

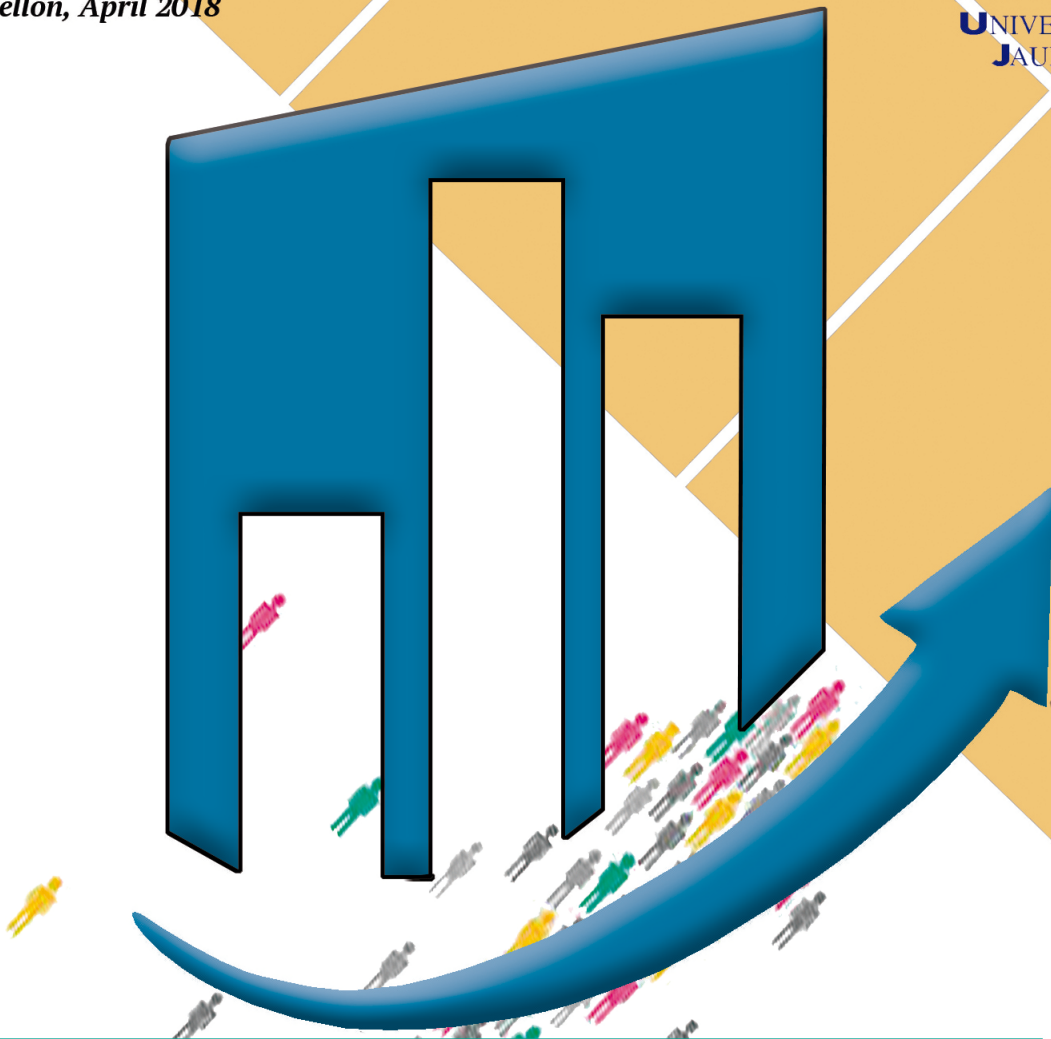
EMPOWERMENT AND PERFORMANCE IN SPANISH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: THE ROLE OF GOAL ORIENTATION AND WELL-BEING OF EMPLOYEES

DOCTORAL THESIS

Castellón, April 2018



**UNIVERSITAT
JAUME I**



Presented by:

Beatriz García Juan

Supervised by:

Dra. Ana B. Escrib Tena

Dr. Vicente Roca Puig



Programa de Doctorado en Economía y Empresa

Escuela de Doctorado de la Universitat Jaume I

**EMPOWERMENT Y RESULTADOS EN
AYUNTAMIENTOS ESPAÑOLES:
EL PAPEL DE LA ORIENTACIÓN A LA META Y
BIENESTAR DE LOS EMPLEADOS**

**Memoria presentada por Beatriz García Juan para optar al grado de doctora
por la Universitat Jaume I.**

Fdo. Beatriz García Juan

Fdo. Dra. Ana B. Escrig Tena

Fdo. Dr. Vicente Roca Puig

Castelló de la Plana, abril 2018

Agradecimientos Institucionales

Este trabajo se ha realizado con la ayuda económica de la Conselleria d'Educació, Investigació, Cultura i Esport de la Generalitat Valenciana procedente de un contrato de carácter predoctoral del Programa VALi+d, y la financiación obtenida para diferentes proyectos por parte de la Universitat Jaume I (Ref. P1.1B2013-26), de la Generalitat Valenciana (Ref. AICO/2015/029) y del Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (Ref. ECO2015-66671-P).

AGRADECIMIENTOS

Muchas han sido las personas y organizaciones que de un modo u otro me han ayudado en el camino a la culminación de esta tesis doctoral. A ellos y ellas dedico estas líneas, que, sin embargo, no son ni de lejos suficientes para mostrarles mi enorme agradecimiento.

A Ana y Vicent, mis directores, por todo el tiempo que me han dedicado, por su paciencia, por estar SIEMPRE ahí, por todo lo que me han enseñado, por sus ánimos y confianza, por creer en mi capacidad aun cuando yo no lo he hecho, por ser un excelente ejemplo a seguir, y, sin desmerecer el trabajo de otros profesores, por ser los mejores directores con los que un doctorando puede iniciarse en este complicado mundo de la investigación. Gracias por transmitirme que “nunca hay que dar nada por sentado, ni darse nunca por vencido”.

Al resto de miembros del grupo de investigación Excellentia, por su ayuda y afecto, por compartir su sabiduría conmigo y por involucrarme en numerosos proyectos y así contribuir a mi desarrollo como investigadora. Con mención especial, a Merche, quien ha sido además mi tutora en el ámbito docente, por sus consejos y tiempo, todo ello acompañado siempre de una sonrisa.

A mis compañeros de despacho en el departamento, por su amistad y buen humor. Y de forma especial, a Sandra, por su cariño y por las bromas tontas, preocupaciones, ilusiones y demás “aventuras” compartidas. Eres un sol.

Al resto de compañeros y compañeras del departamento, por sus palabras de ánimo y consejos, y por hacerme sentir una más durante este tiempo de contratada predoctoral.

A todos los empleados y empleadas de ayuntamientos que completaron los cuestionarios necesarios para desarrollar el estudio. Sin su colaboración, este trabajo no hubiese sido posible.

A mi madre, Mercedes y mi abuelo Miguel. Por su cariño, por “sufrir” conmigo, por ser ejemplo de trabajo, esfuerzo y lucha. Al resto de mi familia, especialmente a mi sobrina Nerea, por sus muestras de interés y curiosidad hacia mi trabajo a pesar de su corta edad.

A Jesús, por su amor, comprensión, positivismo, paciencia y apoyo constantes e incondicionales. Por el tiempo robado. Por todo.

A mis amigas y amigos, que tengo la enorme suerte de que son bastantes y muy buenas y buenos. Por sus ánimos, por ayudarme a desconectar, por soportarme en mis momentos bajos, por ponerle humor a mi vida, por estar ahí siempre, por entender mis ausencias... ¡A algunos también incluso por visitarme en Holanda durante mi estancia de investigación allí! Sois geniales.

Con mención especial, a mi amiga Rebeca, por ser la artífice desinteresada de la portada de esta tesis. Eres una artista. Y a mi amiga Marina, por revisar parte de la redacción en inglés. Eres muy buena..., también como traductora.

Un millón de gracias.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1.- Justification of the research.....	3
1.2.- Objectives of the research.....	7
1.3.- Overall design and research methodology.....	8
1.3.1.- Population and unit of analysis.....	9
1.3.2.- Procedure for data collection and sample.....	10
1.3.3.- Statistical techniques of the study.....	11
1.4.- General contributions of the research.....	12
1.5.- Structure of the doctoral thesis.....	14
References.....	15
CHAPTER 2. OVERALL THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	21
2.1.- Empowerment.....	23
2.1.1.- A general review of the concept of empowerment.....	23
2.1.2.- Structural empowerment.....	25
2.1.3.- Psychological empowerment.....	27
2.2.- Goal orientation.....	29
2.2.1.- Origins and definitions.....	29
2.2.2.- Dimensions of goal orientation.....	31
2.3.- Well-being variables in the work context.....	33
2.3.1.- Job satisfaction.....	33
2.3.2.- Affective commitment.....	34
2.3.3.- Job anxiety.....	35
2.4.- Organisational performance.....	36
2.5.- Theoretical perspectives.....	37
2.6.- Public sector and local government context.....	40
2.6.1.- Public Sector and management: some general notes.....	40
2.6.2.- Public sector and human resources management in Spain.....	41
2.6.3.- Public sector and empowerment.....	42
2.6.4.- Public sector and goal orientation.....	44

2.6.5.- Public sector and job satisfaction, affective commitment and anxiety in the work context.....	44
2.6.6.- Public sector and organisational performance.....	45
References.....	46

CHAPTER 3. LINKING STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT TO ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: WHAT ROLE DOES EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING PLAY?.....	59
3.1.- Introduction.....	61
3.2.- Theoretical background and hypotheses.....	64
3.2.1.- The direct link between structural empowerment and organisational performance.....	64
3.2.2.- The indirect effect: structural empowerment and employee well-being outcomes.....	65
3.2.3.- The indirect effect: employee well-being outcomes and organisational performance.....	67
3.3.- Method.....	69
3.3.1.- Sample and data collection procedure.....	69
3.3.2.- Measurement of variables.....	71
3.3.3.- Analytic procedures.....	71
3.4.- Analysis and results.....	72
3.5.- Discussion.....	74
3.5.1.- Theoretical contributions.....	74
3.5.2.- Practical implications.....	77
3.5.3.- Limitations and future directions.....	77
3.5.4.- Conclusion.....	78
References.....	79

CHAPTER 4. STRUCTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT IN SPANISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES: INFLUENCE ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE.....	83
4.1.- Introduction.....	85
4.2.- Theoretical background and hypotheses.....	88

Table of contents

4.2.1.- Empowerment in Local Authorities.....	88
4.2.2.- The direct effect of structural empowerment on organisational performance.....	89
4.2.3.- The indirect effect: the structural-psychological empowerment link.....	91
4.2.4.- The indirect effect: the psychological empowerment-organisational performance link.....	92
4.3.- Method.....	94
4.3.1.- Sample and data collection procedure.....	94
4.3.2.- Measurement of variables.....	95
4.3.3.- Analytic procedures.....	96
4.4.- Analysis and results.....	97
4.5.- Discussion.....	98
4.5.1.- Theoretical contributions.....	99
4.5.2.- Practical implications.....	100
4.5.3.- Limitations and future directions.....	101
4.5.4.- Conclusion.....	102
References.....	102

CHAPTER 5. GOAL ORIENTATION, PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT AND WELL-BEING OUTCOMES: FOCUSING ON THE EMPLOYEES' LEVEL.....	109
5.1.- Introduction.....	111
5.2.- Theoretical background and hypotheses.....	114
5.2.1.- Psychological empowerment concept.....	114
5.2.2.- Goal Orientation as an antecedent of psychological empowerment.....	114
5.2.3.- Well-being outcomes of psychological empowerment.....	118
5.3.- Method.....	122
5.3.1.- Sample and data collection procedure.....	122
5.3.2.- Measurement of variables.....	124
5.3.3.- Analytic procedures.....	125
5.4.- Analysis and results.....	125
5.5.- Discussion.....	128
5.5.1.- Theoretical contributions.....	128

Table of contents

5.5.2.- Practical implications.....	130
5.5.3.- Limitations and future directions.....	132
5.5.4.- Conclusion.....	132
References.....	133
CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS.....	141
6.1.- Theoretical implications of the research results	143
6.2.- Practical implications of the research results	147
6.3.- Limitations and directions for future research	148
6.4.- General conclusion.....	150
References.....	151
APPENDIXES.....	155
ABSTRACT.....	169
RESUMEN, DISCUSIÓN Y CONCLUSIONES (EN CASTELLANO).....	177

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1. Sample and methodologies employed throughout the doctoral thesis....	11
Table 2.1. Definitions of empowerment.....	24
Table 2.2. Dimensions of structural empowerment.....	26
Table 3.1. Means, SDs and correlations at two levels.....	72
Table 3.2. Estimates of multilevel model.....	73
Table 4.1. Descriptive statistics and correlations for variables at two levels.....	97
Table 4.2. Estimates of multilevel model.....	98
Table 5.1. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables.....	126
Table 5.2. Results of the estimated parameters.....	127

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1. Overall theoretical model proposed.....	8
Figure 3.1. Theoretical model.....	69
Figure 4.1. Conceptual model.....	88
Figure 5.1. Hypothesised model.....	113

CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION

1.1.- JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

In recent decades, the concept of employee empowerment has become a term that is commonly used and heard within everyday management speech, associated with the Human Resource Management (HRM) literature (Wilkinson, 1998; Subramony, 2009; Delery and Roumpi, 2017). Generally speaking, empowerment “entails the passing of considerable responsibility for operational management to individuals or teams, rather than keeping such decision-making in the hands of line management” (Birdi et al., 2008: 471). Its power to obtain beneficial results has been confirmed from extant research (e.g. Hempel et al., 2012). Introduced earlier in the private sector, most of the empirical studies on the topic (e.g. Seibert et al., 2004; Vallas, 2006; Choi, 2007) have been conducted in this setting. Nevertheless, New Public Management (NPM) – the new orientation that has emerged in public management (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) which tries to encourage the public sector to be “more like” the private sector (Hood, 1991; Truss, 2013) with the aim of improving service, efficacy and efficiency (Stanton and Manning, 2013) – has highlighted the relevance of empowerment also for the public sector due to the fact that it promotes more decentralised organisations (Hansen and Host, 2012). Employees’ empowerment thus plays a vital role (Pitts, 2005; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013), with the aim of providing a better service for citizens and improved performance (Pitts, 2005), which are basic precepts of NPM. Hence, more attention should be paid to the empowerment issue in this specific context.

As claimed by the ‘black box’ arguments in the public management literature, empowerment practices, as a part of the management system, make organisations more adaptable, efficient and effective by building structures that match citizens’ demands (Burgess, 1975). Likewise, the more generally applicable social capital theory (Seibert et al., 2001) supports the idea that resources and communication processes embedded in an organisational structure improve coordination and activities, which results in cost reductions and increased efficiency, and ultimately better organisational performance (Seibert et al., 2001). Therefore, it seems clear that empowerment practices are beneficial for organisational performance. Nevertheless, what are the consequences for public employees? The NPM literature has usually neglected the perceptions and experiences of employees (Steijn, 2004), which also leads us to put the spotlight on this level of the organisation.

From a mutual gains perspective of HRM (Van de Voorde et al., 2012) it is agreed that practices such as empowerment are beneficial for both organisational performance and employees. Nevertheless, the conflicting outcomes perspective of HRM (Jensen et al., 2013) as well as, more specifically in the public framework, the documented ‘dark side’ of NPM (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009), warn that HRM and empowerment have no effect on employee well-being – understood as subjective experiences and functioning at work (Grant et al., 2007), such as satisfaction or commitment (Gould-Williams, 2003; Van de Voorde et al., 2012) – or may even have a negative outcome. The explanation for this is that the proactive attitudes that empowerment entails, together with the statement of measurable standards of performance and an attempt to monitor employees, may generate higher pressure, together with intensification of labour and accountability of public staff, which can in turn lead to states of resentment, stress and anxiety, ultimately affecting their health. Likewise, labour process theory (Ramsay et al., 2000) holds that empowerment practices promote not only discretion, but also added responsibility and work intensification, which may also increase stress and anxiety in employees. Since previous empirical research has commonly neglected the consequences for employees, or when it has addressed them it has focused mainly on positive consequences, such as satisfaction or commitment (e.g. Kirkman and Rosen, 1999; Kim, 2002) – both of which represent eudaimonic well-being, that is, they are related to the self-realisation component and the fit between personal values and job (Ryan and Deci, 2001) – there is a lack of a more comprehensive view of the consequences of empowerment in the general literature, but even more so in the public sector context (Park and Rainey, 2007; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013). Therefore, shedding light on the possible negative effects of empowerment on employee health such as anxiety, which is representative of hedonic well-being related to attaining pleasure and avoiding pain (Ryan and Deci, 2001), becomes highly interesting. At the same time, determining how these employee variables affect organisational performance helps to contribute to the ‘black box theories’ of HRM, which point to the importance of mediating variables in the link between HRM practices and organisational performance (Boxall et al., 2011).

At this point it is important to note that empowerment not only refers to managerial practices and it is necessary to examine the concept from two different approaches: structural and psychological (Maynard et al., 2012). On the one hand, the

structural approach – the ‘macro approach’ that has been our focus up until now – regards empowerment as a set of practices, conditions, policies and structures that enable the transfer of power and authority from higher levels of an organisation to lower levels, thereby increasing access to information and resources (Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Kanter, 1993; Labianca et al., 2000). On the other hand, from the psychological approach, empowerment is seen as an employee’s psychological state; it is a motivational concept that implies a powerful state of mind for individuals about the degree of influence they have over their work (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). This perspective, thus, considers empowerment at the individual employee level (Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011).

Numerous scholars (e.g. Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011; Maynard et al., 2012; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) advocate integrating the structural and psychological approaches to gain a broader understanding of the empowerment process. In this respect, recent studies have positioned structural empowerment as an antecedent of psychological empowerment (e.g. Laschinger et al., 2001; Seibert et al., 2004; Hempel et al., 2012). However, there is still a lack of studies integrating both perspectives to better comprehend this relationship (Seibert et al., 2004; Cho and Faerman, 2010). The study of structural empowerment therefore needs to be complemented with the psychological perspective. In the specific context of the public sector, given that, under NPM, mainstream employees need to take risks, be more creative, act in a more proactive manner and find ways to improve the services they provide and performance in general (Pitts, 2005; Diefenbach, 2009), psychological empowerment arises as a basic feeling for public employees (Scotti et al., 2007; Brunetto et al., 2012). This powerful state of mind allows employees to feel both awareness of the work context and accountability for their personal work output (George and Zakkariya, 2014; Gautam and Ghimire, 2017), and so it could be highly beneficial for optimum service delivery and improving performance in the public environment (Taylor, 2013; Van Loon, 2017). Hence, it is interesting to address psychological empowerment as a mediating variable between structural empowerment and organisational performance.

Revisiting the idea of the lack of employee focus in the NPM and public management literature in general, apart from managerial interventions such as structural empowerment, it is noteworthy that numerous questions remain unanswered on the

consequences and antecedents of psychological empowerment, both in public contexts and in research in general (Maynard et al., 2012). Thus, several scholars (Seibert et al., 2011; Macsinga et al., 2015) highlight the importance of going deeper into the factors that guide employees' feelings of empowerment and their consequences. Regarding antecedents, individual orientations such as goal orientation (GO) (e.g. Dweck, 1986) may affect feelings of psychological empowerment, although they have rarely been addressed. Employees' GO might be able to profile their psychological empowerment because it helps to explain individuals' motivations, interests, work behaviours, interpretations and interest for professional development activities (VandeWalle, 1997; Barrick et al., 2013; Joo et al., 2016). Under the demanding conditions of the public sector context, it can help to regulate employees' behaviour according to values associated with their job goals (i.e. learning and/or performance) (Taylor, 2013). As for the consequences, within the context of NPM, employees' satisfaction and commitment have been shown to be valuable aids in achieving the success of public organisations (Kim, 2002; Wright and Davis, 2003; Perry, 2004; Park and Rainey, 2007; Hansen and Høst, 2012). Therefore, guidance on how they can be increased, based not only on managerial interventions such as structural empowerment but also on psychological empowerment, is an important issue for examination. Likewise, psychological empowerment may be expected to help employees to cope with job anxiety, which is particularly relevant in the public sector (Jarman et al., 2014), since it is well documented that working with people (i.e. citizens) is a major risk factor in developing anxiety (Wieclaw et al., 2008). Moreover, as noted earlier, structural empowerment practices could negatively affect the health of the workforce. A psychologically empowered state of mind of employees thus arises as a possible "balsam" for such detrimental consequences for employees.

The contextualisation of this study in Spanish local governments responds to the need to explore novel contexts for empowerment issues (e.g. Bamberger, 2008). The relationships proposed could be different from previous settings examined because of the special features of the reality of the Spanish public setting. Spain has applied NPM principles more slowly and with a lower intensity (Garcia, 2007) and has a characteristic administration culture still grounded in administrative law (Torres et al., 2011). The profile of civil servants in most of the workforce and the general rigidity of the structures make it more difficult to implement reforms based on employee participation

(Serna, 2008). In addition to this, previous research in the Spanish context has focused mainly on management matters (e.g. Barba and Serrano, 2015), largely neglecting employees' experiences.

1.2.- OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Given the need to consider a deeper understanding of the mediating relationships between structural empowerment and organisational performance within the public context, this work has the overall aim of analysing this link by incorporating the mediating role of employees' well-being variables and their levels of psychological empowerment. Furthermore, by focusing on employees the aim is to discover more about the antecedents and consequences of feelings of empowerment.

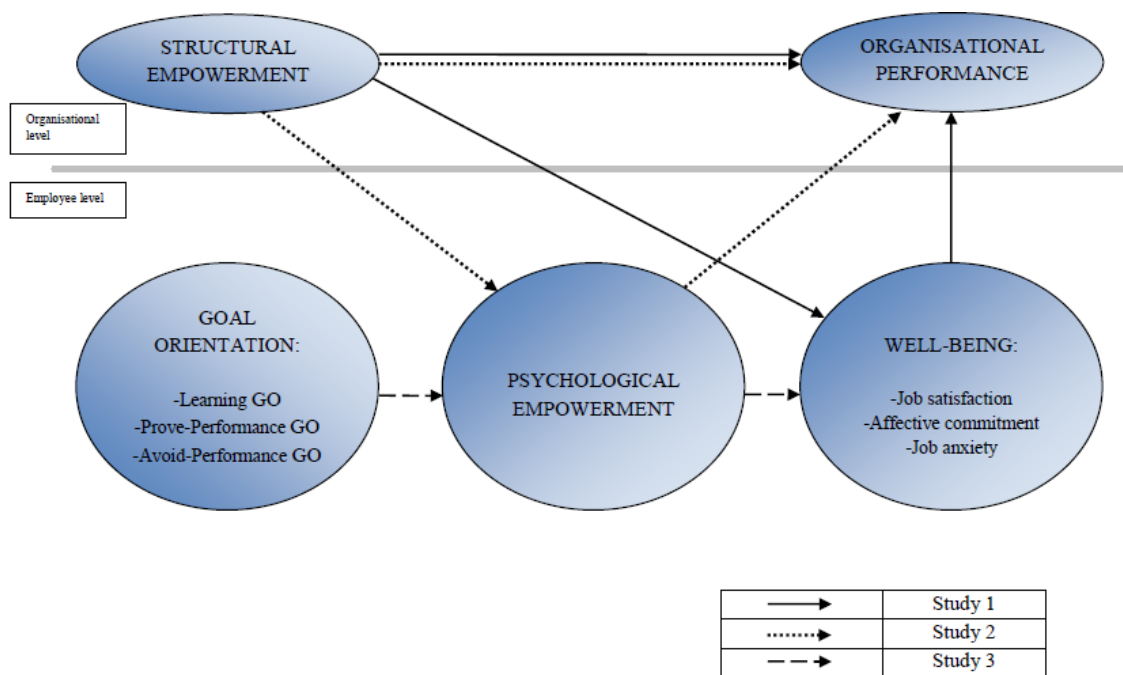
Arising from this general objective, three different studies have been conducted in Spanish local governments in order to accomplish three specific objectives:

- First, to examine the link between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local authorities in Spain by exploring the possible mediating role of different well-being variables: job satisfaction and affective commitment, as representatives of eudaimonic well-being, and job anxiety, as hedonic well-being. By introducing these different types of well-being we try to shed light on the possible 'dark side' of NPM. Moreover, the mediating multilevel design helps to elucidate more about the 'black box' of HRM.
- Second, to focus on the depiction of empowerment by going deeper into the link between structural empowerment practices and organisational results, and considering the mediating role of employees' psychological empowerment in Spanish local governments. We thus try to complete our understanding of the mediating mechanisms that connect structural empowerment and organisational performance, as well as explore the psychological empowerment issue in a context that has been addressed only scarcely.
- Finally, to focus on the employee level and the psychological empowerment importance. By exploring the role of employees' goal orientations as an individual antecedent of their psychological empowerment, and the impact of this latter for employees' well-being (job satisfaction, affective commitment and

job anxiety), we attempt to clarify how and with which consequences empowerment feelings can be promoted among public employees.

Figure 1.1 represents the general model proposed, showing the specific objectives that are addressed in each study.

Figure 1.1. Overall theoretical model proposed



1.3.- OVERALL DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thesis is focused on the public sector, specifically on Spanish local governments, since the NPM makes it necessary to analyse the role of empowerment and its effects on organisational as well as on employee level issues. This focus is due to the fact that previous empirical research regarding Spanish public sector populations has concentrated mainly on management issues (e.g. Torres et al., 2011; Barba and Serrano, 2015), neglecting the viewpoint of employees.

The present research is built from a deductive hypothetical profile, and so the conceptual model developed is based on a theoretical foundation and tested through the use of quantitative tools, applying statistical methods to achieve empirical evidence (Dávila-Newman, 2006).

1.3.1.- Population and unit of analysis

To choose the population, we investigated the profile of public administration in Spain, focusing specifically on local governments. Spain is one of the most decentralised countries in the world with 17 regions, two cities with a statute of autonomy (Ceuta and Melilla) and 8125 local authorities. A local government is the administration in the closest contact with citizens, and provides essential services. In our country, local governments have administrative and financial autonomy, and within their scope they pass regulations and perform specific actions. Moreover, as Ihrke et al. (2003: 79) state “local governments have long been considered laboratories for experimenting with governmental reforms”. In Spain, there are 399 towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants (1st January 2014) and, thus, there exist 399 local governments in charge of these municipalities. Our empirical work is focused on this size of local governments, as they have enough resources to accomplish an effective internal control of their performance (Rosa et al., 2013) and, furthermore, large municipalities put into practice more strategic management techniques (Poister and Streib, 2005). Our population, therefore, comprised these 399 local governments.

The scope of the thesis was thus delimited according to the objectives noted above. Since we aimed to obtain information about the organisational (structural empowerment and organisational performance) and employee level variables (e.g. job satisfaction, goal orientations) of local governments, we gathered data from two different informants, belonging to the organisational and individual levels, respectively: local government managers (human resource managers or, in their absence, clerks) and other employees of the local government in general.

This decision was made based on the idea that, on the one hand, HRM practices and organisational performance have usually been conceptualised and measured at higher levels (Shen, 2016) and, moreover, the key informant, who can provide the most accurate information regarding these variables, is thought to be in a managerial position (Arthur and Boyles, 2007). We therefore decided to employ human resource managers or, in their absence, clerks to gather organisational level information. On the other hand, individual dispositions, emotional states, feelings and attitudes arise from employees and have been traditionally deemed as individual-level constructs (Shen, 2016). The individual level is thus considered to be the best level of measurement by using self-report data (Rousseau, 1985) from employees.

1.3.2.- Procedure for data collection and sample

Data was collected by administering two different structured online questionnaires (addressed to the organisational and employee levels). We gathered the list of the local governments considered in the population from the *Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias (FEMP)* (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces) database, which contains all Spanish city and town councils and their contact information.

The questionnaires were prepared using previously validated scales (see Appendixes A and B for a copy of both administered questionnaires in Spanish and Appendixes C and D for a copy of them in English). Only the scale for measuring structural empowerment was adapted from the original version in order to adjust it to the local governments' real situation and nomenclatures. Since they were originally constructed in English, we followed standard translation and back-translation procedures to translate the measures into Spanish (Ghauri et al., 1995). In addition to the scales for examining our variables of interest, we also included complementary questions, such as gender or age in the case of the employee-level questionnaire, or local government size, in the case of the manager questionnaire, in order to obtain data that can be useful for the ensuing analyses, since there are factors different from our variables of interest that can represent potential sources of variance.

Following Dillman et al. (2009), we carried out a pretest in which the managers' questionnaire was reviewed by four local government managers, and two employees in each of these local authorities were interviewed in order to obtain feedback on the questionnaire prepared for the other staff (individual level). We thus confirmed that the instructions and the questions were clear and that the procedure that we had planned for administering it would be appropriate. Then, all the city councils in the population were contacted by telephone to identify the human resource managers and request local government participation. They were informed of the purpose and relevance of the research and the confidentiality of the responses. The managers were asked to complete the questionnaire addressed to them (on structural empowerment and performance) and were invited to send the employees' questionnaire (on employee-level variables) at random to a minimum of four employees. A telephone follow-up was carried out with the aim of increasing the response rate (Dillman et al., 2009).

The final sample used in the research is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Sample and methodologies employed throughout the doctoral thesis

Study	Managerial level participants	Employee-level participants	Sample error* (organisational level)	Analytical strategy
Study 1 (Chapter 3)	103	461	8.33%	Multilevel structural equation modelling (MSEM)
Study 2 (Chapter 4)	103	461	8.33%	Multilevel structural equation modelling (MSEM)
Study 3 (Chapter 5)	----	553 (from 111 different local governments)	7.91%	Structural equation modelling (SEM)

*95% confidence level

Local governments from which we received fewer than four responses from employees (individual level) were removed. As can be seen, the sample differed depending on the nature of the study: the multilevel studies had data from 103 local governments (103 managers and 461 employees nested in these local governments), and the individual-level study was based on responses from 553 employees nested in 111 local governments. This was due to the fact that for the multilevel examination we needed data from the two levels of analysis (organisational and individual), and we received responses from only 103 managers. Moreover, it is noteworthy that, following previous multilevel studies (e.g. Schneider et al., 2003), we equalised the number of respondents from each local government by randomly sampling observations from organisations with more than six respondents. Thus, some responses from these city councils were deleted, so that their number of employee-level responses ranged between four and six.

1.3.3.- Statistical techniques of the study

As also shown in Table 1, two different statistical techniques were used in the studies that make up this thesis (SEM and MSEM), employing the statistical programs EQS 6.2 (Bentler, 2006) and MPLUS (Muthén and Muthén, 1998-2012), respectively.

The SEM methodology aims to explain the relationships among multiple variables, allowing us to work with constructs (latent variables) that are inferred from indicators (Hair et al., 2010). In order to evaluate the fit of the models, we use widely accepted fit indices (Hooper et al., 2008). On the one hand, we take into account absolute fit indices (which provide the most fundamental indication of how well the

proposed theory fits the data), such as the chi-square (χ^2) model and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). On the other hand, we consider incremental fit indices (also known as comparative or relative indices, which consist of a group of indices that, rather than using the chi-square in its raw form, compare the chi-square value with the baseline model), such as the comparative fit index (CFI) and the non-normed fit index (NNFI).

Briefly, the use of SEM involves two steps. Firstly, the measurement model is estimated to establish the linkages between latent and observable variables. Secondly, the estimation of the structural model specifies relationships between different latent variables (Hair et al., 2010).

The multilevel application becomes especially useful in HRM research, which has resulted in regular calls for this type of design in this framework (Renkema, 2017). On many occasions, HRM research involves hierarchical data from two or more levels of analysis, since employees belong to teams or areas that, at the same time, pertain to organisations (Shen, 2016). The reactions of employees to HRM interventions may therefore differ depending on whether they belong to the same or distinct organisations (Bliese and Hanges, 2004). Accordingly, in recent times a growing number of studies have focused on the HRM-performance link across several levels of analysis, taking into account employees, teams, etc. (Jiang et al., 2012).

Statistically speaking, the multilevel design allows us to specify multilevel mediation models with cross-level links (e.g. the 2-1-2 multilevel design that studies 1 and 2 in this thesis represent) (Preacher et al., 2010). It analyses within-unit and between-unit relationships simultaneously by estimating within-unit and between-unit models separately, and so it overcomes the drawbacks of other traditional methods, such as aggregation and disaggregation approaches (Osborne, 2000).

1.4.- GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

From the above, some useful implications of the present study can be deduced. On the one hand, regarding the academic field, the first contribution has to do with the issue of empowerment. Here, structural empowerment is studied as a construct in itself, and not as a part of a bundle of other HRM practices (e.g. Raineri, 2016), which allows us to better define its consequences (Van de Voorde et al., 2016). Moreover, since we examine the consequences of different types of employees' well-being (job satisfaction

and affective commitment, as eudaimonic, and job anxiety, as hedonic), we offer a more balanced view of HRM effects (Van de Voorde et al., 2012), depicting whether health (here, job anxiety) could be undermined by empowerment practices. Therefore, we contribute to knowledge on the prevailing mutual gains and the conflicting outcomes perspectives of HRM. In a more general view, the examination of mediating variables between structural empowerment and organisational performance supposes an advance in the knowledge of the ‘black box’ between HRM and performance. At the same time, the multilevel approach allows us to integrate the individual and organisational levels (Ostroff and Bowen, 2000), thereby making it possible to bridge the macro and micro perspectives (Shen, 2016). We therefore highlight the vital role of employees as a critical factor to explain the HRM practices-performance link, thus helping to enrich HRM research since, nowadays, most of these studies are conducted at the same level of analysis (Shen, 2016). Furthermore, we draw a distinction between two empowerment approaches: structural and psychological, which allows us to expand our understanding of empowerment (e.g. Cho and Faerman, 2010), in addition to expanding the knowledge on the above-noted ‘black box’ of the HRM-performance link.

Leaving aside the multilevel contribution, by concentrating on the employees’ level, we shed light on the individual dispositions that lead to psychological empowerment, following previous calls by academics (e.g. Maynard et al., 2012). Specifically, GO constitutes a novel frame to be studied, since as far as we know, no empirical research has examined the link between GO (including its three dimensions) and psychological empowerment. Finally, we try to clarify the association between psychological empowerment and the different types of well-being outcomes, emphasising the introduction of job anxiety as a health (hedonic type) outcome, which becomes relevant given its distinct nature compared to the other kinds of well-being (Van de Voorde et al., 2012).

Furthermore, since NPM changes have been developed in different ways depending on the country and setting (Pollitt, 2002), empowerment, as a part of HRM within NPM, and its links with organisational performance need further examination in different contexts (Andrews and Boyne, 2010). Therefore, by focusing on the context of Spanish local governments we extend the understanding of the ‘black box’ arguments of public management about the relevance of management systems, such as HRM, for the improvement of performance and service quality in public organisations. Moreover, we

add empirical evidence of the importance of public administration employees in the new turbulent and demanding public environment, thereby helping to ease the lack of attention to employees' perceptions, dispositions and feelings. Specifically, the study of GO and its connection with psychological empowerment becomes interesting for the framework of public employees, given their commonly indefinite job tenure (Barba and Serrano, 2015). By addressing it, we respond to the calls for incorporating motivational aspects in the public sector (Perry, 2010). GO could play a very important role in their psychological state and, therefore, in their states of well-being, consequently influencing broad public outcomes. Overall, we help to generalise the models involving empowerment, which can be considered an important step in theory development (Whetten, 1989).

On the other hand, regarding the practical and professional fields, the findings could elucidate more about how to improve the management of public administrations, specifically local governments, and their functioning and performance, through human resource management. Some final suggestions arising from these findings could help local managers and policies related to civil servants management to be more effective and to enhance their well-being as well as the organisational results and, ultimately, citizens' satisfaction.

1.5.- STRUCTURE OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

The remainder of this thesis is presented as follows: Chapter 2 is theoretical, and offers an overview of the basic literature on the concepts under study. Furthermore, it situates the public sector framework and, specifically, the context of Spanish local governments, as well as its relationship with the variables under study. Following that, the three empirical studies corresponding to the overall model and the three objectives detailed above are presented (Chapters 3, 4 and 5). Finally, Chapter 6 presents the general discussion and conclusions obtained from the studies conducted, including the implications of the results found and the limitations, as well as directions for future research.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, R. and Boyne, G.A. (2010). 'Capacity, leadership, and organizational performance: Testing the black box model of public management'. *Public Administration Review*, 70:3, 443-454.
- Arthur, J. B. and Boyles, T. (2007). 'Validating the human resource system structure: A levels-based strategic HRM approach'. *Human Resource Management Review*, 17, 77-92.
- Bamberger, P. (2008). 'From the editors beyond contextualization: Using context theories to narrow the micro-macro gap in management research'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51:5, 839-846.
- Barba, M.I. and Serrano, J. (2015). 'Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21,9-16.
- Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K. and Li, N. (2013). 'The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics'. *Academy of management review*, 38:1, 132-153.
- Bentler, P.M. (2006). *EQS 6 Structural Equations Program Manual*. Encino, California: Multivariate Software, Inc.
- Birdi, K., Clegg, C., Patterson, M., Robinson, A., Stride, C.B., Wall, T.D. and Wood, S.J. (2008). 'The impact of human resource and operational management practices on company productivity: a longitudinal study'. *Personnel Psychology*, 61:3, 467-501.
- Bliese, P. D. and Hanges, P. J. (2004). 'Being both too liberal and too conservative: The perils of treating grouped data as though they were independent'. *Organizational Research Methods*, 7, 400-417.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Boxall, P., Ang, S.H. and Bartram, T. (2011). 'Analysing the 'black box' of HRM: uncovering HR goals, Mediators and outcomes in a standardised service environment. *Journal of Management Studies*, 48:7, 1504-32.
- Brunetto, Y., Shacklock, K., Bartram, T., Leggat, S. G., Farr-Wharton, R., Stanton, P. and Casimir, G. (2012). 'Comparing the impact of leader-member exchange, psychological empowerment and affective commitment upon Australian public and private sector nurses: implications for retention'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23:11, 2238-2255.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705-16.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. and Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130-154.
- Choi, J. N. (2007). 'Change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior: effects of work environment characteristics and intervening psychological processes'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 28:4, 467-484.

- Conger, J. and Kanungo, R. (1988). 'The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice'. *Academy of Management Review*, 13:3, 471-483.
- Dávila Newman, G. (2006). *El razonamiento inductivo y deductivo dentro del proceso investigativo en ciencias experimentales y sociales*. Laurus, 12(Ext).
- Delery, J. E. and Roumpi, D. (2017). 'Strategic human resource management, human capital and competitive advantage: is the field going in circles?'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27:1, 1-21.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public Administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Dewettinck, K. and Van Ameijde, M. (2011). 'Linking leadership empowerment behavior to employee attitudes and behavioral intentions. Testing the mediating role of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 40:3, 284-305.
- Dillman, D.A., Smyth J.D. and Christian L. (2009). *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). 'Motivational Processes Affecting Learning'. *American Psychologist*, 41:10, 1040-1048.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 90-506.
- García, M.I. (2007). 'La nueva gestión pública: evolución y tendencias'. *Presupuesto y Gasto Público*, 47, 37-64.
- Gautam, D. K. and Ghimire, S. B. (2017). 'Psychological Empowerment of Employees for Competitive Advantages: An Empirical Study of Nepalese Service Sector'. *International Journal of Law and Management*, 59:4, 466-488.
- George, E. and Zakkariya, K. A. (2014). 'Employees' perception of empowerment: a comparative study among different sectors of banks'. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 6:2, 132-145.
- Ghauri, P., Gronhaug, K. and Kristianslund, I. (1995). *Research methods in business studies: a practical guide*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Gould-Williams, J. (2003). 'The importance of HR practices and workplace trust in achieving superior performance: a study of public-sector organizations'. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14, 28-54.
- Grant, A.M., Christianson, M.K. and Price, R.H. (2007). 'Happiness, health, or relationships? Managerial practices and employee wellbeing tradeoffs'. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21, 51-63.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. and Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis. A global perspective* (7th Eds.). NY: Pearson.
- Hansen, J. R. and Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.

- Hempel, P. S., Zhang, Z. X. and Han, Y. (2012). 'Team empowerment and the organizational context: Decentralization and the contrasting effects of formalization'. *Journal of Management*, 38:2, 475-501.
- Hood, C. (1991). 'A public management for all seasons?'. *Public administration*, 69:1, 3-19.
- Hooper, D., Coughlan, J. and Mullen, M. (2008). 'Structural equation modelling: Guidelines for determining model fit'. *Articles*, 2.
- Ihrke, D., Proctor, R. and Gabris, J. (2003). 'Understanding Innovation in Municipal Government: City Council Member Perspectives'. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 25:1, 79-90.
- Jarman, L., Martin, A., Venn, A., Otahal, P., Taylor, R., Teale, B. and Sanderson, K. (2014). 'Prevalence and correlates of psychological distress in a large and diverse public sector workforce: baseline results from Partnering Healthy@ Work'. *BMC public health*, 14:1, 1-11.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. and Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. and Baer, J.C. (2012). 'How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms'. *Academy of management Journal*, 55:6, 1264-1294.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. and Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Kanter, R.M. (1993). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Ed. Basic Books.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public administration review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Kirkman, B.L. and Rosen, B. (1999). 'Beyond self-management: Antecedents and consequences of team empowerment'. *Academy of Management journal*, 42:1, 58-74.
- Labianca, G., Gray, B. and Brass, D. J. (2000). 'A grounded model of organizational schema change during empowerment'. *Organization Science*, 11:2, 235-257.
- Laschinger, H. K. S., Finegan, J. and Shamian, J. (2001). 'The impact of workplace empowerment and organizational trust on staff nurses' work satisfaction and organizational commitment'. *Health Care Management Review*, 26:3, 7-23.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. and Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. and Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Muthén, L.K. and Muthén, B.O. (1998-2012). *Mplus User's guide*. Seventh Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Muthén and Muthén.
- Osborne, J. W. (2000). 'Advantages of hierarchical linear modeling'. *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, 7, 1-3.

- Ostroff, C. and Bowen D.E. (2000). 'Moving human resource to a higher level: Human resource practices and organizational effectiveness', in K.J. Klein and S.W.J. Kozlowski (eds), *Multilevel Theory, Research, and Methods in Organizations*, San Francisco: Ed. Jossey-Bass.
- Park, R.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Perry, J. L. (2010). 'A strategic agenda for public human resource management research'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 30:1, 20-43.
- Perry, R. W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Poister, T. H. and Streib, G. (2005). 'Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after Two Decades'. *Public Administration Review*, 65:1, 45-56.
- Pollitt, C. (2002). 'Convergence: The useful myth?' *Public Administration*, 79:4, 933-947.
- Preacher, K. J., Zyphur, M. J. and Zhang, Z. (2010). 'A general multilevel SEM framework for assessing multilevel mediation'. *Psychological methods*, 15:3, 209.
- Raineri, A. (2016). 'Linking human resources practices with performance: the simultaneous mediation of collective affective commitment and human capital'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, doi: 10.1080/09585192.2016.1155163
- Ramsay, H., Scholarios, D. and Harley, B. (2000). 'Employees and high-performance work systems: Testing inside the black box'. *British Journal of industrial relations*, 38:4, 501-531.
- Renkema, M., Meijerink, J. and Bondarouk, T. (2017). 'Advancing multilevel thinking in human resource management research: Applications and guidelines'. *Human resource management review*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmmr.2017.03.001>
- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2001). 'On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being'. *Annual review of psychology*, 52:1, 141-166.
- Rosa, C. P., Morote, R. P. and Colomina, C. I. M. (2013). 'Performance Improvement in the Spanish Local Government: A Proposal for Internal Control in Social Care Services'. *International Business Research*, 6:4, 10-24.
- Rousseau, D. M. (1985). 'Issues of level in organizational research: Multi-level and cross-level perspectives'. *Research in organizational behavior*, 7:1, 1-37.
- Schneider, B., Hanges, P.J., Smith, D.B. and Salvaggio, A.N. (2003). 'Which comes first: employee attitudes or organizational financial and market performance?'. *Journal of applied psychology*, 88:5, 836-851.
- Scotti, D.J., Harmon, J. and Behson, S.J. (2007). 'Links among High-Performance Work Environment, Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: An Extension to the Healthcare Sector'. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 52:2, 109-125.
- Seibert, S.E., Kraimer, M.L. and Liden, R.C. (2001). 'A social capital theory of career success'. *Academy of management journal*, 44:2, 219-237.

- Seibert, S.E., Silver, S.R. and Randolph, W.A. (2004). 'Taking Empowerment to the Next Level: a Multiple-Level Model of Empowerment, Performance, and Satisfaction'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47:3, 332–349.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Shen, J. (2016). 'Principles and applications of multilevel modeling in human resource management research'. *Human Resource Management*, 55:6, 951-965.
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). 'Psychological empowerment in the workplace: dimensions, measurement, and validation'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38:5, 1442-1465.
- Stanton, P. and Manning, K. (2013). 'High performance work systems, performance management and employee participation in the public sector', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Steijn, B. (2004). 'Human resource management and job satisfaction in the Dutch public sector'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:4, 291-303.
- Subramony, M. (2009). 'A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between HRM bundles and firm performance'. *Human resource management*, 48:5, 745-768.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Thomas, K. W. and Velthouse, B. A. (1990). 'Cognitive Elements of Empowerment - an Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation'. *Academy of Management Review*, 15:4, 666–681.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Truss, C. (2013). 'The distinctiveness of human resource management in the public sector', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Vallas, S. P. (2006). 'Empowerment redux: Structure, agency, and the remaking of managerial authority'. *American journal of sociology*, 111:6, 1677-1717.
- Van De Voorde, K., Paauwe, J. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2012). 'Employee well-being and the HRM–organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies'. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14:4,391-407.
- Van De Voorde, K., Veld, M. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2016). 'Connecting empowerment-focused HRM and labour productivity to work engagement: the mediating role of job demands and resources'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 26:2, 192-210.
- Van Loon, N. M. (2017). 'Does context matter for the type of performance-related behavior of public service motivated employees?' *Review of public personnel administration*, 37:4, 405–429.

- VandeWalle, D. (1997). 'Development and Validation of a work domain goal orientation instrument'. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 57:6, 995-1015.
- Whetten, D.A. (1989). 'What constitutes a theoretical contribution?' *Academy of Management Review*, 14:4, 490-495.
- Wieclaw, J., Agerbo, E., Mortensen, P. B., Burr, H., Tuchsén, F. and Bonde, J. P. (2008). 'Psychosocial working conditions and the risk of depression and anxiety disorders in the Danish workforce'. *BMC Public Health*, 8:1, 280.
- Wilkinson, A., (1998). 'Empowerment: theory and practice'. *Personnel Review*, 27:1, 40-56.
- Wright, B. E. and Davis, B. S. (2003). 'Job Satisfaction in the Public Sector. The role of the Work Environment'. *American Review of Public Administration*, 33:1, 70-90.

CHAPTER 2.
OVERALL THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL
FRAMEWORK

2.1.- EMPOWERMENT

2.1.1.- A general review of the concept of empowerment

The concept of empowerment has been analysed from many fields, such as religion, education or sociology. Within the managerial field, notions of empowerment are derived from theories of participative management and employee involvement (Spreitzer et al., 1997). Regarding theories of participative management, and according to these authors, managers share decision-making power with employees to enhance performance and work satisfaction. In relation to theories of employee involvement, these authors comment that they emphasise cascading power, information, rewards and training to the lowest level possible in the organisation hierarchy so as to increase worker discretion.

Nowadays, “the concept of empowerment is closely aligned with the thrust to gain organisational effectiveness through the wise utilisation of human resources” (Siegall and Gardner, 2000: 703), inasmuch as they are very important to develop and maintain competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Barney and Wright, 1998). Thus, as Dimitriadis (2005: 80) writes, “[it] is essential to the constant change and learning that characterise today’s global business environment”. In this sense, Ergeneli et al. (2007) list some reasons for the recognition of empowerment as an important subject in management practices. First, personnel empowerment is a fundamental element of managerial and organisational effectiveness, as effectiveness increases when power and control are shared (Keller and Dansereau, 1995). Next, some literature reports empowerment as an aspect facilitating timely response to environmental changes. Finally, empowerment produces beneficial outcomes. Thus, it is an important construct because it offers the potential to generate positive outcomes that benefit individuals and organisations (Chang and Liu, 2008).

However, as Conger and Kanungo (1988) emphasise, despite the recognised role of empowerment, our understanding of the construct is imperfect and often confusing: it is “a tricky concept to grasp” (Matthews et al., 2003: 315). Hence, it is difficult to find one single definition, as can be observed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Definitions of empowerment

AUTHOR	DEFINITION OF EMPOWERMENT
Kanter (1985)	Providing employees with the power tools to maximise their ability to accomplish their work in a meaningful way.
Conger and Kanungo (1988)	Process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organisational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information.
Thomas and Velthouse (1990)	Increased task motivation.
Bowen and Lawler (1992)	Sharing with frontline employees information about the organisation, rewards, knowledge, and power to make decisions.
London (1993)	Ensuring that the employee has the authority to do his or her job.
Gatchalian (1997)	Result of effective and sustained training which enhances the individual's self-esteem and his/her capability to solve problems and to make low-risk decisions.
Wilkinson (1998)	Form of employee involvement initiative focused on task-based involvement and attitudinal change.
Lashley (1999)	Management technique which can be applied universally across all organisations as a means of dealing with the needs of modern global business and across all industrial sectors.
Petter et al. (2002)	Transferring of some managerial authority, prerogative, or ability to employees
Birdi et al. (2008)	Entails the passing of considerable responsibility for operational management to individuals or teams, rather than keeping such decision making in the hands of line management.
Subramony (2009)	Human resource management bundle of practices aimed at delegating decision-making authority and responsibility down the hierarchy through the use of self-managing or autonomous teams and facilitating employee participation and voice using upward feedback mechanisms.
Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2011)	Management practices and behaviours aimed at sharing power, information, and rewards with employees to improve results.

Source: Compiled by author

From this overview of definitions, it can be inferred that employee empowerment is closely related to management techniques and processes, such as motivation, communication, participative management, delegation, training and feedback, which has made it necessary to examine the concept from different perspectives (Pelit et al., 2011). Thus, two approaches can be differentiated: structural and psychological (Maynard et al., 2012).

The structural approach regards empowerment as a set of practices, conditions, policies and structures that enable the transfer of power and authority from higher levels of an organisation to lower levels, thereby increasing access to information and resources (Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Kanter, 1993; Labianca et al., 2000). But focusing solely on this approach is not a suitable method. Conger and Kanungo (1988) refer to this by arguing that most management theorists have dealt with empowerment in this way and have not paid sufficient attention to its nature or the process underlying the construct.

From the psychological approach, empowerment is seen as an employee's psychological reaction to these managerial practices; it is a motivational concept (Spreitzer, 1995; Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). But this single perspective leaves the study of empowerment incomplete, since, in order to further our understanding of its nature, it is essential to take into account the factors that lead to employees' feelings of empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011).

Consequently, as despite the fact that “[it] has emerged as a new management paradigm, virtually no research has combined structural and psychological approaches to develop an integrative approach” (Cho and Faerman, 2010: 130). And in this respect, recent studies have positioned structural empowerment as an antecedent of psychological empowerment (e.g. Laschinger et al., 2001; Seibert et al., 2004; Hempel et al., 2012).

2.1.2.- Structural empowerment

In structural empowerment studies, depending on the framework, empowering structures and practices have received different names, such as structural empowerment (e.g. Laschinger et al., 2001; Mills and Ungson, 2003; Cho and Faerman, 2010; Armellino et al., 2010; Wagner et al., 2010; Wallace et al., 2011; Maynard et al., 2012), role empowerment (Logan and Ganster, 2007), organisational structure characteristics related to empowerment (Hempel et al., 2012), organisational empowerment (Silver et al., 2006; Kazlauskaitė et al., 2012), behavioural empowerment (Pelit et al., 2011), discretionary empowerment (Hui et al., 2004), or, simply, empowerment (Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Labianca et al., 2000; Tarí and Sabater, 2006). Here, we adopt the term “structural” because the empowerment literature refers to the “structural approach” in many studies (e.g. Maynard et al., 2012) and we believe that it represents the meaning of this kind of empowerment adequately.

Structural empowerment is primarily concerned with organisational conditions (e.g. facets of the job, team designs or organisational arrangements that instil situations, policies and procedures) whereby power, decision-making and formal control over resources are shared (Kanter, 1977). However, different authors who have studied this kind of empowerment do not always point out the same organisational conditions, which could explain some of the different findings of the extant literature. Some of them refer to only a few. For instance, a management practice that provides employees'

discretion and autonomy is highlighted by Hui et al. (2004). Menon (2001) understands structural empowerment as the granting of power as well as decision-making authority. Other researchers, such as Conger and Kanungo (1988), Logan and Ganster (2007), Laschinger et al. (2001), Kazlauskaite et al. (2012) or Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) have considered a wider range of conditions. As a result, to operationalise this construct, as occurs with its denomination, there has been no single working definition with precise dimensions (Herrenkohl et al., 1999). Thus, researchers in the structural empowerment field have chosen different dimensions to explain and to work with this construct, although some of them are the same, as Table 2.2 shows:

Table 2.2. Dimensions of structural empowerment

Bowen and Lawler (1992)	Blanchard et al. (2001)	Laschinger et al. (2001)	Tarí and Sabater (2006)	Laschinger, et al. (2004)	Logan and Ganster (2007)	Cho and Faerman (2010)
Power to make decision	Autonomy through development clear boundaries Use self-managed teams		Power to make decision	Formal power Informal power	Greater decision making	Delegation Participative decision making
Information about organisational performance	Information sharing	Access to information	Information about organisation's actions	Access to information	Information	
Rewards based on organisational performance		Access to resources	Rewards based on performance	Access to resources	Resources	
Knowledge	Training opportunities through development clear boundaries (*)	Access to opportunity	Training	Access to opportunity	Training	
		Access to support		Access to support		Feedback on performance

Source: Compiled by author

Nevertheless, as shown in the above table, there is a high degree of consensus on considering any of these elements as a dimension of structural empowerment. This is the case of the role of decision-making, shared information or training and knowledge.

Hence, after a comprehensive review of this empowerment approach, we consider Bowen and Lawler's theory as the most suitable for the current work,

following other studies (e.g. Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2011, 2013) which have also dealt with empowerment in the public sector. As Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2011) state, Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) developed the best-known definition of employee (structural) empowerment by analysing the use of empowerment practices in private service firms, and defined it as “approach to service delivery” (Bowen and Lawler, 1992: 32). Therefore, taking into account that the public administration and, specifically, local governments act as service providers, we consider Bowen and Lawler’s theory of empowerment as a very useful perspective to study structural empowerment.

According to Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995), sharing power and authority with frontline employees is a key element of an empowering approach to management, but it is not enough to gain from the advantages of (structural) empowerment. They state that, besides sharing power, it is vital to distribute the following to frontline employees:

- rewards based on the organisation’s performance (pay tied to service quality, individual and group pay plans, etc.)
- information about the organisation’s performance (customer feedback, unit performance data, data on competitors, etc.)
- knowledge that enables employees to understand and contribute to organisational performance (skills to analyse business results, group process skills, etc.)
- power to make decisions that influence organisational direction and performance (quality circles, job enrichment, self-managed teams, etc.)

Therefore, structural empowerment constitutes a process of managerial investment in employees in order to induce exchanges (Mills and Ungson, 2003). In the next section we refer to psychological empowerment, mentioned above.

2.1.3.- Psychological empowerment

Early work on psychological empowerment developed out of the motivational framework of Bandura’s (1977) work on self-efficacy (Maynard et al., 2012). Bandura (1987: 416) defines self-efficacy as the “belief in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”. According to Conger and Kanungo (1988: 474), “[it] refers to a process whereby an individual’s

belief in his or her self-efficacy is enhanced” (Conger and Kanungo, 1988: 474). Following this idea, Thomas and Velthouse (1990: 666) describe empowerment “as increased intrinsic task motivation”. According to these authors, intrinsic task motivation involves positively valued experiences that individuals develop directly from a task. These authors identified four dimensions as cognitive components of intrinsic motivation (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990: 672-673): meaningfulness, competence, impact and choice.

Despite the fact that other researchers (e.g. Menon, 1999, 2001) have also developed psychological empowerment models, we take Spreitzer’s (1995) model as our basis, since it stands out as the model that has received the greatest international recognition and is the one that is followed by the vast majority of authors. Following Thomas and Velthouse’s (1990) theory, Spreitzer (1995: 1444) describes psychological empowerment “as a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact”. Thus, empowerment is focused at the level of the individual in relation to his or her work environment (Spreitzer, 1996).

Some important assumptions have been made about the definition of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995). First, empowerment is not an enduring personality trait that can be generalised across circumstances but, instead, a set of cognitions shaped by a work environment (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Second, empowerment is a continuous variable; people can be viewed as more or less empowered, rather than empowered or not empowered. Third, empowerment is not a global construct that can be generalised across diverse life situations and roles but to those specific to the work domain.

On the subject of its dimensions, Spreitzer (1995: 1143-1444) explains the first factor, meaning, as the fit between one’s work goals and beliefs or values; it is “the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual’s own ideals or standards”. The second factor, competence, “is an individual’s belief in his or her capability to perform activities with skill”. Third, self-determination (a renamed version of Thomas and Velthouse’s “choice”) “reflects autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes”. Finally, impact “is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work”. The four dimensions, Spreitzer (1996) notes, reflect the individual’s relationship with his or her work unit. Regarding these factors, Spreitzer (1995) developed a

multidimensional instrument to assess individual-level psychological empowerment which has been widely used by many researchers.

With respect to the operationalisation of the concept of psychological empowerment, research has taken several different approaches, using both one-dimensional and multidimensional models (Cho and Faerman, 2010). For instance, Conger and Kanungo (1988), as we have noted above, defined empowerment unidimensionally as self-efficacy. Other authors (Hechanova-Alampay and Beehr, 2001; Mathieu et al., 2006) used a two-dimensional view, focusing on employees' perceptions concerning the delegation of authority and responsibility. This two-dimensional conceptualisation exists within the team psychological empowerment literature, but the predominant view at both the individual and team level is the four-dimensional one (Maynard et al., 2012), which focuses on a set of individual psychological experiences of empowerment (e.g. Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). Thus, in the present study we adopt, as noted above, Spreitzer's (1995) four-factor model of psychological empowerment, as it is the most widely followed in the empowerment literature within the psychological perspective.

2.2.- GOAL ORIENTATION

As VandeWalle (1997) notes, employees show differences in their work interest and behaviours. Specifically, they differ in the way in which they react to setbacks and difficulties, in their receptiveness to professional development activities and in their reactions to feedback provided on how to improve their work behaviours and performance. And all this may be explained by individuals' GO. It is, thus, important that organisations consider the individual dispositions (GO, in our case), as they are significant predictors of desirable outcomes (Macsinga et al., 2015).

2.2.1.- Origins and definitions

In the early days of the study of GO, the educational psychology literature was interested in its analysis (Sanusi et al., 2007), where it was developed to explain differences in student learning behaviour (e.g. Dweck, 1975, 1986; Diener and Dweck, 1978). Later, the study of GO was expanded to other fields, and nowadays it is one of the most frequently studied motivational variables and has become the main approach in the study of achievement motivation (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005; Cellar et al., 2011),

being of growing interest in the repercussions for adult populations (VandeWalle, 1997). As the researchers DeShon and Gillespie (2005) note, GO has been studied to comprehend and predict learning and adaptive behaviour in many contexts, such as training (Brown, 2001), sales performance (VandeWalle et al., 1999), or feedback seeking (VandeWalle et al., 2000), thus demonstrating the value of GO for the organisational field (Payne et al., 2007).

Despite the widespread study of GO, as Elliot and Thrash (2001) observe, there is no universal definition of the concept, and researchers refer to different processes by the same name. Thus, although GO is considered as a promising motivational construct, the conceptual ambiguities present in the GO literature have resulted in a large number of inconsistent empirical results (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005).

Hence, there are different definitional approaches present in the empirical GO literature, which have been categorised by DeShon and Gillespie (2005) as:

- Goals: this approach views GO as the adoption and pursuit of specific goals in achievement contexts (e.g. Elliot and Thrash, 2001; Grant and Dweck, 2003).
- Traits: GO is viewed as a trait or disposition that is responsible for individual differences in behaviour. Authors within this category refer to this construct as a disposition (e.g. VandeWalle, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2000), a personality variable (e.g. VandeWalle et al., 1999; VandeWalle et al., 2001), a trait (e.g. Bell and Kozlowski, 2002), an individual difference (Holladay and Quiñones, 2003) or a stable dispositional trait (Towler and Dipboye, 2001).
- Quasi-trait: GO is viewed as a somewhat stable trait that can be modified by appropriate situational characteristics (e.g. Button et al., 1996).
- Mental framework: the GO construct is a mental framework consisting of a broad variety of beliefs, goals and cognitions that co-vary in achievement settings and result in achievement-related behaviour.
- Beliefs: from this perspective, GO is thought of as following on from an individual's beliefs or implicit theories concerning the malleability of ability (Dweck and Leggett, 1988).

The conceptualisation of the GO construct as a trait versus a state has been greatly debated (Chadwick and Raver, 2015). In the present study we take the definition of “traits” to conceptualise GO, as it is one of the most common definitional approaches used in the literature (e.g. VandeWalle, 1997; Bembenuddy, 1999; Chen et al., 2000; Bell

and Kozlowski, 2002; Wolters, 2003; Caldwell et al., 2004), and, across organisational studies, GO is most often conceptualised as a disposition and measured as a trait-like individual-difference variable (Payne et al., 2007). Overall, GO has been broadly addressed as a relatively stable motivational tendency (Chadwick and Raver, 2015), and so we consider this approach the most suitable for our research.

VandeWalle and colleagues' work provides an important framework referring to this traits approach, focusing on the work domain and even developing a measuring instrument. VandeWalle (1997: 995) understands the concept of GO as "an individual disposition toward developing or validating one's ability in achievement settings". It is, hence, a personality variable and an individual difference (VandeWalle et al., 1999) manifested by behavioural patterns that happen in achievement settings (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005), that is, when individuals face a challenging task (VandeWalle et al., 1999).

2.2.2.- Dimensions of goal orientation

Concerning the operationalisation of GO, researchers also differ with respect to the number of dimensions that form this construct (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005). Originally, it was conceived of as consisting of a single continuum ranging from learning GO to performance GO, and it was not considered possible for individuals to hold both goal orientations simultaneously (e.g. Dweck, 1986). Later, however, it was found that an individual can simultaneously attempt to improve his or her abilities and to perform well with respect to others (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005), so that learning and performance GO are not mutually exclusive (Button et al., 1996).

Thus, a two-dimensional approach to the GO construct appears as a compound of, as Dweck and colleagues (e.g. Dweck, 1986; Dweck and Legget, 1988) proposed, these two classes of GO: learning GO and performance GO, this being the normative goal theory (Pintrich, 2000).

Learning GO (LGO) refers to goal orientation directed towards developing competence by acquiring new abilities and talents, and mastering new situations (Dweck, 1986). It has also been called task-involvement (e.g. Nicholls, 1984) and mastery-GO (e.g. Ames and Archer, 1987). It is characterised by a desire for challenge and learning opportunities in a given performance domain (Chen et al., 2000). Thus, people with learning GO believe that abilities are changeable and effort will affect

outcomes, and they focus on improving performance, mastering tasks through taking risks, understanding new information, mastering new situations, learning from mistakes and experience, and experimentation (Lee et al., 2003; Wolters, 2003; Sanusi et al., 2007).

Performance GO consists of goal orientation aimed at demonstrating and validating the adequacy of one's competence by seeking good judgements and avoiding negative judgements about one's competence. It has also been called ego-involvement (e.g. Nicholls, 1984). It is characterised by a desire to attain easy success and gain praise in a given performance situation (Chen et al., 2000), hence, it is concerned with others' perceptions of one's competence (Cellar et al., 2011). Individuals with a strong performance GO believe that their abilities are fixed, and failure is therefore seen as an indication of low ability (Lee et al., 2003). Hence, they view a challenging task as a threat because there is the risk of failure that would demonstrate their inadequate ability (VandeWalle et al., 1999). These people therefore approach tasks with the intention of performing well and seek to receive positive feedback and assessment by doing better than others and avoiding poor performance and its negative consequences (Martin et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2003; Wolters, 2003).

Many researchers (e.g. Chen et al., 2000; Bell and Kozlowski, 2002; Lee et al., 2003; Holladay and Quiñones, 2003) have used these two dimensions to work on and explain goal orientation, making it one of the most widely followed views adopted by empirical research (DeShon and Gillespie, 2005). And, from that point on, several authors (e.g. VandeWalle, 1997; Elliot and Church, 1997; Elliot and McGregor, 2001) have proposed a third dimension, recommending that the performance aspect should be broken down into two distinct dimensions of proving competence (prove performance) and of avoiding the demonstration of incompetence (avoid performance), thus giving rise to the revised perspective on goal theory (Pintrich, 2000). As VandeWalle (1997) notes, prove-performance GO (PPGO) refers to the desire to prove one's competence and to gain favourable judgements about it, and avoid-performance GO (APGO) is the desire to evade the disapproval of one's competence and to avoid negative judgements about it.

More recently some authors, such as Pintrich (2000), have suggested breaking learning (i.e. mastery) GO down into two dimensions also based on the approach-avoid distinction. Moreover, for instance, Elliot and Thrash (2001) suggest the existence of six

distinct facets of GO by crossing the ways that individuals might define competence (absolute, intrapersonal or interpersonal) with the approach-avoid distinction.

There are, therefore, important differences in the dimensionality of GO depending on the author's view. However, "given the potential value of making a conceptual distinction between the prove and avoid dimensions of a performance goal orientation" (VandeWalle, 1997: 1000), in the present study we take the three-dimensions approach. The reasons underlying this decision are that it is one of the most important views in the literature (e.g. VandeWalle, 1997; Elliot and Church, 1997; Brett and VandeWalle, 1999; Elliot and Thrash, 2002; Phan, 2009), as well as being the most widely used in recent times (Phan, 2009), given the emergence of the revised perspective of goal theory (Pintrich, 2000). Therefore, we consider these dimensions in building the goal orientation variable: learning GO, prove-performance GO and avoid-performance GO.

2.3.- WELL-BEING VARIABLES IN THE WORK CONTEXT

Following this overall theoretical review, we set out the basic aspects of the three factors studied as individual well-being outcomes in the thesis. As noted earlier, the introduction of personal factors in the study of HRM is fundamental to advance in its knowledge (Ostroff and Bowen, 2000), as the importance of employee variables in the 'black box' linking HRM to performance has been demonstrated (Messersmith et al., 2011). Therefore, in this section, we perform a basic review of the concepts of job satisfaction, affective commitment and anxiety. All three are representative of different types of well-being: job satisfaction and affective commitment are more related to eudaimonic well-being, given that they refer the individual's feelings about the agreement between their true self and values, and their life activities – in this case, their job reality; and job anxiety is more related to hedonic well-being, referring to the presence of pleasure and the absence of displeasure and pain (Ryan and Deci, 2001). Additionally, they also differ in their sense and nature, since job satisfaction and affective commitment represent positive outcomes, whereas the concept of job anxiety reflects a negative aspect related to undermined health.

2.3.1.- Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has a fundamental position in the nomological network that includes many of the work-related attitudes studied by management scholars (Fernandez

et al., 2015). At the same time, it is a highly important feature which is frequently measured by organisations (Kumari and Pandey, 2011).

Job satisfaction is defined as “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values” (Locke, 1969: 316), and this suggests that we form attitudes towards our jobs by taking into account our feelings, our beliefs and our behaviours (Kumari and Pandey, 2011). Job satisfaction is therefore related to one’s feelings or state of mind regarding the nature of their work (Peng et al., 2016). Both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are emotional reactions to the job (Locke, 1969). It is a concept which derives from workers’ engagement in the jobs they perform (Guy and Newman, 2013). Thus, someone who is satisfied with his or her job believes that it has provided or will provide an acceptable level of what is desired (Wright and Davis, 2003; Wright and Kim, 2004; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012).

Two approaches have been developed to study job satisfaction (Vandenabeele, 2013): one that focuses on the various facets of the job, and another which understands job satisfaction in a more global way. Here, we consider the second one, as with the first it is more difficult to distinguish between antecedents of job satisfaction and the concept itself (Vandenabeele, 2013: 223), and it is an approach that has been taken by many researchers (e.g. Scarpello and Campbell, 1983; Wanous et al., 1997; De Jonge et al., 2000; Wright and Davis, 2003; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012). As a result, we understand job satisfaction as an attitudinal variable to explore as an overall evaluation of the job (Markovits et al., 2010).

2.3.2.- Affective commitment

In research on the organisational field, organisational commitment has emerged as a major topic because of its relationship with absenteeism, turnover, burnout or performance (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Tett and Meyer, 1993; Eby et al., 1999; Meyer et al., 2002; Markovits et al., 2010). Organisational commitment is defined as the psychological attachment of workers to their organisation (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). It supposes a psychological state that describes the employee’s relationship with the organisation, in other words, it is “a mindset” (Meyer and Allen, 1991: 62). It is, therefore, the “overall attachment to the organisation” (Kanter, 1993: 256).

Allen and Meyer (1990) proposed a model of organisational commitment that included three components: affective, normative and continuance. Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment to the organisation characterised by acceptance of the organisation's culture and values and by a willingness to remain with the organisation (Mowday et al., 1982). Consequently, it refers to an individual's attitude towards the organisation that involves a strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organisation's objectives (Mowday et al., 1982). Normative commitment, as Park and Rainey (2007) say, can be called obligation-based commitment, related to the belief about the employee's formal and informal responsibility and a perceived duty to work for the organisation (Wiener, 1982). In fact, Wiener (1982: 418) defined this type of commitment as the "totality of internalised normative pressures to act in a way that meets organisational interests". Employees therefore act in a certain way because they consider it is the right thing to do (Wiener, 1982). Continuance, or calculative, commitment refers to a mutual relationship grounded on an exchange between the employee and management (Park and Rainey, 2007). It is "based on the cost that employees associate with leaving the organisation" (Allen and Meyer, 1990: 1). The three components of organisational commitment are not mutually exclusive, but rather they act together and have common consequences on organisational results (Park and Rainey, 2007).

However, and despite the multidimensional nature of organisational commitment, much of the empirical evidence has usually focused on the affective perspective (Wasti, 2003). The explanation for this could be the fact that affective commitment is more significant to organisational performance than continuance or normative commitment (Kim, 2005). Owing to this, we consider it suitable to focus on the affective perspective of organisational commitment described above. Moreover, given our purpose of examining individual variables related to psychological aspects of employees, analysing the affective factor of commitment is more useful, as it is an attitudinal construct, in contrast to the others, which are behavioural (Kim, 2005).

2.3.3.- Job Anxiety

Variables related to mental health, such as stress, anxiety and depression, have been recognised as important measures of outcome in various work environments (Bennett et al., 2004; Rusli et al., 2008). Hence, anxiety, as an individual state related to

stimulus (Muschalla et al., 2013), has become a variable to be taken into account in the workplace field.

The workplace is a very important part of people's lives and it has a strong influence on general well-being and health (D'Souza et al., 2003; Andrea et al., 2004; Linden and Muschalla, 2007; Wieclaw et al., 2008; Muschalla et al., 2013). The nature of the workplace impacts on mental health and unfortunately, as Bültmann et al. (2002) note, mental ill-health is common in the working population, such that performance and functioning of employees are diminished (Laitinen-Krispijn and Bijl, 2000; Dewa and Lin, 2000; Bender and Kennedy, 2004; Linden and Muschalla, 2007) when mental problems, such as anxiety or depression, appear.

Anxiety is included as a measure of general mental health (Goldberg and Williams, 1991), and it is defined as an emotional state of perceived nervousness and increased arousal (Spector et al., 1988). It is presented in different ways, including worry, phobic reactions and panic attacks (Bender and Kennedy, 2004; Muschalla et al., 2013).

Unfortunately, anxiety disorders are highly prevalent in the general population and have a substantial effect on people and companies (Bender and Kennedy, 2004; Haslam et al., 2005; Noordik et al., 2010; Sudhir et al., 2012). The existence of these inter-relationships among the factors contributing to anxiety, anxiety symptoms and their consequences on individuals and organisations reveals the importance of paying attention to this reality (Haslam et al., 2005) and integrating mental health issues in HRM.

Mental illness and therefore anxiety, which is a measure of it, could become a very noticeable cause of global disease burden in the future, since, among working populations, it affects productivity more subtly than physical illness does. In fact, an important part of the workforce experiences more than two months of decreased productivity annually, such that it still incurs significant social and economic costs (Dewa and Lin, 2000).

2.4.- ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Organisational performance is a multidimensional concept which includes broader societal, environmental, employee and community dimensions rather than strictly economic criteria (e.g. Dess and Robinson, 1984; Boyne and Dahya, 2002;

Walker and Boyne, 2006). Thus, some non-financial indicators related to, for instance, customer's satisfaction or efficiency (Bontis et al., 2002) are recommended.

Furthermore, organisational performance is likely to be viewed differently depending on the stakeholder (Cameron, 1986), and, hence, it is politically built (Boyne and Dahya, 2002), as it might vary depending on the criteria used, the perspective adopted or the time considered (Barba and Serrano, 2011). Consequently, given our field of interest, i.e. the public sector, in an ensuing section, which talks about organisational performance and the public sector, this theme will be further developed, with special emphasis on its duties, its characteristics and its principles in order to determine the organisational results to be analysed.

2.5.- THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The analysis of linkages between structural empowerment, organisational performance, psychological empowerment, goal orientation and employees' well-being outcomes in this research brings together theoretical arguments from several frameworks, given the multilevel nature of the study, the context in which it takes place and the heterogeneity of the origin of the variables. Specifically, the contributions included are briefly summarised as follows:

- 'Black box' arguments of public management.

The 'black box' arguments of public management hold that the management capacity of a public organisation is vital for performance and service quality (Ingraham et al., 2003; Andrews and Boyne, 2010). This management capacity is composed of different management subsystems, one of which is HRM. Hence, the establishment of a system consisting of practices such as delegating power or training contributes to building a more general structure in the organisation that enhances employee morale, which in turn leads to behaviours and attitudinal dispositions towards the public suited to the particular demands of each service encounter (Chebat and Collias, 2000). Overall, it provides support for achieving better performance by making the organisation more adaptable, efficient and effective (Burgess, 1975).

- Social capital theory.

According to Coleman (1990), social capital is any factor of a social structure that supposes value and facilitates the functions of the individuals within this social

structure. When applied to the work organisational context, the social relations with enclosed resources are thought to be positive both for the collective and for individuals; as a result the whole organisation is benefited (Lin, 1999). It is said that the resources and communication processes embedded in an organisational structure enhance harmonisation and tasks, which connotes cost reductions and incremented efficiency, and ultimately better organisational performance (Seibert et al., 2001).

- Labour process theory.

The labour process refers to the configuration of work, the use of human activities to augment the value of materials for human beings (Bryer, 1994), so it involves the relations between workers, and between them and management (Mihret, 2014). Labour process theory aims to tackle organisation-level research issues in the context of the structure and problems that characterise the capitalist system (Armstrong, 1991). Management is responsible for maximising benefits, which leads to the transmission of this responsibility to employees and maximisation of the amount of labour power (Burawoy, 1979; Bryer, 2000). This trend therefore implies that employees are at risk of accepting an intensification of work, heavier pressures, extension of working hours, etc. (Ramsay et al., 2000; Mihret, 2014).

- Goal orientation theory.

The Goal orientation theory, also called Achievement goal theory (Dweck, 1975; VandeWalle, 1997), seeks to understand why some people are motivated to overcome obstacles, while others give up easily or avoid trying (Dweck, 1999). It also aims to discover what leads some people to respond constructively to stress and others to react defensively (Rusk and Rothbaum, 2010). Overall, achievement goal theory proposes that individuals have motivational tendencies to pursue different goals based on their underlying beliefs, and these goal orientations, in turn, influence how they approach, interpret and respond to situations and challenges (Chen and Mathieu, 2008; Dweck, 2000).

- Norm of reciprocity.

It includes two different theories. On the one hand, Social exchange theory comprises actions subject to the rewarding responses of others, which over time offer mutually

rewarding transactions and relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Accordingly, Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) holds that relationships progress over time into trusting, reliable and reciprocated commitments. When used in the organisational framework, it is argued that with the passing of time a pattern of reciprocity is built up between an employee and his/her organisation. Therefore, it can be said that it implies an emotional bond. On the other hand, the gift-exchange model (Akerlof, 1982) refers to the socially accepted fact that one should return the support received when one is helped or provided with a resource; that is, the exchange is based on norms of behaviour and work effort, which ultimately will affect the performance.

- Job characteristics model.

The Job characteristics model (Hackman and Oldham, 1976) aims to systematise the links between job characteristics and employees' reactions to work. It states that there are three psychological states that lead to several positive personal and work outcomes. They are experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of the actual results. The model suggests that an individual feels positive affect to the extent that he/she learns (knowledge of results) that he/she has individually performed a task correctly (experienced responsibility) and which he/she is in charge of (experienced meaningfulness). This positive feeling strengthens individuals, providing them with personal growth and development regarding the job.

- Job Demand-Control model.

Karasek's (1979) Job Demand-Control model (JDC model) has been the principal work stress model in occupational health psychology over the last few decades. This model identifies two crucial job aspects in the work environment: job demands (work load, time pressure, role conflict) and job control (ability to control the work activities). It is assumed that a psychological work environment can be characterised by a mixture of the demands of the work setting and the amount of control employees have to cope with these demands. Hence, when employees have control over the work process, their stress levels are reduced as they are better prepared to face the job demands.

2.6.- PUBLIC SECTOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

The public sector context and, specifically, local governments, which we have chosen for our study, have specific characteristics to note. Describing and analysing these special traits, explaining how human resource management is dealt with in this context and linking all this with the variables and propositions which we are going to study will make the framework clearer, as well as highlighting the importance attributed to this research.

2.6.1.- Public sector and management: some general notes

The public sector in many countries has been undergoing reforms which attempt to change the structure, management and even the culture of public administration (Worthington and Dollery, 2001; Üstuner and Coşkun, 2004; Angiola and Bianchi, 2015). NPM has, among other things, the characteristics of making public organisations more disaggregated (Hood, 1991; Kilby, 2004; Dunleavy et al., 2006; Hansen and Høst, 2012; Rees, 2013), increasing managerial autonomy (Hood, 1991), and turning the citizen into a customer (De la Cruz et al., 2001; Cuenca, 2002), his or her satisfaction being a crucial element (Cortes, 2001). The overall aim is therefore “to try to encourage the public sector to be ‘more like’ the private sector” (Truss, 2013: 21). Consequently, local governments have also introduced a wide range of techniques to improve their management in order to raise performance in terms of quality, efficiency and effectiveness, as well as citizens’ satisfaction (Leeuw, 1996; Pina et al., 2011). Overall, and according to Moore (1998), managerial success in Administration is founded on starting or redefining activities to increase their value.

This “changing nature of public sector management supposes a global phenomenon that has led to both opportunities and challenges for the management of its employees” (Stanton and Manning, 2013: 255). These reforms have posed a challenge to the traditional public sector approach to managing people (Truss, 2013). It is essential to involve the personnel in order to achieve a real impact and a cultural change (Pina et al., 2011). Therefore, human resources practices, which play a key role in the achievement of organisational goals and effectiveness (Huselid, 1995; Stanton and Manning, 2013), are being applied in a range of public sector organisations internationally (Stanton and Manning, 2013). In consequence, also in Spain, the Public

Administration has started a process of change in recent years (Casado, 2009; Barragan and Perez, 2012) and, likewise, local governments have undergone very important modifications in recent years (Suárez and Ysa, 2011).

2.6.2.- Public sector and human resources management in Spain

Following on from the above statements, in this section we will provide some notes about human resources management within the Spanish context. To start with, it is necessary to highlight that public administrations, also in Spain, are affected by economic constraints, the demands of citizens (Casas, 1996; Cuenca, 2002), and employees' expectations, and, within this context, good planning of human resources management is a suitable tool to deal with them (Cuenca, 2002). Specifically, as Cuenca (2002) states, this reality of resource constraints and public spending containment policies is also a fact in Spanish local governments, derived from our process of European integration, so there is a notable existence of service expansion demands and urban policies, and also a demand for their quality, as well as higher requirements from citizenships.

Spanish local governments are institutions which can be considered as 'social change motors' (FEMP, 2009, in Cuenca, 2010). These governments, called 'governments of proximity', have experienced a very important expansion by providing services that are delivered by highly specialised public employees. As Balaguer (2004) notes, there is an increasing concern to improve managers' professional skills and to introduce measures in order to promote quality of these services. Therefore, attempts have been made to professionalise human factor management in the Spanish Administration (Cuenca, 2010), and all the proposed reforms have focused on the need to apply modern techniques to manage the workforce in the public sector. In this same line, some legal mandates constituting the frame of HRM policies in local administration have been developed (e.g. Efficacy in planning and management of human resources as a fundament of administrative action in Art. 1.3.f of the Basic Statute of Public Employment (*Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público* – EBEP, 2007); objective of personnel 'with quality' in art. 6.2 of the European Charter for Local Self-Government (*Carta Europea de Autonomía Local*); Rational, efficient and economic management of municipal staff in Art. 90.1 of Law 7/1985, dated 2nd April, Regulating the Basis of Local Government (*Reguladora de las Bases del Régimen Local*).

Likewise, the EBEP tries to meet the needs of modernising HRM. Thus, in the 1st article, this legal rule refers to efficacy of planning and management of HRM, participation and continuous professional development and qualification of public employees, among other issues, such as the idea that the goals of public personnel policies will be ‘to appeal to the professionals that the Administration needs, to stimulate employees to carry out their duties and responsibilities efficiently, to provide them with suitable training and offer them sufficient opportunities for professional advancement, while also facilitating rational and objective, agile and flexible management of staff’.

Nevertheless, and as Cuenca (2010) points out, it is essential to note the difficulties of combining the demands of public legal rules (guaranteeing the independence and professionalism of public services) and the requirements of HRM (providing capacities that are demanded and stimulating the commitment of professionals). This reality, therefore, has led to a slower application of mainstream NPM techniques (Garcia, 2007). The culture of the Spanish public administration is still grounded in administrative law (Torres et al., 2011) and most public sector employees are civil servants, which makes it more difficult to implement some reforms based on employee participation. As a result, new HRM methods do not seem to fit well with the rigidity of the structures and processes of Spanish administrations (Serna, 2008). Furthermore, it is important to note the effects of the economic crisis, which has resulted in a freeze on recruitment of new employees and significant reductions in local government staff in recent years (Statistical Gazette of the Staff at the Service of Public Administrations – *Boletín estadístico del personal al servicio de las Administraciones Públicas*, July 2016), with a subsequent ageing of the workforce.

2.6.3.- Public sector and empowerment

One of the key elements of this new HRM in the public sector is employee participation and involvement (Cuenca, 2002; Stanton and Manning, 2013), and therefore empowerment, which is closely linked to them (Stanton and Manning, 2013). As Peters and Savoie (1996) defend, the current form of government proposes that organisations should decentralise and empower lower echelon employees. Hence, although it was first widely adopted in the private sector, empowerment has re-emerged as a component of major government reforms around the world (Pitts, 2005; Fernandez

and Moldogaziev, 2013). According to Pitts (2005), in a move towards serving citizens better and creating more opportunities for social equity, some governments are empowering employees at lower levels to take risks, be creative and find ways to best serve citizens and stakeholders.

Regarding structural empowerment, as noted above, Bowen and Lawler's theory of (structural) empowerment focuses on the services field, and highlights that giving this power to employees in service organisations is important because the customer is often physically present during service creation and consumption. Consequently, customers are immediately and directly affected by service delivery mistakes and witness firsthand whether employees are willing to correct them. Focusing specifically on the context of the Spanish public administration, and relating it to Bowen and Lawler's proposal, we find that their practices are, in one way or another, included in the EBEP as a basis to improve the service's quality. Thus, continuous training and permanent updating of employees' knowledge and abilities are established as a right in this legal rule. Furthermore, one of the principles of conduct presented in this legal document is that they can propose to their superiors anything which they consider suitable to improve the execution of their tasks and duties in their work unit. Likewise, complementary salary linked to performance and productivity is a fundamental element of the EBEP. Finally, information is another very important point in the transformation of local governments, as the generation of information in the vertical direction is a basic aim within labour relations management in local governments (Cuenca, 2010), as it is essential to involve professionals within the organisation (Serna, 2008).

The parts or dimensions which make up psychological empowerment (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact) are also fundamental factors within HRM in local governments. As Cuenca (2010) states, the departure point in people management is that it is necessary to set aims that lead to autonomous individuals who govern themselves. Drawing up understandable and meaningful behaviours for public employees is, however, a challenge (Cuenca, 2010). Furthermore, as Tarazona (2007) points out, people within an organisation must know how to tackle tasks and duties or to make the most suitable decisions in each moment; the current environment in local governments makes it necessary to enable employees to take decisions and perform tasks with autonomy (Villarroya, 2012). Employees' competence and self-determination are therefore basic elements.

2.6.4.- Public sector and goal orientation

As noted earlier, GO is a motivational construct (Lee et al., 2003; Deshon and Gillespie, 2005; Cellar et al., 2011), as it has an impact on the employee's level of motivation (Button et al., 1996; Spinath and Steinmayr, 2012). It is an interesting variable to examine in the challenging environment of the public sector context because it helps to regulate employees' behaviour according to values associated with their job goals (i.e. learning and/or performance) (Taylor, 2013). Taking a broader view of the motivation concept, we can see that, fortunately, research on public sector organisations has gradually increased (Vandenabeele, 2013: 217), showing both similarities (e. g. Buelens and Van den Broeck, 2007) and differences (e.g. Houston, 2000) between public and private sector employees. After all, human resources make a difference and their motivation, and therefore their GO, should be considered a pivotal concept in public sector organisations (Vandenabeele, 2013: 214).

2.6.5.- Public sector and job satisfaction, affective commitment and anxiety in the work context

As Kim (2002) notes and has been said above, public management has been implementing successful human capital strategies to enhance government performance and accountability, and, as a result, researchers studying public administration and government agencies have stressed issues such as job satisfaction, among others.

Besides private firms, job satisfaction of all public sector employees therefore has important implications for public organisations (Grissom et al., 2012), so that it is important to consider when thinking about HRM in the public sector (Vandenabeele, 2013), and in fact many public sector organisations are focusing on strategies intended to enhance employees' satisfaction (Wright and Davis, 2003). After all, the government is, nowadays, considered to be a model employer (Vandenabeele, 2013) that should not merely strive to be effective in its policies, but should also explicitly strive for employee well-being (Boyne et al., 1999).

As noted earlier, in research on the organisational field, commitment has emerged as a major topic because of its relationship with absenteeism, turnover, burnout or performance (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Tett and Meyer, 1993; Eby et al., 1999; Meyer et al., 2002; Markovits et al., 2010). These matters, as Park and Rainey (2007)

state, are as important in government agencies as in other organisations and, therefore, the enhancement of each employee's commitment should be a main goal in public administration. In public organisations, these authors continue, where the organisation's goals tend to be ambiguous and where organisational reform initiatives, such as NPM, may affect public employees' commitment to stay, it is important to analyse organisational commitment. After all, public employees' commitment to act in the interest of their organisation is important to the success of public organisations (Perry and Wise, 1990; Perry, 2004; Park and Rainey, 2007).

Regarding anxiety and the public sector, works focused on the health field are the most common (e.g. Bennett et al., 2004; Hochwalder and Brucefors, 2005). Other public fields, such as public offices (e.g. Laaksonen et al., 2007) have been less studied. Nevertheless, it is particularly relevant in the public sector (Jarman et al., 2014), since it is thought that working with people (i.e. citizens) is a key risk factor in developing anxiety (Wieclaw et al., 2008). Furthermore, new measures implemented under the NPM mainstream may reinforce anxiety states at work (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009).

2.6.6.- Public sector and organisational performance

One noticeable characteristic of organisational performance is the difficulty involved in measuring it in the public sector (Brewer and Seldon, 2000; Kim, 2005); we are unable to measure outputs in monetary terms in the public administration (Villarroya, 2012; Arnaboldi and Azzone, 2013: 291). Hence, keeping this in mind, and as we are going to see, we consider it appropriate to study a set of factors that, together, provide a complete view of local government performance.

Apart from its interest in empowering employees, NPM emphasises efficiency and effectiveness of governmental organisations, and it also strives for a greater quality of service delivery (Leeuw, 1996; Kilby, 2004; Truss, 2013). This fits with the idea of several authors, who state that a good measure of performance for public sector organisations should cover concerns such as quality, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness or equity (Boyne, 2002; Walker and Boyne, 2006; Sebaa et al., 2009; Arnaboldi and Azzone, 2013). Nevertheless, the introduction of performance indicators is usually an internal decision, so different practices have arisen depending on the country (Torres et al., 2011). Thus, as these authors state, in countries such as United

Kingdom specific performance indicators are mandatory, but in others, like Spain, although there are requirements in terms of performance measurement, they do not refer to specific indicators and permit governmental discretion in terms of their definition and introduction.

The fact that the amount of attention being paid to organisational results in the public sector is increasing is obvious, although there is still a lot to do. Legal rules, as was previously commented, also advance in this sense. According to the Law on Public Administration and Common Administrative Procedure (*Ley 30/1992 de Régimen Jurídico de las Administraciones Públicas y del Procedimiento Administrativo Común*), Art. 3, Public administrations act according to the principle of effectiveness, among others, and, within their actions, following the criteria of efficiency and service to citizens. And local governments also have to accomplish these criteria. In the same line, in the statement of its motives, the EBEP highlights the importance of improving the quality of services which are received by citizens. Likewise, efficacy and efficiency of service are also a priority, according to the EBEP.

Thus, most of the authors who have studied public sector performance have paid attention to several of these concepts. Keeping this in mind, and after the literature review, the following organisational results are studied in the present work, in line with the ideas of Walker and Boyne (2006): service outcomes (effectiveness, equity and promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of local people), responsiveness (consumer satisfaction), and output and efficiency (efficiency, quality, value for money and staff satisfaction).

REFERENCES

- Akerlof, G. A. (1982). 'Labor contracts as partial gift exchange'. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 97:4, 543-569.
- Allen, N. J. and Meyer, J. P. (1990). 'The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization'. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63:1, 1-18.
- Ames, C. and Archer, J. (1987). 'Mothers' beliefs about the role of ability and effort in school learning'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 79:4, 409-414.
- Andrea, H., Bültmann, U., Beurskens, A. J. H. M., Swaen, G. M. H., Van Schayck, C. P. and Kant, I. J. (2004). 'Anxiety and depression in the working population using the HAD Scale'. *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology*, 39:8, 637-646.

- Angiola, N. and Bianchi, P. (2015). 'Public managers' skills development for effective performance management: Empirical evidence from Italian local governments'. *Public Management Review*, 17:4, 517-542.
- Armellino, D., Quinn Griffin, M. T. and Fitzpatrick, J. J. (2010). 'Structural empowerment and patient safety culture among registered nurses working in adult critical care units'. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 18:7, 796-803.
- Armstrong P. (1991). 'Contradiction and social dynamics in the capitalist agency relationship'. *Accounting Organizations and Society*, 16, 1-25.
- Arnaboldi, M. and Azzone, G. (2013). 'Case study of 'peak performing' public sector units and successful change efforts', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA.: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Balaguer, M. T. (2005). 'La eficiencia en las administraciones locales ante diferentes especificaciones del output. Hacienda Pública Española', 170, 37-58.
- Barney, J. (1991). 'Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage'. *Journal of Management*, 17:1, 99.
- Barney, J. B. and Wright, P. M. (1998). 'On becoming a strategic partner: the role of human resources in gaining competitive advantage', *Human Resource Management*, 37:1, 31-46.
- Basic Statute of Public Employment, Act 7/2007, 12 April. Boletín Oficial del Estado, Spain, 13 April 2007, 89, 16270-16299.
- Bell, B. S. and Kozlowski, W. J. (2002). 'Goal orientation and ability: Interactive effects on self-efficacy, performance, and knowledge'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87:3, 497-505.
- Bembenuity, H. (1999). 'Sustaining motivation and academic goals: The role of academic delay of gratification'. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 11:3, 233-257.
- Bender, A. and Kennedy, S. (2004). 'Mental health and mental illness in the workplace: diagnostic and treatment issues'. *Healthcare Papers*, 5:2, 54-67.
- Bennett, P., Williams, Y., Page, N., Hood, K. and Woollard, M. (2004). 'Levels of mental health problems among UK emergency ambulance workers'. *Emergency Medicine Journal*, 21:2, 235-236.
- Birdi, K., Clegg, C., Patterson, M., Robinson, A., Stride, C.B., Wall, T.D., and Wood, S.J. (2008). The impact of human resource and operational management practices on company productivity: a longitudinal study. *Personnel Psychology*, 61:3, 467-501.
- Blau, P.M. (1964). *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York:Wiley.
- Bontis, N., Crossan, M. M. and Hulland, J. (2002). 'Managing an organizational learning system by aligning stocks and flows'. *Journal of management studies*, 39:4, 437-469.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1995). 'Empowering service employees'. *Sloan management review*, 36:4, 73.

- Boyne, G. A. (2002). 'Theme: Local Government: concepts and indicators of local authority performance: an evaluation of the statutory frameworks in England and Wales'. *Public Money and Management*, 22:2, 17-24.
- Boyne, G. and Dahya, J. (2002). 'Executive Succession and the Performance of Public Organizations'. *Public Management*, 80:1, 179-200.
- Boyne, G., Jenkins, G. and Poole, M. (1999). 'Human Resource Management in the Public and Private Sector: an Empirical Comparison'. *Public Administration*, 77:2, 407-420.
- Brett, J. F. and VandeWalle, D. (1999). 'Goal Orientation and Goal Content as predictors of performance in a training program'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84:6, 863-873.
- Brewer, G. A. and Selden, S. C. (2000). 'Why elephants gallop: Assessing and predicting organizational performance in federal agencies'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10:4, 685-712.
- Brown, K. G. (2001). 'Using computers to deliver training: Which employees learn and why?'. *Personnel Psychology*, 54:2, 271-296.
- Bryer, R.A. (1994). 'Why Marx's labour theory is superior to the marginalist theory of value: the case from modern financial reporting'. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 5:4, 313-340.
- Bryer, R.A. (2000). 'The history of accounting and the transition to capitalism in England. Part one: theory'. *Accounting Organizations and Society*, 25: 131-62.
- Buelens, M. and Van den Broeck, H. (2007). 'An analysis of differences in work motivation between public and private sector organizations'. *Public administration review*, 67:1, 65-74.
- Bültmann, U., Kant, I., Kasl, S. V., Beurskens, A. J. and van den Brandt, P. A. (2002). 'Fatigue and psychological distress in the working population: psychometrics, prevalence, and correlates'. *Journal of psychosomatic research*, 52:6, 445-452.
- Burawoy, M. (1979). *Manufacturing consent: changes in the labor process under monopoly capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705-16.
- Button, S. B., Mathieu, J. E. and Zajac, D. M. (1996). 'Goal orientation in organizational research: A conceptual and empirical foundation'. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 67:1, 26-48.
- Caldwell, S. D., Herold, D. M. and Fedor, D. B. (2004). 'Toward an understanding of the relationships among organizational change, individual differences, and changes in person-environment fit: a cross-level study'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89:5, 868.
- Cameron, K. S. (1986). 'Effectiveness as paradox: consensus and conflict in conceptions of organizational effectiveness'. *Management Science* (1986-1998), 32:5, 539-554.
- Casas, M. (1996). 'El absentismo en el Sector Público'. *Auditoría Pública*, 7, 20-21.
- Cellar, D. F., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Young, S. K., Fisher, D. M., Adair, C. K., Haynes, S., Twichell, E., Arnold, K. A., Royer, K., Denning, B. L. and Riester, D. (2011). 'Trait Goal Orientation, Self-Regulation, and Performance: A Meta-Analysis'. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 26:4, 467-483.

- Chadwick, I. C. and Raver, J. L. (2015). 'Motivating Organizations to Learn: Goal Orientation and Its Influence on Organizational Learning'. *Journal of Management*, 41:3, 957–986.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. and Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Chang, L.-C. and Liu, C.-H. (2008). 'Employee empowerment, innovative behavior and job productivity of public health nurses: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey'. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45:10, 1442–1448.
- Chebat, J.C. and Kollias, P. (2000). 'The impact of empowerment on customer contact employees' roles in service organizations'. *Journal of Service research*, 3:1, 66-81.
- Chen, G., Gully, S.M., Whiteman, J. and Kilkullen, R.N. (2000). 'Examination of relationships among trait-like individual differences, state-like individual differences, and learning performance'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85:6, 835-847.
- Chen, G. and Mathieu, J. E. (2008). 'Goal orientation dispositions and performance trajectories: The roles of supplementary and complementary situational inducements'. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 106:1, 21-38.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130–154.
- Coleman, J. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Conger, J. and Kanungo, R. (1988). 'The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice'. *Academy of Management Review*, 13:3, 471-483.
- Cortes, J.V. (2001). 'La Administración local como prestadora de servicios y la gestión de la calidad', in J.V. Cortes (ed). *Manual Práctico de Gestión de Recursos Humanos en la Administración Local*. Madrid: Ed. Dykinson, S.L.
- Cropanzano, R. and Mitchell, M.S. (2005). 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review'. *Journal of management*, 31:6, 874-900.
- Cuenca, J. (2002a). *La dirección de recursos humanos en el ámbito municipal*. Barcelona: Ed. Bayer Hnos.
- Cuenca, J. (2002b). 'La gestión estratégica de recursos humanos en las entidades locales'. *Capital Humano*, 161, 32-38.
- Cuenca, J. (2010). *Manual de Dirección y Gestión de Recursos Humanos en los Gobiernos Locales*. Madrid -España: Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública. Publidisa S.A.
- De Jonge, J., Bosma, H., Peter, R. and Siegrist, J. (2000). 'Job strain, effort-reward imbalance and employee well-being: a large-scale cross-sectional study'. *Social Science & Medicine*, 50:9, 1317–1327.
- De La Cruz, A., Cortes, J.V., Gonzalo, J., Yerga, A., Ferreira, M., Gonzalez, D., Redondo, R., Rodriguez, J.L., Ologaray, A., Imaz, J.M., Antonio, J. and Villanueva, C. (2001). 'Modernización de la Gestión de Recursos Humanos en la Administración Local', in J.V. Cortes (ed). *Manual Práctico de Gestión de Recursos Humanos en la Administración Local*. Madrid: Ed. Dykinson, S.L.

- Deshon, R. P. and Gillespie, J. Z. (2005). 'A Motivated Action Theory Account of Goal Orientation', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90:6, 1096-1127.
- Dess, G. G. and Robinson, R. B. (1984). 'Measuring organizational performance in the absence of objective measures: the case of the privately-held firm and conglomerate business unit'. *Strategic management journal*, 5:3, 265-273.
- Dewa, C. S. and Lin, E. (2000). 'Chronic physical illness, psychiatric disorder and disability in the workplace'. *Social science & medicine*, 51:1, 41-50.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Diener, C. I. and Dweck, C. S. (1978). 'An Analysis of Learned Helplessness: Continuous Changes in Performance, Strategy, and Achievement Cognitions Following Failure'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36:5, 451-62.
- Dimitriadis, Z. S. (2005). 'Employee empowerment in the Greek context'. *International Journal of Manpower*, 26:1, 80-92.
- D'Souza, R. M., Strazdins, L., Lim, L. L., Broom, D. H. and Rodgers, B. (2003). 'Work and health in a contemporary society: demands, control, and insecurity'. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 57:11, 849-854.
- Dunleavy, P., Margetts, H., Bastow, S. and Tinkler, J. (2006). 'New public management is dead—long live digital-era governance'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 16:3, 467-494.
- Dweck, C. S. (1975). 'The role of expectations and attributions in the alleviation of learned helplessness'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31:4, 674-685.
- Dweck, C. S. (1999). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). 'Motivational Processes Affecting Learning'. *American Psychologist*, 41:10, 1040-1048.
- Dweck, C. S. and Leggett, E. L. (1988). 'A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality'. *Psychological review*, 95:2, 256-273.
- Dweck, C. S. (2000). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press/Taylor and Francis.
- Eby, L. T., Freeman, D. M., Rush, M. C. and Lance, C.E. (1999). 'Motivational bases of affective organizational commitment: A partial test of an integrative theoretical model'. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 72, 463-483.
- Elliot, A. J. and Church, M. A. (1997). 'A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72:1, 218-232.
- Elliot, A. J. and McGregor, H. A. (2001). 'A 2 × 2 achievement goal framework'. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 80:3, 501.
- Elliot, A. J. and Thrash, T. M. (2001). 'Achievement goals and the hierarchical model of achievement motivation'. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13:2, 139-156.

- Ergeneli, A., Ari, G. S. I. and Metin, S. (2007). 'Psychological empowerment and its relationship to trust in immediate managers'. *Journal of Business Research*, 60:1, 41-49.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2011). 'Empowering Public Sector Employees to Improve Performance: Does It Work?' *The American Review of Public Administration*, 41:1, 23-47.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 90-506.
- Fernandez, S., Resh, W. G., Moldogaziev, T. and Oberfield, Z. W. (2015). 'Assessing the past and promise of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey for public management research: A research synthesis'. *Public Administration Review*, 75:3, 382-394.
- Gatchalian, M. M. (1997). 'People empowerment: the key to TQM success'. *The TQM magazine*, 9:6, 429-433.
- Goldberg, D. and Williams, P. (1991). *A user's guide to the general health questionnaire*. Windsor, Berkshire: The NFERNELSON Publishing Company Ltd.
- Grant, H. and Dweck, C. S. (2003). 'Clarifying achievement goals and their impact'. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 85:3, 541.
- Grissom, J. A., Nicholson-Crotty, J. and Keiser, L. (2012). 'Does my boss's gender matter? Explaining job satisfaction and employee turnover in the public sector'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22:4, 649-673.
- Guy, M.E. and Newman, M.A. (2013). 'Emotional labor, job satisfaction and burnout: how each affects the other', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA.: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Hackman, J. R. and Oldham, G. R. (1976). 'Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory'. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 16:2, 250-279.
- Hansen, J. R. and Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.
- Haslam, C., Atkinson, S., Brown, S. S. and Haslam, R. A. (2005). 'Anxiety and depression in the workplace: effects on the individual and organisation (a focus group investigation)'. *Journal of affective disorders*, 88:2, 209-215.
- Hechanova-Alampay, R. and Beehr, T. A. (2001). 'Empowerment, span of control, and safety performance in work teams after workforce reduction'. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 6:4, 275.
- Hempel, P. S., Zhang, Z. X. and Han, Y. (2012). 'Team empowerment and the organizational context: Decentralization and the contrasting effects of formalization'. *Journal of Management*, 38:2, 475-501.
- Herrenkohl, R.C., Judson, G.T. and Heffner, J.A. (1999). 'Defining and measuring employee empowerment'. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 35:3, 373-389.
- Hochwalder, J. and Brucefors, A. B. (2005). 'Psychological empowerment at the workplace as a predictor of ill health'. *Personality and individual differences*, 39:7, 1237-1248.

- Holladay, C. L. and Quinones, M. A. (2003). 'Practice variability and transfer of training: the role of self-efficacy generality'. *Journal of applied psychology*, 88:6, 1094.
- Hood, C. (1991). 'A public management for all seasons?'. *Public administration*, 69:1, 3-19.
- Houston, D. J. (2000). 'Public-service motivation: A multivariate test'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10:4, 713-728.
- Hui, M.K., Au, K. and Fock, H., (2004). 'Empowerment effects across cultures'. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 35, 46-60.
- Huselid, M. A. (1995). 'The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance'. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 38:3, 635-672.
- Ingraham, P.W., Joyce, P.G. and Donahue, A.K. (2003). *Government performance: Why management matters*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Jarman, L., Martin, A., Venn, A., Otahal, P., Taylor, R., Teale, B. and Sanderson, K. (2014). 'Prevalence and correlates of psychological distress in a large and diverse public sector workforce: baseline results from Partnering Healthy@ Work'. *BMC public health*, 14:1, 1-11.
- Kanter, R.M. (1993). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Ed. Basic Books.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). 'Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign'. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Kazlauskaitė, R., Buciuניene, I., and Turauskas, L. (2011). 'Organisational and psychological empowerment in the HRM-performance linkage'. *Employee Relations*, 34:2, 138-158.
- Kilby, P. (2004). 'Is empowerment possible under a New Public Management environment? Some lessons from India'. *International Public Management Journal*, 7:2, 207-225.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public administration review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Kim, S. (2005). 'Individual-level factors and organizational performance in government organizations'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 15:2, 245-261.
- Kumari, G. and Pandey, M. (2011). 'Job Satisfaction in Public Sector and Private Sector: a comparison'. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 2:3, 222-228.
- Laaksonen, E., Martikainen, P., Lahelma, E., Lallukka, T., Rahkonen, O., Head, J. and Marmot, M. (2007). 'Socioeconomic circumstances and common mental disorders among Finnish and British public sector employees: evidence from the Helsinki Health Study and the Whitehall II Study'. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 36:4, 776-786.
- Labianca, G., Gray, B. and Brass, D. J. (2000). 'A grounded model of organizational schema change during empowerment'. *Organization Science*, 11:2, 235-257.
- Laitinen-Krispijn, S. and Bijl, R. V. (2000). 'Mental disorders and employee sickness absence: the NEMESIS study'. *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology*, 35:2, 71-77.
- Laschinger, H. K. S., Finegan, J. and Shamian, J. (2001). 'The impact of workplace empowerment and organizational trust on staff nurses' work satisfaction and organizational commitment'. *Health Care Management Review*, 26:3, 7-23.

- Laschinger, H. K. S., Finegan, J. E., Shamian, J. and Wilk, P. (2004). 'A longitudinal analysis of the impact of workplace empowerment on work satisfaction'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 5:4, 527-545.
- Lashley, C. (1999). 'Employee empowerment in services: a framework for analysis'. *Personnel Review*, 28:3, 169-191.
- Lee, C., Tinsley, C. and Bobko, P. (2003). 'Cross-cultural Variance in Goal Orientations and their Effects'. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 52:2, 272-297.
- Leeuw, F.L. (1996). 'Performance auditing, new public management and performance improvement: questions and answers'. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 9:2, 92-102.
- Lin, N. (1999). 'Building a network theory of social capital'. *Connections*, 22:1, 28-51.
- Linden, M. and Muschalla, B. (2007). 'Anxiety disorders and workplace-related anxieties'. *Journal of anxiety disorders*, 21:3, 467-474.
- Locke, E.A. (1969). 'What is job satisfaction?'. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 4:4, 309-336.
- Logan, M.S. and Ganster, D.C. (2007). 'The effects of empowerment on attitudes and performance: The role of social support and empowerment beliefs'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44:8, 1523-1550.
- Markovits, Y., Davis, A. J., Fay, D. and Van Dick, R. (2010). 'The Link Between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment: Differences Between Public and Private Sector Employees'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 177-196.
- Martin, A. J., Marsh, H. W. and Debus, R. L. (2001). 'Self-handicapping and defensive pessimism: Exploring a model of predictors and outcomes from a self-protection perspective'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93:1, 87-102.
- Mathieu, J. E. and Zajac, D. M. (1990). 'A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108:2, 171-194.
- Matthews, R. A., Diaz, W. M. and Cole, S. G. (2003). 'The organizational empowerment scale'. *Personnel Review*, 32:3, 297-318.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. and Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. and Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Menon, S. T. (1999). 'Psychological empowerment: Definition, measurement, and validation'. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 31:3, 161-164.
- Menon, S. (2001). 'Employee empowerment: An integrative psychological approach'. *Applied Psychology-an International Review*, 50:1, 153-180.
- Messersmith, J. G., Patel, P. C., Lepak, D. P. and Gould-Williams, J. S. (2011). 'Unlocking the black box: exploring the link between high-performance work systems and performance'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:6, 1105.

- Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L. and Topolnytsky, L. (2002). 'Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment to the Organization: A Meta-analysis of Antecedents, Correlates, and Consequences'. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 61:1, 20–52.
- Mihret, D. G. (2014). 'How can we explain internal auditing? The inadequacy of agency theory and a labor process alternative'. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 25:8, 771-782.
- Mills, P. K. and Ungson, G. R. (2003). 'Reassessing the Limits of Structural Empowerment: Organizational Constitution and Trust as Controls'. *Academy of Management Review*, 28:1, 143–153.
- Moore, M. (1998). *Gestión estratégica y creación de valor en el sector público*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W. and Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Muschalla, B., Heldmann, M. and Fay, D. (2013). 'The significance of job-anxiety in a working population'. *Occupational medicine*, 63:6, 415-421.
- Nicholls, J. G. (1984). 'Achievement motivation: Conceptions of ability, subjective experience, task choice, and performance'. *Psychological review*, 91:3, 328.
- Noordik, E., van der Klink, J. J., Klingen, E. F., Nieuwenhuijsen, K. and van Dijk, F. J. (2010). 'Exposure-in-vivo containing interventions to improve work functioning of workers with anxiety disorder: a systematic review'. *BMC Public Health*, 10:1, 598.
- Ostroff, C. and Bowen D.E. (2000). 'Moving human resource to a higher level: Human resource practices and organizational effectiveness', in K.J. Klein and S.W.J. Kozlowski (eds), *Multilevel Theory, Research, and Methods in Organizations*, San Francisco: Ed. Jossey-Bass.
- Park, R.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Payne, S. C., Youngcourt, S. S. and Beaubien, J. M. (2007). 'A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Goal Orientation Nomological Net'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92:1, 128-150.
- Pelit, E., Özturc, Y. and Arslanturk, Y. (2011). 'The effects of employee empowerment on employee job satisfaction. A study on hotels in Turkey'. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 23:6, 784-802.
- Peng, J., Li, D., Zhang, Z., Tian, Y., Miao, D., Xiao, W. and Zhang, J. (2016). 'How can core self-evaluations influence job burnout? The key roles of organizational commitment and job satisfaction'. *Journal of health psychology*, 21:1, 50-59.
- Perry, R. W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Perry, J.L. and Wise, L. R. (1990). 'The motivational bases of the Public Service'. *Public Administration Review*, 50:3, 367-373.
- Peters, B. G. and Savoie, D. J. (1996). 'Managing incoherence: The coordination and empowerment conundrum'. *Public Administration Review*, 56:3, 281–290.

- Petter, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. and Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Phan, H. P. (2009). 'Relations between goals, self-efficacy, critical thinking and deep processing strategies: a path analysis'. *Educational Psychology*, 29:7, 777-799.
- Pina, V., Torres, L. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'The Implementation Of Strategic Management In Local Governments. An International Delphi Study'. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 551-590.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2000). 'Multiple goals, multiple pathways: The role of goal orientation in learning and achievement'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92:3, 544-555.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Ramsay, H., Scholarios, D. and Harley, B. (2000). 'Employees and high-performance work systems: Testing inside the black box'. *British Journal of industrial relations*, 38:4, 501-531.
- Rees, C.J. (2013). 'Human resource management in the public sector in developing countries', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA.: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Rusk, N. and Rothbaum, F. (2010). 'From stress to learning: Attachment theory meets goal orientation theory'. *Review of General Psychology*, 14:1, 31.
- Rusli, B. N., Edimansyah, B. A. and Naing, L. (2008). 'Working conditions, self-perceived stress, anxiety, depression and quality of life: a structural equation modelling approach'. *BMC public health*, 8:1, 48.
- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2001). 'On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being'. *Annual review of psychology*, 52:1, 141-166.
- Sanusi, Z. M., Iskandar, T. M. and Poon, J. M. (2007). 'Effects of Goal Orientation and Task Complexity on Audit Judgment Performance'. *Malaysian Accounting Review*, 6:2.
- Scarpello, V. and Campbell, J. P. (1983). 'Job satisfaction: Are all the parts there?'. *Personnel psychology*, 36:3, 577-600.
- Sebaa, A., Wallace, J. and Cornelius, N. (2009). 'Managerial characteristics, strategy and performance in local government'. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 13:4, 12-21.
- Seibert, S.E., Kraimer, M.L. and Liden, R.C. (2001). 'A social capital theory of career success'. *Academy of management journal*, 44:2, 219-237.
- Seibert, S.E., Silver, S.R. and Randolph, W.A. (2004). 'Taking Empowerment to the Next Level: a Multiple-Level Model of Empowerment, Performance, and Satisfaction'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47:3, 332-349.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.

- Siegall, M. and Gardner, S. (2000). 'Contextual factors of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 29:6, 703-722.
- Silver, S., Randolph, W. A. and Seibert, S. (2006). 'Implementing and sustaining empowerment: Lessons learned from comparison of a for-profit and a nonprofit organization'. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 15:1, 47-58.
- Spector, P. E., Dwyer, D. J. and Jex, S. M. (1988). 'Relation of job stressors to affective, health, and performance outcomes: a comparison of multiple data sources'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73:1, 11-19.
- Spinath, B. and Steinmayr, R. (2012). 'The roles of competence beliefs and goal orientations for change in intrinsic motivation'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104:4, 1135-1148.
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). 'Psychological empowerment in the workplace: dimensions, measurement, and validation'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38:5, 1442-1465.
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1996). 'Social structural characteristics of psychological empowerment'. *Academy of management journal*, 39:2, 483-504.
- Spreitzer, G.M., Kizilos, M.A. and Nason, S.W. (1997). 'A dimensional analysis of the relationship between psychological empowerment and effectiveness, satisfaction, and strain'. *Journal of Management*, 23:5, 679-704.
- Statistical Gazette of the Staff at the Service of Public Administrations, July 2016. Ministerio de Hacienda y Administraciones Públicas.
- Stanton, P. and Manning, K. (2013). 'High performance work systems, performance management and employee participation in the public sector', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Suárez, M. F. and Ysa, T. (2011). 'An empirical study of continuous process improvement (CPI) regarding public management in Spanish municipalities'. *Administración y Desarrollo*, 39:53, 75-100.
- Subramony, M. (2009). 'A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between HRM bundles and firm performance'. *Human resource management*, 48:5, 745-768.
- Sudhir, P. M., Sharma, M. P., Mariamma, P. and Subbakrishna, D. K. (2012). 'Quality of life in anxiety disorders: Its relation to work and social functioning and dysfunctional cognitions: An exploratory study from India'. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 5:4, 309-314.
- Tarazona, F. (2007). *Dirección estratégica de recursos humanos en la Administración Local Española: Propuesta y contraste de un modelo integrado* (Doctoral dissertation, Tesis doctoral).
- Tarí, J. J. and Sabater, V. (2006). 'Human aspects in a quality management context and their effects on performance'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17:3, 484-503.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Tett, R. P. and Meyer, J. P. (1993). 'Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Turnover intention, and turnover: path analyses based on meta-analytic findings'. *Personnel Psychology*, 46:2, 259-293.

- Thomas, K. W. and Velthouse, B. A. (1990). 'Cognitive Elements of Empowerment - an Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation'. *Academy of Management Review*, 15:4, 666–681.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Towler, A. J. and Dipboye, R. L. (2001). 'Effects of trainer expressiveness, organization, and trainee goal orientation on training outcomes'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86:4, 664–673.
- Truss, C. (2013). 'The distinctiveness of human resource management in the public sector', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- Üstüner, Y. and Coşkun, S. (2004). 'Quality management in the Turkish public sector: a survey'. *Public administration and development*, 24:2, 157-171.
- Vandenabeele, W. (2013). 'Motivation, job satisfaction and retention/turnover in the public sector', in R.J. Burke, A.J. Noblet and C.L. Cooper (eds), *Human Resource Management in the Public Sector*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA.: Ed. Edward Elgar.
- VandeWalle, D. (1997). 'Development and Validation of a work domain goal orientation instrument'. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 57:6, 995-1015.
- VandeWalle, D., Brown, S. P., Cron, W. L. and Slocum Jr., J. W. (1999). 'The influence of goal orientation and self-regulation tactics on sales performance: A longitudinal field test'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84:2, 249–259.
- VandeWalle, D., Ganesan, S., Challagalla, G. N. and Brown, S. P. (2000). 'An integrated model of feedback-seeking behavior: Disposition, context, and cognition'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85:6, 996–1003.
- Villarroya, M. (2012). *Las prácticas de recursos humanos y el rendimiento organizacional. Un estudio contextualizado en la Administración Local Catalana*. (Doctoral dissertation, Tesis doctoral).
- Wagner, J. I., Cummings, G., Smith, D. L., Olson, J., Anderson, L. and Warren, S. (2010). 'The relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment for nurses: a systematic review'. *Journal of nursing management*, 18:4, 448-462.
- Walker, R.M. and Boyne, G.A. (2006). 'Public management reform and organizational performance: An empirical assessment of the UK Labour government's public service improvement strategy'. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25:2, 371-393.
- Wallace, J.V., Johnson, P.D., Mathe, K., and Paul, J. (2011). 'Structural and Psychological Empowerment Climates, Performance, and the Moderating Role of Shared Felt Accountability: A Managerial Perspective'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:4, 840-850.
- Wanous, J. P., Reichers, A. E. and Hudy, M. J. (1997). 'Overall job satisfaction: how good are single-item measures?'. *Journal of applied Psychology*, 82:2, 247-252.
- Warr, P. and Inceoglu, I. (2012). 'Job Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Contrasting Associations With Person–Job Fit'. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17:2, 129-138.
- Wasti, S. A. (2003). 'Organizational commitment, turnover intentions and the influence of cultural values'. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 76, 303-321.

- Wieclaw, J., Agerbo, E., Mortensen, P. B., Burr, H., Tuchsén, F. and Bonde, J. P. (2008). 'Psychosocial working conditions and the risk of depression and anxiety disorders in the Danish workforce'. *BMC Public Health*, 8:1, 280.
- Wiener, Y. (1982). 'Commitment in organizations: A normative view'. *Academy of Management Review*, 7, 418-428.
- Wilkinson, A., (1998). 'Empowerment: theory and practice'. *Personnel Review*, 27:1, 40-56.
- Wolters, C. A. (2003). 'Understanding procrastination from a self-regulated learning perspective'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95:1, 179-187.
- Worthington, A. C. and Dollery, B. E. (2001). 'Measuring efficiency in local government: an analysis of New South Wales municipalities' domestic waste management function'. *Policy Studies Journal*, 29:2, 232-249.
- Wright, B. E. and Davis, B. S. (2003). 'Job Satisfaction in the Public Sector. The role of the Work Environment'. *American Review of Public Administration*, 33:1, 70-90.
- Wright, B. E. and Kim, S. (2004). 'Participation's influence on job satisfaction: The importance of job characteristics'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:1, 18-40.

CHAPTER 3.
LINKING STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT TO
ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE:
WHAT ROLE DOES EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING
PLAY?*

* A version of this chapter is under review in the *Human Resource Management Journal*

3.1.- INTRODUCTION

Controversy has arisen in the past decade over the effect of HRM on organisational performance and employee well-being, corresponding to two different perspectives: mutual gains and conflicting outcomes (e.g. Van De Voorde et al., 2016). On one hand, the prevailing mutual gains perspective states that HRM is beneficial for both organisational performance and employee well-being. It holds that implementing HRM practices for employees has benefits for them, which therefore also enhances organisational performance. On the other hand, the conflicting outcomes perspective holds that HRM has positive effects for organisational results, but has no effect on employee well-being or may even have a negative outcome. In this context, balanced studies presenting arguments and empirical evidence taking into account both perspectives can help to unravel the complexity of the HRM-performance link (e.g. Ramsay et al., 2000).

Since different HRM practices can be associated with different employee and organisational outcomes (Jiang et al., 2012), sub-dimensions of HRM or specific HRM practices, such as empowerment-aimed practices, must be examined to understand such relationships (Van De Voorde et al., 2012). The definition of empowerment practices, or in this case, structural empowerment, is a set of practices allowing the transfer of power and authority from higher to lower levels of an organisation by sharing decision-making power, information, knowledge, and rewards (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). From a mutual gains perspective, at the organisational level, these practices can lead to a more resourceful, rewarding and meaningful work atmosphere (Van De Voorde et al., 2016), thus contributing to better performance, as also suggested by social capital theory (Seibert et al., 2001). At the individual level, empowerment enhances employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment (e.g. Kirkman and Rosen, 1999), as supported by social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005), since employees interpret structural empowerment as indicative of organisational support and concern for their well-being (Van De Voorde et al., 2012), and reciprocate by showing greater satisfaction and commitment (Allen et al., 2003). However, from a conflicting outcomes perspective, empowerment may also make work more demanding, with added responsibilities and work intensification that can increase stress and job anxiety, as proposed by labour process theory (Ramsay et al., 2000).

This dilemma also appears within the New Public Management (NPM) approach that first appeared in public organisations in the 1980s. One central idea of NPM is to improve effectiveness of public services by adopting HRM practices that shift from uniform rules to more employee discretion, team working, recognition of employees' contributions and, in general, endeavours to stimulate involvement among employees by way of high commitment human resource management, where empowerment plays an important part (e.g. Bach and Givan, 2011). Hence, structural empowerment is considered to improve services and performance at the organisational level by improving the communication processes that, according to the social capital theory, may help build effective relationships and structures to solve day-to-day problems easily and deliver better services (Brunetto and Farr-Wharton, 2008). In the same line, the 'black box' arguments of the public management literature claim that structural empowerment makes organisations more adaptable, efficient, and effective by building structures that match citizens' demands (Burgess, 1975). However, at the employee level, some researchers have warned of the human cost associated with NPM. Monitoring, pressure, and intensified accountability of public staff can lead to alienation, fear, stress and anxiety states in employees (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009). NPM therefore has its 'dark side' in that it places additional demands on the workforce (Diefenbach, 2009).

Despite calls for a balanced approach, previous empirical research has generally analysed the effects of structural empowerment on organisational performance (e.g. Logan and Ganster, 2007), or focused on positive consequences for employees, such as satisfaction or commitment (e.g. Kirkman and Rosen, 1999; Kim, 2002), while neglecting the possible negative effects on employee health. These studies therefore offer only partial frames (focusing on one kind of outcome variable, organisational or individual, and on positive employee outcomes), hampering a more comprehensive view of the consequences of structural empowerment. Moreover, this partial view prevents analysis of the indirect or mediating effects of work-related outcomes and, hence, impedes exploration of the 'black box' between structural empowerment and organisational performance. This comprehensive view has received even less research attention in the public sector context (Park and Rainey, 2007; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013).

To address these research needs, we study how structural empowerment practices directly affect organisational performance in a public context and how this effect is mediated by different forms of well-being, namely job satisfaction and affective commitment, as eudaimonic well-being variables related to the self-realisation component, and job anxiety, as a hedonic well-being variable related to attaining pleasure and avoiding pain. On a sample of 103 Spanish local authorities, we use a multilevel mediation model to integrate the individual and organisational levels. This multilevel approach not only extends and refines single-level models but also represents a significant departure from them (Peccei and Van De Voorde, 2016).

This paper makes several important contributions. First, it considers structural empowerment as a construct in itself, inspired by Bowen and Lawler's (1992) multidimensional model, and not as a part of a bundle of other HR practices (e.g. Raineri, 2016), meaning that its composition and consequences can be determined more accurately (Van De Voorde et al., 2016). Second, given the need for a more balanced view of HRM, we build on the analysis of employee satisfaction and commitment – basic, desired attitudes in achieving public organisations' success (Park and Rainey, 2007) – and examine a harmful aspect, job anxiety, in response to the need to test HRM effects on health variables (Van De Voorde et al., 2012). We attempt to answer a timely question: is structural empowerment beneficial or detrimental, or does it have no effect on these well-being variables? Discerning such effects can contribute to knowledge on the prevailing mutual gains and the conflicting outcomes perspectives of HRM. Third, considering that NPM changes have been introduced in different ways and speeds in different countries (Pollitt, 2002), we study empowerment in the context of public services in Spain, where the relationships proposed may differ from other contexts. Spain has been slow to apply mainstream NPM techniques (Garcia, 2007). Furthermore, the Spanish public administration culture is still grounded in administrative law (Torres et al., 2011) and most public sector employees are civil servants, which complicates the introduction of some reforms based on employee participation. New human resource management techniques do not seem to fit well with the rigidity, structures and processes of Spanish administrations (Serna, 2008). Hence, the contextualisation of this study in the Spanish public sector contributes to the understanding and adaptation of empowerment practices to this reality.

3.2.- THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

3.2.1.- The direct link between structural empowerment and organisational performance

Bowen and Lawler (1992) developed the most well-known depiction of structural empowerment in services as “approach to service delivery”. This approach includes practices that increase employees’ access to information and resources by: giving them information on firm’s operations; providing training that enables them to contribute at work; giving them power to make decisions that influence organisational activities; and providing performance-based rewards designed to encourage initiative. According to this definition, employees are able to respond faster to customer needs and improve performance by working more efficiently and effectively, making the service more reliable. Social capital theory supports these ideas, claiming that resources and communication processes embedded in an organisational structure improve coordination and activities. It therefore implies cost reductions and increased efficiency, and ultimately better organisational performance (Seibert et al., 2001). Previous empirical research in private-sector organisations has found positive relationships between practices related to structural empowerment and quality, service and sales, and overall performance (e.g. Seibert et al., 2004).

Regarding the public sector, ‘black box’ approaches to public management claim that structural empowerment has important effects on the delivery of better performance (Ingraham et al., 2003), making organisations more adaptable, efficient, and effective (Burgess, 1975). Such approaches state that delegating power, training, and motivating employees with rewards enhances employee morale, which leads to behaviours and attitudinal dispositions towards the public suited to the particular demands of each service encounter (Chebat and Collias, 2000), thus improving overall performance. Earlier contributions support this claim, showing a positive effect of empowerment on performance in quality of work and accomplishment in federal organisations in the U.S. (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) and in Spanish local authorities (Barba and Serrano, 2015). From these arguments, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 1: Structural empowerment is positively associated with organisational performance in local governments.

3.2.2.- The indirect effect: structural empowerment and employee well-being outcomes

Job satisfaction and affective commitment. Job satisfaction is defined as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one's job as achieving or facilitating the fulfilment of one's job values (Locke, 1969). Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment to the organisation characterised by acceptance of the organisation's culture and values and by a desire to remain part of that organisation (Mowday et al., 1982). Both can be related to eudaimonic well-being, since they refer to individuals' feelings about the alliance between their true self and values, and their job reality (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

From the mutual gains perspective, Bowen and Lawler (1992) state that empowerment leads to more satisfied employees because they feel decision-making is in their hands and perceive increased control over their job. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) provides clear theoretical support for such arguments, holding that employees interpret organisational actions, such as structural empowerment, as indicative of organisational support (Van De Voorde et al., 2012). Such perceptions lead employees to reciprocate and show greater satisfaction and commitment (Allen et al., 2003). The norm of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) also supports this relationship, as it refers to the socially accepted norm of returning a favour in exchange for help or resources. Employees are likely to feel more satisfied and committed to organisations that support them and give them resources through empowerment practices. Previous empirical research has found positive associations between empowerment practices and job satisfaction and affective commitment (Kirkman and Rosen, 1999; Kim, 2002).

In the public sector, especially in health-care contexts, some positive relationships have also been found between structural empowerment and job satisfaction (Sarmiento et al., 2004), as well as affective commitment (Park and Rainey, 2007). In these contexts, as Kanter's (1993) theory of organisational empowerment explains, empowerment structures allow employees to mobilise the necessary resources to get things done, which raises their job satisfaction. Likewise, when employees have the opportunity to increase their competence and skills and are rewarded for contributing to organisational aims, they invest in the organisation and may demonstrate this by seeing themselves as part of the organisation. These same arguments can be

translated to employees in local government where NPM reforms have been introduced. We therefore hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 2a: Structural empowerment is positively associated with job satisfaction in local governments.

Hypothesis 2b: Structural empowerment is positively associated with affective commitment in local governments.

Job anxiety. Anxiety is defined as an emotional state of perceived apprehension and heightened agitation (Spector et al., 1988) and constitutes a measure of general mental health. Job anxiety is linked to a specific stimulus: the workplace. In contrast to job satisfaction and affective commitment, it is associated with hedonic well-being as it reflects the presence or absence of pleasure or pain (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

From a conflicting outcomes perspective, labour process theory (Ramsay et al., 2000) holds that empowerment practices promote not only discretion, but also added responsibility and work intensification, which may increase stress. Employees may feel that managers expect more work effort (Van De Voorde et al., 2016), thus perceiving more pressure to perform and less overall control over their working lives (Orlitzky and Frenkel, 2005), which may cause anxiety.

In the NPM field and its documented ‘dark side’, the proactive attitudes that empowerment entails, together with the statement of measurable standards of performance and an attempt to monitor and reward employees according to these measures, may generate higher pressure, intensification of labour and accountability of public staff, which can lead to states of resentment, fear, stress and anxiety (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009). Some authors (e.g. Clark, 1999; Vidal, 2007) take a critical view of empowerment, claiming that many workers have no desire for empowerment because they associate it with ‘too much work’, and prefer to remain comfortable within the old authority structure where they know the rules and their predictable work arrangements make their jobs feel more secure. Under conditions of empowerment such employees could experience higher levels of anxiety because of the mismatch between their desires at work and the implications of empowerment practices.

In addition, workers in public sector are generally more likely to show worse levels of mental health (McHugh, 1998). It is well documented that working with people (such as customers) plays a major role in the risk of developing anxiety

(Wieclaw et al., 2008). Local governments are services providers, so their employees are expected to deal with citizens in order to meet their requirements, which could increase the likelihood of their suffering anxiety at work. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2c: Structural empowerment is positively associated with job anxiety in local governments.

3.2.3.- The indirect effect: employee well-being outcomes and organisational performance

Job satisfaction and affective commitment. Job satisfaction and affective commitment are expected to contribute to organisational performance, facilitating an indirect relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance, thus illustrating the mutual gains perspective of HRM and its positive outcomes for both organisation and employees (Van De Voorde et al., 2012). Gift-exchange model (Akerlof, 1982) supports such relationships, as employees tend to reciprocate the way they are treated in their organisation with increased work effort, so feeling job satisfaction and affective commitment as a consequence of the empowerment they receive may stimulate them to respond with improved performance, contributing to the overall performance of the organisation. The general consensus in the HRM literature is that employee attitudes are vital to achieving organisational performance (Jiang et al., 2012).

Satisfied employees seek to work and perform their tasks to a high standard and to achieve customer satisfaction, and are more willing to adopt non-compulsory behaviours aimed at realising their objectives (Ogbonnaya and Validaze, 2016). Wood et al. (2012) studied a sample comprising industries from the private and public sectors, demonstrating that job satisfaction was positively associated with financial performance, labour productivity, absenteeism and quality.

Regarding affective commitment, employees with high levels of commitment may strive to achieve more success for the company and show behaviours that benefit the organisation, thus contributing to improved productivity (Elorza et al., 2011). This relationship can also be transferred to public organisations, as affective organisational commitment is seen as a vital element in maintaining output in both public and private

sectors (Perry, 2004). The few studies conducted in the public sector (e.g. Zhu and Wu, 2016) have found associations between affective commitment and organisational performance measures such as managerial accountability, work performance and organisational growth. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 3a: Job satisfaction is positively associated with organisational performance in local governments.

Hypothesis 3b: Affective commitment is positively associated with organisational performance in local governments.

From the above arguments, mediating relationships are expected, for which we suggest the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4a: Job satisfaction positively mediates the relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

Hypothesis 4b: Affective commitment positively mediates the relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

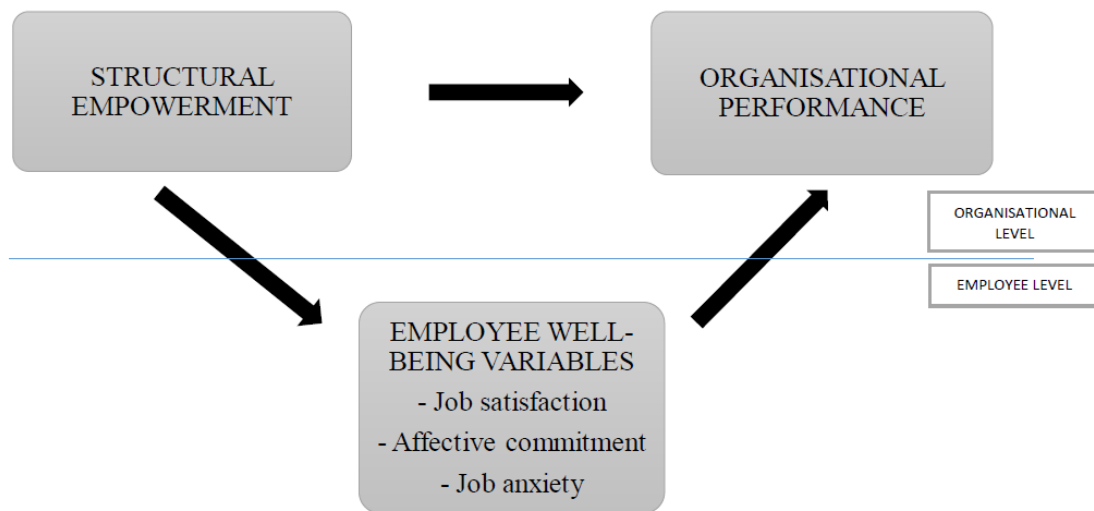
Job anxiety. According to Sackey and Sanda (2009), symptoms of stress and strain, such as anxiety at work, make people less communicative, and increase tension, tiredness and low energy, which are likely to result in lower levels of performance, therefore negatively affecting organisational performance. In a sample of companies from different sectors, Bakker et al. (2004) found that exhaustion (one of the dimensions of burnout) was negatively related to in-role and extra-role performance. As both in-role and extra-role performance are related to effective organisational operations, a negative link might also be found between job anxiety and organisational performance. Similarly, Ramsay et al. (2000) demonstrated that job strain was related negatively to labour productivity and positively to absence rate as measures of organisational performance. The explanation is that such a psychological state related to stress at work affects behavioural outcomes like job performance because it reduces employees' energy levels and their efforts at work, leading to poorer performance (Singh et al., 1994). We therefore hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 3c: Job anxiety is negatively associated with organisational performance in local governments.

From the above arguments, the mediating relationship is hypothesised as follows:

Hypothesis 4c: Job anxiety negatively mediates the relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

Figure 3.1. Theoretical model



3.3.- METHOD

3.3.1.- Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The empirical work was carried out in Spain, which offers an illustrative example of NPM implementation. In the Spanish context, a legal regulation – the *Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público* (2007) (Basic Statute for Public Employees) – embodies the ideas guiding mainstream NPM. This statute endeavours to enhance employees’ involvement through principles and techniques related to structural empowerment (e.g. training, performance-linked remuneration), highlighting the importance of improvement in the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of services delivered to the public.

The population of firms for our sample was selected from the *Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias* (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and

Provinces) database, which lists all Spanish city councils and their contact information. We selected only large municipalities (more than 20,000 inhabitants) because they implement more strategic management practices. The application of this criterion yielded a population of 399 city councils.

The units of analysis are the local authority (organisational level) and the employees (individual level). Thus, two questionnaires were prepared: one for local government managers (human resource managers, or in their absence, clerks) and a second for other public employees. Following Dillman et al. (2009), we carried out a pretest in which the managers' questionnaire was reviewed by four local government managers, and two employees in each of these local authorities were interviewed to obtain feedback on the questionnaire prepared for the other staff. This pretest confirmed that the instructions and the questions were clear and that the planned administration procedure would be effective. The next step was to contact all the city councils in the population by telephone to identify the human resource managers and request city council participation. Likewise, they were informed of the purpose and relevance of the research project and the confidentiality of the responses. The managers were asked to complete the questionnaire addressed to them (on structural empowerment and performance), and were invited to send the employees' questionnaire (on employee outcomes) at random to a minimum of four employees.

City councils with fewer than four employee responses were removed, following previous contributions in which a similar minimum number of employees had been established (Seibert et al., 2004). After this step, we equalised the number of respondents from each organisation by randomly sampling observations from city councils with more than six respondents (Schneider et al., 2003). As a result, some responses were deleted from these city councils, and the number of employees per organisation ranged between four and six, yielding a sample of 103 manager questionnaires and 461 employee questionnaires. The sample error for the organisational level sample was ± 8.33 at the 5% significance level. The average number of employees per local authority was 4.48 ($SD=0.7$). The participants (employees level) were predominantly women (62.7%) and civil servants (79%), reporting an average of 17.52 years' experience in their organisations ($SD=9.72$), and an average age of 46.9 ($SD=7.52$).

3.3.2.- Measurement of variables

At the organisational level (see Appendix C), we used 22 items adapted from Lawler et al.'s (2001) scale to measure structural empowerment. Local authority managers were asked about dimensions of decision-making power, information sharing, rewards, and knowledge and training. Guided by previous studies (e.g. Datta et al., 2005), a single index was created by taking the mean of the four subscales constructed from the survey items. A confirmatory factor analysis showed that the four dimensions significantly loaded on a single factor ($S-B\chi^2=1.189$, $df=2$; p -value=0.55; $BBNNFI=1.03$; $CFI=1.00$; $RMSEA=0.00$). Cronbach's alpha (α) for this empowerment scale was 0.93. We evaluated organisational performance using the eight items from Walker and Boyne's (2006) scale –designed specifically for the public sector– measuring output and efficiency, responsiveness, and service outcomes. Responses of local authority managers to the three dimensions were averaged to form an overall organisational performance score ($\alpha=0.90$).

At employee level (see Appendix D), job satisfaction was measured with Warr and Inceoglu's (2012) single item. The single-item measure is widely accepted in the literature (e.g. Warr and Inceoglu, 2012). We used the three items of affective commitment from Gellatly et al.'s (2006) organisational commitment scale ($\alpha=0.86$). Job anxiety was assessed with Jensen et al.'s (2013) five items ($\alpha=0.89$). Finally, we controlled for gender at employee level, and for local authority size at organisational level (log-transformed number of employees), in line with previous studies (e.g. Jensen et al., 2013).

3.3.3.- Analytic procedures

We used multilevel structural equation modelling and robust maximum likelihood estimator to analyse the hypotheses, by means of MPlus software. To assess whether multilevel analysis was appropriate, we calculated the variation between group levels, estimating the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC1) for job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety. The results of these ICC1 showed substantial values of 0.076, 0.115 and 0.052, respectively. Therefore, we considered that the multilevel procedure was appropriate.

3.4.- ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 3.1 presents the means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of the research measures at the two levels of analysis.

Table 3.1. Means, SDs and correlations at two levels

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Organisational level									
1. Structural empowerment	2.65	0.90	1						
2. Organisational performance	2.62	0.51	0.44***	1					
3. Job satisfaction	5.23	0.74	-0.02	0.20	1				
4. Affective commitment	4.21	0.65	0.04	0.44*	0.83	1			
5. Job anxiety	1.59	0.30	-0.47†	-0.49	-0.48	-0.31	1		
6. Organisation size	497.58	802.33	0.06	-0.01	0.15	0.1	-0.16	1	
7. Gender (0=male, 1=female)	0.63	0.27	0.04	-0.05	-0.32	-0.21	0.69	-0.11	1
Employee level									
1. Job satisfaction	5.23	1.38	1						
2. Affective commitment	4.19	1.16	0.28***	1					
3. Job anxiety	1.59	0.60	-0.25***	-0.12*	1				
4. Gender	0.63	0.48	0.12*	-0.08	-0.07	1			

† $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3.2 shows the parameter estimates for the model of Figure 3.1. The proposed model has an adequate fit as shown by the value of the indices ($S-B\chi^2=13.318$, $df=7$; p -value=0.06; CFI=0.95; RMSEA=0.04). Table 3.2 shows the significant positive association between structural empowerment and organisational performance ($\beta=0.26$; $p < 0.05$), thus supporting Hypothesis 1. These findings indicate that the more structural empowerment implemented in a local authority, the better its organisational performance. Structural empowerment was hypothesised to be positively related to job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job anxiety (Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c, respectively). However, we found that structural empowerment is not significantly related to either job satisfaction or affective commitment; Hypotheses 2a and 2b are therefore rejected. Similarly, Hypothesis 2c is rejected because while structural

empowerment does show a significant link, it is contrary to that posited ($\beta=-0.49$; $p<0.05$).

Table 3.2. Estimates of multilevel model

	Parameter estimates	S.E.
ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL		
Direct Effects		
Structural empowerment→Organisational performance (H1)	0.26*	0.11
Structural empowerment→Job satisfaction (H2a)	0.02	0.27
Structural empowerment→Affective commitment (H2b)	0.07	0.20
Structural empowerment→Job anxiety (H2c)	-0.49*	0.20
Job satisfaction→Organisational performance (H3a)	-0.36	0.23
Affective commitment→Organisational performance (H3b)	0.49†	0.29
Job anxiety→Organisational performance (H3c)	-0.33*	0.15
Organisation size→Organisational performance	-0.06	0.09
Gender→Job satisfaction	-0.89**	0.32
Gender→Affective commitment	-0.53*	0.26
Gender→Job anxiety	0.74*	0.33
Indirect Effects		
Structural empowerment→Job satisfaction→Organisational performance (H4a)	-0.01	0.10
Structural empowerment→Affective commitment→Organisational performance (H4b)	0.03	0.10
Structural empowerment→Job anxiety→Organisational performance (H4c)	0.16†	0.09
EMPLOYEE LEVEL		
Direct Effects		
Gender→Job satisfaction	0.15**	0.05
Gender→Affective commitment	-0.06	0.06
Gender→Job anxiety	-0.08	0.05

† $p<0.10$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$

The results related to Hypotheses 3a-c were as follows. Job anxiety was negatively and significantly related to organisational performance ($\beta=-0.33$; $p<0.05$), supporting Hypothesis 3c. The higher the levels of job anxiety in local authorities, the lower the level of organisational performance. However, no significant relationship was found between job satisfaction and organisational performance; Hypothesis 3a was

therefore rejected. Hypothesis 3b was only supported at the 90% confidence level ($\beta=0.49$; $p<0.10$), slightly confirming that affective commitment in a local authority is positively associated with organisational performance.

Hypotheses 4a-c posited that job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety mediate the relationships between structural empowerment and organisational performance. As noted earlier, we found neither the association between structural empowerment and job satisfaction nor the link between job satisfaction and organisational performance, failing to support Hypothesis 4a. Similarly, regarding Hypothesis 4b, structural empowerment is not related to affective commitment, and therefore neither is the mediation effect confirmed. Structural empowerment is significantly related to job anxiety, and job anxiety is significantly associated with organisational performance, thereby meeting the requirements for mediation. The results of additional indirect effects tests ($\beta=0.16$; $p<0.10$) support a positive mediation (although only at 90% confidence level) of job anxiety in the structural empowerment–organisational performance relationship.

3.5.- DISCUSSION

The rationale for this research was to examine the extent to which structural empowerment benefits both organisations and employees, or whether there is a trade-off in terms of which outcomes to prioritise. To this end, we studied the influence of structural empowerment on organisational performance and the mediating role of various forms of employee well-being –job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety– in the context of local authorities. We now outline the main implications of our study.

3.5.1.- Theoretical contributions

Mediating role of well-being: mutual gains versus conflicting outcomes perspective. The findings support the idea that structural empowerment is linked to organisational performance through job anxiety. Thus, in consonance with the mutual gains perspective commonly developed in the HR literature (e.g. Peccei et al., 2013), the findings demonstrate the vital importance of structural empowerment practices in improving performance in organisations, and contrary to our expectations, in reducing

employees' job anxiety levels. This deviates from the 'dark side' arguments in the NPM literature and the conflicting outcomes perspective of HRM (Chandler et al., 2002; Jensen et al., 2013).

At the individual level, structural empowerment does not appear to increase workforce anxiety; indeed, it is associated with lower levels. Perhaps the slow pace at which Spanish organisations are implementing NPM changes means that employees do not feel under pressure or strain. Karasek's (1979) JDC model lends support to this suggestion. This model claims that control over potential stressors, such as tasks, activities and work decisions, and feelings of autonomy help employees cope better with the demands of their jobs and reduce perceived strain. Structural empowerment transfers decision-making power, and therefore, more control and discretion to employees. Consequently, they may feel less anxious in the work context because they feel they can face the demands of their jobs with greater autonomy, supported by training, information, and rewards. Taking into account that in the sovereign model of governance characteristic of the Spanish public administration (Torres et al., 2011), most employees are civil servants with permanent contracts, which may mean they perceive greater job security and less uncertainty and as a result, they do not fear challenges. In such a context, our supplemental analyses may also provide some possible explanations. Increased information may mean employees feel less worried about coming changes, and receiving rewards might help to ease any concerns they may have.

Despite the mutual benefits reported, our findings also are consistent with predictions of the conflicting outcomes perspective. We found confirmation for the sceptical view of HRM (no effect of HRM on employees' well-being) and, partially, the 'dark side' of NPM, since despite the beneficial effects for performance, structural empowerment was not found to be positive and significantly linked to job satisfaction or to affective commitment, in contrast to previous studies (e.g. Kirkman and Rosen, 1999). Specifically, our findings reinforce the view that structural empowerment does not provide employees with beneficial effects in all situations or with all types of employees. This supports the idea that staff morale is not increased by empowerment practices in this public sector context.

A possible explanation for the differences in the significance of the three well-being variables in our model is their distinct nature. As previously explained, job

satisfaction and affective commitment can be related to eudaimonic well-being (work conditions-desires fit). By contrast, job anxiety is more related to hedonic (pain-pleasure emotions). Because of this, job satisfaction and affective commitment in our study may have a different behavioural pattern from that of job anxiety. The person-organisation issue, related to the eudaimonic view of well-being, offers a suitable explanation. Vidal (2007) showed that empowerment does not necessarily increase satisfaction, since individuals' work orientation may mediate the effects of empowerment on job satisfaction. Thus, perhaps if employees' orientation does not fit with the empowerment 'trend', they will neither experience more satisfaction nor feel more committed. This makes sense when the profile of tenure and age of the workforce in our sample is considered, since it may be representative of people less willing to change and grow. For instance, Rhodes (1983) argues that age is negatively related to the need for self-actualisation and growth.

Empowerment and performance. This paper also contributes to the social capital theory in that it illustrates the precepts of this approach (Seibert et al., 2001) in the context of local government. As previous contributions have contended (e.g. Brunetto and Farr-Wharton, 2008), the implementation of NPM practices, such as empowerment, seems capable of creating an organisational network in local government that provides a flow of relevant information and resources, or even emotional support, which arm employees with better tools to undertake their work, serve clients, and in turn, positively affects organisational outcomes. Likewise, as asserted by recent 'black box' arguments of public management, the establishment of a system consisting of practices such as delegating power or training contributes to building a more general structure in the organisation, providing support for achieving better performance (Burgess, 1975).

Employee well-being and performance. Concerning the influence of the three forms of well-being on organisational performance, the results only confirmed the power of job anxiety, and, less significantly, the role of affective commitment. These findings enrich the growing body of research on how to stimulate performance in public organisations, an issue that remains highly topical. This research holds that stress and strain symptoms lead to a state of tension and low energy that negatively affects

performance (Sackey and Sanda, 2009). However, the positive influence of job satisfaction on organisational performance remains unconfirmed. This might be due to possible measurement effects that could have influenced the results. Judge et al. (2001) suggest that the concept and measurement of job satisfaction should perhaps be closer to emotions than to attitudes. According to some authors (e.g. Brief and Roberson, 1989) job satisfaction fails to anticipate performance because the current job satisfaction measure reflects cognitive evaluation more than affective tendency. In our case, the item used refers to a general job satisfaction assessment, so it does not specifically capture affect. This could explain the absence of a link between job satisfaction and organisational performance, even more so if we consider that affective commitment (which is specifically a measure of affect) does have a connection with performance.

3.5.2.- Practical implications

From a practical perspective, our findings suggest two types of actions that may be valuable to city councils. First, in order to improve organisational performance local authority managers should strive to implement structural programmes including training, rewards based on productivity, dissemination of information, and tools for decision-making participation. Given the need to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, and public satisfaction, strategies are needed to face the new challenges.

Second, and turning to employee-related actions, public managers should aim to reduce employee anxiety at work. Detrimental effects of anxiety disorders are a major problem in the public sector (McHugh, 1998), leading to high costs for organisations if they result in time off work due to sickness. Anxiety can be reduced by developing structural empowerment practices and promoting employees' perception of control over potential stressors and feelings of autonomy (Karasek, 1979).

3.5.3- Limitations and future directions

The first limitation of the study is the sample, which covers only on local governments. Future work in other public settings is recommended in order to generalise our model. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design of the study does not allow inference of causality, so a longitudinal design may be useful to test causal links in this question. In addition, as explained earlier, in the context studied employees'

individual orientations may play a role in job satisfaction levels. Future studies should analyse whether the fit of employees' orientation with the values embedded in structural empowerment may have explanatory power. In a similar line, as mentioned earlier, job satisfaction could be better measured by trying to infer affect and emotion (Judge et al., 2001). Here, the general coverage of job satisfaction leads to a lack of knowledge about its behaviour. Future studies could usefully examine how structural empowerment relates to different facets of job satisfaction. In a similar vein, and given that structural empowerment is composed by different practices referred to distinct dimensions, it could be also interesting to study the specific link between each dimension and performance.

Another interesting line would be to explore curvilinear effects. Given that a new stream of psychological well-being studies has identified the limits of positive experiences (e.g. Grant and Schwartz, 2011), research could usefully examine the optimal levels of structural empowerment for a positive effect on well-being variables.

One final suggestion for future research would be a qualitative study. Petter et al. (2002:397) state that "empowerment is both locally defined and individually valued", so interviews and feedback in a specific context could add valuable information to further understanding of their effects.

3.5.4- Conclusion

The analysis of the mediating role of well-being suggests that in Spanish city councils structural empowerment acts as a 'reassuring' mechanism for employees, but not as a catalyst of well-being. Thus, our findings support the integration of the optimistic and sceptical perspectives on HRM, as considered in Peccei et al. (2013) and as illustrated by Van De Voorde et al. (2016). Regarding the NPM discussion, the results do not completely confirm its 'dark side' (Diefenbach, 2009) concerning the increase of stress and anxiety, although it is noteworthy that the absence of influence of empowerment on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment could be a sign of the inability of the new HRM within the NPM paradigm to accompany the enhancement of organisational performance with the motivation of the workforce.

REFERENCES

- Akerlof, G. A. (1982). 'Labor contracts as partial gift exchange'. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 97:4, 543-569.
- Allen, D.G., Shore, L.M. and Griffeth, R.W. (2003). 'The role of perceived organizational support and supportive human resource practices in the turnover process'. *Journal of management*, 29:1, 99-118.
- Bach, S. and Givan, R. (2011). 'Varieties of new public management? The reform of public service employment relations in the UK and USA'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22:11, 2349-2366.
- Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E. and Verbeke, W. (2004). 'Using the job demands-resources model to predict burnout and performance'. *Human Resource Management*, 43:1, 83-104.
- Barba, M.I. and Serrano, J. (2015). 'Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21, 9-16.
- Basic Statute of Public Employment, Act 7/2007, 12 April. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, Spain, 13 April 2007, 89, 16270-16299.
- Blau, P.M. (1964). *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York: Wiley.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Brief, A.P. and Roberson, L. (1989). 'Job attitude organization: An exploratory study'. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 19, 717-727.
- Brunetto, Y. and Farr-Wharton, R. (2008). 'Service delivery by local government employees post-the implementation of NPM: A social capital perspective'. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 57:1, 37-56.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705-16.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. and Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Chebat, J.C. and Kollias, P. (2000). 'The impact of empowerment on customer contact employees' roles in service organizations'. *Journal of Service research*, 3:1, 66-81.
- Clark, S. (1999). 'Magic of empowerment: A blessing or a curse?'. *Long Island Business News*, 47:10, 5.
- Cropanzano, R. and Mitchell, M.S. (2005). 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review'. *Journal of management*, 31:6, 874-900.
- Datta, D.K., Guthrie, J.P. and Wright, P.M. (2005). 'Human resource management and labor productivity: does industry matter?' *Academy of management Journal*, 48:1, 135-145.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Dillman, D.A., Smyth J.D. and Christian L. (2009). *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

- Elorza, U., Aritzeta, A. and Ayestarán, S. (2011). 'Exploring the black box in Spanish firms: the effect of the actual and perceived system on employees' commitment and organizational performance'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22:07, 1401-1422.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 90-506.
- Garcia, M.I. (2007). 'La nueva gestión pública: evolución y tendencias'. *Presupuesto y Gasto Público*, 47, 37-64.
- Gellatly, I.R., Meyer, J.P. and Luchak, A.A. (2006). 'Combined effects of the three commitment components on focal and discretionary behaviors: A test of Meyer and Herscovitch's propositions'. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, 331-345.
- Ingraham, P.W., Joyce, P.G. and Donahue, A.K. (2003). *Government performance: Why management matters*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. and Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. and Baer, J.C. (2012). 'How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms'. *Academy of management Journal*, 55:6, 1264-1294.
- Judge, T.A., Thoresen, C.J., Bono, J.E. and Patton, G.K. (2001). 'The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127:3, 376-407.
- Kanter R.M. (1993). *Men and Women of the Corporation*, 2nd ed., New York: Basic Books.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). 'Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign'. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public administration review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Kirkman, B.L. and Rosen, B. (1999). 'Beyond self-management: Antecedents and consequences of team empowerment'. *Academy of Management journal*, 42:1, 58-74.
- Lawler, E., Mohrman, S. and Benson, G. (2001). *Organizing for high-performance: Employee involvement, TQM, reengineering, and knowledge management in the Fortune 1000*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Locke, E.A. (1969). 'What is job satisfaction?'. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 4:4, 309-336.
- Logan, M.S. and Ganster, D.C. (2007). 'The effects of empowerment on attitudes and performance: The role of social support and empowerment beliefs'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44:8, 1523-1550.
- McHugh, M. (1998). 'Rationalization as a key stressor for public sector employees: an organizational case study'. *Occupational medicine*, 48:2, 103-112.
- Mowday, R.T., Porter, L.W. and Steers, R.M. (1982). *Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

- Ogbonnaya, C. and Valizade, D. (2016). 'High performance work practices, employee outcomes and organizational performance: A 2-1-2 multilevel mediation analysis'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-21.
- Orlitzky, M. and Frenkel, S.J. (2005). 'Alternative pathways to high-performance workplaces'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16:8, 1325-1348.
- Park, R.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Peccei, R. and Van De Voorde, K. (2016). 'The Application of the Multilevel Paradigm in Human Resource Management–Outcomes Research: Taking Stock and Going Forward'. *Journal of Management*, 0149206316673720.
- Peccei, R., Van De Voorde, K. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2013). 'HRM, well-being and performance: a theoretical and empirical review', in J. Paauwe, D. Guest and P.M. Wright (eds), *Human Resource Management and Performance: Achievements and Challenges*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Perry, R.W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Petter, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. and Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Pollitt, C. (2002). 'Convergence: The useful myth?' *Public Administration*, 79:4, 933–947.
- Raineri, A. (2016). 'Linking human resources practices with performance: the simultaneous mediation of collective affective commitment and human capital'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, doi: 10.1080/09585192.2016.1155163
- Ramsay, H., Scholarios, D. and Harley, B. (2000). 'Employees and high-performance work systems: Testing inside the black box'. *British Journal of industrial relations*, 38:4,501-531.
- Rhodes, S.R. (1983). 'Age-related differences in work attitudes and behavior: A review and conceptual analysis'. *Psychological bulletin*, 93:2, 328-367.
- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2001). 'On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being'. *Annual review of psychology*, 52:1, 141-166.
- Sackey, J. and Sanda, M.A. (2009). 'Influence of occupational stress on the mental health of Ghanaian professional women'. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 39:5, 876-887.
- Sarmiento, T.P., Laschinger, H.K.S. and Iwasiw, C. (2004). 'Nurse educators' workplace empowerment, burnout, and job satisfaction: testing Kanter's theory'. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 46:2, 134-143.
- Schneider, B., Hanges, P.J., Smith, D.B. and Salvaggio, A.N. (2003). 'Which comes first: employee attitudes or organizational financial and market performance?'. *Journal of applied psychology*, 88:5, 836-851.
- Seibert, S.E., Kraimer, M.L. and Liden, R.C. (2001). 'A social capital theory of career success'. *Academy of management journal*, 44:2, 219-237.

- Seibert, S.E., Silver, S.R. and Randolph, W.A. (2004). 'Taking Empowerment to the Next Level: a Multiple-Level Model of Empowerment, Performance, and Satisfaction'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47:3, 332–349.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Singh, J., Goolsby, J.R. and Rhoads, G.K. (1994). 'Behavioral and psychological consequences of boundary spanning burnout for customer service representatives'. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 31, 558–569.
- Spector, P.E., Dwyer, D.J. and Jex, S.M. (1988). 'Relation of job stressors to affective, health, and performance outcomes: a comparison of multiple data sources'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73:1, 11-19.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Van De Voorde, K., Paauwe, J. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2012). 'Employee well-being and the HRM–organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies'. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14:4, 391-407.
- Van De Voorde, K., Veld, M. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2016). 'Connecting empowerment-focused HRM and labour productivity to work engagement: the mediating role of job demands and resources'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 26:2, 192-210.
- Vidal, M. (2007). 'Lean production, worker empowerment, and job satisfaction: A qualitative analysis and critique'. *Critical Sociology*, 33:1-2, 247-278.
- Walker, R.M. and Boyne, G.A. (2006). 'Public management reform and organizational performance: An empirical assessment of the UK Labour government's public service improvement strategy'. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25:2, 371-393.
- Warr, P. and Inceoglu, I. (2012). 'Job Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Contrasting Associations With Person–Job Fit'. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17:2, 129-138.
- Wieclaw, J., Agerbo, E., Mortensen, P.B., Burr, H., Tuchsén, F. and Bonde, J.P. (2008). 'Psychosocial working conditions and the risk of depression and anxiety disorders in the Danish workforce'. *BMC Public Health*, 8:1, 280.
- Wood, S., Van Veldhoven, M., Croon, M. and de Menezes, L.M. (2012). 'Enriched job design, high involvement management and organizational performance: The mediating roles of job satisfaction and well-being'. *Human relations*, 65:4, 419-445.
- Zhu, C. and Wu, C. (2016). 'Public service motivation and organizational performance in Chinese provincial governments'. *Chinese Management Studies*, 10:4, 770-786.

CHAPTER 4.
STRUCTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
EMPOWERMENT IN SPANISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES:
INFLUENCE ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE[†]

[†] A version of this chapter is under review (second stage) in the *Personnel Review* journal

4.1.- INTRODUCTION

New Public Management (NPM) (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) has highlighted the relevance of empowerment for public sector organisations due to its promotion of more decentralised organisations (Hansen and Host, 2012). This decentralisation has also brought about changes in the way organisations manage people by heightening the importance of the human factor in public organisations (Giménez and Prior, 2007; Stanton and Manning, 2013). Within this context, employee empowerment is harnessed to make changes that improve the services provided (Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017; Pitts, 2005).

Although numerous studies have reported positive effects of implementing practices to manage empowerment (see Maynard et al., 2012), the concept remains difficult to explain (Matthews et al., 2003). This situation has led scholars to study empowerment from different perspectives (Dimitriades and Maroudas, 2007), predominantly the structural and the psychological approaches. The structural perspective understands empowerment as a set of practices and structures that enable the transfer of power and authority from higher levels in the organisation to lower levels, increasing access to information and resources (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). This is the “macro” approach to empowerment (Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011). The psychological perspective, in contrast, regards empowerment as a psychological state, as employees’ attitudes in reaction to managerial practices (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). This perspective considers empowerment at the individual employee level and represents the “micro” approach to empowerment (Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011).

While there is a growing body of research on the structural empowerment–performance link, usually showing a positive relationship (e.g. Seibert et al., 2004), few studies have considered indirect or mediating effects of work-related attitudes (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013). In this line, Boxall et al. (2011) state that although the ‘black box’ of general HR practices (which includes structural empowerment) has attracted increasing research attention in recent years (e.g. Aryee et al., 2012), more investigation is needed to advance our understanding of the mediating variables intervening in the HR practices–performance relationship. Within the specific empowerment field, numerous scholars (e.g. Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011; Maynard et al., 2012; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) advocate integrating the

structural and psychological approaches to gain a broader understanding of the empowerment process. However, “virtually no research has combined structural and psychological approaches to develop an integrative approach” (Cho and Faerman, 2010:130). This article focuses on the local government context to conceptually develop and empirically test a model proposing that structural empowerment directly affects organisational performance, and that this effect is mediated by employees’ psychological empowerment.

This study makes four contributions to the literature. First, by including psychological empowerment as an intervening variable, we advance knowledge of the ‘black box’ between structural empowerment and organisational performance by exploring more deeply the role of individual cognitive and psychological variables in this link. Although some scholars have considered structural empowerment as an antecedent of psychological empowerment (e.g. Laschinger et al., 2001; Seibert et al., 2004), and others have demonstrated that structural empowerment affects organisational performance (e.g. Patterson et al., 2004; Birdi et al., 2008; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013), these are partial frames, since they examine only one part of the reality. There is a gap in the scholarship combining the two parts that the present study attempts to fill by adopting a global view to analyse three variables simultaneously: structural empowerment, psychological empowerment and organisational performance.

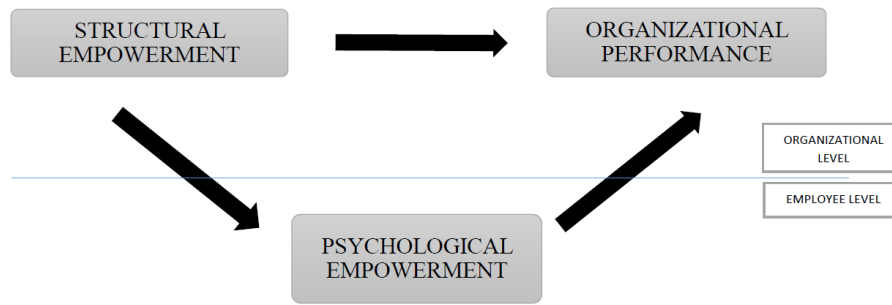
The second contribution is the use of a multilevel approach to integrate the individual and organisational levels. Studies centered on the individual level (e.g. Spreitzer, 1996), originating from the field of psychology, set out to demonstrate the influence of certain behaviours and attitudes workers hold about their work performance, but neglect the organisational context in which these processes take place. Studies with a focus on the organisation (e.g. Patterson et al., 2004; Birdi et al., 2008), grounded on economic approaches, explore the influence of empowerment on organisational outcomes, without taking into account the essential role of employees as a critical organisational resource to explain this relationship. Integrating the two perspectives could help advance the field of human resource management (Ostroff and Bowen, 2000), especially if multilevel mediation models are used, which according to Peccei and Van De Voorde (2016), not only further extend and refine single-level models but also represent a significant departure from them.

Third, the study contributes to public management theories and practice. Andrews and Boyne (2010) point to the notable field of research into ‘black box’ theories of public management that has demonstrated the importance of management systems, including human resource management systems, for improving performance and service quality. These authors highlight the need to test this relationship in organisations outside U.S. state governments, such as local governments in other countries. Furthermore, Ingraham et al. (2003) call for increased efforts to specify links between management and performance that emphasise the individual’s role and more active public administration. We follow this suggestion by testing the relevance of structural empowerment, as part of human resource management, to local authority performance. We also introduce psychological empowerment as an employee variable, thus complementing the findings of other studies on management and performance in the public sector (e.g. Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017).

Finally, we add specific empirical evidence of the important role of empowerment within the NPM context. The current challenges and changes in the public sector are a reality (Pollitt, 2001; Angiola and Bianchi, 2015; Audenaert et al., 2017) and local governments particularly—the level of government closest to the public (Kim and Wright, 2007)—have introduced a wide range of techniques to improve management in order to raise performance in quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen satisfaction (Leeuw, 1996). Local governments are increasingly required to meet more professional and varied demands (Giménez and Prior, 2007; Vermeeren et al., 2011); as a result if employees are not empowered, they cannot cope with such organisational challenges, complexities and innovations (Laschinger et al., 2004; Audenaert et al., 2017). The present study therefore hopes to shed light on the role both types of empowerment play in organisational performance.

The following sections outline the context of the study, the theoretical framework, and the hypotheses. We then describe the method used to test the proposed model, and discuss the results. Finally, we present the implications of our findings for theory and practice, and draw conclusions.

Figure 4.1. Conceptual model



4.2.- THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

4.2.1.- Empowerment in Local Authorities

Bowen and Lawler's (1992, 1995) definition of employee (structural) empowerment in private service firms, an "approach to service delivery", is the most widely used description (Bowen and Lawler, 1992:32). Given that local governments act as service providers, Bowen and Lawler's theory of empowerment is therefore a useful perspective from which to study structural empowerment (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013). According to Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995), to realise the benefits of (structural) empowerment, the following practices need to be shared with employees: (1) power to make decisions, (2) information, (3) knowledge, and (4) rewards (1992: 32), in order to achieve a multiplicative rather than additive effect on performance (1995: 74).

Bowen and Lawler's practices of structural empowerment seem to be contemplated in the normative theory of public administration, specifically the "New Public Service" (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000). This normative approach establishes continuous training and updating of employees' knowledge and skills as a right. NPM also encourages employees to put forward ideas to their superiors on how to improve the way they carry out their tasks and functions. Likewise, the supplementary payment, or bonus, linked to performance and productivity is fundamental to NPM. Finally, information is also crucial to local government transformation, since the vertical generation of information is a basic aim of labor relations (Cuenca, 2010) and is essential to involving professionals within the organisation (Serna, 2008).

Psychological empowerment concerns employees' beliefs about the degree of influence they have over their work (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). Following Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) conceptualisation, Spreitzer's model (1995:1444)—the most widely followed in previous research—describes psychological empowerment “as a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact”. Meaning concerns the importance attributed to the individual's job, judged in relation to his or her own ideals or standards. Competence refers to the extent to which individuals believe they are able to perform tasks and activities skillfully when they try. Self-determination or autonomy is the feeling that one has a choice in initiating and regulating actions. Finally, impact refers to the degree to which individuals perceive that they have an influence over outcomes at work (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995).

The four cognitions of psychological empowerment are useful feelings for public employees to cope with the new and challenging public environment. Public employees should typically want to serve the public interest, and be more highly motivated by the intrinsic rewards they receive from performing a task (Houston, 2000), so their feelings of empowerment are decisive in their work routine. Mostafa et al. (2015) note that public employees should express their prosocial motivation when offering their service. Good service depends on employees feeling they have control over the way they work toward aims (Cuenca, 2010). This allows them to feel that their particular tasks and activities at work affect the overall results (Taylor, 2013). Furthermore, the current environment in local authorities means employees must be able to feel they can make decisions and perform tasks autonomously, without a high level of concentrated authority (Vandenabeele et al., 2005).

4.2.2.- The direct effect of structural empowerment on organisational performance

The Bowen and Lawler framework of empowerment (1992, 1995) states that empowered service employees respond to customer needs more quickly and they interact with more enthusiasm and warmth, leading to better performance. Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) also point out that empowerment helps in recovery following service failures, and leads to more satisfied customers and employees. As Beltran et al. (2008) argue in the context of high performance work systems, the resource-based view

of the firm explains how by developing a human capital pool, empowerment practices could lead to competitive advantages. Much empirical evidence confirms the beneficial effects of structural empowerment practices on organisational outcomes (Logan and Ganster, 2007; Biron and Bamberger, 2010). Studies in the private sector have confirmed these links, finding positive relationships between practices related to structural empowerment and quality (Seibert et al., 2004), productivity (Patterson et al., 2004; Birdi et al., 2008), sales and service (Wallace et al., 2011), and, overall performance (Patterson et al., 2004; Seibert et al., 2004). In a meta-analysis of practices closely related to empowerment, consisting of dimensions such as information sharing, promotion, career development, training, compensation and employee involvement, Jiang et al. (2012) showed that high performance work systems are related to financial results, voluntary turnover, and operational outcomes. In sum, providing an organisation with an environment that fosters empowerment leads to important benefits (Siegall and Gardner, 2000).

In the public sector recent ‘black box’ arguments of public management affirm that human resource management, which includes structural empowerment, strongly affects higher performance delivery (Ingraham et al., 2003). In this same line, Burgess (1975) found that when a public organisation demonstrates high capacity in managing human resources, among other aspects, it enables the organisation to be adaptable, efficient, and effective, thereby enhancing performance. Several researchers (e.g. Petter et al., 2002) hold that empowerment practices benefit organisations by improving performance, and as a result their importance in the public sector has grown. For example, Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2013) analysed U.S. federal employees and found that empowerment practices have a positive, substantial and significant influence on perceived performance of the overall quality of work done and mission accomplishment. Barba and Serrano’s (2015) study in Spanish local governments found that training has a positive and significant effect on employees’ ability, and career development enhances employees’ ability and citizen service, concluding that the more attention local governments pay to human resources, the greater the improvements to employees’ skills and service to citizens. Other studies, such as Lee et al. (2006), Naghavi et al. (2012) or Smith et al. (2012), showed similar findings, demonstrating positive effects of empowerment practices on perceptions of organisational effectiveness and organisational performance. According to Walker and Boyne (2006),

there is evidence that management (including human resource management) plays an important role in making a difference to public service performance. And more specifically, “the more effort from local government in involving the personnel, the more impact and cultural change is achieved” (Pina et al., 2011:582). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

4.2.3.- The indirect effect: the structural-psychological empowerment link

Thomas and Velthouse’s (1990) theoretical model of empowerment in the workplace, which formed the basis for Spreitzer’s definition of psychological empowerment, states that empowering interventions (structural empowerment) enable workers to feel they can perform their work competently (1990: 666) and develop an active and positive orientation to their jobs.

In the same line, Bowen and Lawler (1995) note that empowering practices generate an empowered state of mind in employees, including control over what happens on the job, freedom to do their job and act spontaneously with customers, and awareness of the context of work, among others. All these factors are closely related to the psychological empowerment concept.

Many studies corroborate this conclusion. One of the first scholars to suggest the connection between the two types of empowerment was Spreitzer (1995, 1996). She found that low role ambiguity, sociopolitical support, access to information, and participative climate create opportunities for (psychological) empowerment in the workplace. As well as Spreitzer (1995, 1996), other scholars have studied the structural and psychological empowerment relationship in a wide range of service companies (e.g. Sharma and Kaur 2011; Wallace et al., 2011; Kazlauskaitė et al., 2012), showing that empowering practices such as reward systems, autonomy and participative decision making have positive effects on employees’ psychological empowerment levels. Maynard et al. (2012) explain that psychological empowerment appears when management transfers autonomy and responsibility to employees. Psychological

empowerment is therefore an employee reaction to structural empowerment conditions (Laschinger et al., 2004).

Despite the importance of empowerment and the empirical evidence to support it, public sector research has paid little attention to the subject, especially psychological empowerment (Dimitriades and Maroudas, 2007; Cho and Faerman, 2010). Cho and Faerman's (2010) study is one of the few to examine the structural (as an employee perception) and psychological empowerment relationship in areas of the public sector other than health services. Using a sample of public employees in the city of Seoul (Korea), these authors found that structural empowerment affects extra-role performance through psychological empowerment.

In light of the studies reviewed, the context, and the legal regulations of local administrations, structural empowerment is likely to be valuable and to have major implications for psychological empowerment in local government. We therefore pose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment in local governments.

4.2.4.- The indirect effect: the psychological empowerment-organisational performance link

Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) claim that empowered employees can respond more quickly to angry or dissatisfied customers, as they feel they have the necessary resources to resolve the situation and to give customers what they need without turning to a supervisor or higher authority. This leads to better responses during the service delivery, more satisfied recipients, and better service quality in general. Furthermore, employees' feelings about their jobs affect the way customers feel about the service they receive (Bowen and Lawler, 1992). These authors also state that empowered employees are more willing to offer their opinion and give ideas to improve the service. In fact, they point out that an employee's empowered state of mind mediates the relationship between management practices and business results (Bowen and Lawler, 1995:74).

Several empirical studies have shown the connection between psychologically empowered employees and high performance. In the services sector, Jung and Sosik (2002) revealed a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and collective efficacy, which in turn was positively related to group members' perceived group effectiveness. Koberg et al. (1999) studied a sample of full-time professionals working in a large private hospital, and found that empowerment perceptions (i.e. psychological empowerment) were associated with work productivity/effectiveness. Seibert et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis demonstrated that psychological empowerment was positively associated with a broad range of outcomes, such as productivity and service performance, and, at the team level, team psychological empowerment was positively related to team performance (customer service ratings, productivity, and effectiveness, among others). In sum, Spreitzer (2008) points out, there is clear evidence that psychological empowerment is related to performance at the individual, team and unit level.

As organisations in the public sector are service-oriented (Chang et al., 2010), empowered employees are crucial in the response to customer' needs, as suggested by Bowen and Lawler's empowerment framework and the growing body of empirical evidence. Citizens, understood as public sector "customers" (Cuenca, 2002), will experience high levels of service satisfaction and will receive higher quality service when they are attended by employees who feel empowered. According to Taylor (2013: 456) "employees' beliefs that their job is meaningful can satisfy their need to feel connected to others", so their behaviour with citizens will be closer and more satisfactory to both parties when employees feel empowered. Likewise, following Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995), organisational outcomes in terms of local communities' social, economic and environmental well-being may be enhanced by suggestions from empowered employees.

There is empirical evidence supporting the association between psychological empowerment and organisational effectiveness. Sharma and Kaur (2011) studied samples of private and public bank employees and found a high correlation between psychological empowerment and organisational effectiveness, understood as planning, productivity, or efficiency and readiness. Chang and Liu (2008) also found productivity as one of the results of psychological empowerment. In turn, Alge et al. (2006)

investigated workers in a large public university, confirming that psychological empowerment was linked to creative performance.

Given the above arguments, we consider the effect of psychological empowerment on organisational results to be plausible in local governments. Our final two hypotheses are therefore:

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

Hypothesis 4: Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between structural empowerment and organisational performance in local governments.

4.3.- METHOD

4.3.1.- Sample and Data Collection Procedure

The empirical study took place in Spain, a country that offers an illustrative example of NPM. In the Spanish context, the guiding principles and ideas of the NPM mainstream are embodied in a legal statute, the *Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público* (EBEP, 2007, in English, the Basic Statute of Public Employment). It aims to enhance participation and to improve human resource management through principles and actions related to structural empowerment (e.g. training, performance-linked bonuses), and it prioritises improving the quality, efficacy and efficiency of services citizens receive.

Drawing on previous studies (e.g. Barba and Serrano, 2015), the data to test the proposed hypotheses were obtained from a sample of local authorities in Spanish cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. We focused on large municipalities since they implement more strategic management practices (Poister and Streib, 2005), and structural empowerment can be considered an element of strategic management (Seibert et al., 2011). According to this criterion, the sample population consisted of 399 local governments. We obtained the list of these local governments and their contact information from the *Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias* (FEMP, Spanish federation of municipalities and provinces).

The unit of analysis comprised the local governments (organisation) and the employees (individual). Collecting data from two different sources limits problems associated with common method variance (Collins and Smith, 2006). Following the literature, we prepared two questionnaires: one for local government managers (e.g. human resource manager, clerk), and the second for other public employees (see Appendixes C and D). The questionnaires were uploaded onto an Internet survey application and pretested by four local government managers and other employees to test and improve the measures, to ensure all the questions were easily understood, and to verify the suitability of the online format. After making the necessary improvements to the questionnaires, we first telephoned the local governments and made contact with the human resource managers, or the person in charge of personnel management (sometimes the clerk or the auditor), to explain the study and request their email addresses. We then contacted these managers with emails containing links to the two questionnaires, asking them to complete the managers' questionnaire and to forward the link to the employees' questionnaire for other workers to complete. We then made follow-up telephone calls to increase response rates, as proposed in the literature (Dillman et al., 2009).

We removed town or local governments with fewer than 4 employee responses, which yielded a sample of 103 manager questionnaires and 461 employee questionnaires. The number of employee respondents per local government ranged from 4 to 6, with an average of 4.48 ($SD=0.7$). The respondents surveyed came from a wide range of local authority administrative services, including human resource management, accounting, town planning, tourism, and social services. Respondents reported an average of 17.52 years' experience in their organisations ($SD=9.72$), and an average age of 46.9 years ($SD=7.52$). They were predominantly women (62.7%), and non-supervisors (69.6%). The majority of the manager respondents were human resource managers (90.3%). The participating local governments had an average of 497.58 employees ($SD=802.33$).

4.3.2.- Measurement of variables

Structural Empowerment. The scale consisted of twenty-two items adapted from Lawler et al.'s (2001) scale. Local government managers responded to items on the dimensions of decision-making power, information sharing, rewards, and

knowledge and training on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (no employees) to 7 (all employees). Guided by previous studies (e.g. Datta et al., 2005), we created a single index by taking the mean of the four subscales generated from the survey items. Cronbach's alpha for the composite structural empowerment scale was 0.93.

Psychological Empowerment. Employees responded on Spreitzer's 12-item psychological empowerment scale (1995), a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). We then averaged the responses to the items to form an overall psychological empowerment score (e.g. Seibert et al., 2004; Taylor, 2013). Taken together, the 12 items showed high reliability ($\alpha=0.86$).

Organisational Performance. We evaluated organisational performance using the eight items from Walker and Boyne's (2006) scale, designed for the public sector, measuring output and efficiency, responsiveness, and service outcomes. For each of the eight items, local managers assessed the quartile in which their organisation was located, with 1 being the bottom and 4 the top. We averaged the responses to the three dimensions to form a global organisational performance score. Taken together, scale items showed high reliability ($\alpha=0.90$).

Controls. Following previous studies (e.g. Piening et al., 2013), we controlled for sex at the employee level (female=1; male=0), and for the size of the local government (log-transformed number of employees) at the organisational level.

4.3.3.- Analytic procedures

The structure of the data was non-independent, since the 461 employees were working in 103 local governments. We therefore applied multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) using MPlus software (Muthén and Muthén, 1998–2012) to test the hypotheses. MSEM allows us to specify multilevel mediation models with cross-level relationships (e.g. a 2-1-2 multilevel design) (Preacher et al., 2010). The between-group level variation, estimated by the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC1) for psychological empowerment (the individual level variable), showed a substantial value of 0.063 (Muthén and Satorra, 1995), suggesting the appropriateness of multilevel analysis. In the analysis we used a maximum likelihood estimator with standard errors and chi-square test statistics robust to non-normality, and tested the hypotheses by means of multilevel path-analysis, which estimates the direct and indirect relationships simultaneously.

4.4.- ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 4.1 presents the means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of the study measures.

Table 4.1. Descriptive statistics and correlations for variables at two levels

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5
Organisational level							
1. Structural empowerment	2.65	0.90	1				
2. Organisational performance	2.62	0.51	0.44***	1			
3. Local government psychological Empowerment	5.41	0.44	-0.07	0.39†	1		
4. Organisation size	497.58	802.33	0.06	-0.01	-0.17	1	
5. Gender (1=female)	0.63	0.27	0.03	-0.06	-0.18	-0.11	1
Employee level							
1. Psychological Empowerment	5.41	0.84	1				
2. Gender	0.63	0.48	-0.06	1			

† $p < 0.10$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4.2 shows the estimates for the model presented in Figure 4.1. The proposed model provided an acceptable fit, taking into account the value of the chi-square test ($S-B\chi^2=1.15$, $df=2$; p -value=0.56; CFI=1.00; RMSEA=0.00). The table shows that structural empowerment had significant positive association with organisational performance ($\beta=0.47$, $p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 was not confirmed, since the values failed to achieve statistical significance; we therefore found no relationship between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment in local governments. The results confirmed the link between psychological empowerment and organisational performance, established in hypothesis 3 ($\beta=0.44$, $p < 0.05$). Taken together, these findings suggest that organisational performance is positively associated with both structural empowerment and psychological empowerment, although there is no link between the two types of empowerment. We also found that the indirect mediating effect of psychological empowerment is not significant in the structural empowerment–organisational performance relationship. These results therefore do not support hypothesis 4, which posited the meditational role of psychological empowerment. Finally, estimated

coefficients show that neither the employees' gender nor the size of the local government is associated with psychological empowerment or organisational performance, respectively.

Table 4.2. Estimates of multilevel model

	Parameter estimates	S.E.
ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL		
Direct effects		
Structural empowerment→Organisational performance (H1)	0.47***	0.10
Structural empowerment→Psychological empowerment (H2)	-0.07	0.20
Psychological empowerment→Organisational performance (H3)	0.44*	0.22
Organisation size→Organisational performance	-0.02	0.08
Gender→Psychological empowerment	-0.015	0.24
Indirect Effects		
Structural empowerment→Psychological empowerment→Organisational performance (H4)	-0.03	0.09
EMPLOYEE LEVEL		
Direct Effects		
Gender→Psychological empowerment	-0.07	0.05

*p<.05; ***p<.001

Given the surprising lack of mediation, a new model was estimated in which psychological empowerment acted as a moderator in the structural empowerment–organizational performance link; however, the results of this model did not support a moderating effect either.

4.5.- DISCUSSION

In this paper we proposed and tested a multilevel model to examine the influence of structural empowerment on organisational performance in the context of local authorities, and the mediating role of psychological empowerment in this relationship. The study furthers understanding of the empowerment construct and its effects in the public sector.

4.5.1- Theoretical contributions

Our findings partially confirm the research hypotheses. The structural empowerment practices local authorities put in place explain the differences in organisational performance among them. Likewise, psychological empowerment emerges as a driver of organisational performance. Overall, both types of empowerment (although independently, since the mediating effect was not confirmed) play a key role in organisational performance. A discussion of some of the specific theoretical contributions of this study now follows.

Firstly, recent ‘black box’ arguments of public management have claimed that structural empowerment, as a part of human resource management, plays a vital role in improving performance and service quality (Andrews and Boyne, 2010). Our results are consistent with previous research examining the empowerment practices and performance link (e.g. Patterson et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2006). Furthermore, we considered structural empowerment as a construct in itself, based on Bowen and Lawler’s (1992, 1995) multidimensional model, and not as a part of a more general bundle of practices. Through this approach we were able to identify its component parts and effects more precisely (Patterson et al., 2004; Birdi et al., 2008).

Secondly, our study did not find a positive link between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment, in contrast to previous studies (e.g. Cho and Faerman, 2010; Wallace et al., 2011). A possible explanation for these surprising findings may be that public sector employees configure their psychological empowerment differently to those of private sector. As Houston (2000) points out, public sector employees are more highly motivated by the intrinsic rewards they receive from performing a task, so it seems that their internal motivations and feelings are more powerful and independent from external circumstances than those of private employees. Structural empowerment as an external intervention may not affect them in the expected way because the employees themselves generate their feelings of meaning, competence, impact, and autonomy. Job crafting theory would support this view. It claims that “employees craft their jobs by changing cognitive, task, and/or relational boundaries to shape interactions and relationships with others at work” (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001:179). Employees therefore play a more active role in shaping the outcomes of the organisational interventions (Nielsen, 2013) and in how they feel about their work, such that the way their own jobs are configured could be the cause of their feelings of

empowerment, rather than structural empowerment interventions. Notably, research into the relationship between employees' personal characteristics and the configuration of their psychological empowerment has demonstrated that, for instance, positive self-evaluation traits (Seibert et al., 2011) and high levels of need for achievement are strongly related to psychological empowerment (Hon and Rensvold, 2006). In sum, employees' individual characteristics and their own power should not be overlooked in explanations of psychological empowerment in public sector organisations.

The results also confirmed the positive relevance of psychological empowerment for organisational performance. This finding contributes to the growing body of research on the topical question of how to motivate performance in public organisations. The study therefore supports the ideas put forward by Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995). Where there is a high level of motivation at work, a feeling of competence in the tasks the job involves, of autonomy and freedom to carry out daily activities, and a feeling that employees are making a difference to the work unit through their own efforts, local authorities are able to enhance the way in which the service is delivered and their overall performance.

4.5.2.- Practical implications

Our results also have implications for management practice. The findings suggest that from both its perspectives—structural and psychological—empowerment is a valuable way of enhancing organisational performance in local governments. Two types of action are noteworthy in this line. First, to foster organisational performance, local governments' managers should introduce structural empowerment programs that will develop training, establish productivity-based bonuses, spread information, and give employees the opportunity to participate in making decisions. The NPM ideals of improving effectiveness, efficiency, and citizen satisfaction require local governments to develop strategies with which to face the new challenges. Indeed, they “have long been considered laboratories for experimenting with governmental reforms” (Ihrke et al., 2003:79), and their responsibilities to society are increasing, so their actions are essential to NPM success.

Second, with regard to employees and their psychological empowerment, managers should improve and adapt staff selection systems to take into account employees' motivations and personality, as far as the system regulating public

employee selection allows it. For example, tests to evaluate candidates' personal characteristics and motivations should be carried out, thereby complementing knowledge and skills requirements. As this study has shown, structural empowerment practices do not affect employees' psychological empowerment; the way to nurture a staff of psychologically empowered employees should start by selecting candidates who have the capacity to foster their own psychological empowerment by themselves. Managers could also promote this by giving employees the opportunity to mould their job according to their preferences, skills and abilities (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001), since this job crafting process leads to a more meaningful perception of work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Tims and Bakker, 2010) and may ultimately facilitate psychological empowerment, irrespective of organisational interventions.

On the question of finances, local governments account for large proportions of public sector expenditure around the world (Andrews and Boyne, 2010), and scrutiny of their performance is therefore essential. In sum, in this context empowerment is an important tool for improving performance, and, as Cho and Faerman (2010) note, to achieve effectiveness in the new public management environment, leaders in government organisations should pay attention to both structural and psychological empowerment.

4.5.3.- Limitations and future directions

The study has some limitations. First, the sample consists of Spanish local governments and their employees. Therefore, although our study offers some important insights in relation to existing research in the empowerment and organisational performance framework, future investigation in other public settings is warranted in order to generalise the model. Finally, the issue of endogeneity should be noted, since performance could be endogenous to structural empowerment, therefore giving rise to a reversed causality (Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017). Traditionally, the link between management and performance has been addressed as one-way, so almost no study has examined the link between the success of a public organization and its management practices. Perhaps local governments with higher performance are more likely to be willing to make decisions aimed to develop structural empowerment programs. The fact that we were unable to measure real performance and considered perceived performance may prevent us from inferring the actual effects of structural empowerment. Future

empirical studies could usefully apply a longitudinal design using objective data to rigorously assess the causal links in this hypothesised model and to deal with the potential for reciprocal causation.

4.5.4.- Conclusion

In summary, the present study reports new evidence about empowerment and its effects on organisational performance in the public sector context. We demonstrated that structural empowerment has a strong and positive influence on organisational performance, supporting the belief that local authority management should pay more attention to managing human resource practices, specifically by investing in the development of empowering practices. Furthermore, this study provides new empirical evidence by showing that structural empowerment does not influence employees' psychological empowerment, but rather it must be sought and promoted through other means, since it does influence organisational performance. Therefore, although we do not find evidence for the mediating role of psychological empowerment in the structural empowerment–organisational performance link, the results highlight the importance of both structural and the psychological empowerment in yielding improved organisational performance in the local government context.

REFERENCES

- Alge, B.J., Ballinger, G.A., Tangirala, S. and Oakley, J.L. (2006). 'Information privacy in organizations: empowering creative and extrarole performance'. *Journal of applied psychology*, 91:1, 221.
- Andrews, R. and Boyne, G.A. (2010). 'Capacity, leadership, and organizational performance: Testing the black box model of public management'. *Public Administration Review*, 70:3, 443-454.
- Angiola, N. and Bianchi, P. (2015). 'Public managers' skills development for effective performance management: Empirical evidence from Italian local governments'. *Public Management Review*, 17:4, 517-542.
- Aryee, S., Walumbwa, F.O., Seidu, E.Y. and Otaye, L.E. (2012). 'Impact of high-performance work systems on individual-and branch-level performance: test of a multilevel model of intermediate linkages'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97:2, 287.
- Audenaert, M., Vanderstraeten, A. and Buyens, D. (2017). 'When innovation requirements empower individual innovation: the role of job complexity'. *Personnel Review*, 46:3, 608-623.
- Barba, M.I. and Serrano, J. (2015). 'Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21, 9–16.

- Basic Statute of Public Employment, Act 7/2007, 12 April. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, Spain, 13 April 2007, 89, 16270-16299.
- Beltrán-Martín, I., Roca-Puig, V., Escrig-Tena, A. and Bou-Llusar, J.C. (2008). 'Human resource flexibility as a mediating variable between high performance work systems and performance'. *Journal of Management*, 34:5, 1009-1044.
- Birdi, K., Clegg, C., Patterson, M., Robinson, A., Stride, C.B., Wall, T.D., and Wood, S.J. (2008). The impact of human resource and operational management practices on company productivity: a longitudinal study. *Personnel Psychology*, 61:3, 467–501.
- Biron, M. and Bamberger, P. (2010). 'The impact of structural empowerment on individual well-being and performance: Taking agent preferences, self-efficacy and operational constraints into account'. *Human Relations*, 63:2, 163-191.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1995). 'Empowering service employees'. *Sloan management review*, 36:4, 73.
- Boxall, P., Ang, S.H. and Bartram, T. (2011). 'Analysing the 'black box' of HRM: Uncovering HR goals, mediators, and outcomes in a standardized service environment'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 48:7, 1504-1532.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705–16.
- Chang, C.C., Chiu, C.M. and Chen, C.A. (2010). 'The effect of TQM practices on employee satisfaction and loyalty in government'. *Total Quality Management*, 21:12, 1299-1314.
- Chang, L.-C. and Liu, C.-H. (2008). 'Employee empowerment, innovative behavior and job productivity of public health nurses: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey'. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45:10, 1442–1448.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130–154.
- Collins, C.J. and Smith, K.G. (2006). 'Knowledge exchange and combination: The role of human resource practices in the performance of high-technology firms'. *Academy of management journal*, 49:3, 544-560.
- Conger, J. and Kanungo, R. (1988). 'The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice'. *Academy of Management Review*, 13:3, 471-483.
- Cuenca, J. (2002). 'La gestión estratégica de recursos humanos en las entidades locales'. *Capital Humano*, 161, 32-38.
- Cuenca, J. (2010). *Manual de Dirección y Gestión de Recursos Humanos en los Gobiernos Locales*. Madrid -España: Instituto Nacional de Administración Pública. Publidisa S.A.
- Datta, D.K., Guthrie, J.P. and Wright, P.M. (2005). 'Human resource management and labor productivity: does industry matter?' *Academy of management Journal*, 48:1, 135-145.

- Denhardt, R.B. and Denhardt, J.V. (2000). 'The new public service: Serving rather than steering'. *Public administration review*, 60:6, 549-559.
- Dewettinck, K. and van Ameijde, M. (2011). 'Linking leadership empowerment behaviour to employee attitudes and behavioural intentions: Testing the mediating role of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 40:3, 284-305.
- Dillman, D.A., Smyth J.D. and Christian L. (2009). *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Dimitriadis, Z.S. and Maroudas, T. (2007). 'Internal service climate and psychological empowerment among public employees'. *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*, 1:4, 377-400.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 490-506
- Giménez, V.M. and Prior, D. (2007). 'Long- and Short-Term Cost Efficiency Frontier Evaluation: Evidence from Spanish Local Governments'. *Fiscal Studies*, 28:1, 121-139.
- Hansen, J.R. and Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.
- Hon, A.H. and Rensvold, R.B. (2006). 'An interactional perspective on perceived empowerment: the role of personal needs and task context'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17:5, 959-982.
- Houston, D. J. (2000). 'Public-service motivation: A multivariate test'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10:4, 713-728.
- Ihrke, D., Proctor, R. and Gabris, J. (2003). 'Understanding Innovation in Municipal Government: City Council Member Perspectives'. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 25:1, 79-90.
- Ingraham, P.W., Joyce, P.G. and Donahue, A.K. (2003). *Government performance: Why management matters*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. and Baer, J.C. (2012). 'How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms'. *Academy of management Journal*, 55:6, 1264-1294.
- Jung, D.I. and Sosik, J.J. (2002). 'Transformational leadership in work groups: The role of empowerment, cohesiveness, and collective-efficacy on perceived group performance'. *Small group research*, 33:3, 313-336.
- Kazlauskaitė, R., Buciušienė, I., and Turauskas, L. (2011). 'Organisational and psychological empowerment in the HRM-performance linkage'. *Employee Relations*, 34:2, 138-158.
- Kim, S. and Wright, B.E. (2007). 'IT employee work exhaustion toward an integrated model of antecedents and consequences'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:2, 147-170.
- Koberg, C.S., Boss, R.W., Senjem, J.C. and Goodman, E.A. (1999). 'Antecedents and outcomes of empowerment - Empirical evidence from the health care industry'. *Group & Organization Management*, 24:1, 71-91.

- Laschinger, H.K.S., Finegan, J., Shamian, J. and Wilk, P. (2001). 'Impact of structural and psychological empowerment on job strain in nursing work setting'. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 31:5, 260–272.
- Laschinger, H.K.S., Finegan, J.E., Shamian, J. and Wilk, P. (2004). 'A longitudinal analysis of the impact of workplace empowerment on work satisfaction'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 5:4, 527-545.
- Lawler, E., Mohrman, S. and Benson, G. (2001). *Organizing for high-performance: Employee involvement, TQM, reengineering, and knowledge management in the Fortune 1000*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, H., Cayer, N.J. and Lan, G.Z. (2006). 'Changing federal government employee attitudes since the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 26:1, 21-51.
- Leeuw, F.L. (1996). 'Performance auditing, new public management and performance improvement: questions and answers'. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 9:2, 92-102.
- Logan, M.S. and Ganster, D.C. (2007). 'The effects of empowerment on attitudes and performance: The role of social support and empowerment beliefs'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44:8, 1523-1550.
- Matthews, R. A., Diaz, W. M. and Cole, S. G. (2003). 'The organizational empowerment scale'. *Personnel Review*, 32:3, 297–318.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. and Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.
- Mostafa, A.M.S., Gould-Williams, J.S. and Bottomley, P. (2015). 'High-Performance Human Resource Practices and Employee Outcomes: The Mediating Role of Public Service Motivation'. *Public Administration Review*, 75:5, 747-757.
- Muthén, L.K. and Muthén, B.O. (1998-2012). *Mplus User's guide*. Seventh Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Muthén and Muthén.
- Muthén, B.O. and Satorra, A. (1995). 'Complex sample data in structural equation modeling'. *Sociological methodology*, 267-316.
- Naghavi, M., Mohamad, Z. and Sambasivan, M. (2012). 'The Mediating Role of Organizational Innovation on the Relationship between Knowledge Management Processes and Organizational Performance in the Public Sector'. *Knowledge Management International Conference*, July 2012.
- Nicholson-Crotty, S., Nicholson-Crotty, J. and Fernandez, S. (2017). 'Performance and management in the public sector: Testing a model of relative risk aversion'. *Public Administration Review*, 77:4, 603-614.
- Nielsen, K. (2013). 'Review article: How can we make organizational interventions work? Employees and line managers as actively crafting interventions'. *Human Relations*, 66:8, 1029-1050.
- Ostroff, C. and Bowen D.E. (2000). 'Moving human resource to a higher level: Human resource practices and organizational effectiveness', in K.J. Klein and S.W.J. Kozlowski (eds), *Multilevel Theory, Research, and Methods in Organizations*, San Francisco: Ed. Jossey-Bass.

- Patterson, M.G., West, M.A. and Wall, T.D. (2004). 'Integrated manufacturing, empowerment, and company performance'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25:5, 641-665.
- Peccei, R. and Van De Voorde, K. (2016). 'The Application of the Multilevel Paradigm in Human Resource Management—Outcomes Research: Taking Stock and Going Forward'. *Journal of Management*, 0149206316673720.
- Petter, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. and Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Piening, E.P., Baluch, A.M. and Salge, T.O. (2013). 'The relationship between employees' perceptions of human resource systems and organizational performance: Examining mediating mechanisms and temporal dynamics'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98:6, 926.
- Pina, V., Torres, L. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'The Implementation Of Strategic Management In Local Governments. An International Delphi Study'. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 551-590.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5–28.
- Poister, T.H. and Streib, G. (2005). 'Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after two Decades'. *Public Administration Review*, 65:1, 45-56.
- Pollitt, C. (2001). 'Convergence: the useful myth?' *Public Administration*, 79:4, 933–947.
- Preacher, K.J., Zyphur, M.J. and Zhang, Z. (2010). 'A general multilevel SEM framework for assessing multilevel mediation'. *Psychological methods*, 15:3, 209.
- Seibert, S.E., Silver, S.R. and Randolph, W.A. (2004). 'Taking Empowerment to the Next Level: a Multiple-Level Model of Empowerment, Performance, and Satisfaction'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47:3, 332–349.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Sharma, M. and Kaur, G. (2011). 'Workplace empowerment and organizational effectiveness: an empirical investigation of Indian banking sector'. *Academy of Banking Studies Journal*, 10:2, 105.
- Siegall, M. and Gardner, S. (2000). 'Contextual factors of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 29:6, 703-722.
- Smith, T., Capitulo, K.L., Quinn Griffin, M.T. and Fitzpatrick, J.J. (2012). 'Structural empowerment and anticipated turnover among behavioural health nurses'. *Journal of nursing management*, 20:5, 679-684.
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). 'Psychological empowerment in the workplace: dimensions, measurement, and validation'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38:5, 1442-1465.

- Spreitzer, G. M. (1996). 'Social structural characteristics of psychological empowerment'. *Academy of management journal*, 39:2, 483-504.
- Spreitzer, G.M. (2008). 'Taking stock: A review of more than twenty years of research on empowerment at work' In J. Barling and C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational behavior* (pp. 54–72), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Thomas, K. W. and Velthouse, B. A. (1990). 'Cognitive Elements of Empowerment - an Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation'. *Academy of Management Review*, 15:4, 666–681.
- Tims, M. and Bakker, A.B. (2010). 'Job crafting: Towards a new model of individual job redesign'. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 36, 1-9
- Vandenabeele, W., Depré, R., Hondeghem, A. and Yan, S. (2005). 'The motivational patterns of civil servants'. *Viesoji politika ir administravimas*, 13.
- Vermeeren, B., Kuipers, B. and Steijn, B. (2011). 'Two faces of the satisfaction mirror: a study of work environment, job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction in Dutch municipalities'. *Review of public personnel administration*, 31:2, 171-189.
- Walker, R.M. and Boyne, G.A. (2006). 'Public management reform and organizational performance: An empirical assessment of the UK Labour government's public service improvement strategy'. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 25:2, 371-393.
- Wallace, J.V., Johnson, P.D., Mathe, K. and Paul, J. (2011). 'Structural and Psychological Empowerment Climates, Performance, and the Moderating Role of Shared Felt Accountability: A Managerial Perspective'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:4, 840-850.
- Wrzesniewski, A. and Dutton, J.E. (2001). 'Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work'. *Academy of management review*, 26:2, 79-201.

CHAPTER 5.
GOAL ORIENTATION,
PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT
AND WELL-BEING OUTCOMES:
FOCUSING ON THE EMPLOYEES' LEVEL[‡]

[‡] A version of this chapter is under review (second stage) in the *Review of Public Personnel Administration* journal

5.1.- INTRODUCTION

Public employee management has started to pay more attention to the role of the workforce in improving performance (Feeney and DeHart-Davis, 2009; Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017), which is the aim of many public sector management reforms, such as New Public Management (NPM). Hence, employees need to take risks, be more creative, act in a more proactive manner, and find ways to improve the services they provide and performance in general (Pitts, 2005; Diefenbach, 2009). In this environment, psychological empowerment is particularly important (Scotti et al., 2007; Brunetto et al., 2012) since it refers to a set of psychological states that are necessary for individuals to feel a sense of control in their work (Spreitzer, 1995). Since psychological empowerment implies a feeling of awareness of the work context, accountability for personal work output, and, overall, a powerful state of mind (George and Zakkariya, 2014; Gautam and Ghimire, 2017), it could be highly beneficial for optimum service delivery and improving performance in the public context (Taylor, 2013; Van Loon, 2017).

Although some studies have noted the value of the psychological approach to better understand its direct influence on public employees' attitudes (e.g. Fernandez et al., 2015), it has not been widely considered. NPM literature in general has looked at management practices to increase citizens' satisfaction and performance, but it has devoted very little attention to employees' perceptions and experiences (Steijn, 2004). Numerous questions therefore remain unanswered on the consequences and antecedents of psychological empowerment, both in public contexts and in research in general (Maynard et al., 2012). It is particularly important to go deeper into the factors that lead to employees' feelings of empowerment and their consequences (Seibert et al., 2011; Macsinga et al., 2015).

With regard to antecedents, individual orientations and dispositions, such as goal orientation (GO) (e.g. Dweck, 1986), may affect feelings of psychological empowerment, although they have rarely been addressed. Employees' GO might be able to shape their psychological empowerment because it helps to explain individuals' motivations, their work behaviours, interests, interpretations and receptiveness to professional development activities (VandeWalle, 1997; Barrick et al., 2013; Joo et al., 2016). It is an interesting variable to examine in the demanding conditions of the public sector context because it helps to regulate employees' behaviour according to values

associated with their job goals (i.e. learning or/and performance) (Taylor, 2013). As for the consequences, within the context of NPM, employees' satisfaction and commitment have been shown to achieve the success of public organisations (Kim, 2002; Wright and Davis, 2003; Perry, 2004; Park and Rainey, 2007; Hansen and Høst, 2012) and guidance on how they can be increased based on psychological empowerment is an important issue for analysis. Moreover, psychological empowerment may be expected to help employees to cope with job anxiety, which is particularly relevant in the public sector (Jarman et al., 2014), since it is well documented that working with people (i.e. citizens) is a major risk factor in developing anxiety (Wieclaw et al., 2008).

In this context, our purpose in this study is to explore the relationship between GO and psychological empowerment, and between psychological empowerment and three employee well-being outcomes: affective commitment, job satisfaction and job anxiety. To this end, we design an empirical study using a sample of 553 Spanish city council employees and apply structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships proposed in Figure 5.1.

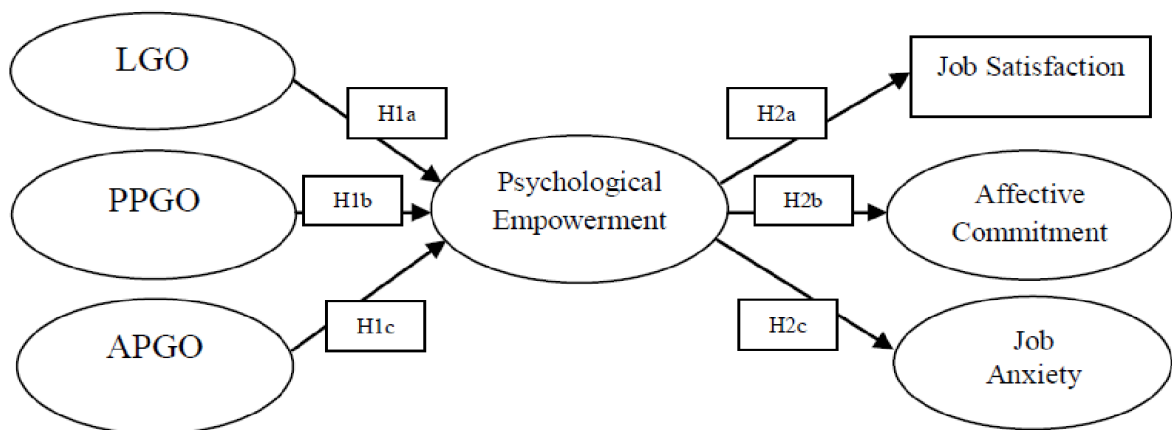
This paper contributes to understanding of psychological empowerment in three main ways. First, we expand on the individual dispositions that lead to psychological empowerment by studying GO as its antecedent, which is a relatively innovative approach in the literature. To the best of our knowledge, only one empirical study (Joo et al., 2016) has addressed the relationship between GO and psychological empowerment, although their study was carried out in the private sector and focused on only one of its dimensions (learning goal orientation). Furthermore, given the distinctive characteristics of public employees—they generally have permanent job tenure, for example—(Barba and Serrano, 2015), one very interesting point in public management practice is to examine the importance of the role that their GO could play in their psychological state and, hence, in their well-being outcomes, which can in turn influence general public sector results. At the same time, we respond to the need to take into account motivational aspects in the public sector (Perry, 2010) by reviewing arguments from the GO literature and previous related research.

Second, we expand on the knowledge about the consequences of psychological empowerment on several well-being variables (Maynard et al., 2014). We consider job satisfaction and affective commitment as representative of eudaimonic well-being related to the self-realisation component, and job anxiety as a health outcome and

hedonic well-being variable related to attaining pleasure and avoiding pain (Ryan and Deci, 2001), and test these variables on a sample of public employees. Thus, we add empirical evidence on health outcomes (hedonic type), which is of interest in that hedonic well-being differs from other types (Van De Voorde et al., 2012).

Finally, we extend research on psychological empowerment by examining it in a novel public sector context: Spanish local authorities. Previous contributions examining psychological empowerment in the public sector have mainly explored the nursing context (e.g. Chang and Liu, 2008; Smith et al., 2010), while studies in the Spanish public sector have generally looked at management issues (e.g. Barba and Serrano, 2015; Torres et al., 2011) and have neglected the employee's viewpoint. It is important to examine how psychological empowerment can be achieved and analyse its effects in a different context from those of previous contributions, given that differences across contexts can have important implications for relationships involving empowerment (Petter et al. 2002; Bamberger, 2008; Seibert et al., 2011; Maynard et al., 2012; Maccinga et al., 2015; Joo et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2017). Since this approach helps to generalise psychological empowerment models, according to Whetten (1989), it can be considered a significant step forward in theoretical development.

Figure 5.1. Hypothesised model.



The next section offers a review of the literature that justifies the relationships proposed in Figure 1. The data and methods are then explained, followed by the results of the analyses. Finally, a discussion of the implications, limitations, and main conclusions is presented.

5.2.- THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

5.2.1.- Psychological empowerment concept

In this study, Spreitzer's (1995) notion of psychological empowerment has been adopted, as it has received greater international recognition and it is the most widely followed by the vast majority of authors. Following Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) conceptualisation, Spreitzer's model (1995: 1444) describes psychological empowerment "as a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact". Meaning concerns the importance that is placed on the individual's job, judged in relation to his or her own ideals or standards. Competence refers to the extent to which a person believes that they can perform task activities skillfully when they try. Self-determination or autonomy is the sense of having choice in initiating and regulating actions. Finally, impact refers to the degree to which individuals perceive that they have an influence over the outcomes at work (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). According to Spreitzer (1995), these cognitions reflect an active, rather than a passive, orientation to a work role; an orientation in which an individual wishes and feels able to shape his or her role and context. All in all, psychological empowerment focuses on employees' beliefs regarding the degree of influence they have over their work (Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995).

5.2.2.- Goal Orientation as an antecedent of psychological empowerment

The Goal Orientation Theory (VandeWalle, 1997; Pintrich, 2000) seeks to discover what leads people to respond differently to achievement settings (Rusk and Rothbaum, 2010) and it can be used to explain the relationships between the different dimensions of GO and psychological empowerment in the context of public administration. Its most recent conception (e.g. VandeWalle, 1997) is the most widely used nowadays (Phan, 2009), and understands goal orientation as "an individual disposition toward developing or validating one's ability in achievement settings", which is shaped by three different factors: *Learning goal orientation* (LGO) is the goal orientation directed toward developing competence by acquiring new abilities and mastering new situations (Dweck, 1986), and it is characterised by a concern with self-development and mastery (Dietz et al., 2015); *Prove-performance goal orientation*

(PPGO) is the aspiration to prove one's competence and to obtain positive judgments about it (VandeWalle, 1997), with an inherent motivation to compete against others (Dietz et al., 2015); and *Avoid-performance goal orientation* (APGO) refers to the desire to avoid disapproval and negative judgments of one's competence (VandeWalle, 1997).

Learning Goal Orientation. Many works have shown important associations between LGO and feelings of own competence (e.g. Payne et al., 2007; Phan, 2009; Cellar et al., 2011). Competence is included in the conceptualisation of psychological empowerment, referring specifically to one of its four dimensions, which takes into account confidence in one's own ability to do the job, the level of self-assurance about one's own capabilities to perform activities, and the level of mastery of the skills needed to perform one's job. People with LGO approach tasks with the intention of developing their skills (Lee et al., 2003), and take pains to understand new information (Wolters, 2003); they are more inclined to set themselves goals to develop ability rather than simply demonstrating their current skill level (VandeWalle, 1997). These characteristics would therefore be expected to have a positive effect on developing and increasing employees' psychological empowerment, since it consists in feeling control over their work and performing activities skillfully, which can be more easily achieved when they are willing to learn and seek to improve their skills. Furthermore, as Brown (2005) points out, people with high mastery orientation (i.e. LGO) show a tendency to have positive affect, and this makes them feel more satisfied with training activities. This tendency is likely to result in higher psychological empowerment, since on many occasions working implies "being trained" or learning new ways of carrying out a task. For instance, in the public sector, where NPM implies that public employees need to learn and master new tasks in order to improve the services they provide, their levels of LGO could play a pivotal role in their feelings of empowerment. All these conjectures were confirmed by the only empirical study to date that has tested the relationship between LGO and psychological empowerment (Joo et al., 2016), which found a positive relationship in employees from consulting firms in Korea. In the context of Spanish city council employees, the positive link is highly plausible. The measures provided for in the Basic Statute of Public Employment —*Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público* (EBEP, 2007)—specifically include training programs for public

employees. Additionally, because civil servants typically enjoy long-term job security (Torres et al., 2011), they are more likely to approach learning activities with a confident state of mind, which allows them to take full advantage of the learning situation. Individuals with a LGO disposition will therefore be more likely to feel they have an influence on the work they do, and to perceive meaningfulness, or capability. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between LGO and psychological empowerment.

Prove-Performance Goal Orientation. Research regarding this GO dimension and its outcomes is less consistent and more controversial (Midgley et al., 2001), since mixed results have been found (e.g. Elliot and Moller, 2003; Payne et al., 2007) depending on whether the more traditional or the revised perspective of goal theory is considered. The more traditional perspective (e.g. Dweck and Legget, 1988) supports the idea that any concern with performance could have negative effects on involvement in a task because of the distraction promoted by attention to comparisons with others or negative self-assessments (Pintrich, 2000). In contrast, according to the most recent perspective, that is, the revised goal theory (Pintrich, 2000), performance goals could be useful, since they provide an external reference by which performance can be evaluated, and a guide for interpreting feedback (Butler and Winne, 1995). This idea has been supported by some empirical research that has associated these goals with outcomes related to positive achievement (e.g. Harackiewicz et al., 2000). Specifically, PPGO has been found as a predictor of self-efficacy, task value, and the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Wolters et al., 1996).

Following the revised goal theory, Elliot and Harackiewicz (1996) state that PPGO, as in the case of LGO, represents an approach orientation grounded in self-regulation according to potential positive results, such as task mastery, which promotes an affective and perceptual-cognitive process that facilitates immersion in the task. Thus, an employee with high PPGO could enhance his feelings of competence, self-determination, impact, and meaning related to his work tasks. Several studies (e.g. Elliot and Moller, 2003; Cellar et al., 2011) have somehow suggested this idea, since they have found positive links between PPGO and feelings of competence. In the public

context, given that the latest reforms have posited the challenge involved in the improvement of human resource management and in the efficient utilisation of public resources, some techniques such as performance evaluation are being implemented (Barba and Serrano, 2015). High-PPGO employees could be reinforced by this new situation, since their individual performance and the comparison with other workmates can come to light, so they can demonstrate and be rewarded for their performance, which at the same time could raise their levels of psychological empowerment.

Moreover, it should be noted that PPGO can be functional or not, depending on the task (Sanusi et al., 2007; Noordzij et al., 2013), so that when tasks are routine and easy, PPGO is functional (Winters and Latham, 1996; Sanusi et al., 2007), but it becomes dysfunctional when tasks are complex, new and have different phases (Earley et al., 1989; Sanusi et al., 2007). In the context of Spanish local governments, higher levels of PPGO in employees can be related to higher levels of psychological empowerment since tasks in this type of workplace are typically routine and well-established, especially following the introduction of NPM (Carter et al., 2011), and are carried out by employees with long tenure in their organisations, which means they are generally familiar with their tasks. As a result, employees with a PPGO disposition may be more likely to experience feelings of competency or impact regarding their work.

On the other hand, PPGO has been shown to be bolstered by both achievement motivation and the fear of failure (Elliot and Church, 1997). Middleton et al. (2004) propose that the weight of each of these dispositions in the PPGO is related to the level of opportunity for success in the particular environment, among other factors. In the context of Spanish local governments, employees' permanent tenure (Barba and Serrano, 2015) together with the reinforcement they gain from the training programs embedded in NPM could lead to a perception that they have great opportunities for gaining benefits, not perceiving a possibility of failure and negative consequences, since they have considerable job security. From these arguments, we infer that psychological empowerment feelings can arise more easily. Therefore, following the above studies, the specific context analysed here, and the revised perspective on goal theory, we hypothesise that:

Hypothesis 1b: There is a positive relationship between PPGO and psychological empowerment.

Avoid-Performance Goal Orientation. As Chadwick and Raver (2015) pointed out, research strongly suggests that APGO is associated with negative outcomes. From both the more traditional and the more recent perspectives of GO theory (Pintrich, 2000), this performance goal is conceptualised as an avoidance orientation based on self-regulation according to possible negative outcomes (Elliot and Harackiewicz, 1996). These authors claim that it engenders a process that complicates optimal task engagement. Hence, feelings of psychological empowerment are probably reduced when having high APGO, since mechanisms related to this latter could hardly foster, for instance, feelings of competence or meaning in an employee. Previous empirical research (e.g. Elliot and Harackiewicz, 1996; Elliot and Church, 1997; Pintrich, 2000) supports this view, since APGO was found to be negatively related to the interest in an activity for its own sake, that is, to the meaning dimension of psychological empowerment. In the same line of arguments, Cellar et al. (2011) and Payne et al. (2007) claimed that the relationship between APGO and judgments of one's own competence is negative. For high-APGO public employees, the possibility of failure after a performance evaluation could enhance the negative feelings of their empowerment. In the context of Spanish local government, employees became used to a freedom and lack of accountability that allayed their fear of failure and insecurity over any possible poor judgment of their performance. Under NPM and the Spanish Basic Statute of the Public Employee, this "bubble" of security has given way to a new situation of challenges and accountability for performance, where employees with a high APGO disposition can find that they have less control over their tasks, or their activities become less meaningful. Therefore, high-APGO employees may perceive a more hostile environment which leads them to feel less psychologically empowered. Accordingly, we put forward the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1c: There is a negative relationship between APGO and psychological empowerment.

5.2.3.- Well-being outcomes of psychological empowerment

Job satisfaction. In the public administration literature one of the most widely studied concepts is job satisfaction (Cantarelli et al., 2016), which is defined as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or

facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (Locke, 1969: 316). This definition suggests that individuals form attitudes towards their jobs by taking into account their feelings, beliefs, and behaviours (Kumari and Pandey, 2011).

As Spreitzer et al. (1997) stated, job satisfaction was one of the first outcomes of psychological empowerment to be studied, and it has been the one that has received the most attention (Dewettinck and Van Amejide, 2011; Maynard et al., 2012). On the basis of Spreitzer's psychological empowerment model, Spreitzer et al. (1997) found a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and work satisfaction.

Moreover, Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model proposes that there are three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of the actual results)—which would correspond to the meaning and impact dimensions of psychological empowerment—that influence beneficial personal and work outcomes, such as job satisfaction, because they provide feelings of personal growth and development about the job. Thus, following these arguments, many studies have been conducted, finding the same positive relationship (e.g. Carless, 2004; Seibert et al., 2004; Dewettinck and Van Amejide, 2011; Li et al., 2013). As Seibert et al. (2011) propose, psychologically empowered workers are likely to feel more intrinsic need fulfillment through work and, therefore, show better levels of job satisfaction.

Empirical evidence of this relationship is not abundant in the public sector (Cho and Faerman, 2010). Only the healthcare field has a relatively large number of studies (e.g. Li et al., 2013), one of the findings being that psychological empowerment is strongly and positively linked to nurses' work satisfaction. With regard to other fields in the public sector, as far as we know, very few studies have dealt with the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. Some examples are Carless' (2004) study, which found this positive relationship in call centers in a public administration, or Harris, Wheeler and Kacmar's (2009) work on full-time employees at a state agency. Despite the context of Spanish local authorities with stagnant wages, recruitment freezes, and increased working hours, psychologically empowered employees from these organisations may also experience higher levels of job satisfaction since such psychological feelings may promote personal growth and fulfillment at work. Therefore, the positive cognitive evaluation of their current work situation—and thus their job satisfaction—will be improved (Judge et al., 2001). All in

all, we expect that, also in local governments, psychological empowerment will yield similar results. Therefore, we hypothesise as follows:

Hypothesis 2a: There is a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction.

Affective commitment. Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment to the organisation characterised by acceptance of the organisation's culture and values and by a desire to remain in such an organisation (Mowday et al., 1982). It denotes the "employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation" (Kim, 2005: 248).

As in the case of job satisfaction, Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model provides a suitable frame to understand this relationship. The three critical psychological states proposed by the model (which would correspond to the meaning and impact dimensions of psychological empowerment) are the cause of positive outcomes in employees, since when employees personally experience responsibility for a task that they are involved in, they experience positive affect. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) also supports this relationship (Dewettinck and Van Ameijde, 2011), since it refers to the rewarding responses of others, which over time offer mutually rewarding transactions and relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Therefore, owing to a process of reciprocation, employees are inclined to be thankful and committed to organisations that make them feel responsible for their work, as well as having feelings of meaning, impact, self-determination, and competence (Liden et al., 2000). Following Spreitzer's (1995) model, Seibert et al. (2011) suggested that the meaning dimension of psychological empowerment leads to affective commitment because it meets the demands of the work role and the individual's needs and values. Moreover, they stated, feelings of autonomy, competence, and impact are expected to increase employees' commitment, since they enhance their ability to express their principles and interests through work.

Several studies have analysed this relationship in the private sector (e.g. Dewettinck and Van Ameijde, 2011; Macinga et al., 2015). As was the case of job satisfaction, healthcare services are a field that has received quite a lot of attention from researchers interested in organisational commitment (e.g. Kraimer et al., 1999). Positive

and significant links have been found between psychological empowerment and affective commitment among nurses, and in other healthcare workplaces (i.e. dental services). Very little empirical research has been carried out in other fields of the public sector, and not only about the psychological approach, but also about empowerment in general and its consequences (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2011). However, the extant but scarce body of work, like Chen and Chen's study (2008) in state-owned enterprises, also supports the positive link between psychological empowerment and organisational commitment. The conditions of Spanish local authority employees favor high feelings of belonging to their organisation because of their long job tenure (Park and Rainey, 2007; Torres et al., 2011). Thus, when they experience high levels of autonomy, competence, impact and meaning related to their job activities, their general affective commitment may be enhanced since their individual values will better fit with their work role. All these argumentations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2b: There is a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and affective commitment.

Anxiety at Work. Anxiety is defined as an emotional state of perceived apprehension and augmented agitation (Spector et al., 1988). It constitutes a measure of general mental health (Goldberg and Hillier, 1979) and is presented in different ways like worry, phobic reactions, and panic attacks (Muschalla et al., 2013). Job anxiety, specifically, is a type of anxiety that is linked to a specific stimulus: the workplace (Muschalla et al., 2010; Muschalla et al., 2013).

Empirical evidence developed in working populations related to health services has shown the negative link between psychological empowerment and employees' variables related to job anxiety and general mental health, such as burnout or job strain (e.g. Laschinger et al., 2001; Hochwalder and Brucefors, 2005). Similar findings have been reported by other types of studies. In their meta-analytic study, Seibert et al. (2011) found that psychological empowerment is related to lower levels of strain. Likewise, Jensen et al. (2013) found that job control (which tallies with the self-determination and impact dimensions of psychological empowerment) contributes to reduce job anxiety levels in government employees. All these findings are consistent with Karasek's (1979) JDC model, which states that perceived control over potential

stressors, such as work decisions and tasks, and feelings of autonomy allow better coping with job demands and reduce perceived strain. In the context of Spanish local authority employees, despite the recent measures to assess performance and the challenging context that could undermine their hedonic well-being, it is expected that if they experience high levels of control over their job activities, they perceive they have an impact on the results, are competent, and have autonomy to act, they will feel less tense, which could reduce their sense of fear, and thus, their job anxiety in general. Taking into account the above empirical and theoretical arguments, the following hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 2c: There is a negative relationship between psychological empowerment and job anxiety.

5.3.- METHOD

5.3.1.- Sample and Data Collection Procedure

In addition to drawing on previous studies (e.g. Rosa et al., 2013; Barba and Serrano, 2015), the data required to test the hypotheses put forward were also obtained from a sample of local authorities in Spanish towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants. We focused on large municipalities since they are able to put into practice more strategic management practices (Poister and Streib, 2005), such as those of NPM. The list of these city councils was taken from the *Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias* (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces) database, which contains all Spanish city councils and their contact information. As our unit of analysis consisted of the employees, a questionnaire was prepared for them, in order to assess goal orientation, psychological empowerment, and attitudinal and health outcomes (job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job anxiety). The questionnaire was uploaded to the internet with a survey application and was reviewed by several workers from four local governments (pretest), in order to test and improve the measures as well as to ensure understanding of all the questions and the adequacy of the online format. After making the necessary improvements to the questionnaire, our data collection procedure involved, first, contacting all the city councils in the population by telephone and identifying the human resource managers, or the person in charge of personnel

management (sometimes the clerk or auditor), in order to explain the study and ask them for their e-mail addresses. E-mails were sent to these managers, asking them to send a message explaining the research to workers from different departments together with the questionnaire to be answered. A telephone follow-up was carried out in order to increment response, as proposed in the literature (Dillman et al., 2009).

Only questionnaires from city councils in which at least four employees had answered the questionnaire were retained, following previous contributions (e.g. Seibert et al., 2004; Shen, 2016) in which samples consisted of several workers from different organisations. As a result, 553 questionnaires completed by public employees from 111 of the 399 local authorities that comprised the population were finally used in our empirical research. At the organisational level, the 111 local authorities participating yielded a response rate of 27.82%, with a sample error of $\pm 7.91\%$ at the 5% significance level. The presence of non-response bias was checked with the commonly used time extrapolation test by performing a *t*-test on the scores of the early and late respondents (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). No significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were found in any of the main or control variables, confirming that there is no evidence of non-response bias in the study. The average number of employees per local authority was five ($SD = 2.69$). The departments surveyed covered a wide range of administrative services provided by a local authority, including, for instance, human resource management, accounting, town planning, tourism, or social services. The participants reported an average of 17 years' experience in their organisations ($SD = 9.63$), and an average age of 47 years ($SD = 7.62$). They were predominantly women (62.6%), and non-supervisors (67.8%).

Some procedural measures were used to help to minimise the risk of common method bias, as suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2012) and Brannick et al. (2010). First, we gave participants an appropriate cover story and instructions. Second, we labeled each section of the questionnaire clearly and provided titles for the variables included. Finally as noted earlier, we gathered data through online questionnaires as opposed to face-to-face interviews. Furthermore, we applied a statistical remedy usually recommended to control for common method bias. We carried out a single-factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) to assess whether common method variance exists. The results of the CFA with all the indicators loading onto a single-factor ($S-B\chi^2 = 6917.864$,

$df=527$; $BBNNFI=0.165$; $CFI=0.216$; $RMSEA=0.148$) revealed a poor fit, suggesting that common method bias is not a problem in this study.

5.3.2.- Measurement of variables

The Appendixes C and D provide a detailed description of the measures used in our research. The scales were constructed originally in English, and therefore we followed standard translation and back-translation procedures to translate the measures into Spanish (see Appendixes A and B).

Psychological Empowerment. Psychological Empowerment was measured with Spreitzer's 12-item Psychological Empowerment Scale (1995). It consists of four subscales, one for each dimension of empowerment: meaning ($\alpha=0.874$), competence ($\alpha=0.858$), self-determination ($\alpha=0.897$), and impact ($\alpha=0.940$), with three items in each of them; it is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Collectively, the 12 items showed high reliability ($\alpha=0.856$).

Goal Orientation. Brett and VandeWalle (1999) scale, specific to work settings, was used to assess the levels of LGO (5 items, $\alpha=0.861$), PPGO (4 items, $\alpha=0.914$), and APGO (4 items, $\alpha=0.809$) of workers; it is a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured with Warr and Inceoglu's (2012) single item using a 7-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = *extremely dissatisfied* and 7 = *extremely satisfied*. The single-item measure has been shown to be importantly correlated with multi-item scales (Wanous et al., 1997) and has frequently been used in previous studies (Vermeeren et al., 2011; Warr and Inceoglu, 2012; Cantarelli et al., 2016).

Affective Commitment. The three items referring to affective commitment within Gellatly et al. (2006) organisational commitment scale were used. These are answered on 6-point Likert-type scale, from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree* ($\alpha=0.876$).

Job Anxiety. Job anxiety was assessed with the instrument of Jensen et al. (2013), which is a 4-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = *not at all* and 4 = *very much*. The final scale with five items showed $\alpha=0.872$.

Controls. Guided by previous studies (e.g. Koberg et al., 1999; Kim, 2002; Ergeneli et al., 2007; Park and Rainey, 2007; Jensen et al., 2013; Maynard et al., 2014),

we controlled for organisational tenure (years working in the city council) and job position (supervisor = 1 or non-supervisor = 0).

5.3.3.- Analytic procedures

The empirical validation of the proposed model was performed using structural equation modeling (SEM). We employed the statistical software EQS 6.2 (Bentler, 2006), using the maximum likelihood estimation method. The chi-square values shown correspond to Satorra and Bentler's (1994) scaled goodness-of-fit statistics, to prevent possible deviations of normality assumption. Apart from chi-square values, several fit indices are reported, given that the sample analysed is large, and that the chi-statistic is sensitive to sample size (Hair et al., 2010).

The data collected presented a non-independent structure, since the 553 employees were working in 111 city councils, and therefore the employees who were serving in the same city council could share some common characteristics that affect the results of the answers. Therefore the analyses were conducted taking this into account, and the city council was used as a variable to nest the responses, implementing Satorra's (1992) correction for clustering.

5.4.- ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) for each scale were conducted to examine the dimensionality of goal orientations (LGO, PPGO, and APGO), psychological empowerment, affective commitment, and job anxiety. First, a CFA was performed to assess the fit of a four-factor model for the 12 items of psychological empowerment, providing a good fit ($S-B\chi^2=106.926$, $df=48$; $BBNNFI=0.971$; $CFI=0.979$; $RMSEA=0.047$). Then, a second-order factor CFA was estimated in which the first-order constructs of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact were each loaded into a single second-order latent construct representing psychological empowerment. The goodness-of-fit indices indicated that the higher-order model also demonstrated an adequate fit to the data ($S-B\chi^2=141.266$, $df=50$; $BBNNFI=0.957$; $CFI=0.967$; $RMSEA=0.058$), so the model supports the higher-order factor structure of psychological empowerment.

Regarding GO, a CFA of the 13 items loading into their corresponding factor (LGO, PPGO and APGO) indicated that the three-factor model demonstrated a good fit

to the data ($S-B\chi^2=219.479$, $df=62$; $BBNNFI=0.906$; $CFI=0.925$; $RMSEA=0.068$), thereby supporting past findings (e.g. Brett and VandeWalle, 1999; VandeWalle et al., 2001).

The CFA of job anxiety showed a poor fit, so one item loading below 0.5 was deleted, following literature recommendations (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2010). After this change, the fit of the model showed acceptable values ($S-B\chi^2=20.557$, $df=5$; $BBNNFI=0.930$; $CFI=0.965$; $RMSEA=0.075$). Finally, for affective commitment, a pooled measurement model of affective commitment and job anxiety was performed to avoid negative degrees of freedom, since it has only three indicators. This model also reported a good fit ($S-B\chi^2=66.904$, $df=19$; $BBNNFI=0.938$; $CFI=0.958$; $RMSEA=0.068$).

In addition, a single measurement model was estimated to assess whether all the measures introduced in the structural model are distinct (Hair et al., 2010). To this end, a CFA was conducted where the three factors of GO, the second order factor of psychological empowerment, job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety correlate, and all items loaded on their respective factors. The output showed a good fit ($S-B\chi^2=1206.254$, $df=501$; $BBNNFI=0.941$; $CFI=0.947$; $RMSEA=0.05$), and indicated that all items' factor loadings were significant ($p<0.01$) and above the cutoff value.

Table 5.1. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. LGO	1.00							
2. PPGO	0.169***	1.00						
3. APGO	-0.192**	0.472***	1.00					
4. Psychological empowerment	0.527***	0.258***	0.091	1.00				
5. Job satisfaction	0.123	0.006	-0.017	0.230**	1.00			
6. Affective commitment	0.145**	0.190***	0.154***	0.681***	0.221**	1.00		
7. Job anxiety	-0.186***	0.073	0.168***	-0.174**	-0.228***	-0.124*	1.00	
8. Tenure	-0.016	-0.013	0.001	0.017	0.000	0.004	-0.015	1.00
Mean	5.869	3.866	2.829	5.429	5.20	4.162	1.168	17.3
Standard deviation	0.899	1.514	1.374	0.836	1.389	1.181	0.619	9.63

Note. N = 553.

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$

Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations among the estimated latent variables, following Maynard et al.'s (2014) presentation, are shown in Table 5.1. Notably, the three dimensions of GO are significantly correlated among them. Psychological empowerment is also highly correlated with LGO, and also with PPGO, but no significant correlation is exhibited with APGO. In turn, psychological empowerment also shows significant correlations with job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job anxiety. These findings provide partial and preliminary support for the proposed relationships.

The relationships to be estimated for the structural model are presented in Table 5.2. The overall fit was acceptable, taking into account the value of the fit indices ($S-B\chi^2=1274.559$, $df=569$; $BBNNFI=0.909$; $CFI=0.918$; $RMSEA=0.047$).

Table 5.2. Results of the estimated parameters

Path to	Path from	Hypotheses	Standardised beta
Psychological empowerment	LGO	H1a: +	0.375***
	PPGO	H1b: +	0.112
	APGO	H1c: -	0.107
	Organisational tenure		0.104*
	Job position		0.391***
Job satisfaction	Psychological empowerment	H2a: +	0.478***
	Organisational tenure		-0.009
	Job position		-0.246***
Affective commitment	Psychological empowerment	H2b: +	0.717***
	Organisational tenure		-0.029
	Job position		-0.198***
Job anxiety	Psychological empowerment	H2c: -	-0.280***
	Organisational tenure		-0.119**
	Job position		0.260***

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$

GO as an Antecedent of Psychological Empowerment. In Hypothesis 1a, LGO was proposed as associated with psychological empowerment. The statistical values provide support for this hypothesis ($\beta=0.375$, $p<0.001$), and therefore psychological empowerment is strongly associated with LGO. Hypothesis 1b is not

supported, since there is no significant relationship between PPGO and psychological empowerment. Similarly, Hypothesis 1c is not confirmed either, since the relationship found between APGO and psychological empowerment is not significant.

Outcomes of Psychological Empowerment. Hypothesis 2a was supported as more psychologically empowered employees feel more satisfied at work. Similarly, consistent with Hypothesis 2b, feeling more psychological empowerment leads to feel more attachment and commitment to the organisation. Finally, Hypothesis 2c was also confirmed, since job anxiety is significant and negatively linked to psychological empowerment ($\beta=-0.280$, $p<0.001$). Those who feel higher levels of psychological empowerment experience reduced levels of job anxiety.

The **indirect effects of learning goal orientation on outcome variables** via psychological empowerment can also be reported by jointly taking into account the direct effects reported above. The findings show an indirect effect of LGO through psychological empowerment for job satisfaction ($\beta=0.179$, $p<0.001$), affective commitment ($\beta=0.269$, $p<0.001$), and job anxiety ($\beta=-0.105$, $p<0.01$). No significant indirect effect was found in either the case of PPGO or of APGO. Therefore, apart from the direct effects that psychological empowerment has on well-being, it also seems to channel LGO feelings into increased well-being.

5.5.- DISCUSSION

5.5.1.- Theoretical contributions

The results shed light on the individual dispositions which act as drivers of psychological empowerment. We support the positive association between LGO and psychological empowerment, following past findings (e.g. Joo et al., 2016), and confirm this relationship for public employees. Therefore, employees with high LGO, who are willing to look for opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge and take risks to develop their work ability to better serve citizens, are more inclined to have a high level of motivation for their job, a feeling of competence in their tasks, of having autonomy and freedom to develop their work activities, and of making a contribution to their department, constituting a psychologically empowered workforce for these organisations.

With regard to PPGO, we did not find a significant relationship. Therefore, it could be possible that, in the public context, both GO perspectives (the traditional and

the revised) arise and offset each other, leading to a null relationship. One possible explanation for this finding is that PPGO is not a “pure” form of regulation, in contrast to LGO and APGO (Elliot and Church, 1997). Rather, it is a complex construct driven by two different motivations: achievement and avoidance (Elliot and Church, 1997). Therefore, when achievement is the motivation that is activated, individuals can feel and behave in a similar way and obtain comparable results to those with high LGO (Elliot, 1999). In contrast, when avoidance motivation is activated, PPGO individuals may evidence fear of challenge and a focus on negative information, similarly to those with high APGO (Li and Bagger, 2008). It could be possible that the current mainstream of individual performance evaluation in Spanish public organisations can lead some high-PPGO employees to activate an achievement motivation, but perhaps, given their special condition of indefinite tenure in their job, other high-PPGO individuals may activate avoidance motivation and behave in a different way, since they might be resistant to pursuing performance aims (Serna, 2008). This mixed reality could lead to compensated effects that offset and cancel each other out.

APGO was not found to be negatively linked to psychological empowerment. A possible explanation for these findings could be the fact that this goal orientation can be expressed as an active removal or a passive rumination of an unpleasant situation (Elliot and Sheldon, 1998). As these authors argue, when APGO is manifested in an active behaviour trying to stop a negative situation, the outcomes are less detrimental and APGO is linked to specific approach-oriented sub-goals, so it may involve active and adequate forms of regulation (Elliot and Sheldon, 1998). Perhaps public employees in the context studied do not tend to ruminate and act passively. Rather, since they are in a workplace where they usually enjoy indefinite tenure and special status as a result (Torres et al., 2011), their most common behaviour is to remove a situation in which they feel afraid of not performing well by giving such tasks to other workmates or simply not performing them.

Furthermore, the confirmation of the hypotheses regarding psychological empowerment and its outcomes contribute to the growing body of research on the different psychological consequences in employees. The positive effect of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction has once again been confirmed (Spreitzer, 1995; Carless, 2004; Harris et al., 2009). Thus, it is clearly demonstrated that feeling a high level of motivation for the job, being competent in the tasks involved in the job, feeling

they enjoy self-government and freedom to carry out the daily activities, and feeling they are making a difference to the work unit through their own work, also help to enhance job satisfaction for city council employees. In the same line, our results confirm the positive link between psychological empowerment and affective commitment found in previous studies (Dewettinck and Van Ameijde, 2011; Macinga et al., 2015), supporting the norm of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). If Spanish local authority employees feel psychologically empowered, they are more likely to have a strong sense of belonging to their city council, since they feel a kind of gratitude towards the organisation as a consequence of reciprocation. Both the effects on job satisfaction and on affective commitment found in this study allow us to confirm that eudaimonic well-being, that is, fit between values and desires, and these employees' work conditions, are achieved when they reach a psychologically empowered state of mind.

In addition, psychological empowerment has emerged as a considerable variable to reduce levels of job anxiety. These findings provide interesting empirical support for the reaffirmation of psychological empowerment as a “protector” against ill health (Hochwalder and Brucefors, 2005). In line with Karasek's (1979) JDC model, our results suggest that the feeling of having influence on the course of tasks to produce an impact on the job would reduce job anxiety levels in local authority employees. It is therefore confirmed that the psychologically empowered state of mind contributes to hedonic well-being, since it leads to the avoidance of pain and induces a feeling of calm in these employees. Psychological empowerment therefore helps to improve both eudaimonic and hedonic employee well-being.

5.5.2.- Practical implications

Some practical implications can be derived from our study. To start with, the results suggest the value of employees' motivations to have healthier and more committed staff. In this regard, staff selection systems should be improved in the sense that they need to take into account employees' competences and attitudes (e.g. LGO) as far as the legal regulations regarding public employees' selection allow it. This is even more important in the case of public organisations than in the private sector, since public employees generally have an indefinite stay in the organisation (Barba and Serrano, 2015). For example, in the case of the Spanish Public Administration, there are

different kinds of selection systems to gain access to public employment. Nevertheless, they focus mainly on proving the candidate is in possession of the knowledge and the skills to be applied in the workplace, through written tests. Interviews and psychological tests may be included, but this is a point that is weakly emphasised. Therefore, it would be advisable to incorporate and carry out tests on a more regular basis to evaluate the LGO of employees, and thus to complement the knowledge and skills requirements. Given the appearance of NPM and its new ideas about the importance of human resources and their involvement and importance to improve services for citizens, seeking to have more learning goal-oriented employees can help to guide the improvement of the services.

But could employees' LGO also be enhanced? Although LGO is a relatively stable personal disposition, it can also be influenced through external factors (Button et al., 1996; Johnson et al., 2011), so it would be advisable to utilise techniques that cultivate and sustain LGO in city council employees. Thus, it is suggested that LGO can be induced by setting learning goals aimed at improving rather than demonstrating competencies, as well as creating an LGO climate that drives learning and development (Sanusi et al., 2007; Noordzij et al., 2013). It could therefore be useful to provide training sessions that allow employees to become aware and assess their learning goals (i.e. establishing a motto, explanation of theory and examples of learning goals or balance sheets, practice in determining learning goals or completing balance sheets, feedback from trainer and workmates, reinforcement exercises to do at home, discussions, etc.). Local government managers should take these tools into consideration and encourage supervisors to model LGO and help to promote a continuous learning culture within the organisation.

Secondly, and related to the above, the study highlights the key role of psychological empowerment and its power to generate favorable outcomes in public employees. As noted earlier, having satisfied and committed staff is fundamental in the new paradigm of NPM (Perry, 2004). Therefore, the organisational outcomes derived from these positive attitudes of employees are likely to be better than if they do not feel committed or satisfied. Furthermore, anxiety disorders and their detrimental effects are a problem in the private and, even more so, the public sector (McHugh, 1998). This is a problem that can result in a high cost for organisations if, for example, it results in time off work due to sickness. From our findings, local government managers should

promote measures to take care of and improve psychological feelings of competence, meaning, impact, and self-determination among the workforce. Further still, a more visible psychological empowerment culture could be enhanced and it would be appropriate to help public supervisors and employees in general to identify the feelings, attitudes, and behaviours related to the empowerment mindset.

5.5.3.- Limitations and future directions

The results of this work must be considered in the light of its limitations. First, the sample for the study focuses on public-sector employees in Spanish local governments. Thus, despite the fact that our research offers an important contribution concerning existing work in the psychological empowerment framework, future work in other public settings is needed in order to generalise the model. Furthermore, the data were obtained at a single point in time, so we cannot infer causality. Therefore, a longitudinal design could be useful in future empirical studies conducted to rigorously assess the causal order in this hypothesised model. Although this research has expanded psychological empowerment theory and its relationships, more remains to be unraveled.

5.5.4.- Conclusion

This study extends research in the field of psychological empowerment, indicating a strong and significant relationship between LGO and psychological empowerment, and between psychological empowerment and the well-being outcomes of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job anxiety, using a sample of Spanish local authority employees. The Spanish context of local governments is representative of NPM ideals, with a growing concern to improve efficiency (Garcia, 2007). At the same time, resistance to change from the latent 'administrative law culture' (Serna, 2008; Torres et al., 2011) and recent reforms, stagnant wages, frozen recruitment, and increased working hours due to the crisis that began in 2008, have all generated an hostile environment for employees (López-Andreu, 2017). This workforce, mostly represented by civil servants with a long tenure and consequent special status (Torres et al., 2011), may perceive these circumstances as threatening, and experience detrimental feelings as a result. Our findings help to corroborate that if these employees feel psychologically empowered, their well-being will be enhanced, all of which can be

brought about by high levels of LGO. Ultimately, this can improve service delivery and general performance in local authorities.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, J. S. and Overton, T. S. (1977). 'Estimating nonresponse bias in mail surveys'. *Journal of marketing research*, 14, 396-402.
- Bagozzi, R. P. and Yi, Y. (1988). 'On the evaluation of structural equation models'. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 16, 74-94.
- Bamberger, P. (2008). 'From the editors beyond contextualization: Using context theories to narrow the micro-macro gap in management research'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51:5, 839-846.
- Barba, M. I. and Serrano, J. (2015). '¿Es útil la gestión de los recursos humanos en los ayuntamientos? Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21, 9-16.
- Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K. and Li, N. (2013). 'The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics'. *Academy of management review*, 38:1, 132-153.
- Basic Statute of Public Employment, Act 7/2007, 12 April. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, Spain, 13 April 2007, 89, 16270-16299.
- Bentler, P.M. (2006). EQS 6 Structural Equations Program Manual. Encino, California: Multivariate Software, Inc.
- Brannick, M.T., Chan, D., Conway, J.M., Lance, C.E. and Spector, P.E. (2010). 'What is method variance and how can we cope with it? A panel discussion'. *Organizational Research Methods*, 13:3, 407-420.
- Brett, J. F. and VandeWalle, D. (1999). 'Goal Orientation and Goal Content as predictors of performance in a training program'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84:6, 863-873.
- Brown, K. G. (2005). 'An examination of the structure and nomological network of trainee reactions: a closer look at " smile sheets' '. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90:5, 991-1001.
- Brunetto, Y., Shacklock, K., Bartram, T., Leggat, S. G., Farr-Wharton, R., Stanton, P. and Casimir, G. (2012). 'Comparing the impact of leader-member exchange, psychological empowerment and affective commitment upon Australian public and private sector nurses: implications for retention'. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23:11, 2238-2255.
- Button, S. B., Mathieu, J. E. and Zajac, D. M. (1996). 'Goal orientation in organizational research: A conceptual and empirical foundation'. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 67:1, 26-48.
- Cantarelli, P., Belardinelli, P. and Belle, N. (2016). 'A meta-analysis of job satisfaction correlates in the public administration literature'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 36:2, 115-144.

- Carless, S. A. (2004). 'Does Psychological Empowerment Mediate the Relationship Between Psychological Climate and Job Satisfaction?' *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 18:4, 405–425.
- Carter, B., Danford, A., Howcroft, D., Richardson, H., Smith, A. and Taylor, P. (2011). 'All they lack is a chain': lean and the new performance management in the British civil service'. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 26:2, 83-97.
- Cellar, D. F., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Young, S. K., Fisher, D. M., Adair, C. K., Haynes, S., Twichell, E., Arnold, K. A., Royer, K., Denning, B. L. and Riester, D. (2011). 'Trait Goal Orientation, Self-Regulation, and Performance: A Meta-Analysis'. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 26:4, 467–483.
- Chadwick, I. C. and Raver, J. L. (2015). 'Motivating Organizations to Learn: Goal Orientation and Its Influence on Organizational Learning'. *Journal of Management*, 41:3, 957–986.
- Chang, L.-C. and Liu, C.-H. (2008). 'Employee empowerment, innovative behavior and job productivity of public health nurses: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey'. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45:10, 1442–1448.
- Chen, H. F. and Chen, Y. C. (2008). 'The impact of work redesign and psychological empowerment on organizational commitment in a changing environment: An example from Taiwan's state-owned enterprises'. *Public Personnel Management*, 37:3, 279-302.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130–154.
- Cropanzano, R. and Mitchell, M.S. (2005). 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review'. *Journal of management*, 31:6, 874-900.
- Dewettinck, K. and Van Ameijde, M. (2011). 'Linking leadership empowerment behavior to employee attitudes and behavioral intentions. Testing the mediating role of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 40:3, 284-305.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Dietz, B., van Knippenberg, D., Hirst, G. and Restubog, S. L. D. (2015). 'Outperforming whom? A multilevel study of performance-prove goal orientation, performance, and the moderating role of shared team identification'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100:6, 1811-1824.
- Dillman, D.A., Smyth J.D. and Christian L, (2009). *Internet, Mail and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). 'Motivational Processes Affecting Learning'. *American Psychologist*, 41:10, 1040-1048.
- Dweck, C. S. and Leggett, E. L. (1988). 'A social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality'. *Psychological review*, 95:2, 256-273.
- Earley P.C., Connolly T. and Ekegren G. (1989). 'Goals, strategy development, and task performance: Some limits on the efficacy of goal setting'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74, 24–33.

- Elliot, A. J. (1999). 'Approach and avoidance motivation and achievement goals'. *Educational psychologist*, 34:3, 169-189.
- Elliot, A. J. and Church, M. A. (1997). 'A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72:1, 218-232.
- Elliot, A. J. and Harackiewicz, J. M. (1996). 'Approach and Avoidance Achievement goals and intrinsic motivation: a meditational analysis'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70:3, 461-475.
- Elliot, A.J. and Moller, A. C. (2003). 'Performance-approach goals: good or bad forms of regulation?' *International Journal of Educational Research*, 39:4-5, 339-356.
- Elliot, A. J. and Sheldon, K. M. (1998). 'Avoidance personal goals and the personality-illness relationship'. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 75:5, 1282-1299.
- Ergeneli, A., Ari, G. S. I. and Metin, S. (2007). 'Psychological empowerment and its relationship to trust in immediate managers'. *Journal of Business Research*, 60:1, 41-49.
- Feeney, M. K. and DeHart-Davis, L. (2009). 'Bureaucracy and public employee behavior a case of local government'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 29:4, 311-326.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2011). 'Empowering Public Sector Employees to Improve Performance: Does It Work?' *The American Review of Public Administration*, 41:1, 23-47.
- Fernandez, S., Resh, W. G., Moldogaziev, T. and Oberfield, Z. W. (2015). 'Assessing the past and promise of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey for public management research: A research synthesis'. *Public Administration Review*, 75:3, 382-394.
- Gautam, D. K. and Ghimire, S. B. (2017). 'Psychological Empowerment of Employees for Competitive Advantages: An Empirical Study of Nepalese Service Sector'. *International Journal of Law and Management*, 59:4, 466-488.
- Garcia, M.I. (2007). 'La nueva gestión pública: evolución y tendencias'. *Presupuesto y Gasto Público*, 47, 37-64.
- Gellatly, I. R., Meyer, J. P. and Luchak, A. A. (2006). 'Combined effects of the three commitment components on focal and discretionary behaviors: A test of Meyer and Herscovitch's propositions'. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, 331-345.
- George, E. and Zakkariya, K. A. (2014). 'Employees' perception of empowerment: a comparative study among different sectors of banks'. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management* 4, 6:2, 132-145.
- Goldberg, D. P. and Hillier, V. F. (1979). 'A scaled version of the general health questionnaire'. *Psychological Medicine*, 9, 139-145.
- Hackman, J. R. and Oldham, G. R. (1976). 'Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory'. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 16:2, 250-279.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. and Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis. A global perspective* (7th Eds.). NY: Pearson.
- Hansen, J. R. and Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.

- Harackiewicz, J. M., Barron, K. E., Tauer, J. M., Carter, S. M. and Elliot, A. J. (2000). 'Short-term and long-term consequences of achievement goals: Predicting interest and performance over time'. *Journal of educational psychology*, 92:2, 316-330.
- Harris, K. J., Wheeler, A. R. and Kacmar, K. M. (2009). 'Leader-member exchange and empowerment: Direct and interactive effects on job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and performance'. *Leadership Quarterly*, 20:3, 371-382.
- Hochwalder, J. and Brucefors, A. B. (2005). 'Psychological empowerment at the workplace as a predictor of ill health'. *Personality and individual differences*, 39:7, 1237-1248.
- Jarman, L., Martin, A., Venn, A., Otahal, P., Taylor, R., Teale, B. and Sanderson, K. (2014). 'Prevalence and correlates of psychological distress in a large and diverse public sector workforce: baseline results from Partnering Healthy@ Work'. *BMC public health*, 14:1, 1-11.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. and Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Johnson, P. D., Shull, A. and Wallace, J. C. (2011). 'Regulatory focus as a mediator in goal orientation and performance relationships'. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32:5, 751-766.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. and Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E. and Patton, G. K. (2001). 'The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127:3, 376-407.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). 'Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign'. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Kim, P. B., Lee, G. and Jang, J. (2017). 'Employee empowerment and its contextual determinants and outcome for service workers: a cross-national study'. *Management Decision*, 55:5.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public administration review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Kim, S. (2005). 'Individual-level factors and organizational performance in government organizations'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 15:2, 245-261.
- Kim, S. and Wright, B. E. (2007). 'IT employee work exhaustion toward an integrated model of antecedents and consequences'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:2, 147-170.
- Koberg, C. S., Boss, R. W., Senjem, J. C. and Goodman, E. A. (1999). 'Antecedents and outcomes of empowerment - Empirical evidence from the health care industry'. *Group & Organization Management*, 24:1, 71-91.
- Kraimer, M. L., Seibert, S. E. and Liden, R. C. (1999). 'Psychological empowerment as a multidimensional construct: A test of construct validity'. *Educational and Psychological measurement*, 59:1, 127-142.
- Kumari, G. and Pandey, M. (2011). 'Job Satisfaction in Public Sector and Private Sector: a comparison'. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 2:3, 222-228.

- Laschinger, H. K. S., Finegan, J., Shamian, J. and Wilk, P. (2001). 'Impact of structural and psychological empowerment on job strain in nursing work setting'. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 31:5, 260–272.
- Lee, C., Tinsley, C. and Bobko, P. (2003). 'Cross-cultural Variance in Goal Orientations and their Effects'. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 52:2, 272-297.
- Li, A. and Bagger, J. (2008). 'Role ambiguity and self-efficacy: The moderating effects of goal orientation and procedural justice'. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 73:3, 368–375.
- Li, I. C., Kuo, H. T., Huang, H. C., Lo, H. L. and Wang, H. C. (2013). 'The mediating effects of structural empowerment on job satisfaction for nurses in long-term care facilities'. *Journal of nursing management*, 21:3, 440-448.
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J. and Sparrowe, R. T. (2000). 'An examination of the mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relations between the job, interpersonal relationships, and work outcomes'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85:3, 407–416.
- Locke, E.A. (1969). 'What is job satisfaction?'. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 4:4, 309-336.
- López-Andreu, M. (2017). 'All precarious? Institutional change and turning points in labour market trajectories in Spain: Insights from narrative biographies'. *Employee Relations*, 39:3, 408-422.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. and Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263–276.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. and Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.
- Maynard, M. T., Luciano, M. M., D’Innocenzo, L., Mathieu, J. E. and Dean, M. D. (2014). 'Modeling time-lagged reciprocal psychological empowerment–performance relationships'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99:6, 1244-1253.
- McHugh, M. (1998). 'Rationalization as a key stressor for public sector employees: an organizational case study'. *Occupational medicine*, 48:2, 103-112.
- Middleton, M. J., Kaplan, A. and Midgley, C. (2004). 'The change in middle school students' achievement goals in mathematics over time'. *Social Psychology of Education*, 7:3, 289-311.
- Midgley, C., Kaplan, A. and Middleton, M. (2001). 'Performance-approach goals: Good for what, for whom, under what circumstances, and at what cost?' *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93:1, 77–86.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. W. and Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Muschalla, B., Heldmann, M. and Fay, D. (2013). 'The significance of job-anxiety in a working population'. *Occupational medicine*, 63:6, 415-421.
- Muschalla, B., Linden, M. and Olbrich, D. (2010). 'The relationship between job-anxiety and trait-anxiety—A differential diagnostic investigation with the Job-Anxiety-Scale and the State-Trait-Anxiety-Inventory'. *Journal of anxiety disorders*, 24:3, 366-371.

- Nicholson-Crotty, S., Nicholson-Crotty, J. and Fernandez, S. (2017). 'Performance and management in the public sector: Testing a model of relative risk aversion'. *Public Administration Review*, 77:4, 603-614.
- Noordzij, G., Hoofst, E. A., Mierlo, H., Dam, A. and Born, M. P. (2013). 'The effects of a learning-goal orientation training on self-regulation: A field experiment among unemployed job seekers'. *Personnel Psychology*, 66:3, 723-755.
- Park, R.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Payne, S. C., Youngcourt, S. S. and Beaubien, J. M. (2007). 'A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Goal Orientation Nomological Net'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92:1, 128-150.
- Perry, J. L. (2010). 'A strategic agenda for public human resource management research'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 30:1, 20-43.
- Perry, R. W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Petters, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. and Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Phan, H. P. (2009). 'Relations between goals, self-efficacy, critical thinking and deep processing strategies: a path analysis'. *Educational Psychology*, 29:7, 777-799.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2000). 'Multiple goals, multiple pathways: The role of goal orientation in learning and achievement'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92:3, 544-555.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Lee, J.Y. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2003). 'Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88:5, 879-903.
- Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2012). 'Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it'. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 63, 539-569.
- Poister, T. H. and Streib, G. (2005). 'Elements of Strategic Planning and Management in Municipal Government: Status after two Decades'. *Public Administration Review*, 65:1, 45-56.
- Rosa, C. P., Morote, R. P. and Colomina, C. I. M. (2013). 'Performance Improvement in the Spanish Local Government: A Proposal for Internal Control in Social Care Services'. *International Business Research*, 6:4, 10-24.
- Rusk, N. and Rothbaum, F. (2010). 'From stress to learning: Attachment theory meets goal orientation theory'. *Review of General Psychology*, 14:1, 31.
- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2001). 'On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being'. *Annual review of psychology*, 52:1, 141-166.
- Sanusi, Z. M., Iskandar, T. M. and Poon, J. M. (2007). 'Effects of Goal Orientation and Task Complexity on Audit Judgment Performance'. *Malaysian Accounting Review*, 6:2, 123-139.

- Satorra, A. (1992). 'Asymptotic robust inferences in the analysis of mean and covariance structures'. *Sociological Methodology*, 22, 249-278.
- Satorra, A. and Bentler, P.M. (1994). 'Corrections to test statistics and standard errors in covariance structure analysis', in A. von Eye and C. C. Clogg (eds.), *Latent variables analysis: Applications for developmental research* (pp. 399–419). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scotti, D.J., Harmon, J. and Behson, S.J. (2007). 'Links among High-Performance Work Environment, Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: An Extension to the Healthcare Sector'. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 52:2, 109–125.
- Seibert, S.E., Silver, S.R. and Randolph, W.A. (2004). 'Taking Empowerment to the Next Level: a Multiple-Level Model of Empowerment, Performance, and Satisfaction'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47:3, 332–349.
- Seibert, S.E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Shen, J. (2016). 'Principles and applications of multilevel modeling in human resource management research'. *Human Resource Management*, 55:6, 951-965.
- Smith, L., Andrusyszyn, M. A. and Laschinger, H. K. (2010). 'Effects of workplace incivility and empowerment on newly-graduated nurses' organizational commitment'. *Journal of nursing management*, 18:8, 1004-1015.
- Spector, P. E., Dwyer, D. J. and Jex, S. M. (1988). 'Relation of job stressors to affective, health, and performance outcomes: a comparison of multiple data sources'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 73:1, 11-19.
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). 'Psychological empowerment in the workplace: dimensions, measurement, and validation'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38:5, 1442-1465.
- Spreitzer, G.M., Kizilos, M.A. and Nason, S.W. (1997). 'A dimensional analysis of the relationship between psychological empowerment and effectiveness, satisfaction, and strain'. *Journal of Management*, 23:5, 679–704.
- Steijn, B. (2004). 'Human resource management and job satisfaction in the Dutch public sector'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:4, 291-303.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Thomas, K. W. and Velthouse, B. A. (1990). 'Cognitive Elements of Empowerment - an Interpretive Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation'. *Academy of Management Review*, 15:4, 666–681.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.

- Van De Voorde, K., Paauwe, J. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2012). 'Employee well-being and the HRM–organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies'. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14:4,391-407.
- Van Loon, N. M. (2015). 'Does context matter for the type of performance-related behavior of public service motivated employees?' *Review of public personnel administration*, 37:4, 405–429.
- VandeWalle, D. (1997). 'Development and Validation of a work domain goal orientation instrument'. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 57:6, 995-1015.
- VandeWalle, D., Cron, W. L. and Slocum Jr, J. W. (2001). 'The role of goal orientation following performance feedback'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86:4, 629-640.
- Vermeeren, B., Kuipers, B. and Steijn, B. (2011). 'Two faces of the satisfaction mirror: a study of work environment, job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction in Dutch municipalities'. *Review of public personnel administration*, 31:2, 171-189.
- Wanous, J. P., Reichers, A. E. and Hudy, M. J. (1997). 'Overall job satisfaction: how good are single-item measures?' *Journal of applied Psychology*, 82:2, 247-252.
- Warr, P. and Inceoglu, I. (2012). 'Job Engagement, Job Satisfaction, and Contrasting Associations With Person–Job Fit'. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17:2, 129-138.
- Whetten, D.A. (1989). 'What constitutes a theoretical contribution?' *Academy of Management Review*, 14:4, 490-495.
- Wieclaw, J., Agerbo, E., Mortensen, P. B., Burr, H., Tuchsén, F. and Bonde, J. P. (2008). 'Psychosocial working conditions and the risk of depression and anxiety disorders in the Danish workforce'. *BMC Public Health*, 8:1, 280.
- Winters, D. and Latham, G. P. (1996). 'The effect of learning versus outcome goals on a simple versus a complex task'. *Group & Organization Management*, 21:2, 236-250.
- Wolters, C. A. (2003). 'Understanding procrastination from a self-regulated learning perspective'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95:1, 179-187.
- Wolters, C, Yu, S. and Pintrich, P. R. (1996). 'The relation between goal orientation and students' motivational beliefs and self-regulated learning'. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 8, 211-238.
- Wright, B. E. and Davis, B. S. (2003). 'Job Satisfaction in the Public Sector. The role of the Work Environment'. *American Review of Public Administration*, 33:1, 70-90.

CHAPTER 6.
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE DOCTORAL
THESIS

6.1.- Theoretical implications of the research results

This thesis has allowed us to shed light on the relationships involving empowerment in the public sector through the development of three studies, with a view to fulfilling the different objectives set out in the Introduction section.

Firstly, two of the objectives referred to examining possible ways that lead to the enhancement of organisational performance, since it constitutes a key factor within the NPM mainstream and the prevailing obligation of the accountability and improvement of the services delivered that is inherent in this trend (Pitts, 2005; Torres et al., 2011). In this sense, from our findings we claim that three variables arise as being relevant for this aim: structural empowerment at the organisational level, and psychological empowerment and job anxiety at the individual level. The positive link between structural empowerment and organisational performance contributes to reinforce social capital theory (Seibert et al., 2001) in the context of local governments. Thus, it is suggested that the application of empowerment can build an organisational network that helps employees to arm themselves so as to be able to face their work and to serve citizens in a way that improves organisational outcomes. Likewise, our results are consistent with recent ‘black box’ arguments of public management, which claim that the establishment of a system, such as structural empowerment, contributes to create a more general structure in the organisation that in turn helps to improve performance and service quality (Burgess, 1975; Andrews and Boyne, 2010).

Furthermore, from the cross-level examinations, the results support the power of job anxiety, thereby enlarging the body of research on how to stimulate performance in public settings. It is thus confirmed that stress and strain symptoms lead to a state of tension and low energy that undermines performance (Sackey and Sanda, 2009) and, conversely, if staff job anxiety levels are reduced, organisational performance will get better. Finally, the importance of psychological empowerment for enhancing organisational performance found in our study supports the ideas proposed by Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995): by having employees who feel competence at work, autonomy to perform daily activities, power to impact on the results and are doing a meaningful job, local authorities can improve the service they offer and, consequently, overall performance.

Secondly, we have explored the effects of structural empowerment for different outcomes, i.e. organisational performance (noted above) and well-being of employees,

thereby providing insights about the dilemma of the mutual gains/conflictive outcomes perspectives of HRM and the 'dark side' of NPM. From the positive and significant linkage between structural empowerment and organisational performance, and from the negative and significant relationship between structural empowerment and levels of job anxiety, we confirm the mutual gains perspective of the HR literature (e.g. Peccei et al., 2013), in contrast to our expectations. Thus, structural empowerment arises as beneficial for both organisational performance and employees' health. This differs from the 'dark side' ideas in the NPM literature and the conflicting outcomes perspective of HRM (Chandler et al., 2002; Jensen et al., 2013). Since NPM changes are being implemented at a slower pace in Spain, perhaps employees do not experience the strain we expected. Theoretically, Karasek's (1979) JDC model provides us with support for this idea. Structural empowerment means higher decision-making power and more control in the employees' hands, which helps them to better cope with the demands of their jobs and reduce perceived strain. Focusing on the context examined, the sovereign model of governance that characterises the Spanish public administration, with numerous civil servants with permanent, or indefinite, contracts, may lead them to feel greater job security, without fearing new trials. Nevertheless, the insignificant links between structural empowerment and job satisfaction and affective commitment provide some support for the sceptical view of HRM (no effect of HRM on employees' well-being) (Peccei, 2004). It seems that despite the positive effects of structural empowerment for organisational performance, eudaimonic well-being is not enhanced. This, therefore, partially confirms the 'dark side' of NPM (Diefenbach, 2009).

The distinction among the well-being variables can help us to explain the results found. They are of different natures (hedonic: job anxiety; eudaimonic: job satisfaction and affective commitment), and so job satisfaction and affective commitment could display a different pattern from that of job anxiety. While eudaimonic well-being refers more to an assessment of the fit between work conditions and the desire and values of the employees, hedonic well-being is more related to the absence or presence of pain and pleasure emotions. Perhaps, as Vidal (2007) states, empowerment does not necessarily improve employees' job satisfaction or commitment levels if they have an orientation which does not fit with the empowerment tendency; that is, the person-organisation fit issue also plays a vital role.

Finally, we have been able to shed light on the links between psychological empowerment and antecedents and consequences, given the importance of this state of mind of employees for public work and the scarcity of studies in this context (e.g. Cho and Faerman, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2015).

Hence, from the cross-level analysis, we demonstrated the absence of a significant and positive link between structural empowerment and psychological empowerment, and so we present a result that does not agree with the findings of previous works (e.g. Cho and Faerman, 2010). This fact could be due to the characteristics of the context examined. Public sector employees are more motivated by the intrinsic rewards they receive from performing a task (Houston, 2000) and so their internal motivations are very powerful; this in turn makes external circumstances, such as structural empowerment, less important. In this sense, job crafting theory could provide us with a useful theoretical frame. It states that employees craft their jobs by making some changes to the extent they can, and thus they adopt a more active role in configuring interactions and relationships at work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Nielsen, 2013). The concept of Public Sector Motivation can also explain this reality (Perry and Wise, 1990), since this trait, related to the willingness to perform public sector work, could also be critical for the shaping of psychological empowerment in this type of workforce.

Focusing on the employees' level, we have illustrated the relevance of employees' dispositions and feelings in the configuration of their well-being in the public sector by further investigating the role of employees' goal orientations as an individual antecedent of their psychological empowerment, and the influence of this latter on employees' well-being (job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety, that is, both the eudaimonic and the hedonic types). From the positive relationship of LGO and psychological empowerment we confirm similar findings from previous empirical research (e.g. Joo et al., 2016). Thus, employees with high LGO, who seek opportunities to expand new abilities and like to take risks to develop their work ability to better serve citizens, are also more inclined to create an empowered state of mind by themselves. Regarding PPGO, no link was found. Perhaps, in the context examined, both GO perspectives (the traditional and the revised) arise in a way that builds a null relationship. As explained earlier, PPGO is a complex construct, driven, actually, by two different motivations: achievement and avoidance (Elliot and Church, 1997). In

Spanish public organisations, the current trend of individual performance assessment can activate an achievement motivation in some workers, but others with indefinite tenure in their job may initiate avoidance motivation, behaving differently, since they could feel resistance towards pursuing performance aims (Serna, 2008). The overall effects, therefore, could be offset. APGO did not show any link with psychological empowerment either. Maybe the profile of the employees studied is again at the root of the explanation. APGO can be manifested by an active removal or a passive rumination of an unpleasant circumstance (Elliot and Sheldon, 1998). Public employees may be more likely to eradicate a situation in which they feel afraid of not performing well rather than ruminating and acting passively, given their common indefinite stay condition (Torres et al., 2011). Therefore, the outcomes of this disposition are less detrimental, and so psychological empowerment is not affected.

Regarding the consequences of psychological empowerment for well-being, the positive effect of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction (e.g. Carless, 2004) as well as on affective commitment (e.g. Macsinga et al., 2015) have been confirmed once again, thus ratifying the usefulness of the proposed norm of reciprocity (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) for the context analysed. If Spanish local authorities' employees feel psychologically empowered, they develop a feeling of gratitude towards the organisation as a consequence of reciprocation. Therefore, eudaimonic well-being is achieved when employees are in an empowered state of mind. Finally, job anxiety has been found to be reduced when psychological empowerment is high. This supports the idea that psychological empowerment protects against ill health (Hochwalder and Brucefors, 2005) and also offers new evidence of the usefulness of Karasek's (1979) JDC model in that, when the employees from local authorities feel that they have an influence on carrying out the tasks they have to accomplish, they feel reduced levels of anxiety. Moreover, in this case hedonic well-being is also improved, which leads us to conclude that psychological empowerment is positive for both eudaimonic and hedonic well-being.

Generally speaking, and from the beliefs that differences across contexts can mean relevant implications for relationships concerning empowerment (e.g. Bamberger, 2008; Johns, 2006; Kim et al., 2017), it is worth emphasising that the study makes an important contribution in the sense that the contextualisation of the model in a specific

sector facilitates its generalisation, which can be considered a relevant step forward in theory development (Whetten, 1989).

6.2.- Practical implications of the research results

The large proportions of public sector expenditure that correspond to local governments (Andrews and Boyne, 2010) make it vital to examine their performance. Given the undisputed value of empowerment to successfully enhance the performance of public organisations, our research findings can offer useful indications for public managers. Different types of actions may be implemented in city councils.

First, in order to improve organisational performance local authority managers should endeavour to promote different facets. On the one hand, they should put into practice structural empowerment programmes including training, productivity-based bonuses, dissemination of information and tools to allow employees to participate in decision-making. Within the NPM paradigm of effectiveness, efficiency and improvement of citizens' satisfaction, structural empowerment emerges as a powerful strategy for local governments to face the new challenges and demands of responsibility from society. Moreover, our findings also emphasise the role of low levels of job anxiety for good performance in local governments. In this sense, local managers can promote activities with the aim of helping employees to cope with their demanding situations and balance their levels of job anxiety. One suggestion would be, for instance, to hold sessions of mindfulness (Fortney et al., 2013), so that they can reduce their anxiety and stress levels. Finally, and given its valuable role in improving organisational performance, managers should also pay attention to the state of psychological empowerment of their employees.

This last statement leads us to underline the need to improve the levels of psychological empowerment of employees. It would be advisable to adapt selection systems in order to take into account employees' motivations and personality. It seems that not only the skills and knowledge required to carry out the daily work activities are important for performance. These talents need to be complemented with personal characteristics, such as a psychologically empowered state of mind. Therefore, in the selection processes it may be recommendable to prioritise candidates who, apart from possessing the above-mentioned talents, are also capable of fostering their own psychological empowerment by themselves. A possible suggestion for managers is to

give employees the opportunity to mould their job according to their preferences, skills and aptitudes (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001), thus enabling them to perceive their work as more meaningful. For instance, they could organise the way and time in which they carry out their daily activities as they consider best, and establish their own routines so as to feel more comfortable at work. In this same vein, it could also be positive to take into account the concept of Public Service Motivation (Perry and Wise, 1990). Given that our study indicates that psychological empowerment can be generated more from an individual's trait rather than from a structural influence, it is important to consider the question that certain individuals are more predisposed to public service work, which could enhance their feelings of empowerment at work. Thus, in the selection processes it would be advisable to use some instrument (Perry, 1996) to measure this disposition in candidates.

Also from our findings, we observe the importance of employees' LGO in the development of psychological empowerment. Therefore, following the same vein noted above, the selection processes could take into account dispositions of candidates that can lead to a future beneficial state of mind in the employees selected. Apart from this, and considering that LGO can also be shaped by external circumstances (Button et al., 1996), holding training sessions to help employees to become more aware and to assess their learning goals would be recommendable. These sessions would be based on establishing a motto, explaining theory and examples of learning goals or balance sheets, practising certain learning goals, receiving feedback from trainer and workmates, holding discussions, etc. All this could result in a reinforcement for employees so they can cultivate and sustain their levels of LGO, which would help to enhance their feelings of meaning, competence, autonomy and impact, resulting in a reduction in job anxiety and an increase in job satisfaction and affective commitment.

Overall, several suggestions of managerial techniques arise from the findings of our research. Ultimately, the service delivered to citizens and the effectiveness of local governments would benefit from taking these proposals into consideration.

6.3.- Limitations and directions for future research

Naturally, this study has some limitations that should be mentioned. Firstly, despite the contribution made by concentrating on one specific context, it is recommended that future work should be undertaken in other public settings in order to

help extend the generalisation of the model. Secondly, the data obtained and analysed refer to a single point in time, and hence causality cannot be inferred. This is a weakness but at the same time an opportunity for future research, as it could be useful to apply a longitudinal design to test causal relationships in the hypothesised model and go deeper into the consequences of structural empowerment for organisational performance and for employees' feelings of empowerment and well-being, as well as into the effects of goal orientations in the long term. At the same time, with regard to the organisational level, the issue of endogeneity should be noted, since performance could be endogenous to structural empowerment existing a reversed causality (Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017). It would be interesting for future research to focus on this question.

Thirdly, regarding the measurement of variables, it is noteworthy that job satisfaction was measured with a single item that captures overall job satisfaction, as a general assessment of the work situation. Nevertheless, it could also be interesting to examine how empowerment affects other facets of job satisfaction, such as co-worker satisfaction or supervisor satisfaction (Deshpande, 1996) or to use measures to infer affect and emotion, as proposed by some authors (e.g. Judge et al., 2001). In the case of organisational performance, it is worth noting that the measure used actually reflects perceived organisational performance. It would be advisable to complement these data with objective results, although, as explained earlier, in the sample analysed this was not possible because performance control and information is not mandatory for all the Spanish local authorities. Perhaps, if this fact changes, future studies could collect objective performance data, or if the research is conducted in a different country where the existence of these types of reports is mandatory, these data could be easily incorporated into the model. Furthermore, regarding management level, another interesting line to explore would be the possible curvilinear effects. As asserted by Grant and Schwartz (2011), psychological well-being experiences have limits, so it could be useful if future research studied the most favourable levels and combinations of structural empowerment for beneficial results on employees.

Additionally, and given the surprising absence of a mediating power of psychological empowerment in the link between structural empowerment and organisational performance, it could be interesting to explore whether a moderator may be better than a mediator. From our findings it is inferred that empowerment feelings are more determined by internal factors, so perhaps, regardless of external

circumstances, the levels of employees' psychological empowerment could influence (by fostering) the power of structural empowerment in the enhancement of organisational performance.

One last suggestion for future studies involving empowerment would be to conduct a qualitative study. Complementing the quantitative studies with interviews and feedback could be useful to further understanding of the results obtained, since, as stated by Petter et al. (2002), the definition of empowerment and esteem actually depends on each individual and situation.

6.4.- General conclusions

To sum up, the multilevel design of the research has profiled the effects of structural empowerment on employees, in addition to organisational performance, thereby contributing to shed light on the traditional 'black box' question of HRM. From our findings it can be inferred that structural empowerment acts as a "reassuring" instrument for the workforce, but not as a medium for the enhancement of employees' satisfaction and commitment. That is, the findings support the combination of the optimistic and sceptical perspectives on HRM (e.g. Peccei et al., 2013; Van de Voorde et al., 2016). With respect to the NPM discussion, the results do not provide full support for its 'dark side' (Diefenbach, 2009) about the increase in stress and anxiety: hedonic well-being is not undermined – rather it is enhanced. Nevertheless, there is evidence to confirm the fact that structural empowerment practices embedded within the NPM mainstream do not enhance employees' eudaimonic well-being.

Furthermore, this thesis has provided some surprising empirical evidence, i.e. the no-link between structural and psychological empowerment, suggesting that this latter should be promoted through other means, such as personal mechanisms management, given its value for the enhancement of organisational performance. Overall, it becomes clearer that both structural and psychological empowerment are relevant factors for the general performance of local authorities. At the individual level, we offer insights on the personal dispositions involved in the well-being of employees, confirming the vital role of LGO in generating feelings of competence, impact, autonomy and meaning among them. At the same time, the association of these feelings of empowerment for the well-being of public employees has also been observed. Further, the study greatly enriches the development of empowerment theory, since the

contextualisation of the model in an explicit sector makes it possible to generalise it, this being a significant step forward in theory progress (Whetten, 1989).

To conclude, from this outline of empirical evidence, public managers could take some guidelines on the improvement of the management techniques and methods implanted in local authorities. This, ultimately, could lead to benefits both for employees and for overall performance.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, R. and Boyne, G.A. (2010). 'Capacity, leadership, and organizational performance: Testing the black box model of public management'. *Public Administration Review*, 70:3, 443-454.
- Bamberger, P. (2008). 'From the editors beyond contextualization: Using context theories to narrow the micro-macro gap in management research'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51:5, 839-846.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Bowen, D.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1995). 'Empowering service employees'. *Sloan management review*, 36:4, 73.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705-16.
- Button, S. B., Mathieu, J. E. and Zajac, D. M. (1996). 'Goal orientation in organizational research: A conceptual and empirical foundation'. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 67:1, 26-48.
- Carless, S. A. (2004). 'Does Psychological Empowerment Mediate the Relationship Between Psychological Climate and Job Satisfaction?' *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 18:4, 405-425.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. and Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130-154.
- Cropanzano, R. and Mitchell, M.S. (2005). 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review'. *Journal of management*, 31:6, 874-900.
- Deshpande, S. P. (1996). 'The impact of ethical climate types on facets of job satisfaction: An empirical investigation'. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 15:6, 655-660.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Elliot, A. J. and Church, M. A. (1997). 'A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72:1, 218-232.

- Elliot, A. J. and Sheldon, K. M. (1998). 'Avoidance personal goals and the personality-illness relationship'. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 75:5, 1282-1299.
- Fernandez, S., Resh, W. G., Moldogaziev, T. and Oberfield, Z. W. (2015). 'Assessing the past and promise of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey for public management research: A research synthesis'. *Public Administration Review*, 75:3, 382-394.
- Fortney, L., Luchterhand, C., Zakletskaia, L., Zgierska, A. and Rakel, D. (2013). 'Abbreviated mindfulness intervention for job satisfaction, quality of life, and compassion in primary care clinicians: a pilot study'. *The Annals of Family Medicine*, 11:5, 412-420.
- Grant, A. M. and Schwartz, B. (2011). 'Too much of a good thing: The challenge and opportunity of the inverted U'. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6:1, 61-76.
- Hochwalder, J. and Brucefors, A. B. (2005). 'Psychological empowerment at the workplace as a predictor of ill health'. *Personality and individual differences*, 39:7, 1237-1248.
- Houston, D. J. (2000). 'Public-service motivation: A multivariate test'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10:4, 713-728.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. and Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Johns, G. (2006). 'The essential impact of context on organizational behavior'. *Academy of management review*, 31:2, 386-408.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. and Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Judge, T.A., Thoresen, C.J., Bono, J.E, and Patton, G.K. (2001). 'The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127:3, 376-407.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). 'Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign'. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Kim, P. B., Lee, G. and Jang, J. (2017). 'Employee empowerment and its contextual determinants and outcome for service workers: a cross-national study'. *Management Decision*, 55:5.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sarbescu, P., Fischmann, G. and Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Nicholson-Crotty, S., Nicholson-Crotty, J. and Fernandez, S. (2017). 'Performance and management in the public sector: Testing a model of relative risk aversion'. *Public Administration Review*, 77:4, 603-614.
- Nielsen, K. (2013). 'Review article: How can we make organizational interventions work? Employees and line managers as actively crafting interventions'. *Human Relations*, 66:8, 1029-1050.
- Peccei, R. (2004). *Human Resource Management and the Search for the Happy Workplace*. Inaugural Address. Rotterdam: Erasmus Research Institute of Management.
- Peccei, R., Van De Voorde, K. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2013). 'HRM, well-being and performance: a theoretical and empirical review', in J. Paauwe, D. Guest and P.M. Wright (eds), *Human*

- Resource Management and Performance: Achievements and Challenges*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Petter, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. and Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Perry, J. L. (1996). 'Measuring public service motivation: An assessment of construct reliability and validity'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 6:1, 5-22.
- Perry, J.L. and Wise, L. R. (1990). 'The motivational bases of the Public Service'. *Public Administration Review*, 50:3, 367-373.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Sackey, J. and Sanda, M.A. (2009). 'Influence of occupational stress on the mental health of Ghanaian professional women'. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 39:5, 876-887.
- Seibert, S.E., Kraimer, M.L. and Liden, R.C. (2001). 'A social capital theory of career success'. *Academy of management journal*, 44:2, 219-237.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Van De Voorde, K., Veld, M. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2016). 'Connecting empowerment-focused HRM and labour productivity to work engagement: the mediating role of job demands and resources'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 26:2, 192-210.
- Vidal, M. (2007). 'Lean production, worker empowerment, and job satisfaction: A qualitative analysis and critique'. *Critical Sociology*, 33:1-2, 247-278.
- Whetten, D.A. (1989). 'What constitutes a theoretical contribution?' *Academy of Management Review*, 14:4, 490-495.
- Wrzesniewski, A. and Dutton, J.E. (2001). 'Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work'. *Academy of management review*, 26:2, 79-201.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A CUESTIONARIO RESPONSABLES AYUNTAMIENTOS

Desde la **Universitat Jaume I (Castellón)** estamos llevando a cabo un **estudio sobre gestión de recursos humanos, concretamente empowerment, y resultados en ayuntamientos españoles**. Este estudio no sería posible sin su colaboración, y por ello **le pedimos su ayuda contestando el cuestionario** que le presentamos seguidamente y que le rogamos tenga la amabilidad de completar en su totalidad.

El propósito de este cuestionario es obtener información sobre prácticas de recursos humanos relativas al empowerment y su percepción sobre resultados del ayuntamiento. Se completa en 8-9 minutos aproximadamente. Tenga en cuenta que no existen respuestas correctas ni incorrectas. Si en alguna de las cuestiones no está totalmente seguro de la respuesta, no importa, nos interesa su estimación. La mayoría de las preguntas pueden ser contestadas rápidamente eligiendo números dentro de una escala. **Toda la información obtenida será tratada de forma confidencial** y global para fines de investigación en el ámbito universitario.

Si tiene alguna duda, **puede ponerse en contacto con Beatriz García**, investigadora del Departamento de Administración de Empresas y Marketing de la Universitat Jaume I, a través del correo electrónico: beatriz.garcia@uji.es

Le agradecemos de antemano su colaboración, la cual es indispensable para llevar a cabo esta investigación.

PARTE A – INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL AYUNTAMIENTO

1- ¿En qué ayuntamiento trabaja? Por favor, indique la población o ciudad a la que pertenece el ayuntamiento:

2- ¿Cuál es su cargo? Por favor, seleccione sólo una de las siguientes opciones:

- Secretario/a
- Responsable de RRHH
- Interventor/a
- Tesorero/a

3- ¿Cuántos/as empleados/as tiene actualmente su ayuntamiento? _____ empleados/as

PARTE B – EMPOWERMENT ESTRUCTURAL. Por favor, siguiendo la siguiente escala indique lo correspondiente en cada bloque de cuestiones:

- 1 = Ninguno (0 %)
- 2 = Casi ninguno (1-20 %)
- 3 = Algunos (21-40 %)
- 4 = La mitad (41-60 %)
- 5 = Bastantes (61-80 %)
- 6 = Casi todos (81-99 %)
- 7 = Todos (100 %)

INFORMACIÓN COMPARTIDA. Por favor indique cuántos/as empleados/as de su ayuntamiento reciben de forma habitual estos tipos de información:

1- Información sobre los resultados del ayuntamiento.	
2- Información sobre los resultados del departamento en el que trabajan.	
3- Información sobre nuevas tecnologías que puedan afectarles.	
4- Información sobre los objetivos y planes del ayuntamiento.	
5- Información sobre los resultados de otros ayuntamientos.	

Appendixes

RECOMPENSAS. Por favor indique a cuántos/as empleados/as de su ayuntamiento se les aplica cada uno de estos sistemas de remuneración o recompensa:

6- Complemento por logro de metas u objetivos individuales.	
7- Complemento por logro de metas u objetivos de grupo.	

CONOCIMIENTOS Y FORMACIÓN. Por favor indique cuántos/as empleados/as de su ayuntamiento han recibido, en los últimos 3 años, formación sistemática y programada en los siguientes temas:

8- Toma de decisiones/solución de problemas en grupos.	
9- Conocimientos de liderazgo.	
10- Conocimientos de Administración Pública y de gestión del ayuntamiento	
11- Análisis estadístico/calidad	
12- Formación de equipos de trabajo	
13- Entrenamiento en las habilidades de su propio puesto de trabajo.	
14- Formación en otras áreas diferentes a las relacionadas con el puesto de trabajo.	
15- Habilidad en el uso de tecnologías de la información y ordenadores	

PODER PARA LA TOMA DE DECISIONES. Por favor indique cuántos/as empleados/as de su ayuntamiento están actualmente participando en cada uno de los siguientes programas:

16- Encuestas de opinión: el ayuntamiento recopila datos mediante cuestionarios sobre el nivel de motivación, satisfacción, necesidades, formación y expectativas de los empleados	
17- Enriquecimiento o rediseño del puesto de trabajo: el ayuntamiento reformula las características de los puestos de trabajo para incrementar la productividad y satisfacción de los trabajadores (mayor variedad de tareas, autonomía, sentido, etc.)	
18- Círculos de calidad: grupos voluntarios de empleados del mismo nivel y bajo un mismo mando que se reúnen periódicamente con el fin de buscar mejoras en su área de trabajo. Se ocupan de sugerir mejoras de calidad y productividad que serán evaluadas por los altos responsables del ayuntamiento	
19- Otros grupos de mejora diferentes a los círculos de calidad: grupos para proponer sugerencias que pueden ser formados por personal de diferentes departamentos o niveles y con áreas de trabajo más extensas que los Círculos de Calidad	
20- Comités de empresa o negociación colectiva	
21- Grupos de trabajo semiautónomos o equipos de trabajo: el grupo es responsable del servicio o parte del servicio con gran autonomía en las decisiones operativas que son tomadas por los propios empleados	
22- Comités de consulta: grupos con componentes de todos los niveles para tratar cuestiones estratégicas o de políticas del ayuntamiento	

PARTE C – RESULTADOS DEL AYUNTAMIENTO. Indique para estos aspectos el cuartil (1, 2, 3 ó 4) en el que se encuentra su ayuntamiento comparándolo con otros, **siendo 1 la peor posición y 4 la mejor:**

Resultado/producción y eficiencia

1- Calidad (por ejemplo, la rapidez / resolución con que se presta el servicio)	
2- Buena relación calidad-precio	
3- Eficiencia (por ejemplo, el coste por unidad de servicio prestado)	
4- Satisfacción de los empleados	

Capacidad de respuesta y sensibilidad

5- Satisfacción del ciudadano	
-------------------------------	--

Resultados del servicio

6- Eficacia (por ejemplo, si se han alcanzado los objetivos)	
7- Equidad (por ejemplo, cómo de equitativamente sus servicios se distribuyen entre los ciudadanos)	
8- Promoción del bienestar social, económico y medioambiental de la población local	

Gracias por participar en el estudio.

APPENDIX B CUESTIONARIO EMPLEADOS AYUNTAMIENTOS

Desde la **Universitat Jaume I (Castellón)** estamos llevando a cabo un **estudio sobre gestión de recursos humanos, concretamente empowerment, y resultados en ayuntamientos españoles**. Este estudio no sería posible sin su colaboración, y por ello **le pedimos su ayuda contestando el cuestionario** que le presentamos seguidamente y que le rogamos tenga la amabilidad de completar en su totalidad.

El propósito de este cuestionario es obtener información sobre sus sentimientos y actitudes en relación con el trabajo (satisfacción, compromiso...). Se completa en 5 minutos aproximadamente. La mayoría de las preguntas pueden ser contestadas rápidamente eligiendo números dentro de una escala. **Toda la información obtenida será tratada de forma confidencial** y global para fines de investigación en el ámbito universitario.

Si tiene alguna duda, **puede ponerse en contacto con Beatriz García**, investigadora del Departamento de Administración de Empresas y Marketing de la Universitat Jaume I, a través del correo electrónico: beatriz.garcia@uji.es

Le **agradecemos de antemano su colaboración, la cual es indispensable para llevar a cabo esta investigación.**

PARTE A - INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL/LA EMPLEADO/A

1- ¿En qué ayuntamiento trabaja? Por favor, indique la población o ciudad a la que pertenece el ayuntamiento:

2- ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando en el ayuntamiento? ____ años

3- ¿Cuál es su condición de empleado? Por favor, seleccione sólo una de las siguientes opciones:

- Funcionario de carrera
- Funcionario interino
- Personal laboral fijo
- Personal laboral indefinido
- Personal laboral temporal
- Personal eventual

4- ¿Tiene empleados bajo su supervisión? Por favor, seleccione sólo una de las siguientes opciones:

- Sí
- No

5- Por favor, indique el departamento/servicio concreto en el que trabaja:

6- ¿Cuál es su edad? ____ años

7- ¿Cuál es su sexo?

- Mujer
- Hombre

PARTE B - ORIENTACIONES A LA META. Por favor, siguiendo la siguiente escala, indique el grado en que se siente de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con estas cuestiones:

- 1 = Totalmente en desacuerdo
- 2 = Bastante en desacuerdo
- 3 = Algo en desacuerdo
- 4 = Indiferente
- 5 = Algo de acuerdo
- 6 = Bastante de acuerdo
- 7 = Totalmente de acuerdo

Orientación a la meta de aprendizaje

1- Estoy dispuesto/a a elegir tareas en el trabajo que supongan un desafío y de las que pueda aprender mucho.	
2- A menudo busco oportunidades en las que pueda desarrollar nuevas habilidades y conocimientos.	
3- Disfruto con tareas difíciles y desafiantes en el trabajo donde puedo aprender nuevas habilidades.	
4- Para mí, desarrollar más mi capacidad en el trabajo es lo suficientemente importante como para asumir riesgos.	
5- Prefiero trabajar en situaciones que requieren un alto grado de capacidad y talento.	

Orientación a la meta de desempeño-demostración

6- Me gusta demostrar que puedo hacerlo mejor que mis compañeros/as de trabajo.	
7- Intento averiguar lo que se necesita para demostrar mi capacidad a los demás en el trabajo.	
8- Disfruto con que mis compañeros de trabajo sepan lo bien que hago las cosas.	
9- Prefiero trabajar en tareas donde pueda demostrar mi capacidad ante los demás.	

Orientación a la meta de desempeño-evitación

10- Evitaría realizar una tarea si hubiera la posibilidad de parecer menos competente que los demás.	
11- Para mí es más importante evitar demostrar una baja capacidad para una tarea que aprender una nueva habilidad.	
12- Me preocupa llevar a cabo una tarea en el trabajo si mi rendimiento puede revelar que tengo baja capacidad para la misma.	
13- Prefiero evitar situaciones en el trabajo donde pueda hacerlo mal.	

PARTE C - EMPOWERMENT PSICOLÓGICO. Por favor, siguiendo la siguiente escala, indique el grado en que se siente de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con estas cuestiones:

- 1 = Totalmente en desacuerdo
- 2 = Bastante en desacuerdo
- 3 = Algo en desacuerdo
- 4 = Indiferente
- 5 = Algo de acuerdo
- 6 = Bastante de acuerdo
- 7 = Totalmente de acuerdo

Significado

1- El trabajo que hago es muy importante para mí	
2- Mis actividades laborales tienen un significado personal para mí.	
3- El trabajo que hago tiene sentido para mí.	

Competencia

4- Tengo confianza en mi capacidad para hacer mi trabajo.	
5- Estoy seguro/a de mí mismo/a acerca de mis capacidades para realizar las actividades de mi trabajo.	
6- He adquirido las habilidades necesarias para mi trabajo.	

Autonomía

7- Tengo bastante autonomía para decidir cómo hacer mi trabajo.	
8- Puedo decidir por mí mismo/a cómo voy a realizar mi propio trabajo.	
9- Tengo bastantes oportunidades de independencia y libertad en la forma de hacer mi trabajo.	

Impacto

10- Mi influencia sobre lo que ocurre en mi departamento o área es alta.	
11- Tengo mucho control sobre lo que sucede en mi departamento.	
12- Tengo bastante influencia sobre lo que ocurre en mi departamento.	

PARTE D - SATISFACCIÓN LABORAL. En general, ¿cómo se siente usted con su trabajo? Por favor, seleccione sólo una de las siguientes opciones:

- Extremadamente insatisfecho/a
- Bastante insatisfecho/a
- Algo insatisfecho/a
- Indiferente
- Algo satisfecho/a
- Bastante satisfecho/a
- Extremadamente satisfecho/a

PARTE E - COMPROMISO AFECTIVO. Por favor, siguiendo la siguiente escala, indique el grado en que se siente de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con estas cuestiones:

- 1 = Totalmente en desacuerdo
- 2 = Bastante en desacuerdo
- 3 = Algo en desacuerdo
- 4 = Algo de acuerdo
- 5 = Bastante de acuerdo
- 6 = Totalmente de acuerdo

1- Esta organización tiene un gran significado personal para mí.	
2- Siento un fuerte sentimiento de "pertenencia" a mi organización.	
3- En esta organización me siento como en familia.	

PARTE F - ANSIEDAD EN EL TRABAJO. Por favor, siguiendo la siguiente escala, señale cómo se ha sentido durante el último mes en relación a estas cuestiones:

- 1 = Nada, en absoluto
- 2 = Poco
- 3 = Bastante
- 4 = Mucho

1- Me siento tenso o nervioso.	
2- Tengo una especie de temor que me hace sentir como "mariposas" en el estómago.	
3- Siento una especie de temor como si algo malo fuera a suceder.	
4- Me siento inquieto, como si tuviera que estar en movimiento.	
5- Tengo sentimientos repentinos de pánico.	
6- Puedo sentarme cómodamente y sentirme relajado.	

Gracias por participar en el estudio.

**APPENDIX C
LOCAL AUTHORITIES MANAGERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

From the Universitat Jaume I (Castellón) we are carrying out a study on human resources management, specifically empowerment, and results in Spanish local authorities. This study would not be possible without your help, and therefore we ask for your help by answering the questionnaire that we present below and that we kindly ask you to complete in its entirety.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about human resource practices related to empowerment and their perception of the results of the municipality. It can be completed in approximately 8-9 minutes. Keep in mind that there are no correct or incorrect answers. If in any of the questions you are not totally sure of the answer, it does not matter, we are interested in your estimation. Most questions can be answered quickly by choosing numbers within a scale. All information obtained will be treated confidentially and globally for research purposes in the university environment.

If you have any questions, you can contact Beatriz García, researcher at the Department of Business Administration and Marketing of the Universitat Jaume I, by e-mail: beatriz.garcia@uji.es

We thank you in advance for your collaboration, which is essential to carry out this research.

PART A – INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

1- In what municipality do you work? Please indicate the town or city to which the municipality belongs:

2- Which is your charge? Please select only one of the following options:

- Clerk
- HR manager
- Auditor / financial controller
- Treasurer

3- How many employees does your town hall currently have? _____ employees

PART B – STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT. Please, following the scale below indicate what corresponds in each block of questions:

- 1 = None (0 %)
- 2 = Almost none (1-20 %)
- 3 = Some (21-40 %)
- 4 = About half (41-60 %)
- 5 = Most (61-80 %)
- 6 = Almost all (81-99 %)
- 7 = All (100 %)

INFORMATION SHARING. Please indicate how many employees of your city council are routinely provided with the following types of information:

1- Information about the local government's performance.	
2- Information about their unit's performance.	
3- Advance information on new technologies that may affect them.	
4- Information on local government plans/goals.	
5- Information on other local governments' performance.	

Appendixes

REWARDS. Please indicate how many employees of your city council are covered by each of these remuneration or reward systems:

6- Bonus for achieving individual goals	
7- Bonus for achieving group goals	

KNOWLEDGE AND TRAINING. Please indicate how many employees of your city council have received, in the last three years, systematic and programmed training on the following topics:

8- Group decision-making/problem-solving skills.	
9- Leadership skills.	
10- Skills in understanding public administration and local government.	
11- Quality/statistical analysis skills.	
12- Team building skills	
13- Job skills training.	
14- Cross-training skills other than those required for the job.	
15- Skills in using information technology and computers.	

POWER TO MAKE DECISIONS. Please indicate how many employees of your city council are currently participating in each of the following programs:

16- Survey feedback.	
17- Job enrichment.	
18- Quality circles.	
19- Employee participation groups other than quality circles.	
20- Union-management quality of work committees.	
21- Self-managing work teams.	
22- Employee committees on local government policy and/or strategy.	

PART C – ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE. Please indicate for these aspects the quartile (1, 2, 3 or 4) in which your organisation is located compared to others, being 1=the bottom and 4=the top:

Output and efficiency

1- Quality (e.g. how quickly/responsive your services are delivered)	
2- Value for money	
3- Efficiency (e.g. cost per unit of service delivery)	
4- Staff satisfaction	

Responsiveness

5- Citizen satisfaction	
-------------------------	--

Service outcomes

6- Effectiveness (e.g. whether your objectives were achieved)	
7- Equity (e.g. how fairly your services are distributed amongst citizens)	
8- Promoting the social, economic, and environmental well-being of local people.	

Thank you for participating in the study.

APPENDIX D
LOCAL AUTHORITIES EMPLOYEES' QUESTIONNAIRE

From the Universitat Jaume I (Castellón) we are carrying out a study on human resources management, specifically empowerment, and results in Spanish town halls. This study would not be possible without your help, and therefore we ask for your help by answering the questionnaire that we present below and that we kindly ask you to complete in its entirety.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about your feelings and attitudes in relation to work (satisfaction, commitment ...). It can be completed in about 5 minutes. Most questions can be answered quickly by choosing numbers within a scale. All information obtained will be treated confidentially and globally for research purposes in the university environment.

If you have any questions, you can contact Beatriz García, researcher at the Department of Business Administration and Marketing of the Universitat Jaume I, by e-mail: beatriz.garcia@uji.es

We thank you in advance for your collaboration, which is essential to carry out this research.

PART A – INFORMATION ABOUT THE EMPLOYEE

1- In what municipality do you work? Please indicate the town or city to which the municipality belongs:

2- How long have you been working in the town hall? ____ years

3- What is your employee status? Please select only one of the following options:

- Civil servant
- Acting official
- Permanent staff
- Indefinite staff
- Temporary staff
- Interim staff

4- Do you have employees under your supervision? Please select only one of the following options:

- Yes
- No

5- Please, indicate the specific department / service in which you work:

6- How old are you? ____ years

7- Which is your gender?

- Woman
- Man

PART B – GOAL ORIENTATIONS. Please, following this scale, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these issues:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Mostly disagree
- 3 = Slightly disagree
- 4 = Indifferent
- 5 = Slightly agree
- 6 = Mostly agree
- 7 = Strongly agree

Learning goal orientation

1- I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from.	
2- I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.	
3- I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills.	
4- For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks.	
5- I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent.	

Prove-performance goal orientation

6- I like to show that I can perform better than my coworkers.	
7- I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work	
8- I enjoy it when others at work are aware of how well I am doing.	
9- I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my ability to others.	

Avoid-performance goal orientation

10- I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others.	
11- Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill.	
12- I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability.	
13- I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly.	

PART C – PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT. Please, following this scale, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these issues:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Mostly disagree
- 3 = Slightly disagree
- 4 = Indifferent
- 5 = Slightly agree
- 6 = Mostly agree
- 7 = Strongly agree

Meaning

1- The work I do is very important to me.	
2- My job activities are personally meaningful to me.	
3- The work I do is meaningful to me.	

Competence

4- I am confident about my ability to do my job.	
5- I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities.	
6- I have mastered the skills necessary for my job.	

Self-determination

7- I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.	
8- I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.	
9- I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.	

Impact

10. My impact on what happens in my department is large.	
11. I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department.	
12. I have significant influence over what happens in my department.	

PART D – JOB SATISFACTION. In general, how do you feel about your work? Please select only one of the following options:

- Extremely dissatisfied
- Mostly dissatisfied
- Slightly dissatisfied
- Indifferent
- Slightly satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Extremely satisfied

PART E – AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT. Please, following this scale, indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with these issues:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Mostly disagree
- 3 = Slightly disagree
- 4 = Slightly agree
- 5 = Mostly agree
- 6 = Strongly agree

1- This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	
2- I feel a strong sense of “belonging” to my organization.	
3- I feel like “part of the family” in this organization.	

PART F – JOB ANXIETY. Please, following this scale, indicate how you have felt during the last month in relation to these issues:

- 1 = Not at all
- 2 = Little bit
- 3 = Quite
- 4 = Definitely/very much

1- I feel tense or wound up.	
2- I get a sort of frightened feeling like “butterflies” in the stomach.	
3- I get a sort of frightened feeling as if something awful is about to happen.	
4- I feel restless as if I have to be on the move.	
5- I get sudden feelings of panic.	
6- I can sit at ease and feel relaxed* (R)	

Thank you for participating in the study.

ABSTRACT

Justification of the research

In recent decades, the concept of employee empowerment has become a commonly used term within everyday management language, associated with Human Resource Management (HRM) (Wilkinson, 1998; Subramony, 2009; Delery and Roumpi, 2017). In the context of public management it has also arisen as a powerful technique within the New Public Management (NPM) mainstream. Employee's empowerment, thus, plays a vital role (Pitts, 2005; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) in delivering better service for citizens and improved performance (Pitts, 2005), which are basic precepts of NPM. More attention should therefore be paid to the empowerment issue in this specific context. Thus, as inferred from the 'black box' arguments of the public management literature, structural empowerment, as practices that are part of the management system, make organisations more adaptable, efficient and effective by building structures that match citizens' demands (Burgess, 1975), which is also supported by the more generally applicable social capital theory (Seibert et al., 2011). Nevertheless, the consequences for public employees are less clear, since the NPM literature has usually neglected employees' perceptions and experiences (Steijn, 2004).

From a mutual gains perspective of HRM (Van de Voorde et al., 2012) it is defended that practices such as structural empowerment are beneficial for both organisational performance and employees. Yet, the conflicting outcomes perspective of HRM (Jensen et al., 2013) as well as (more specifically in the public framework) the documented 'dark side' of NPM (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009) warn that structural empowerment has no effect on employee well-being or may even have a negative outcome. This led us to consider it interesting to explore the consequences of empowerment for employees, given the need for a more comprehensive view of this issue in the general literature, but even more so in the public sector context (Park and Rainey, 2007; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013).

At the same time, it is necessary to explore the empowerment construct from its two different perspectives: structural (management practices) and psychological (personal state of mind), since numerous scholars (e.g. Dewettinck and van Ameijde, 2011; Maynard et al., 2012; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013) advocate integrating both approaches to gain a broader understanding of the empowerment process. There is, however, a lack of research that combines the two approaches to develop an integrative approach (Cho and Faerman, 2010). Furthermore, in the public sector, psychological

empowerment becomes vital, given that it allows employees to feel awareness of the work context and accountability for personal work output (George and Zakkariya, 2014; Gautam and Ghimire, 2017), thus making it highly beneficial for optimum service delivery and improving performance in the public environment (Taylor, 2013; Van Loon, 2017).

Due to the scarce amount of work focused on the psychological empowerment issue in the public sector, and in the literature in general, numerous questions about its consequences and antecedents remain unanswered (Maynard et al., 2012). Hence, going deeper into the factors that guide employees' feelings of empowerment and their consequences arises as a useful frame to be examined (Seibert et al., 2011; Macinga et al., 2015). Regarding antecedents, individual orientations such as goal orientation (GO) (e.g. Dweck, 1986) may affect feelings of psychological empowerment, although they have rarely been addressed. Employees' GO might be able to profile their psychological empowerment because it helps to explain individuals' motivations, interests, work behaviours, interpretations and interest for professional development activities (VandeWalle, 1997; Barrick et al., 2013; Joo et al., 2016). Under the demanding conditions of the public sector context, it can help to regulate employees' behaviour according to values associated with their job goals (i.e. learning and/or performance) (Taylor, 2013). As for the consequences, within the context of NPM, employees' satisfaction and commitment have been shown to play an important role in achieving the success of public organisations (Kim, 2002; Wright and Davis, 2003; Perry, 2004; Park and Rainey, 2007; Hansen and Høst, 2012) and guidance on how they can be increased, not only based on managerial interventions such as structural empowerment, but also on psychological empowerment, is an important issue for examination. Psychological empowerment may be expected to help employees to cope with job anxiety, which is particularly pertinent in the public sector (Jarman et al., 2014).

Research objectives

The general objective of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships involving empowerment in the public sector at both the organisational and the individual levels. Therefore, we analyse the mediating relationships between structural empowerment and organisational performance within the public context, specifically incorporating the mediating role of employees' well-being variables (job

satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety) and their psychological empowerment levels (an issue scarcely addressed in the public context). By doing so, we try to shed light on the possible ‘dark side’ of NPM. Overall, the mediating multilevel design helps to elucidate more about the ‘black box’ of HRM.

Furthermore, we seek to focus on the employees’ level to discover more about the antecedents and consequences of feelings of empowerment. For this purpose, we examine the role of employees’ goal orientations (learning goal orientation/LGO, prove-performance goal orientation/PPGO, and avoid-performance goal orientation/APGO) as an individual antecedent of their psychological empowerment, and the impact of this latter on employees’ well-being (job satisfaction, affective commitment and job anxiety). To this end, we have conducted three different studies: two with a multilevel design and a third at the individual level of analysis.

Methodology and data analysis

The model is focused on both the individual (employees) and the organisational (managers) levels of Spanish local authorities, since the implementation of NPM precepts makes it necessary to examine the role of empowerment and its effects on organisational as well as on employee-level issues, given that previous empirical research regarding Spanish public populations has mainly focused on management issues (e.g. Torres et al., 2011; Barba and Serrano, 2015) and neglected the employees’ viewpoint.

For the empirical research, we tested the model with quantitative data from Spanish local authorities of municipalities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. Two different online questionnaires were developed (based on validated scales), addressed to the human resource manager (or the person in charge of personnel), and to other employees in general. For the multilevel studies (two of the three in the dissertation) we used data from the two levels of 103 local authorities (the manager and between 4-6 employees) and, for the individual-level work (the third study), we employed data from 553 employees, nested in 111 local authorities.

The statistical techniques used to analyse the hypotheses put forward were SEM (Structural equation modelling) and MSEM (Multilevel structural equation modelling). These techniques allow us to examine relationships among multiple variables from the

work with constructs (latent variables) that are inferred from indicators (Hair et al., 2010).

Main results

Results revealed that structural empowerment is positive and strongly related to organisational performance in the sample examined. Furthermore, it was found that this relationship is mediated by lower levels of job anxiety among employees. It was also found that psychological empowerment is significantly and positively associated with organisational performance. Therefore, empowerment, in both its facets, arises as a powerful tool to enhance organisational performance. Specifically, at the individual level, psychological empowerment is driven by higher levels of LGO and, in turn, is positively related to job satisfaction and affective commitment, and negatively related to job anxiety.

Overall, our study presents new empirical evidence for the importance of empowerment within the public sector by offering an insightful view into the individual variables that may intervene on the path to the improvement of organisational performance. Thus, both views, organisational and individual, are jointly analysed. This may allow public managers to carry out some modifications, by introducing new and appropriate means to improve employees' morale and well-being, while at the same time enhancing the general outcomes of local authorities.

References

- Barba, M.I. and Serrano, J. (2015). 'Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21,9–16.
- Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K. and Li, N. (2013). 'The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics'. *Academy of management review*, 38:1, 132-153.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705–16.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. and Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Cho, T. and Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130–154.

- Delery, J. E. and Roumpi, D. (2017). 'Strategic human resource management, human capital and competitive advantage: is the field going in circles?'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27:1, 1-21.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public Administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Dewettinck, K. and Van Ameijde, M. (2011). 'Linking leadership empowerment behavior to employee attitudes and behavioral intentions. Testing the mediating role of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 40:3, 284-305.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). 'Motivational Processes Affecting Learning'. *American Psychologist*, 41:10, 1040-1048.
- Fernandez, S. and Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 90-506.
- Gautam, D. K. and Ghimire, S. B. (2017). 'Psychological Empowerment of Employees for Competitive Advantages: An Empirical Study of Nepalese Service Sector'. *International Journal of Law and Management*, 59:4, 466-488.
- George, E. and Zakkariya, K. A. (2014). 'Employees' perception of empowerment: a comparative study among different sectors of banks'. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 6:2, 132-145.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. and Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis. A global perspective* (7th Eds.). NY: Pearson.
- Hansen, J. R. and Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.
- Jarman, L., Martin, A., Venn, A., Otahal, P., Taylor, R., Teale, B. and Sanderson, K. (2014). 'Prevalence and correlates of psychological distress in a large and diverse public sector workforce: baseline results from Partnering Healthy@ Work'. *BMC public health*, 14:1, 1-11.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. and Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. and Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public Administration Review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. and Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. and Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.

- Park, R.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Perry, R. W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. and Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Steijn, B. (2004). 'Human resource management and job satisfaction in the Dutch public sector'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:4, 291-303.
- Subramony, M. (2009). 'A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between HRM bundles and firm performance'. *Human resource management*, 48:5, 745-768.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. and Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Van De Voorde, K., Paauwe, J. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2012). 'Employee well-being and the HRM-organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies'. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14:4,391-407.
- Van Loon, N. M. (2017). 'Does context matter for the type of performance-related behavior of public service motivated employees?' *Review of public personnel administration*, 37:4, 405-429.
- VandeWalle, D. (1997). 'Development and Validation of a work domain goal orientation instrument'. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 57:6, 995-1015.
- Wilkinson, A., (1998). 'Empowerment: theory and practice'. *Personnel Review*, 27:1, 40-56.
- Wright, B. E. and Davis, B. S. (2003). 'Job Satisfaction in the Public Sector. The role of the Work Environment'. *American Review of Public Administration*, 33:1, 70-90.

RESUMEN, DISCUSIÓN Y CONCLUSIONES

(EN CASTELLANO)[§]

[§]El procedimiento y criterios aplicables para la obtención de la mención internacional en el título de doctor (Aprobado por el Consejo de Gobierno núm. 21 de 30 de marzo de 2012) de la Universitat Jaume I establece en su punto segundo que “El doctorando debe haber redactado y presentado a defensa parte de la tesis doctoral, al menos el resumen y las conclusiones, en una de las lenguas habituales para la comunicación científica en su campo de conocimiento, distinta a las lenguas oficiales en España. Esta norma no será de aplicación cuando las estancias, informes y expertos procedan de un país de habla hispana. En todo caso, el **resumen y las conclusiones deberán acompañarse también en castellano o valenciano**”. Atendiendo a este último requisito, el presente apartado contiene la versión en castellano del “Abstract” y del capítulo 6 de la tesis doctoral.

Justificación de la investigación

En las últimas décadas, el concepto de *empowerment*** de los empleados se ha convertido en un término cotidiano dentro del lenguaje de dirección de empresas, asociado con la gestión de recursos humanos (GRH) (Wilkinson, 1998; Subramony, 2009; Delery y Roumpi, 2017). En el contexto de la gestión pública, también ha emergido como una poderosa técnica dentro de la corriente de la Nueva Gestión Pública (NGP). El *empowerment* de los empleados, por lo tanto, juega un papel vital (Pitts, 2005; Fernández y Moldogaziev, 2013), pretendiendo la consecución de un mejor servicio para los ciudadanos y un mejor desempeño (Pitts, 2005), los cuales son preceptos básicos de la NGP. Por lo tanto, se debe prestar más atención al tema del *empowerment* en este contexto específico. Así, como se deduce de los argumentos de la “caja negra” de la literatura de gestión pública, el *empowerment* estructural, como prácticas que forman parte del sistema de gestión, hace que las organizaciones sean más adaptables, eficientes y efectivas construyendo estructuras que se ajustan a las demandas de los ciudadanos (Burgess, 1975), lo cual también está respaldado por la más generalmente aplicable teoría del capital social (Seibert et al., 2001). Sin embargo, las consecuencias para los empleados públicos son menos claras, ya que la literatura en NGP generalmente ha descuidado las percepciones y experiencias de los empleados (Steijn, 2004).

Desde la perspectiva de ganancias mutuas de GRH (Van de Voorde et al., 2012), se acepta que las prácticas, como el *empowerment* estructural, son beneficiosas tanto para el desempeño de la organización como para los empleados. Sin embargo, la perspectiva de resultados conflictivos de GRH (Jensen et al., 2013) y, más específicamente en el marco público, el documentado "lado oscuro" de la NGP (Chandler et al., 2002; Diefenbach, 2009), advierten que el *empowerment* estructural no tiene ningún efecto en el bienestar de los empleados o incluso puede tener un resultado negativo. Esto nos llevó a encontrar interesante explorar las consecuencias del *empowerment* para los empleados, dada la necesidad de una visión más integral de este tema en la literatura general, pero aún más en el contexto del sector público (Park y Rainey, 2007; Fernández y Moldogaziev, 2013).

** Siguiendo la tendencia generalizada de los estudios en este ámbito, se utiliza el término en inglés *empowerment* en lugar de su traducción al español.

Al mismo tiempo, es necesario explorar el constructo de *empowerment* desde sus dos diferentes perspectivas: estructural (prácticas de gestión) y psicológica (estado mental personal), ya que numerosos académicos (e.g. Dewettinck y van Ameijde, 2011; Maynard et al., 2012; Fernández y Moldogaziev, 2013) defienden la integración de ambos enfoques para obtener una comprensión más amplia del proceso de *empowerment*. Sin embargo, hay una escasa investigación existente que combine ambos enfoques para desarrollar un enfoque integrador (Cho y Faerman, 2010). Aún más, en el sector público, el *empowerment* psicológico se vuelve vital dado que permite a los empleados tomar conciencia del contexto de trabajo y responsabilizarse de la rendición de cuentas de su trabajo personal (George y Zakkariya, 2014; Gautam y Ghimire, 2017), siendo así altamente beneficioso para la óptima prestación de servicios y mejora del rendimiento en el entorno público (Taylor, 2013; Van Loon, 2017).

A causa de la exigua atención que se ha prestado al tema del *empowerment* psicológico en el sector público, y en la literatura en general, quedan numerosas preguntas sin respuesta sobre sus consecuencias y antecedentes (Maynard et al., 2012). Por lo tanto, profundizar en los factores que guían los sentimientos de *empowerment* de los empleados y sus consecuencias surge como un útil marco a ser examinado (Seibert et al., 2011; Macinga et al., 2015). En cuanto a los antecedentes, las orientaciones individuales, como la orientación a la meta (OM) (e.g. Dweck, 1986), pueden afectar los sentimientos de *empowerment* psicológico, aunque se han raramente abordado. La OM de los empleados podría perfilar su *empowerment* psicológico porque ayuda a explicar las motivaciones, los intereses, las conductas laborales, las interpretaciones y el interés de las personas por actividades de desarrollo profesional (VandeWalle, 1997; Barrick et al., 2013; Joo et al., 2016). Bajo las exigentes condiciones del contexto del sector público, dicha orientación puede ayudar a regular el comportamiento de los empleados de acuerdo con los valores asociados con sus objetivos laborales (es decir, el aprendizaje y / o el rendimiento) (Taylor, 2013). En cuanto a las consecuencias, dentro del contexto de la NGP, se ha demostrado que la satisfacción y el compromiso de los empleados contribuyen al éxito de las organizaciones públicas (Kim, 2002; Wright y Davis, 2003; Perry, 2004; Park y Rainey, 2007; Hansen y Høst, 2012) y una guía sobre cómo pueden incrementarse, no solo en base a intervenciones de gestión como el *empowerment* estructural, sino a través también del *empowerment* psicológico, es un tema importante para explorar. Se puede esperar que el *empowerment* psicológico ayude

a los empleados a lidiar con la ansiedad laboral, lo cual es particularmente pertinente en el sector público (Jarman et al., 2014).

Objetivos de la investigación

El objetivo general de este estudio es obtener una comprensión más profunda de las relaciones que involucran al *empowerment* en el sector público tanto a nivel organizacional como individual. Por lo tanto, analizamos las relaciones de mediación entre el *empowerment* estructural y el desempeño organizacional dentro del contexto público, incorporando específicamente el rol mediador de las variables de bienestar de los empleados (satisfacción laboral, compromiso afectivo y ansiedad laboral) y de sus niveles de *empowerment* psicológico (un problema apenas abordado en el contexto público). Al hacerlo, tratamos de arrojar luz sobre el posible "lado oscuro" de la NGP. En general, el diseño multinivel de mediación ayuda a dilucidar más sobre la "caja negra" de GRH.

Además, nos enfocamos en el nivel de los empleados para descubrir más sobre los antecedentes y las consecuencias de los sentimientos de *empowerment*. Para este propósito, examinamos el papel de las orientaciones a la meta de los empleados (orientación a la meta de aprendizaje, orientación a la meta de desempeño-demonstración, y orientación a la meta de desempeño-evitación) como un antecedente individual de su *empowerment* psicológico y el impacto de este para el bienestar de los empleados (satisfacción laboral, compromiso afectivo y ansiedad laboral). Para este fin, hemos desarrollado tres estudios diferentes: dos con un diseño multinivel y un tercero centrado en el nivel individual de análisis.

Metodología y análisis de los datos

El modelo se centra tanto en el nivel individual (empleados) como organizativo (dirección y gestión) de los ayuntamientos españoles, ya que la implementación de los preceptos de la NGP hace necesario examinar el papel del *empowerment* y sus efectos en cuestiones organizacionales y de los empleados, dado que la investigación empírica previa sobre muestras públicas españolas se ha centrado principalmente en cuestiones de gestión (e.g. Torres et al., 2011; Barba y Serrano, 2015) descuidando el punto de vista de los empleados.

Para la investigación empírica, probamos el modelo usando datos cuantitativos de ayuntamientos españoles de municipios con más de 20.000 habitantes. Se desarrollaron dos cuestionarios *online* diferentes (basados en escalas validadas), dirigidos al responsable de recursos humanos (o la correspondiente figura a cargo del personal) y a otros empleados en general. Para los estudios multinivel (dos de los tres en la tesis) utilizamos datos de los dos niveles de 103 ayuntamientos (el responsable de recursos humanos y entre 4-6 empleados), y para el trabajo de nivel individual (el tercer estudio) utilizamos datos de 553 empleados, anidados en 111 ayuntamientos.

Las técnicas estadísticas utilizadas para analizar las hipótesis presentadas fueron SEM (modelos de ecuaciones estructurales) y MSEM (modelos de ecuaciones estructurales multinivel). Estas permiten examinar las relaciones entre múltiples variables trabajando con constructos (variables latentes) que se deducen de indicadores (Hair et al., 2010).

Principales resultados

Los resultados revelaron que el *empowerment* estructural está positiva y fuertemente relacionado con el desempeño organizacional en la muestra examinada. Además, se encontró que esta relación está mediada por reducidos niveles de ansiedad laboral de los empleados. También se encontró que el *empowerment* psicológico se asocia de manera significativa y positiva con el desempeño organizacional. Por lo tanto, el *empowerment*, en sus dos facetas, surge como una poderosa herramienta para mejorar el desempeño organizacional. Mientras tanto, específicamente a nivel individual, el *empowerment* psicológico se ve impulsado por altos niveles de orientación a la meta de aprendizaje y, a su vez, se relaciona positivamente con la satisfacción laboral y el compromiso afectivo, y negativamente con la ansiedad laboral.

En general, nuestro estudio presenta nueva evidencia empírica de la importancia del *empowerment* dentro del sector público, proporcionando una visión de las variables individuales que pueden interceder en el camino hacia la mejora del desempeño organizacional. Por lo tanto, ambos puntos de vista, organizacional e individual, se analizan conjuntamente. Esto puede permitir a los directivos públicos llevar a cabo algunas modificaciones, introduciendo nuevos y apropiados medios para mejorar la moral y el bienestar de los empleados, al mismo tiempo que se mejoran los resultados generales de los ayuntamientos.

Referencias

- Barba, M.I. y Serrano, J. (2015). 'Is human resource management in local councils useful?' *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 21,9–16.
- Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K. y Li, N. (2013). 'The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics'. *Academy of management review*, 38:1, 132-153.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705–16.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. y Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Cho, T. y Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130–154.
- Delery, J. E. y Roumpi, D. (2017). 'Strategic human resource management, human capital and competitive advantage: is the field going in circles?'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 27:1, 1-21.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations:the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Dewettinck, K. y Van Ameijde, M. (2011). 'Linking leadership empowerment behavior to employee attitudes and behavioral intentions. Testing the mediating role of psychological empowerment'. *Personnel Review*, 40:3, 284-305.
- Dweck, C. S. (1986). 'Motivational Processes Affecting Learning'. *American Psychologist*, 41:10, 1040-1048.
- Fernandez, S. y Moldogaziev, T. (2013). 'Employee empowerment, employee attitudes, and performance: Testing a causal model'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 90-506.
- Gautam, D. K. y Ghimire, S. B. (2017). 'Psychological Empowerment of Employees for Competitive Advantages: An Empirical Study of Nepalese Service Sector'. *International Journal of Law and Management*, 59:4, 466-488.
- George, E. y Zakkariya, K. A. (2014). 'Employees' perception of empowerment: a comparative study among different sectors of banks'. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 6:2, 132-145.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. y Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis. A global perspective* (7th Eds.). NY: Pearson.
- Hansen, J. R. y Høst, V. (2012). 'Understanding the relationships between decentralized organizational decision structure, job context, and job satisfaction—A survey of Danish public managers'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 32:3, 288-308.
- Jarman, L., Martin, A., Venn, A., Otahal, P., Taylor, R., Teale, B. y Sanderson, K. (2014). 'Prevalence and correlates of psychological distress in a large and diverse public sector workforce: baseline results from Partnering Healthy@ Work'. *BMC public health*, 14:1, 1-11.

- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. y Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. y Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Kim, S. (2002). 'Participative management and job satisfaction: Lessons for management leadership'. *Public administration review*, 62:2, 231-241.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. y Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Maynard, M. T., Gilson, L. L. y Mathieu, J. E. (2012). 'Empowerment – Fad or Fab? A Multilevel Review of the Past Two Decades Research'. *Journal of Management*, 38:4, 1231-1281.
- Park, R.M. y Rainey, H.G. (2007). 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment. Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27:3, 197-226.
- Perry, R. W. (2004). 'The Relationship of Affective Organizational Commitment with Supervisory Trust'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:2, 133-149.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. y Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Steijn, B. (2004). 'Human resource management and job satisfaction in the Dutch public sector'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24:4, 291-303.
- Subramony, M. (2009). 'A meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between HRM bundles and firm performance'. *Human resource management*, 48:5, 745-768.
- Taylor, J. (2013). 'Goal setting in the Australian public service: Effects on psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior?'. *Public Administration Review*, 73:3, 453-464.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. y Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Van De Voorde, K., Paauwe, J. y Van Veldhoven, M. (2012). 'Employee well-being and the HRM-organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies'. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14:4,391-407.
- Van Loon, N. M. (2017). 'Does context matter for the type of performance-related behavior of public service motivated employees?' *Review of public personnel administration*, 37:4, 405-429.
- VandeWalle, D. (1997). 'Development and Validation of a work domain goal orientation instrument'. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 57:6, 995-1015.
- Wilkinson, A., (1998). 'Empowerment: theory and practice'. *Personnel Review*, 27:1, 40-56.
- Wright, B. E. y Davis, B. S. (2003). 'Job Satisfaction in the Public Sector. The role of the Work Environment'. *American Review of Public Administration*, 33:1, 70-90.

DISCUSIÓN Y CONCLUSIONES

Implicaciones teóricas de los resultados de la investigación

Esta tesis nos ha permitido arrojar luz sobre las relaciones que involucran el *empowerment* en el sector público a través del desarrollo de tres estudios, con diferentes objetivos expuestos en el apartado de introducción.

En primer lugar, dos de los objetivos hacían referencia a examinar posibles caminos que conducen a la mejora del rendimiento organizacional, ya que este constituye un factor clave dentro de la corriente principal de la NGP y la obligación prevaleciente de rendición de cuentas y mejora de los servicios entregados inherentes a esta tendencia (Pitts, 2005; Torres et al., 2011). En este sentido, a partir de nuestros hallazgos, afirmamos que tres variables surgen como relevantes para este objetivo: el *empowerment* estructural a nivel organizacional y el *empowerment* psicológico y la ansiedad laboral a nivel de individuo. El vínculo positivo entre el *empowerment* estructural y el desempeño organizacional contribuye a reforzar la teoría del capital social (Seibert et al., 2001) en el contexto de los gobiernos locales. Por lo tanto, se sugiere que la aplicación del *empowerment* puede construir una red organizacional que ayuda a los empleados a armarse para afrontar su trabajo y servir a los ciudadanos de una manera que mejore los resultados organizacionales. Asimismo, nuestros resultados son consistentes con los recientes argumentos de la "caja negra" de la gestión pública, que afirman que el establecimiento de un sistema, como el *empowerment* estructural, contribuye a crear una estructura más general en la organización que ayuda a mejorar el rendimiento y la calidad del servicio (Burgess, 1975; Andrews y Boyne, 2010).

Además, a partir de los exámenes de "niveles cruzados", los resultados respaldan el poder de la ansiedad laboral y amplían el conjunto de investigaciones sobre cómo estimular el rendimiento en entornos públicos. Se confirma, por lo tanto, que los síntomas de estrés y tensión conducen a un estado de tensión y baja energía que socava el rendimiento (Sackey y Sanda, 2009) y, a la inversa, si se reducen los niveles de ansiedad laboral, el rendimiento de la organización mejorará. Finalmente, la importancia del *empowerment* psicológico para mejorar el desempeño organizacional encontrado en nuestro estudio apoya las ideas propuestas por Bowen y Lawler (1992, 1995): al tener empleados que sienten competencia en el trabajo, autonomía para desarrollar actividades diarias, poder para impactar en los resultados y que desarrollan

un trabajo significativo, las autoridades locales pueden mejorar el servicio que ofrecen y, por lo tanto, el rendimiento general.

En segundo lugar, hemos explorado los efectos del *empowerment* estructural en diferentes resultados: desempeño organizacional (mencionado anteriormente) y bienestar de los empleados, proporcionando, por lo tanto, conocimiento acerca del dilema sobre las perspectivas de ganancias mutuas / resultados conflictivos de la gestión de recursos humanos y el "lado oscuro" de la NGP. Desde el vínculo positivo y significativo entre el *empowerment* estructural y el desempeño organizacional, y de la relación negativa y significativa entre el *empowerment* estructural y los niveles de ansiedad laboral, verificamos la perspectiva de ganancias mutuas de la literatura de recursos humanos (e.g. Peccei et al., 2013), lo que contrasta con nuestras expectativas. Por lo tanto, el *empowerment* estructural surge como beneficioso tanto para el desempeño organizacional como para la salud de los empleados. Esto difiere de las ideas del "lado oscuro" en la literatura de NGP y la perspectiva de los resultados conflictivos de la GRH (Chandler et al., 2002; Jensen et al., 2013). Dado que en España los cambios inherentes a la NGP se están implementando a un ritmo más lento, tal vez los empleados no experimenten la tensión que esperábamos. Teóricamente, el modelo de demandas del trabajo-control del trabajo de Karasek (1979) nos proporciona soporte para esta idea. El *empowerment* estructural significa un mayor poder de decisión y más control en las manos de los empleados, lo que les ayuda a enfrentar mejor las demandas de sus trabajos y reducir la tensión percibida. Centrándonos en el contexto examinado, el modelo soberano de gobierno característico de la administración pública española con numerosos funcionarios con vinculación permanente, puede llevarlos a sentir una mayor seguridad laboral, sin temer a nuevas pruebas o problemas. Sin embargo, los insignificantes vínculos entre el *empowerment* estructural y la satisfacción en el trabajo y el compromiso afectivo brindan cierto apoyo para la visión escéptica de la GRH (ningún efecto de la GRH sobre el bienestar de los empleados) (Peccei, 2004). Parece que a pesar de los efectos positivos del *empowerment* estructural para el desempeño organizacional, el bienestar eudaimónico no se ve mejorado. Esto, por lo tanto, confirma parcialmente el "lado oscuro" de la NGP (Diefenbach, 2009).

La distinción entre las variables de bienestar puede ayudarnos a explicar los resultados encontrados. Pertenecen a una naturaleza diferente (hedónica: ansiedad laboral; eudaimónica: satisfacción laboral y compromiso afectivo), por lo que la

satisfacción laboral y el compromiso afectivo pueden mostrar un patrón diferente al de la ansiedad laboral. Mientras que el bienestar eudaimónico se refiere más bien a una evaluación del ajuste entre las condiciones de trabajo y el deseo y los valores de los empleados, el hedónico está más relacionado con la ausencia o presencia de dolor y las emociones de placer. Quizás, como afirma Vidal (2007), el *empowerment* no necesariamente mejora la satisfacción laboral o los niveles de compromiso de los empleados si estos tienen una orientación que no encaja con la tendencia de *empowerment*; es decir, la cuestión del ajuste persona-organización también juega un papel vital.

Finalmente, hemos podido arrojar luz sobre los vínculos del *empowerment* psicológico con sus antecedentes y consecuencias, dada la importancia del estado de ánimo de estos empleados para el trabajo público y la escasez de estudios en este contexto (e.g. Cho y Faerman, 2010; Fernandez et al., 2015).

Por lo tanto, a partir del análisis de “niveles cruzados”, demostramos la ausencia de un vínculo significativo y positivo entre el *empowerment* estructural y el *empowerment* psicológico, por lo que presentamos un resultado disonante en comparación con hallazgos de trabajos anteriores (e.g. Cho y Faerman, 2010). Este hecho podría deberse a las características del contexto examinado. Los empleados del sector público están más motivados por las recompensas intrínsecas que reciben de realizar una tarea (Houston, 2000), por lo que sus motivaciones internas son muy poderosas, lo que hace que las circunstancias externas, como el *empowerment* estructural, sean menos importantes. En este sentido, la teoría de la artesanía del puesto de trabajo, originalmente *job crafting theory*, podría proporcionar un marco teórico útil. Esta establece que los empleados crean sus trabajos realizando algunos cambios en la medida de sus posibilidades, por lo que configuran las interacciones y relaciones en el trabajo adoptando un rol más activo (Wrzesniewski y Dutton, 2001; Nielsen, 2013). También el concepto de Motivación del Sector Público puede explicar esta realidad (Perry y Wise, 1990), ya que este rasgo, relacionado con la disposición al trabajo en el sector público, también podría ser crítico para la conformación del *empowerment* psicológico en este tipo de fuerza de trabajo.

Centrados en el nivel de los empleados, hemos ilustrado la relevancia de las disposiciones y sentimientos de los empleados para la configuración de su bienestar en el sector público al investigar más a fondo el papel de las orientaciones a la meta de los

empleados como un antecedente individual de su *empowerment* psicológico, y la influencia de este a su vez para el bienestar de los empleados (satisfacción laboral, compromiso afectivo y ansiedad laboral, es decir, tipos de bienestar eudaimónico y hedónico). A partir de la relación positiva de la orientación a la meta de aprendizaje y el *empowerment* psicológico confirmamos los hallazgos de investigaciones empíricas similares anteriores (e.g. Joo et al., 2016). Por lo tanto, los empleados con altos niveles de orientación a la meta de aprendizaje, que buscan oportunidades para expandir nuevas habilidades y a los cuales les gusta tomar riesgos para desarrollar su capacidad de trabajo para servir mejor a los ciudadanos, también están más inclinados a autocrear un estado de ánimo fortalecido. En cuanto a la orientación a la meta de rendimiento-demostración, no se encontró ningún enlace. Quizás, en el contexto examinado, ambas perspectivas de orientación a la meta (la tradicional y la revisada) surgen de una manera que construye una relación nula. Como se explicó anteriormente, la meta de rendimiento-demostración es una construcción compleja, impulsada, en realidad, por dos motivaciones diferentes: el logro y la evitación (Elliot y Church, 1997). En las organizaciones públicas españolas, la tendencia actual de evaluación del desempeño individual puede activar una motivación de logro en algunos trabajadores, pero otros con una permanencia indefinida en su trabajo pueden iniciar la motivación de evitación, comportándose de manera diferente, ya que pueden sentir resistencia para perseguir los objetivos de rendimiento (Serna, 2008). Los efectos globales, por lo tanto, podrían ser compensados. Por su parte, la orientación a la meta de rendimiento-evitación no mostró ningún vínculo con el *empowerment* psicológico. Tal vez también el perfil de los empleados estudiados es la explicación. La orientación a la meta de rendimiento-evitación se puede manifestar mediante una eliminación activa o una reflexión pasiva de una circunstancia desagradable (Elliot y Sheldon, 1998). Los empleados públicos pueden ser más propensos a erradicar una situación en la que tienen miedo de no desempeñar bien en lugar de rumiar y actuar de forma pasiva, dada su condición habitual de permanencia indefinida (Torres et al., 2011). Por lo tanto, los resultados de esta disposición son menos perjudiciales, de modo que el *empowerment* psicológico no se ve afectado.

En cuanto a las consecuencias del *empowerment* psicológico para el bienestar, se confirmó una vez más el efecto positivo del *empowerment* psicológico sobre la satisfacción laboral (e.g. Carless, 2004) y sobre el compromiso afectivo (e.g. Macsinga

et al. 2015) ratificando así la utilidad de la propuesta norma de reciprocidad (Cropanzano y Mitchell, 2005) para el contexto analizado. Si los empleados de los ayuntamientos españoles se sienten psicológicamente empoderados, desarrollan un sentimiento de gratitud hacia la organización como consecuencia de la reciprocidad. Por lo tanto, el bienestar eudaimónico se logra cuando los empleados están en un estado de ánimo fortalecido. Finalmente, se ha descubierto que la ansiedad laboral se reduce cuando el *empowerment* psicológico es alto. Esto respalda la idea de que el *empowerment* psicológico protege contra la mala salud (Hochwälder y Brucefors, 2005) y también ofrece nuevas pruebas de la utilidad del modelo de Karasek (1979) de demandas y control laboral: cuando los empleados de los ayuntamientos creen que tienen influencia en el desarrollo de las tareas que deben realizar, sienten niveles reducidos de ansiedad. Además, en este caso el bienestar hedónico también se mejora, lo que nos lleva a concluir que el *empowerment* psicológico es positivo tanto para el bienestar eudaimónico como para el hedónico.

En términos generales, y partiendo de la creencia de que las diferencias entre contextos pueden significar implicaciones relevantes para las relaciones que atañen *empowerment* (e.g. Bamberger, 2008; Johns, 2006; Kim et al., 2017), vale la pena enfatizar que el estudio hace una contribución importante en el sentido de que la contextualización del modelo en un sector específico facilita su generalización, lo que puede considerarse un paso relevante en el desarrollo teórico (Whetten, 1989).

Implicaciones prácticas de los resultados de la investigación

Las grandes proporciones de gastos del sector público que los gobiernos locales suponen (Andrews y Boyne, 2010) hacen vital el examen de su desempeño. Dado el valor indiscutible del *empowerment* para alcanzar con éxito la mejora del rendimiento organizacional público, nuestros hallazgos de investigación pueden ofrecer útiles indicaciones para los gerentes públicos. Se pueden implementar diferentes tipos de acciones en los ayuntamientos.

En primer lugar, para mejorar el desempeño organizacional, los dirigentes de los ayuntamientos deben luchar para promover diferentes facetas. Por un lado, deben poner en práctica programas de *empowerment* estructural que incluyan formación, recompensas basadas en la productividad, diseminación de información y herramientas para participar en la toma de decisiones para los empleados. Dentro del paradigma de la

NGP de eficacia, eficiencia y mejora de la satisfacción ciudadana, el *empowerment* estructural emerge como una poderosa estrategia para que los gobiernos locales se enfrenten los nuevos desafíos y demandas de responsabilidad que la sociedad ejerce. Por otro lado, nuestros hallazgos también enfatizan el rol de los bajos niveles de ansiedad laboral para un buen desempeño en los gobiernos locales. En este sentido, los gerentes locales pueden promover actividades con el objetivo de ayudar a los empleados a enfrentar sus exigentes situaciones y equilibrar sus niveles de ansiedad laboral. Una sugerencia sería, por ejemplo, desarrollar sesiones de *mindfulness*, es decir, atención plena (Fortney et al., 2013), para que puedan reducir sus niveles de ansiedad y estrés. Finalmente, y dado su papel valioso para la mejora del desempeño organizacional, los gerentes también deben prestar atención al estado de *empowerment* psicológico de los empleados.

Esta última afirmación nos lleva a remarcar la necesidad de mejorar los niveles de *empowerment* psicológico de los empleados. Sería aconsejable adaptar los sistemas de selección para tener en cuenta las motivaciones y la personalidad de los empleados. Parece que no solo las habilidades y el conocimiento requeridos para llevar a cabo las actividades laborales diarias son importantes para el rendimiento. Estos talentos deben complementarse con características personales, como un estado psicológico de la mente. Por lo tanto, en los procesos de selección puede ser recomendable priorizar a los candidatos que, además de contar con los talentos antes mencionados, sean capaces de fomentar su propio *empowerment* psicológico por sí mismos. Una posible sugerencia para los gerentes es dar a los empleados la oportunidad de moldear su trabajo de acuerdo con sus preferencias, habilidades y aptitudes (Wrzesniewski y Dutton, 2001), para que puedan percibir su trabajo como más significativo. Ellos, por ejemplo, podrían organizar el modo y el momento en que llevan a cabo sus actividades diarias de la manera que consideran más óptima, y establecer sus propias rutinas para sentirse más cómodos en el trabajo. En este mismo sentido, también podría ser positivo tener en cuenta el concepto de Motivación del Servicio Público (Perry y Wise, 1990). Dado que nuestro estudio indica que el *empowerment* psicológico puede generarse más a partir del rasgo de un individuo que de una influencia estructural, es importante considerar la cuestión de que ciertos individuos están más predispuestos al servicio público, lo que podría mejorar sus sentimientos de *empowerment* en el trabajo. Por lo tanto, en los

procesos de selección sería aconsejable utilizar algún instrumento (Perry, 1996) para medir esta disposición en los candidatos.

También a partir de nuestros hallazgos, reconocemos la importancia de la orientación a la meta de aprendizaje de los empleados en la conformación del *empowerment* psicológico. Por lo tanto, siguiendo el mismo argumento mencionado anteriormente, los procesos de selección podrían tener en cuenta las disposiciones de los candidatos que pueden conducir a un estado mental beneficioso en el futuro en los empleados seleccionados. Aparte de esto, y considerando que la orientación a la meta de aprendizaje también puede estar configurado por circunstancias externas (Button et al., 1996), la organización de sesiones de formación para ayudar a los empleados a ser más conscientes y evaluar sus objetivos de aprendizaje sería recomendable. La guía para estas sesiones consistiría en establecer un lema, explicación de la teoría y ejemplos de objetivos de aprendizaje o balances, práctica para determinar los objetivos de aprendizaje, retroalimentación por parte del formador y de los compañeros de trabajo, discusiones, etc. Todo esto podría significar un refuerzo para los empleados de manera que puedan cultivar y mantener sus niveles de orientación a la meta de aprendizaje, lo que ayudaría a mejorar sus sentimientos de significado, competencia, autonomía e impacto, llevando a reducir la ansiedad laboral y aumentar la satisfacción laboral y el compromiso afectivo.

En general, emergen varias sugerencias de técnicas directivas a partir de los hallazgos de nuestra investigación. En definitiva, el servicio a los ciudadanos y la eficacia de los gobiernos locales se beneficiarían si se toman en consideración estas propuestas.

Limitaciones y direcciones para futuras investigaciones

Naturalmente, este estudio tiene algunas limitaciones que deben mencionarse. En primer lugar, a pesar de la contribución que supone el hecho de concentrarse en un contexto específico, se recomienda desarrollar trabajos futuros en otros escenarios públicos para contribuir a extender la generalización del modelo. En segundo lugar, los datos obtenidos y analizados se refieren a un único punto en el tiempo, por lo que no se puede inferir causalidad. Esto supone una debilidad pero, al mismo tiempo, una oportunidad para futuras investigaciones, por lo que podría ser útil aplicar un diseño longitudinal para probar las relaciones causales en el hipotético modelo, profundizar en

las consecuencias del *empowerment* estructural para el desempeño organizacional y para los sentimientos de *empowerment* y bienestar de los empleados, así como en los efectos de las orientaciones a la meta a largo plazo. Al mismo tiempo, con respecto al nivel organizacional, se debe remarcar el tema de la endogeneidad, ya que el desempeño podría ser endógeno al *empowerment* estructural existiendo una causalidad inversa (Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2016). La investigación futura podría interesantemente centrarse en esta pregunta.

En tercer lugar, con respecto a la medición de variables, es digno de mención que la satisfacción laboral se midió con un solo ítem que captura la satisfacción laboral general, como una evaluación general de la situación laboral. Sin embargo, también podría ser interesante examinar cómo el *empowerment* afecta otras facetas de la satisfacción laboral, como la satisfacción con los compañeros o la satisfacción con el supervisor (Deshpande, 1996) o el uso de medidas para inferir el afecto y la emoción, según lo propuesto por algunos autores (Judge et al., 2011). En el caso del desempeño organizacional, vale la pena señalar que la medida utilizada refleja, en realidad, el desempeño organizacional percibido. La complementación de estos datos con resultados objetivos sería adecuada, aunque, como se explicó anteriormente, en la muestra analizada esto no fue posible porque el control del rendimiento y la información no son obligatorios para todos los ayuntamientos españoles. Quizás, si este hecho cambia, los estudios futuros pueden recopilar datos de rendimiento objetivo, o si la investigación se desarrolla en un país diferente donde la existencia de este tipo de informes es obligatoria, estos datos podrían incorporarse fácilmente al modelo. Además, con respecto al nivel de gestión, otra línea interesante para explorar serían los posibles efectos curvilíneos. Como afirman Grant y Schwartz (2011), las experiencias de bienestar psicológico tienen límites, por lo que las investigaciones futuras podrían útilmente estudiar los niveles más favorables y las combinaciones de *empowerment* estructural para obtener resultados beneficiosos para los empleados.

Además, y dada la sorprendente ausencia de un poder mediador de *empowerment* psicológico en el vínculo *empowerment* estructural-desempeño organizacional, podría ser interesante explorar si puede ser más bien un moderador en lugar de un mediador. De nuestros hallazgos se infiere que los sentimientos de *empowerment* están más determinados por factores internos, por lo que quizás, independientemente de las circunstancias externas, los niveles de *empowerment*

psicológico de los empleados puedan influir y fomentar el poder de *empowerment* estructural para mejorar el desempeño organizacional.

Una última sugerencia para futuros estudios que involucren el *empowerment* sería el desarrollo de un estudio cualitativo. Complementar los estudios cuantitativos con entrevistas y comentarios podría ser útil para una mayor comprensión de los resultados obtenidos, ya que, como expresan Petter et al. (2002), la definición de *empowerment* y la estimación en realidad depende de cada individuo y situación.

Conclusiones generales

Resumiendo, el diseño multinivel de la investigación ha perfilado los efectos del *empowerment* estructural en los empleados, además del desempeño organizacional, lo que contribuye a arrojar luz sobre la tradicional pregunta de "caja negra" de la GRH. De nuestros hallazgos se deduce que el *empowerment* estructural actúa como un instrumento "tranquilizador" para la fuerza de trabajo, pero no como un medio para mejorar la satisfacción y el compromiso de los empleados. Es decir, los hallazgos apoyan la combinación de las perspectivas optimista y escéptica sobre la GRH (e.g. Peccei et al., 2013; Van de Voorde et al., 2016). Con respecto a la discusión de la NGP, los resultados no proporcionan un apoyo total para su "lado oscuro" (Diefenbach, 2009) sobre el aumento del estrés y la ansiedad: el bienestar hedónico no se socava, sino que se potencia; sin embargo, hay una confirmación del hecho de que las prácticas de *empowerment* estructural integradas dentro de la corriente principal de la NGP no mejoran el bienestar eudaimónico de los empleados.

Además, esta tesis ha proporcionado algunas pruebas empíricas impactantes: el no-vínculo entre el *empowerment* estructural y psicológico, sugiriendo que este último debería promoverse a través de otros medios, como la gestión de mecanismos personales, dado su valor para la mejora del desempeño organizacional. En general, se vuelve más clara la relevancia del *empowerment* estructural y psicológico para el desempeño general de los ayuntamientos. A nivel individual, brindamos información sobre las disposiciones personales involucradas en el bienestar de los empleados, confirmando el papel vital de la orientación a la meta de aprendizaje para generar sentimientos de competencia, impacto, autonomía y significado entre ellos. Al mismo tiempo, se ha evidenciado la asociación de estos sentimientos de *empowerment* para el bienestar de los empleados públicos. Además, el estudio supone un enriquecimiento

importante para el desarrollo de la teoría sobre *empowerment*, ya que la contextualización del modelo en un sector explícito hace posible su generalización, siendo este un paso significativo en el progreso teórico (Whetten, 1989).

Para concluir, a partir de esta exposición de evidencia empírica, los gestores públicos podrían tomar algunas pautas para la mejora de las técnicas y formas de gestión implantadas en los ayuntamientos. Esto, en última instancia, podría generar beneficios tanto para los empleados como para su desempeño general.

Referencias

- Andrews, R. y Boyne, G.A. (2010). 'Capacity, leadership, and organizational performance: Testing the black box model of public management'. *Public Administration Review*, 70:3, 443-454.
- Bamberger, P. (2008). 'From the editors beyond contextualization: Using context theories to narrow the micro-macro gap in management research'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51:5, 839-846.
- Bowen, D.E. y Lawler, E.E. (1992). 'The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When'. *Sloan Management Review*, 33:3, 31-39.
- Bowen, D.E. y Lawler, E.E. (1995). 'Empowering service employees'. *Sloan management review*, 36:4, 73.
- Burgess, P.M. (1975). 'Capacity Building and the Elements of Public Management'. *Public Administration Review*, 35:6, 705-16.
- Button, S. B., Mathieu, J. E. y Zajac, D. M. (1996). 'Goal orientation in organizational research: A conceptual and empirical foundation'. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 67:1, 26-48.
- Carless, S. A. (2004). 'Does Psychological Empowerment Mediate the Relationship Between Psychological Climate and Job Satisfaction?'. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 18:4, 405-425.
- Chandler, J., Barry, J. y Clark, H. (2002). 'Stressing academe: The wear and tear of the new public management'. *Human Relations*, 55:9, 1051-1069.
- Cho, T. y Faerman, S. R. (2010). 'An Integrative Model of Empowerment and Individuals' In-Role and Extra Role Performance in the Korean Public Sector: Moderating Effects of Organizational Individualism and Collectivism'. *International Public Management Journal*, 13:2, 130-154.
- Cropanzano, R. y Mitchell, M.S. (2005). 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review'. *Journal of management*, 31:6, 874-900.
- Deshpande, S. P. (1996). 'The impact of ethical climate types on facets of job satisfaction: An empirical investigation'. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 15:6, 655-660.
- Diefenbach, T. (2009). 'New public management in public sector organizations: the dark sides of managerialistic 'enlightenment''. *Public administration*, 87:4, 892-909.
- Elliot, A. J. y Church, M. A. (1997). 'A hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72:1, 218-232.

- Elliot, A. J. y Sheldon, K. M. (1998). 'Avoidance personal goals and the personality-illness relationship'. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 75:5, 1282-1299.
- Fernandez, S., Resh, W. G., Moldogaziev, T. y Oberfield, Z. W. (2015). 'Assessing the past and promise of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey for public management research: A research synthesis'. *Public Administration Review*, 75:3, 382-394.
- Fortney, L., Luchterhand, C., Zakletskaia, L., Zgierska, A. y Rakel, D. (2013). 'Abbreviated mindfulness intervention for job satisfaction, quality of life, and compassion in primary care clinicians: a pilot study'. *The Annals of Family Medicine*, 11:5, 412-420.
- Grant, A. M. y Schwartz, B. (2011). 'Too much of a good thing: The challenge and opportunity of the inverted U'. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6:1, 61-76.
- Hochwälder, J. y Brucefors, A. B. (2005). 'Psychological empowerment at the workplace as a predictor of ill health'. *Personality and individual differences*, 39:7, 1237-1248.
- Houston, D. J. (2000). 'Public-service motivation: A multivariate test'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 10:4, 713-728.
- Jensen, J.M., Patel, P.C. y Messersmith, J.G. (2013). 'High-Performance Work Systems and Job Control: Consequences for Anxiety, Role Overload, and Turnover Intentions'. *Journal of Management*, 39:6, 1699-1724.
- Johns, G. (2006). 'The essential impact of context on organizational behavior'. *Academy of management review*, 31:2, 386-408.
- Joo, B. K., Park, J. G. y Lim, T. (2016). 'Structural determinants of psychological well-being for knowledge workers in South Korea'. *Personnel Review*, 45:5, 1069-1086.
- Judge, T.A., Thoresen, C.J., Bono, J.E. y Patton, G.K. (2001). 'The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review'. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127:3, 376-407.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). 'Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign'. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Kim, P. B., Lee, G. y Jang, J. (2017). 'Employee empowerment and its contextual determinants and outcome for service workers: a cross-national study'. *Management Decision*, 55:5.
- Macsinga, I., Sulea, C., Sârbescu, P., Fischmann, G. y Dumitru, C. (2015). 'Engaged, Committed and Helpful Employees: The Role of Psychological Empowerment'. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149:3, 263-276.
- Nicholson-Crotty, S., Nicholson-Crotty, J. y Fernandez, S. (2017). 'Performance and management in the public sector: Testing a model of relative risk aversion'. *Public Administration Review*, 77:4, 603-614.
- Nielsen, K. (2013). 'Review article: How can we make organizational interventions work? Employees and line managers as actively crafting interventions'. *Human Relations*, 66:8, 1029-1050.
- Peccei, R. (2004). *Human Resource Management and the Search for the Happy Workplace*. Inaugural Address. Rotterdam: Erasmus Research Institute of Management.
- Peccei, R., Van De Voorde, K. y Van Veldhoven, M. (2013). 'HRM, well-being and performance: a theoretical and empirical review', in J. Paauwe, D. Guest and P.M. Wright (eds), *Human*

- Resource Management and Performance: Achievements and Challenges*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Petter, J., Byrnes, P., Choi, D.L., Fegan, F. y Miller, R. (2002). 'Dimensions and patterns in employee empowerment: Assessing what matters to street-level bureaucrats'. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 12:3, 377-400.
- Perry, J. L. (1996). 'Measuring public service motivation: An assessment of construct reliability and validity'. *Journal of public administration research and theory*, 6:1, 5-22.
- Perry, J.L. y Wise, L. R. (1990). 'The motivational bases of the Public Service'. *Public Administration Review*, 50:3, 367-373.
- Pitts, D. W. (2005). 'Leadership, Empowerment, and Public Organizations'. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 25:1, 5-28.
- Sackey, J. y Sanda, M.A. (2009). 'Influence of occupational stress on the mental health of Ghanaian professional women'. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 39:5, 876-887.
- Seibert, S.E., Kraimer, M.L. y Liden, R.C. (2001). 'A social capital theory of career success'. *Academy of management journal*, 44:2, 219-237.
- Seibert, S. E., Wang, G. y Courtright, S. H. (2011). 'Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96:5, 981-1003.
- Serna, M.S. (2008). 'Nuevas tendencias en gestión de recursos humanos en las Administraciones públicas: ¿están cambiando las reglas del juego?'. *Revista internacional de organizaciones*, 1, 109-127.
- Torres, L., Pina, V. y Yetano, A. (2011). 'Performance measurement in Spanish local governments. A cross-case comparison study'. *Public administration*, 89:3, 1081-1109.
- Van De Voorde, K., Veld, M. y Van Veldhoven, M. (2016). 'Connecting empowerment-focused HRM and labour productivity to work engagement: the mediating role of job demands and resources'. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 26:2, 192-210.
- Vidal, M. (2007). 'Lean production, worker empowerment, and job satisfaction: A qualitative analysis and critique'. *Critical Sociology*, 33:1-2, 247-278.
- Whetten, D.A. (1989). 'What constitutes a theoretical contribution?' *Academy of Management Review*, 14:4, 490-495.
- Wrzesniewski, A. y Dutton, J.E. (2001). 'Crafting a job: Revisioning employees as active crafters of their work'. *Academy of management review*, 26:2, 79-201.