How does political board role behavior impact strategy implementation effectiveness in local authorities? The role of cooperative dynamics between political boards and senior management.

Kenn Meyfroodt[*] & Sebastian Desmidt[*]

[*]*Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Department Marketing, Innovation and Organization, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium.*

Corresponding author: Kenn Meyfroodt, e-mail: kenn.meyfroodt@ugent.be, Tel: +32(0)92432957, ORCID 0000-0002-0587-1732.

Sebastian Desmidt, e-mail: sebastian.desmidt@ugent.be, Tel: +32(0)92432958, ORCID 0000-0002-5769-4440.

Kenn Meyfroodt is a postdoctoral researcher in public management in the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent University, Belgium. His research focuses on strategic planning processes, decision making, and the role of information processing in public strategic decision-making teams.

Sebastian Desmidt is associate professor of strategic management in the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent University, Belgium. His research focuses on the effectiveness of strategic management instruments and strategic planning processes, the determinants of strategic consensus, and the motivational power of mission valence in public and non-profit organizations.

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For strategic planning and performance measurement to foster strategy implementation effectiveness in local authorities much depends on how political boards and senior management shape their relationship and cooperate with each other while making use of these rational planning practices. Given that the politics-administration dichotomy perspective advocates a complete separation between political boards and senior management, while the complementarity view eulogizes interdependence, the question arises if cooperative dynamics between these groups take place and foster strategy implementation effectiveness. Therefore, this study investigates whether independence and interdependence oriented political board role behaviors stimulate cooperative dynamics between political boards and senior management and, consequently, strategy implementation effectiveness. Results, based on perceptual data of 96 Flemish local authorities' chief administrative officers, reveal that handing down goals and drawing boundaries through strategic planning (overseeing board role behavior) works best for chief administrative officers.

Keywords: politics-administration interface, interdependence, strategy implementation effectiveness, cooperative dynamics, board role behavior.

Introduction

Strategic planning and performance measurement are widely adopted in contemporary public sector organizations (Bryson 2010; George 2017; Joyce 2017; Meyfroodt and Desmidt 2021). Underlying its popularity is the assumption that both rational planning practices support learning and meaning-making, improve strategic decision-making quality and foster strategy implementation effectiveness through the provision of strategic relevant information (Andrews et al. 2009a, 2009b; George and Desmidt 2018; George et al. 2017; Meyfroodt and Desmidt 2021; Poister and Streib 2005; Poister, Pasha, and Edwards 2013; Walker and Boyne 2006; Walker, Boyne, and Brewer 2010) and by serving as boundary object in use (Meyfroodt, desmidt, and Goeminne 2019). Specifically, strategic plan information can help during strategy

implementation to maintain a strategic consensus (Desmidt and Meyfroodt 2018; Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne 2019) and focus on predetermined strategic goals, a sequence of implementation steps, potential troubleshooting and anticipated consequences (Bryson 2010; Elbanna, Andrews, and Pollanen 2016; Grimmelikhuijsen and Welch 2012; Vaara, Sorsa, and Palli 2010), while performance information can assist in indicating whether specified targets and goals are achieved (Moynihan and Landuyt 2009; Moynihan, Pandey, and Wright 2012; Poister, Pasha, and Edwards 2013) or in alerting whether interventions become expedient (Boyne, 2001; Walker, Boyne, and Brewer 2010).

However, to unlock rational planning practices' potential and foster strategy implementation effectiveness much depends on how decision-makers at the apex of their organization (i.e., boards and senior management) shape their relationship and cooperate with each other while making use of these rational planning practices (Andrews et al. 2012; Boivie et al. 2016; Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson 1997; Jacobsen 2006; 2011; Liguori et al. 2012; Luciano et al. 2020; Meier et al. 2006; Meyfroodt 2020; Schillemans 2013; Van Slyke 2007; Walker et al. 2013). Specifically, the strategic management literature postulates that cooperative dynamics (i.e., the reciprocal sharing of information and insights pertaining to the formulation and realization of an organization's strategic goals and strategic plan) between boards and senior management are conducive to strategy implementation effectiveness because strategic decisions need to be refined and adjusted during strategy implementation in order to be able to deal with unforeseen issues and the inherent complexity of strategy processes (Meyfroodt and Desmidt, 2021; Kellermanns et al. 2011). It is argued that cooperative dynamics reduce information asymmetries between boards and senior management and foster decision-making quality because they allow the pooling of insights from both boards and senior management (Boivie et al. 2016; Luciano et al. 2018; McDonald et al. 2008; Meyfroodt and Desmidt 2021; Oehmichen et al. 2017; van der Voet and Steijn 2020). This is particularly relevant for local

authorities and their political board-senior management governing system (Jacobsen 2006; Mouritzen and Svara 2002; Sancino and Turrini 2009; Svara 2006): Political boards (which are in many countries populated by lay, often part-time, politicians [Kleven et al. 2000]) encounter the risk of being distant from and lacking information about the organizational day-to-day activities (Buchanan 2002; Meyfroodt 2020), while senior management has to rely on political boards' decision-making to be able to operationalize and implement chosen policy directions (Svara 1999).

However, although strategic management research stresses the importance of cooperative dynamics between boards and senior management (Andrews et al. 2012; Jacobsen 2006; 2011; Liguori et al. 2012; Meier & O'Toole 2006; Meyfroodt 2020; Schillemans 2013; Van Slyke 2007; Walker et al. 2013), empirical research on the subject, and in particular on what instigates, limits or prevents cooperative dynamics between political boards (i.e., councils comprised of elected or appointed politicians) and senior management during strategy implementation, is almost non-existent in politicized public settings. The lack of (empirical) insights on political board-senior management cooperative dynamics probably roots in the fact that both the traditional and the new public management (NPM) literature predominantly adopted a dichotomist perspective of the political board-senior management relationship (Demir 2009; Georgiou 2014; Kim 2020; Liguori et al. 2009; Svara 1998; 1999). Specially, NPM draws heavily from agency theory (Andrews et al. 2012; Kaboolian 1998) to stress that a political board-senior management governing system should be characterized by a hierarchical principal-agent relationship whereby political boards set out the mission, goals, and the direction of policies which are subsequently, and unidirectionally, implemented by senior managers (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Lee 2001; Loveridge 1971; McSwite 1997). As a result, the dominant research stream has been concerned with the study of command and control mechanisms intended to minimize the negative effects of information asymmetry and to protect

public organizations from opportunistic, self-serving senior managers (Dalton et al. 2007; Luciano et al. 2020). Many contemporary public administration scholars, however, have argued that such a clear division between politicians and senior managers is impossible to uphold and ineffective (Demir 2009; Demir and Reddick 2012; Jacobsen 2006; Losada and Esteve 2017; Svara 2001) because the political board-senior management relationship is "characterized by interdependency, extensive interaction, distinct but overlapping roles, and political supremacy and administrative subordination coexisting with reciprocity of influence" (Svara 1999, 678). The notion that such complementarity (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Nalbandian 1999; Svara 2001) can be conducive to strategy implementation effectiveness is supported by the public strategic management literature (Meyfroodt 2020; Walker et al. 2013). Specifically, this literature conceives organizations as problem-solving institutions whereby individual organizational actors within these institutions have limited cognitive capacity (i.e., bounded rationality) and thus need to engage in reciprocal interaction processes in order to be able to effectively analyze complex tasks and to avoid making errors in decision-making (Van Ees et al. 2009). However, despite the fact that the concept of complementarity "achieve[d] a good reputation among public administration scholars" (Demir 2009, 877), insights into the extent to which practice conforms to this norm and, hence, research analyzing if, how and when complementary behavior such as cooperative dynamics between political boards and senior management contributes to strategy implementation effectiveness are missing. Do politicians and senior managers recognize that it takes two to tango or do they march to the beat of their own drum? And, what type of political board-senior management board role behavior works best (i.e., independence versus interdependence oriented) to facilitate political board-senior management cooperative dynamics and/or foster strategy implementation effectiveness?

Based on the fact that the literatures on group decision-making (Amason 1996; Buelens and Van Poucke 2006) and (motivated) information processing theory (Boivie et al. 2016; De

Dreu 2007) indicate that group members' role-related behaviors are key predictors of cooperative dynamics (Bock et al. 2005; Boivie et al. 2016; Buelens and Van Poucke 2006) while cooperative dynamics are essential for strategy implementation effectiveness, we tested the impact of a political board role behavior-continuum on strategy implementation effectiveness via political board-senior management cooperative dynamics. The developed political board role behaviors range from a politics-administration dichotomy perspective (based on agency theory [Eisenhardt 1989]) to a politics-administration complementarity view (based on stewardship theory [Schillemans 2013; Van Slyke, 2007]) and are denominated as interfering (i.e., disrespect of administrative competency and interference with management operations [Andrews et al. 2017; Demir 2009; Duggan 2006]), 'controlling' (i.e., a clear-cut politics-administration dichotomy [Demir and Nyhan 2008]), 'overseeing' (i.e., handing down goals and drawing boundaries through strategic planning [Andrews et al. 2017; Finer 1941]), and partnering' (i.e., collectively seeking to attain organizational goals [Cumberland et al. 2015]). Figure 1 depicts the developed research model.

[Insert Figure 1. About here]

The theoretical model is tested using Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (Sanchez, Trinchera, Russolillo 2014) to analyze perceptual data of chief administrative officers (CAOs) representing the senior-management teams of 96 Flemish local authorities. This approach is suitable given our focus on what CAOs – who are responsible for strategy implementation – expect from politics during strategy implementation, hence, after a strategic plan is (formally) agreed upon. By doing so, the study at hand has three main contributions. First, the applied approach not only fits well with the behavioral turn in public administration, whereby insights from psychology are used to advance public administration and management (Grimmelikhuijsen et al. 2017) but simultaneously answers the call from Bryson et al. (2010) for a contingent approach to public strategic management research. Specifically, by

substantiating arguments based on (motivated) information processing theory and tailoring it to the specificities of the setting in which governing systems operate (Spanhove and Verhoest 2007), the study's findings can help to move insights beyond typical one-size-fits-all prescriptions and create a more fine-grained understanding of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics in organizations having a politics-administration interface (Boivie et al. 2016; Nijstad and De Dreu 2012; Scholten et al. 2007; Van Dooren and Hoffmann 2018). Afterall, "if we want to understand why organizations do the things they do, or why they perform the way they do, we must consider the biases and dispositions" of the groups involved in the governing systems (Hambrick 2007, 334).

Second, by moving beyond an exclusive focus on management or political boards - an approach which is common in much of the public management literature (e.g., Meyfroodt 2020) - and examining cooperative dynamics between those empowered to make decisions (i.e., political boards) and those in charge of implementing decisions (i.e., senior management) we provide new insights into the political board-senior management relationship considered central to the study of public management (Ejersbo and Svara 2015; Walker et al. 2013). Such an integrative perspective is crucial given the assumption that strategic information asymmetry between political boards and senior management will hamper politicized public organizations to run smoothly (Meier and O'Toole, 2006).

Third, by adding an interdependence perspective based on stewardship theory (Van Slyke 2007) and strategic management literature on governing systems (Luciano et al. 2020) this study answers the repeated call to not self-evidently opt solely for agency theory and to search for new directions and alternative theorizing in research on boards and management (e.g., Daily et al. 2003; Gabrielsson and Huse 2004; Hambrick et al. 2008; Luciano et al. 2020).

Theory & hypotheses

Both agency and stewardship theory are well suited to study the political board-senior management relationship and governance-related issues given their overlapping delegator-delegatee focus but contradictory assumptions about the behavior of the delegators vis-à-vis the delegatees (Schillemans and Bjurstrøm 2020). Whereas the principal-agent relationship (i.e., agency theory) is characterized by a coercive approach, distrust and goal incongruence, the principal-steward relationship (i.e., stewardship theory) assumes a collaborative approach, is based on trust and postulates goal alignment (Bjurstrøm 2020). Also, managers' motivation differs between both theories: Agency theory views agents as individualistic, self-serving managers who complete their duties based on extrinsic motivation, while stewardship theory stresses that management is more collectively oriented and intrinsically motivated (Van Puyvelde et al. 2016). Agency theory and stewardship theory are often contrasted to proof the superiority of one theory over the other (e.g., Dicke [2002] when analyzing government contracting relationships; Marvel and Marvel [2008; 2009] when studying local governments' use of incentives and monitoring practices; Van Slyke [2007] when investigating applied management practices in government – non-profit contracting; Schillemans [2013] when studying the relationship between central governments and public agencies). However, more recently it is argued that both theories do not necessarily contradict each other but rather describe ideal types of relationships on different ends of a continuum (ranging from a principal-agent to a principal-steward type of relationship) (Bjurstrøm 2020; Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003, Van Puyvelde et al. 2016; Schillemans and Bjurstrøm 2020). In this study we follow such perspective and develop and apply a continuum of potential political board role behaviors (see Figure 2) that shape governing systems and determine its effectiveness.

[Insert Figure 2. About here]

Controlling board role behavior and interfering board role behavior (as a more extreme form) cover agency theory's basic assumption of principal-agent goal divergence and distrust as well as its control-oriented management philosophy (Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003; Van Slyke, 2007). In a similar vein, overseeing board role behavior and partnering board role behavior (as a more extreme form) cover stewardship theory's assumption of principal-steward goal alignment and initial trust disposition as well as its collaborative involvement-oriented philosophy (Dawes 2010; Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003; Van Slyke, 2007). In what follows, we will use the abovementioned order to move along the political board role continuum and construct hypotheses 1 to 4.

Agency theory's side of the continuum

Following agency theory it is assumed that the politics-administration relationship is a clear-cut dichotomy (Weber 1968; Aberbach et al. 1981): Whereas politics (i.e., a process characterized by disagreement and conflict) results in policy choices and priorities, it is senior management's task to neutrally translate these choices into concrete implementation through knowledge and expertise (Loveridge 1971; Martin 1988; McSwite 1997; Miller 2000). This means that political boards have the responsibility to formulate and clarify the public's preferences and communicate them to senior management (i.e., setting the task for public administration), and consequently to strictly control senior management "to ensure that policy implementation proceeds in conformity with legislative intentions and instructions" (i.e., putting accountability on senior management) (Demir and Nyhan 2008, 85). Senior management, on the other hand, should work isolated from the day-to-day rough and tumble of politics to be able to neutrally deploy its administrative competencies and translate the politically made strategic choices into concrete implementation (Koven 1992, Nalbandian and Edwards 1983). This entails that political boards have the formal authority, while senior management typically possesses an information advantage by performing the delegated task or

duty (Maggetti & Papadopoulos, 2018).

Within agency theory's dichotomous perspective, rational planning inspired practices are well suited to safeguard the envisioned isolation and hierarchical differences between political boards and senior management during implementation (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Person 1940; Poister and Streib 1989). Specifically, it provides senior management with a framework to focus on implementation effectiveness and apply its expertise, while providing the political board with the necessary tools to prevent senior management from taking actions that would alter the range and object of politically chosen strategic priorities (Demir and Nyhan, 2008; Finer 1940). Hence, from a political board point of view rational planning practices are to be used as a big stick to wield against misalignment and opportunistic or self-serving behavior of senior management. In this perspective, keeping a watchful eye on senior management through the use of rational planning practices (i.e., controlling board role behavior) not only allows political boards to preserve their desired hierarchical principal-agent relationship in which political board-senior management cooperative dynamics are avoided (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Loveridge 1971; McSwite 1997; Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003), but it also keeps political boards informed about the policy implementation progress (Lee 2001; Maggetti and Papadopoulos 2018). Hence, although cooperative dynamics between political boards and senior management are considered a key predictor of strategy implementation effectiveness (Boivie et al. 2016; Luciano et al. 2020; Walker et al. 2013) controlling board role behavior is believed to hamper these cooperative dynamics as the intrinsic motivation to cooperate is crowded out (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Loveridge 1971; Lee 2001; McSwite 1997; Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003). Therefore we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1a: Controlling board role behavior negatively associates with political board-senior management cooperative dynamics while the latter is positively associated with strategy implementation effectiveness.

Nevertheless, due to the fact that controlling board role behavior stimulates senior management to use its expertise to focus on strategy implementation (Demir and Nyhan, 2008; Finer 1940), it is deemed to have a direct positive impact on strategy implementation effectiveness. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1b: Controlling board role behavior has a direct positive association with strategy implementation effectiveness.

It is also possible that political boards move further along the continuum to a more extreme interfering board role type of behavior. Political boards may choose to shift from controlling board role behavior to interfering board role behavior in order to secure the input of strategic information, correct detected performance problems (Svara 2001) or to keep their local authority in touch with their electorate and/or political reality (Svara 1999b). Although it is possible that taking implementation in their own hands while amending and making continual changes to the strategic plan is well intended or perceived as needed, interfering board role behavior indicates that political boards do not respect administrative competence (Demir, 2009; Duggan, 2006). Given that it is expected that such behavior fuels resistance among senior management to cooperate and interact with their political board (Demir 2009; Demir and Reddick 2012; Duggan 2006; Svara 1999a) which weighs in on strategy implementation effectiveness (Boivie et al. 2016; Luciano et al. 2020; Walker et al. 2013), we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2a: Interfering board role behavior negatively associates with political board-senior management cooperative dynamics which, in turn, positively associates with strategy implementation effectiveness.

Moreover, we also expect that interfering board role behavior will limit or prevent senior management to deploy its available skills and expertise as strategy implementation is in part taken out of their hands, leading to suboptimal results (Boivie et al. 2016; Luciano et al. 2020; Walker et al. 2013). Therefore we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2b: Interfering board role behavior has a direct negative association with strategy implementation effectiveness.

Stewardship theory's side of the continuum

Whereas the agency theory's dichotomy perspective divides labor and authority along functional lines to keep policy-making and implementation tasks in separate hands (Martin 1988), the stewardship's theory interdependence perspective puts emphasis on the cooperation and interaction between political boards and senior management (Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson 1997; Demir and Reddick 2012; Pierre and Peters 2017; Van Thiel and Yesilkagit 2011). Namely, the interdependence perspective or complementarity view argues that shared (or at least overlapping) roles are inherent to policy making and administration (Demir and Nyhan 2008; Dunn and Legge 2002; Mouritzen and Svara 2002; Nalbandian and Portillo 2006; Svara 1999b; Zhang and Feiock 2010). "Public administrators [should] engage in questions that relate to policy making, while elected officials contribute to administration by directing, shaping, and overseeing policy implementation" (Demir and Reddick 2012, 526). Nevertheless, for CAOs to be involved, such role has to be approved by the political board (Whitaker and DeHoog 1991). This approval can happen explicitly, but also implicitly through specific board role behaviors. For instance, political boards can indicate that they expect senior management to play an advisory role and generate an expert opinion in support of more informed decision-making or they can go one step further by empowering their senior management to be actively involved in policy and strategy making (Brimeyer 1993; Demir and Reddick 2012; Lee 2001; Zhang and Feiock 2010). Hence, to increase strategy implementation effectiveness and, ultimately, organizational performance the political board has to partner up with management (Hung 1998; Cornforth 2003; Van Puyvelde et al. 2016).

Within stewardship theory's cooperative perspective, rational planning inspired practices are well suited to improve the conditions for effective strategy implementation when used to create a shared understanding of strategic issues and, thus, transcend person- or (sub)group-specific knowledge (Bryson, Berry, and Yang 2010; Bryson, Crosby, and Bryson 2009; Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne 2019). Senior management's support to the political board through the use of strategic plans and performance information will provide the political board with a firsthand and accurate understanding of strategy implementation which, in turn, will allow the political board to steer and complement senior management and contribute to strategy implementation effectiveness as it unfolds (Demir and Reddick 2012). However, such positive outcome depends to large extent to the level of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (Demir and Reddick; Ohren 2007). Given that overseeing board role behavior, which is based on handing down goals and drawing boundaries with sufficient amounts of leeway and room for collaboration is deemed conducive to strategy implementation effectiveness (Andrews et al. 2017; Finer 1941), but in part depends on the level of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (Demir and Reddick; Ohren 2007), we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3a: Overseeing board role behavior positively associates with political board-senior management cooperative dynamics which, in turn, positively associates with strategy implementation effectiveness.

Hypothesis 3b: Overseeing board role behavior has a direct positive association with strategy implementation effectiveness.

When the relationship between political boards and senior management is amicable and both actors complement each other, their relationship can even resemble a partnership (Dunn and Legge 2002; Nalbandanian 1994) whereby political boards and senior management are collectively seeking to attain the strategic goals. In such a partnership type of relationship more

policy making authority can be delegated to senior management further blurring a clear demarcation between politics and administration and increasing the level of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (Zhang and Feiock 2010). Given that strategy implementation effectiveness is believed to depend on the level of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (Demir and Reddick; Ohren 2007), we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4a: Partnering board role behavior positively associates with political board-senior management cooperative dynamics which, in turn, positively associates with strategy implementation effectiveness.

However, often this partnering type of relationship is characterized by too little controlling by the political board, which is expected to result in increased opportunism and a lack of focus on strategy implementation effectiveness (Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003). Given that such lack of focus can be detrimental to strategy implementation effectiveness, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4b: Partnering board role behavior negatively associates with strategy implementation effectiveness.

Methods

Research setting and data collection

The theoretical model was tested using data from chief administrative officers (CAOs) of Flemish (i.e., the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) Public Centers for Social Welfare (PCSW). A PCSW is a local authority responsible for organizing and delivering social services within its municipality. A PCSW's daily operations are coordinated by its management team, which is chaired by the CAO. The activities of the management team and chairing CAO are steered and monitored by a political board consisting of 9 to 15 politicians (depending on the population size of the municipality). Allocation of seats in the PCSW-board is based on the electoral results

of the political parties represented in the city council.

The population of the study comprises all CAOs of Flemish PCSWs. Given that a sampling frame with the contact details of all 308 CAOs is not publicly available, we created a database containing their names per municipality, their party affiliation and gender with their email-addresses. All 308 email-addresses were retrieved (100% of the population) from municipal and PCSW websites. The CAOs of the different PCSWs were invited to participate in an electronic survey. A data collection process between April and June 2018 resulted in 99 usable respondents from 308 PCSWs (i.e., usable response rate of 32.14%). Analysis of the data indicates that there are only 4 missing observed variable values (i.e., 0.169% of all observed data; percentage missing values per observed variable ranges from 0 to 1.020%). To avoid reducing the number of respondents, missing data were imputed at item level. Missing data were imputed using the single imputation expectation-maximization method (EM) because data are missing completely at random and the missing rate is limited.

66.70 % of the respondents are male, the average age of the respondents is 51 years (SD = 8.409; Range from 31 to 65) and the average number of years that the respondents have worked for their municipality is 18 years (SD = 10.844; Range from 1 to 41). The sample is believed to be representative: the socioeconomic characteristics of included municipalities do not differ statistically from the population ($\chi^2 = 0.759$, $p = 0.980$), while at the individual level, CAOs reflect the population with regard to gender ($\chi^2 = 2.286$, $p = 0.131$). Details of the statistical tests are reported in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1. About here]

Measures

Key (latent) variables

All the study's key constructs were measured using validated scales, consisting of items with response options on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 'strongly disagree' to 7 'strongly agree' (See Supplementary material A for more detailed measurement information and Table 2. and Table 3. for information on the convergent and discriminant validity of the study's constructs). With regard to the independent variables, partnering board role behavior (i.e., collectively seeking to attain organizational goals [Cumberland et al. 2015]) and controlling board role behavior (i.e., board role behavior based on a clear-cut politics-administration dichotomy [Demir and Nyhan, 2008]) are measured using four items based on the work Cumberland et al. (2015). Overseeing board role behavior (i.e., handing down goals and drawing boundaries through strategic planning [Andrews et al., 2017; Finer, 1941]) and interfering board role behavior - which is about disrespect of administrative competency and interference with management operations (Demir, 2009; Duggan, 2006) - are measured through three items based on the work Andrews et al., (2017). The first exogenous variable 'political board-senior management cooperative dynamics' is measured by four items based on the work of Gabris et al. (2001). Strategy implementation effectiveness, the second endogenous variable, is measured by four items based on the work of Slater, Hult, and Olson (2010), and Noble and Mokwa (1999).

Control variables

Four types of controls are used (based on Demircioglu 2020): Individual level demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, age and tenure of the CAO), team level political board characteristics (i.e., political diversity), organizational level characteristics (i.e., size) and meso-level characteristics (i.e. the number of minimum income guarantees). First, demographic

characteristics are argued to be proxies of differences in experiences, resulting in differences in interpretations which may impact CAOs' perceptions and expectations on, for instance, political board roles, political board-senior management cooperative dynamics and strategy implementation effectiveness (Bromiley and Rau 2016). Political diversity "is a composite measure based on the degree of fragmentation within a [political board] and the ideological position of the constituent political parties" expected to weigh in on the level of cooperative dynamics and the level of strategy implementation effectiveness because it is expected to determine the level of strategic consensus within political boards and, hence, the level of discretion of senior management during implementation (Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne 2019, 754; Stillman 1977). This means that a political board being politically diverse will be more strongly involved in the day to day administration as it wishes to maintain a full grip on strategic decisions (Craeghs et al. 2001). Size is included because organizations overseeing a large number of inhabitants are believed to have greater opportunities and a wider set of skills to adopt strategic planning processes (Boyne et al. 2005; Walker 2014). Moreover, it is argued that senior management serving larger populations can devote more of their time to their strategy and policy role than those serving smaller populations (as their main focus remains on administrative activities) (Dunn and Legge 2002; Newell and Ammons 1987). Finally, the number minimum income guarantees acts as an indicator of the socio-economic situation of a municipality's inhabitants which, in turn, is related to work load as it reflects the degree to which a PCSW is called upon. Detailed measurement and source information regarding the control variables[1] is provided in Supplementary material A.

Common source bias

Although collecting data on endogenous and exogenous variables through different sources is a preferable practice to minimize the impact of common source variance (Favero and Bullock 2015), using a single self-reported survey is justified as measurement method when 'both the

predictor and criterion variables are capturing an individual's perceptions, beliefs, judgements, or feelings' (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2012, 549). Given that for the latent variables one source is used (which differs from the controls for which multisource data is used), several ex ante precautions are implemented and post-hoc tests are conducted to minimize and evaluate the potential negative impact of common source bias. To ex-ante limit the potential negative impact of common source bias, we followed the recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2003) and George and Pandey (2017): We respected the survey requirements applicable within the field of public management (Favero and Bullock 2015; Lee, Benoit-Bryan, and Johnson 2012; Mackenzie and Podsakoff 2012), encouraged the provision of accurate responses, guaranteed anonymity, pretested the survey, and used a cover letter to emphasize the societal importance of the study without referencing to the study's research questions. We also labelled response options and highlighted items for reasons of clarity (Favero, Meier, and O'Toole 2016). To complement these precautions and guarantee proximal and psychological separation we also separated items and variables in the survey by means of other variables, buffer items and a cover story (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff 2012).

A second step in dealing transparently with common source bias is by reporting the results of a post-hoc analysis (George and Pandey 2017; Podsakoff et al. 2003). Given that the results of a collinearity assessment (i.e., a post-hoc analysis technique to evaluate the negative impact of common source bias that is generally accepted in Partial Least Squares Path Modeling [see, for instance, Ritz et al., 2020]) - show that the variance inflation factor (VIF) for each independent construct measurement (VIF range from 2.0 to 3.3) is below the critical value of 5 (Hair et al. 2017; Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2011) and even is "equal to or lower than 3.3, the model can be considered free of common method bias" (Kock 2015, 7).

Data analysis

Given that the research model contains complex multivariate relationships among (blocks of) observed and latent variables, plspm (an R package) for performing Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (PLS-PM) (Sanchez, Trinchera, Russolillo 2014) was used to analyze the data. PLS-PM is a data analysis methodology at the intersection of regression models, structural equation models, and multiple table analysis "that can produce estimates for very small sample sizes" (Benitez et al. 2020, 2) and does not assume that data is normally distributed (Hair et al. 2017). Furthermore, contrary to multiple regression analysis, PLS-PM allows to simultaneously model multiple endogenous constructs in one model (Hair Jr, Howard, and Nitzl 2020). To test the significance of the estimated path coefficients, PLS-PM relies on a nonparametric bootstrap procedure (5,000 samples) (e.g., George 2020; Ritz et al. 2020). Missing values were imputed by using EM missing value imputation (Little MCAR test Chi-square = 87.561, df = 92, p = 0.612).

Results

Model evaluation is a two-step procedure whereby first the outer model (i.e., the measurement model) is evaluated and then the inner model (i.e., the structural model) is examined (Sanchez 2013). The measurement model is evaluated by determining the degree to which (1) the blocks' indicators are unidimensional, (2) variations in the indicators are explained by their latent variables (i.e., convergent validity), and (3) a given construct is distinct from the study's other constructs (i.e., discriminant validity). The quality of the structural model is determined by assessing the degree of the variance in the endogenous latent variables that is accounted for by the independent variables (i.e., coefficient of determination), by determining the predictive capability of the latent independent variables (i.e., redundancy) (Hair Jr, Howard, and Nitzl 2020), and by evaluating the regression weights. The goodness-of-fit measure, as proposed by

Tenenhaus et al. (2005), is reported for diagnostic purposes (Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder, and Van Oppen 2009).

Measurement model

Table 2 reports the results of the assessment of the undimensionality and convergent validity and uses the thresholds as suggested by Chin (1998), Hair et al. (2017), and Sanchez, Trinchera, and Russolillo (2014). Given that all measurement loadings, Cronbach's alpha scores, and composite reliability scores are above their respective threshold of 0.7, that the average variance extracted (AVE) scores are above the threshold of 0.5 and that per construct the first eigenvalue score is above one (while the subsequent eigenvalues scores are below one), we can conclude that the blocks are unidimensional and the study's latent variables sufficiently explain the variance of their observed variables.

[Insert Table 2. About here]

Next, we evaluated the discriminant validity (Farrell 2010) (1) by assessing the cross loadings, (2) by examining the Fornell-Larcker criterion values (i.e., comparing the AVE with the squared correlations of each construct with the other constructs) (Fornell and Larcker 1981), and (3) by examining the Heterotrait-Monotrait criterion (HTMT) values which should be below 0.85 to 0.90 for each tuple (based on Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015 and Kline 2011). The studied constructs are distinct from each other because: The loadings of the indicators associated with a construct are higher than their loadings on any other construct; The AVE of each of the study's constructs exceeds the highest squared correlation with any other construct; The HTMT values (as reported in Table 3.) do not exceed 0.85.

[Insert Table 3. About here]

Structural model

The model fit of the inner model is good because of three reasons. First, 55.7% of the variance

in political board-senior management cooperative dynamics is accounted for by the independent variables, while 51.6% of the variance in strategy implementation effectiveness is explained by the political board role behaviors and political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (R^2 values between 30% and 60% are considered moderate in PLS-PM analysis [Sanchez, Trinchera, Russolillo 2014]). Second, the mean redundancy of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (0.371) and strategy implementation effectiveness (0.395) show that a large amount (i.e., redundancy > 0.30 [Fornell and Larcker 1981; Sanchez, Trinchera, Russolillo 2014]) of the variance in the endogenous variables is attributable to the study's independent latent variables. The geometric mean of the average communality and average R^2 for endogenous constructs (i.e., GoF) of 0.612 is considered large following Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder, and Van Oppen (2009) threshold value of 0.36. Third, as expected, we can observe causal pathways between different political board role behaviors, political board-senior management cooperative dynamics and strategy implementation effectiveness. Figure 3. and Table 4. show the detailed results of the PLS-PM analysis[1].

[Insert Figure 3. About here]

[Insert Table 4. About here]

With regard to the board role behaviors that are associated with the agency theory's independence perspective, we do not observe significant relationships (even though the signs of the relationships are in line with hypotheses 1 and 2). Specifically, controlling and interfering board role behavior both do not impact political board-senior management cooperative dynamics nor strategy implementation effectiveness significantly (i.e., not in support of hypotheses 1 and 2 as we fail to reject the respective null-hypotheses). However, when we turn attention to the board role behaviors linked to the stewardship theory's interdependence perspective, both partnering ($\beta = 0.584$, $p < .001$) and overseeing board role behavior ($\beta = 0.445$, $p < .001$) are positively and significantly associated with political board-senior management

cooperative dynamics, which in turn is positively and significantly related to strategy implementation effectiveness ($\beta = 0.517$, $p < .001$) (i.e., in support of hypothesis 3a and 4a [the respective null hypotheses are rejected]). The endogenous variable strategy implementation effectiveness is - apart from the above-mentioned indirect paths related to the interdependence perspective (with effect sizes of respectively 0.302 and 0.230) - only directly impacted by overseeing board role behavior ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < .001$) and, hence, not by partnering board role behavior (i.e., in support of hypothesis 3b because the null hypothesis is rejected, but not in support of hypothesis 4b as we fail to reject the null hypothesis). Moreover, the total effect of overseeing board role behavior on strategy implementation effectiveness through political board-senior management cooperative dynamics is significant and prevailing: A bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval does not include zero (0.282 to 0.766) and therefore indicates that the nontrivial total effect (standardized effect size = 0.532) is significant.

Discussion

Despite the attributed importance of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics for strategy implementation success in politicized public sector settings (Andrews et al. 2012; Jacobsen 2006; 2011; Liguori et al. 2012; Meier & O'Toole 2006; Meyfroodt 2020; Schillemans 2013; Van Slyke 2007; Walker et al. 2013) and the fact that agency and stewardship theory provide insights to shape potential role behaviors (which determine governing effectiveness) differently (Bjurstrøm 2020; Sundaramurthy and Lewis 2003, Van Puyvelde et al. 2016; Schillemans and Bjurstrøm 2020), empirical knowledge on what works best, and in particular on what instigates, limits or prevents political board-senior management cooperative dynamics during strategy implementation, remains scarce in politicized public settings. Therefore, this study investigates in local authorities (where the politics-administration interface is expected to be strong) whether agency or stewardship theory inspired political board role behaviors hamper or foster strategy implementation effectiveness through political board-

senior management cooperative dynamics. By doing this, the study provides valuable insights for theory and practice.

First, the study results are in support of the widespread assumption that cooperative dynamics between boards and senior management are conducive to strategy implementation effectiveness (Boivie et al. 2016; Luciano et al. 2020) and that such mechanism also works in politicized public settings having a strong politics-administration interface (Walker et al. 2013). Allied to this, the study's findings reveal that political board role behaviors positioned at the stewardship theory's side of the continuum are relevant predictors of the association between political board-senior management cooperative dynamics and strategy implementation effectiveness. Although the strongest impact on cooperative dynamics seems to sprout from partnering board role behavior, the largest total effect size on strategy implementation effectiveness buds from the more modest overseeing board role behavior. Overseeing board role behavior has (both directly and indirectly) a strong positive association with strategy implementation effectiveness. While confirming Davis et al.'s (1997) viewpoint that the presence of control mechanisms by principals in the principal-steward/agent relationship matter (as the effect of overseeing board role behavior on strategy implementation effectiveness is stronger than of partnering board role behavior), the study findings simultaneously offer nuance to Davis et al.'s (1997) stance on 'how' principals should exercise control on their stewards/agents to ensure that the imposed control mechanisms are highly impactful. Specifically, whereas Davis et al. (1997) argue that if the political board-senior management relationship resembles a principal-steward type of relationship more relaxed control mechanisms should be imposed in comparison to when the relationship resembles a principal-agent type of relationship (Bjurstrøm 2020), the study findings rather indicate that choosing a modest principle-steward type of controlling based on rational planning practices (i.e., overseeing board role behavior) outperforms other types of political board role behavior with

regard to strategy implementation effectiveness. Hence, partnering up with management but using strategic planning as a boundary object in use to create a shared understanding of strategic issues and transcend person- or (sub)group-specific knowledge on the one hand (Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne 2019), while being provided with performance information to form an accurate understanding of strategy implementation (Meyfroodt and Desmidt 2021), allows political boards to steer and complement senior management and contribute to strategy implementation effectiveness as it unfolds (Demir and Reddick 2012). Future research can further highlight the importance of overseeing board role behavior by shifting attention to other important intermediate outcomes. For instance, future research can shed light on the question if learning in support of better informed decision-making between political boards and senior management can be stimulated by reflecting on and putting in practice that politics and administration are interrelated as "elected officials do and should engage in administration, and public administrators do and should contribute to policy making" through strategic information sharing (Boivie et al. 2016; Demir and Reddick 2012, 526; Myers 2018; 2020).

Second, surprisingly no support was found for the hypotheses with respect to the political board role behaviors at the agency theory's side of the continuum. A possible explanation for the fact that controlling and interfering board role behavior do not significantly impact political board-senior management cooperative dynamics nor strategy implementation effectiveness (even though the sign of the relationships is in line with the hypotheses 1 and 2) can be because NPM-reforms have changed the idea of a 'classic bureaucracy' and have altered some of its assumptions with regard to the expected hierarchical relationship (Ejersbo and Svara 2015). For instance, contracting out of services to private providers challenges the steep hierarchy in local authorities as it becomes more difficult to know who is to be held accountable, while strategic management paves the way for more purposeful direction of organizational performance rather than being satisfied with stable levels of performance in disparate programs

that are managed separately (Ejersbo and Svara 2015; Ingraham 2007; Svara 2007). Often these NPM-like reforms steer towards "a decrease in political control and increasing administrative influence and institutional autonomy" (Christensen and Lægreid 2001, 74). Rather than completing predetermined duties, senior management has to focus on the fulfillment of tasks and the achievement of planned outcomes (Hennau 2020). This entails that senior management is granted leeway to choose and select appropriate methods and means as they are held accountable through rational planning practices such as performance management systems (Hood 1995). As a result of this empowerment of senior management -of whom now more is expected with regard to professional skills and competencies- the hierarchical principal-agent relationship between political boards and senior management is challenged (Aberbach et al. 1981; Hennau 2020; Weber1968). Namely, senior management becomes a more important information beacon necessary for strategic and policy related decision-making, a responsibility traditionally predestined for political boards (Ejersbo and Svara 2015; Hennau 2020). Is the pollical board still in control over its local authority or is it rather becoming a rubber stamp for the CAO (based on Miller-Millesen 2003)? In answering this question "tensions can arise between bureaucratic experience and specialized knowledge on the one hand and democratic accountability and control on the other hand" (Hennau 2020, 142). Therefore, future research can apply an integrative perspective with regard to strategic information sharing and governing effectiveness in local authorities to highlight how political boards and senior management can improve their coordination through functional and dysfunctional conflict (Amason 1996; Olson et al. 2007; Walker et al. 2013; Zhang et al. 2011).

Conclusion

While research has mainly focused on how the politics-administration relationship should be shaped in terms of independence and complementarity in order to proof the superiority of stewardship theory over agency theory (or vice versa), this study tested the impact of a political

board role behavior-continuum ranging from agency theory's politics-administration dichotomy perspective to stewardship theory's complementarity or interdependence perspective on political board-senior management cooperative dynamics as well as on strategy implementation effectiveness. Results indicate that partnering up while handing down goals and drawing boundaries through strategic planning (i.e., overseeing board role behavior) offers the most promising results.

Apart from mentioning the study's contributions it is also important to acknowledge its limitations. First, Although Svara (1999) argues that the political board-senior management form of government can be considered the dominant governance model for the majority of Western local authorities we have to be cautious when generalizing these findings beyond Belgian borders as we have representative data from only 96 local authorities in Belgium. Moreover Jacobsen (2006) argues that the politics-administration relationship may vary depending on the contextual, structural and demographical factors. Future research should therefore be conducted in different countries and specifically also in non-western countries. Second, future research could test whether the relationships found in this study can be replicated when cooperative dynamics and implementation effectiveness are measured through secondary data rather than being self-reported as this would further reduce the potential risk of common method variance. Finally, although the research model and its causal assumptions are deeply rooted in theory we also have to acknowledge the possibility of reversed causality. Because of our cross-sectional research design, we cannot exclude the possibility that perceived strategy implementation effectiveness impacts the level of political board-senior management cooperative dynamics.

Notes

1. The structural model does not include control variables. Initially, political diversity of the political board, tenure of the CAO, gender of the CAO, age of the CAO, the number

of minimum income guarantees, and population size were considered (See Supplementary material A for detailed information). However, none of these variables have a significant impact on the included variables in the model, and adding these to the model does not result in a significant R^2 change (see Supplementary material B for the results including controls). Therefore, they were omitted from the presented structural model.

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Figure 1. Research model.

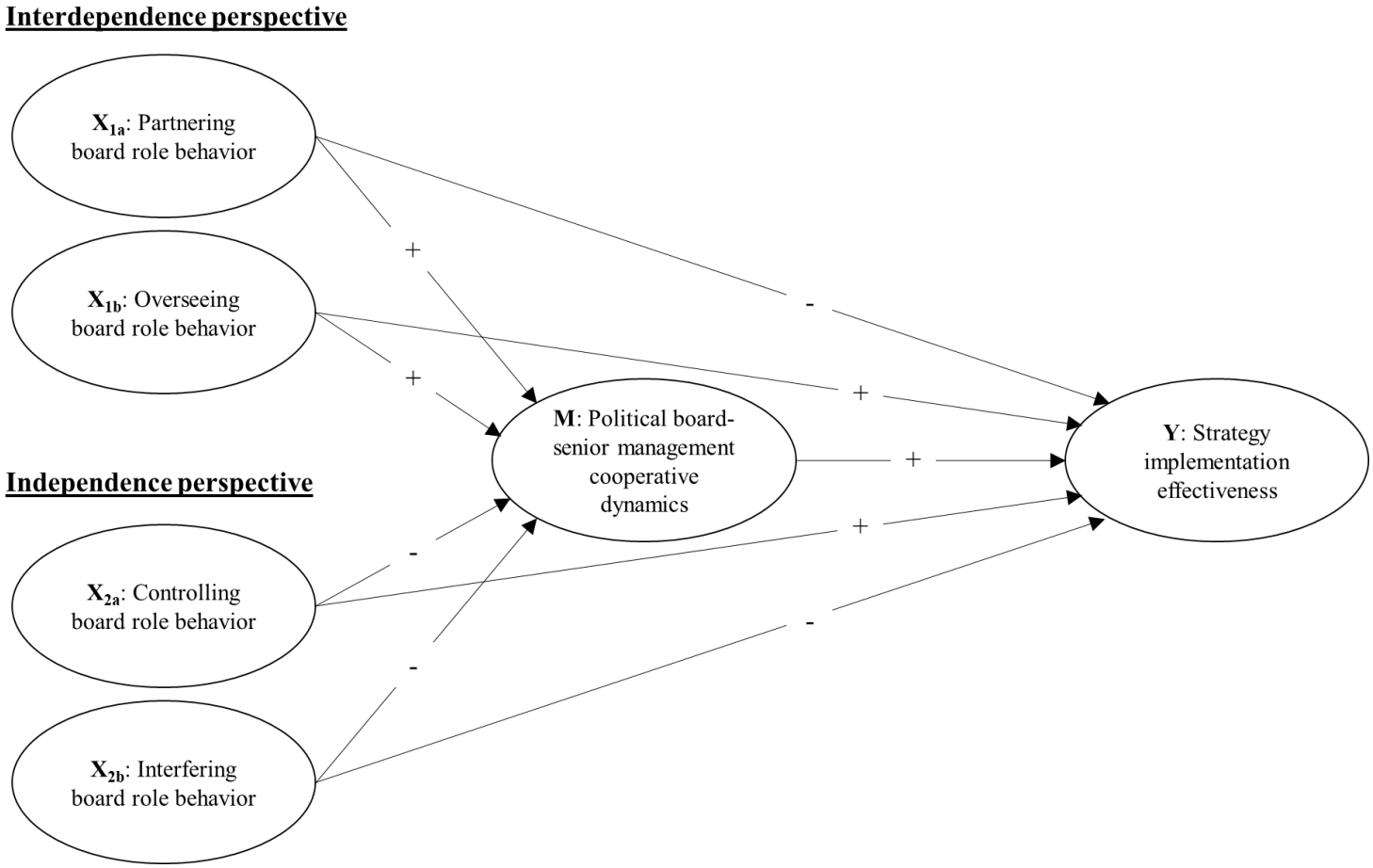


Figure 2. Political board role behaviors on a continuum

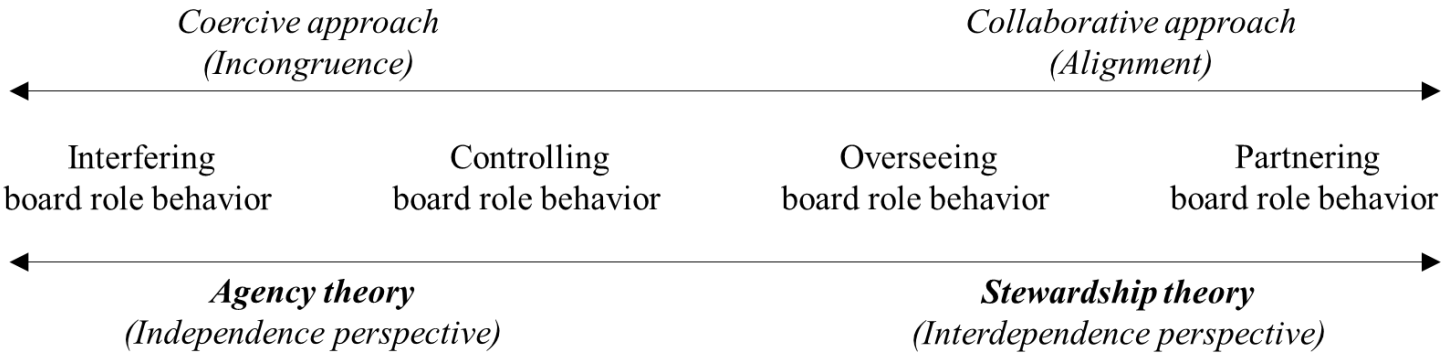
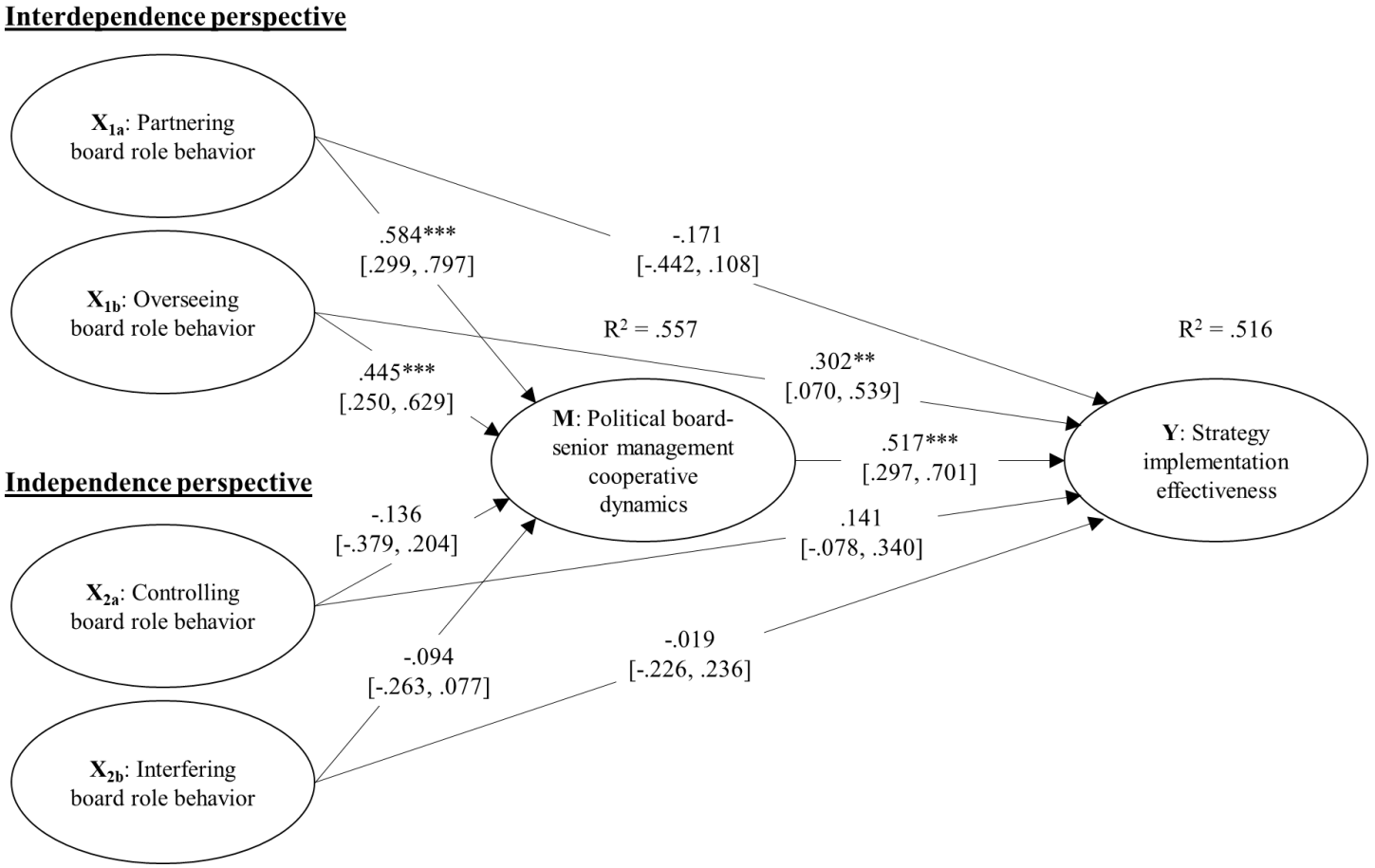


Figure 3. Results.



Standardized coefficients are shown
95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval (5,000 bootstrap samples)
** $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

Table 1: Individual and organizational characteristics of the respondents and the population.

	Respondents	Population	Significance*	Null hypothesis
Gender			$\chi^2 = 2.286$, $p = .131$	Accepted
Male	66.70%	58.10%		
Female	33.30%	41.90%		
Municipal clusters			$\chi^2 = .759$, $p = .980$	Accepted
Residential municipalities	26.44%	26.95%		
Rural municipalities	27.59%	31.49%		
Municipalities with concentrated economic activities	14.94%	12.99%		
Agglomeration municipalities	14.94%	13.64%		
Central cities	13.79%	12.34%		
Tourist municipalities	2.30%	2.60%		

* Chi-square test

Table 2: Table 2. Assessment of the blocks' undimensionality and convergent validity

	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Eigen value 1st	Eigen value 2nd
	>.7	*>.7*	*>.7*	*>.5*	*>1*	*<1*
Part1	.842	.834	.891	.663	2.69	.692
Part2	.872					
Part3	.752					
Part4	.786					
Over1	.923	.855	.912	.775	2.33	.435
Over2	.813					
Over3	.901					
Cont1	.777	.819	.881	.648	2.60	.680
Cont2	.868					
Cont3	.843					
Cont4	.724					
Inte1	.840	.772	.868	.685	2.06	.513
Inte2	.818					
Inte3	.824					
PbSm1	.913	.832	.889	.667	2.67	.557
PbSm2	.793					
PbSm3	.782					
PbSm4	.769					
StIE1	.914	.899	.930	.764	3.07	.447
StIE2	.765					
StIE3	.897					
StIE4	.912					

Part = Partnering board role behavior; Over = Overseeing board role behavior; Cont = Controlling board role behavior; Inte = Interfering board role behavior; PbSm = Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics; StIE = Strategy implementation effectiveness.

Table 3. Assessment of the discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait criterion

	Part	Over	Cont	Inte	PbCD	StIE
Part						
Over	.667					
Cont	.836	.760				
Inte	.725	.796	.733			
PbSm	.768	.724	.668	.548		
StIE	.466	.670	.524	.448	.733	

Part = Partnering board role behavior; Over = Overseeing board role behavior; Cont = Controlling board role behavior; Inte = Interfering board role behavior; PbSm = Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics; StIE = Strategy implementation effectiveness.

Table 4: Path coefficients, indirect and total effects (*N* = 96 CAOs).

		Consequent					
		Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (M)			Strategy implementation effectiveness (Y)		
	Antecedent	β	95% CI	p	β	95% CI	p
X_{1a}	Partnering board role behavior	.584***	[.299, .797]	<.001	-.171	[-.442, .108]	.228
X_{1b}	Overseeing board role behavior	.445***	[.250, .629]	<.001	.302**	[.070, .539]	.013
X_{2a}	Controlling board role behavior	-.136	[-.379, .204]	.287	.141	[-.078, .340]	.294
X_{2b}	Interfering board role behavior	-.094	[-.263, .077]	.344	-.019	[-.226, .236]	.917
M	Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics	---	---	---	.517***	[.297, .701]	<.001
		R^2 = .557			R^2 = .516		

Standardized indirect and total effects (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval [5,000 bootstrap samples])

X_{1a}→M→Y: Indirect effect = .302; Total effect = .131 CI [-.158, .362]

X_{1b}→M→Y: Indirect effect = .230; Total effect = .532 CI [.282, .766]

X_{2a}→M→Y: Indirect effect = -.070; Total effect = .071 CI [-.180, .348]

X_{2b}→M→Y: Indirect effect = -.048; Total effect = -.059 CI [-.289, .211]

β = Standardized path coefficients
** p < .05, *** p < .01
CI = Confidence interval

Supplementary material A: Measurement information

Table A1. Constructs and items (endogenous, exogenous and control variables)

(1/3) Endogenous variables (primary data):

Strategy implementation effectiveness (StIE), based on Slater, Hult, and Olson (2010), and Noble and Mokwa (1999).	StIE1	Our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019 was effectively implemented.
	StIE2	Our implementation effort on our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019 was disappointing. (Reverse coded)
	StIE3	The implementation of our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019 was generally considered a success.
	StIE4	I personally think that the implementation of our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019 was a success.
Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (PbSm), based on Gabris, Golembiewski, and Ihrke (2001).	PbSm1	I am effective in my interactions with the political board.
	PbSm2	Communications between the political board and myself are frequent and effective.
	PbSm3	On balance, political board views its relationship with me as reciprocal rather than a supervisory.
	PbSm4	I can own up and tell the political board what I really think, even if it is unpopular are conflicting with their viewpoint.

(2/3) Exogenous variables (primary data):

Construct and source	Code	Items
Partnering board role behavior (Part), based on Cumberland et al. (2015).	Part1	The political board frequently provided feedback on our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Part2	The political board holds candid discussions on our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Part3	The political board proposes changes and adjustments with regard to our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Part4	The political board ensures that debates on our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019 are constructive.
Overseeing board role behavior (Over), based on Andrews, Beynon, and Genc (2017).	Over1	The political board frequently discusses the implementation status regarding our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Over2	The political board has precise procedures and processes followed for overseeing the implementation of our strategy and related policy priorities.
	Over3	When implementing the strategy and related policy priorities, the political board regularly reviews progress against targets.
Controlling board role behavior (Cont), based on Cumberland et al. (2015).	Cont1	The political board inquires into performance deficiencies with regard to our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Cont2	The political board evaluates the realization of our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Cont3	The political board requires information demonstrating progress against objectives with regard to our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Cont4	The political board reviews the actual performance against our PCSW's multiannual strategic plan.
Interfering board role behavior (Inte), based on Andrews, Beynon, and Genc (2017)	Inte1	During the implementation process, the political board amends our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Inte2	To keep in line with our environment, the political board makes continual small-scale changes to our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.
	Inte3	Our strategy develops through a process of ongoing adjustment from the political board while implementing our PCSW's strategy and related multiannual strategic plan for the period 2014-2019.

(3/3) Control variables (multi-source data):

Construct and source	**Code**	**Items**
Political diversity of the board, based on Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne (2019) Secondary data from Blockmans et al. (2013) and the Agency for Local and Provincial Governance	PolD	Measured by means of a weighted Blau's index (See Meyfroodt, Desmidt, and Goeminne 2019 for the measurement procedure)
Demographic variables (CAO) Primary data	Tenu Age Gend	Tenure Age Gender
Number of minimum income guarantees Secondary data from the programmatic federal public service delivery organization Social Integration	MinI	---
Population size Secondary data from the Belgian statistical office STATBEL	PopS	---

Supplementary material B: Results including controls

Table B1. Path coefficients, indirect and total effects, including controls.

		Consequent					
		Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics (M)			Strategy implementation effectiveness (Y)		
	Antecedent	β	95% CI	p	β	95% CI	p
Control	Political diversity of the board	-.074	[-.213, .065]	.320	.023	[-.144, .181]	.781
Control	CAO's tenure	.061	[-.127, .241]	.523	.038	[-.203, .247]	.722
Control	CAO's gender	.038	[-.126, .216]	.627	.015	[-.168, .192]	.859
Control	CAO's age	.138	[-.050, .336]	.167	-.020	[-.237, .238]	.857
Control	Number of min. income guarantees	.059	[-.102, .277]	.549	.035	[-.159, .212]	.746
Control	Population size	.058	[-.268, .126]	.569	-.011	[-.164, .184]	.923
X_{1a}	Partnering board role behavior	.577***	[.281, .794]	<.001	-.168	[-.467, .114]	.260
X_{1b}	Overseeing board role behavior	.408***	[.195, .620]	<.001	.293**	[.031, .550]	.026
X_{2a}	Controlling board role behavior	-.142	[-.401, .223]	.268	.137	[-.100, .369]	.936
X_{2b}	Interfering board role behavior	-.054	[-.221, .104]	.583	-.009	[-.225, .250]	.917
M	Political board-senior management cooperative dynamics	---	---	---	.509***	[.274, .711]	<.001
		R^2 = .597			R^2 = .513		
	Standardized indirect and total effects (5,000 bootstrap samples; level of confidence: 95)						
	X_{1a}→M→Y: Indirect effect = .294; Total effect = .126 CI [-.205, .367]						
	X_{1b}→M→Y: Indirect effect = .207; Total effect = .500 CI [.233, .744]						
	X_{2a}→M→Y: Indirect effect = -.072; Total effect = .065 CI [-.208, .378]						
	X_{2b}→M→Y: Indirect effect = -.028; Total effect = -.036 CI [-.258, .225]						

β = Standardized path coefficients
** p < .05, *** p < .01
CI = Confidence interval

Supplementary material A and B: References

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