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Balancing Public Safety and Social Work

An Analysis of Probation Officers' Frontline Practices in Belgium

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph. Doctor in Political and Social Sciences

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16th August 2020

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This doctoral research was funded by the Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S.–FNRS)

Abstract

Only a handful of studies have adopted a street-level bureaucracy (SLB) framework to study officer-offender interactions in probation services. Besides the clues provided by criminology research, there is little empirical evidence about how POs use their discretion and how the multiple constraints they encounter at work affect their delivery of services to probationers. Furthermore, little is known about how POs rely on their perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness to make decisions. While it is generally agreed that frontline workers rely on their assessments of citizens' key characteristics, few studies have specifically examined this issue taking stock of the notions of trust and trustworthiness. Yet, uncertainties persist regarding the role and effect of individual and organizational factors in the assessment of citizens' trustworthiness.

This research fills these gaps using an analytical framework that combines the conceptual insights from the SLB and trust research to explore the nature and conditions of officer-offender interactions. Two empirical studies were conducted in the public agencies responsible for probation in Belgium. First, I examined how POs adapt the delivery of services to probationers in response to pressure and work constraints. Hypotheses were examined with a thematic analysis of 29 semi-structured interviews conducted with POs and several first-line managers. Second, building on the theoretical and conceptual insights of trust, I examined how individual and organizational factors affect the importance officers attach to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a given course of action with offenders. Hypotheses were tested with the structural equation modelling of survey data from a sample of 370 POs.

The findings provide strong indications about how POs take into consideration the characteristics of their supervisees and how this information affects frontline work. In particular, the combination of the results of both studies shows that POs' assessment of offenders is a sequential process. In a first step, organizational constrains oblige POs to assess offenders' profiles based on their degree of complexity and urgency. This way, they prioritize their efforts on a reduced number of high-priority cases. In a second step, POs assess offenders' trustworthiness to cherry-pick those who will benefit from benevolent courses of action. However, at that stage, the importance attached to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness varies according to POs' individual characteristics, such their role perceptions and their propensity to trust. At the end of this assessment process, POs' benevolent practices are mostly oriented towards the probationers who are considered the most deserving: individuals who are simultaneously in urgent need for help and care, who are regarded as trustworthy, but who do not seem to present any major risk for the community.

The research highlights the usefulness of trust and trustworthiness in the study street-level bureaucrats' delivery of public services to citizens. The results should be applicable to other probation systems as well as many other street-level organizations where frontline workers manage caseloads and operate a guidance of citizen-clients.

Keywords: Street-level bureaucracy; Probation; Trustworthiness assessments; Coping mechanisms; Thematic analysis; Structural equation modelling

Acknowledgements

This work would have not been possible without the determinant contribution of many people to whom I would like to express my most sincere gratitude.

First of all, I would like to thank my two supervisors: Stéphane and Nathalie. I cannot stress enough the chance I had to work under such a patient, thoughtful, and kind guidance since the day I started my PhD project. They never ceased to believe in my work and abilities despite my frequent doubts and interrogations. Stéphane Moyson was a particularly kind supervisor. In addition to his always sharp and precise intellectual input, he never ceased to impress me with his determination, his positive attitude, and his level-headedness. Nathalie Schiffino was also decisive with her experience, vast knowledge, and attention to details. She never spared any efforts to make sure that I could work in the best conditions possible. Her kindness and constant support throughout this process were determinant, to say the least.

I would also like to address my special thanks to the scientific committee and the members of the jury. I thank prof. Steven Maynard-Moody who kindly welcomed me during my research stay at the University of Kansas. The multiple discussions, seminars, and meetings with graduate students were particularly insightful and stimulating. I have great memories from Lawrence, and Steven and his wife Carey hold a special place in them. My sincere reconnaissance also goes to prof. Steven Van de Walle, who spontaneously accepted to be a member of the committee. I thank him for his availability and for the great readings he sent me during these years. I also thank prof. Jacques de Maillard for his precise and helpful comments on the present manuscript. His inputs as discussant and secretary of the jury were instrumental in improving the quality of the final manuscript. Finally, I would like to thank prof. Claire Dupuy, who kindly accepted to be the president of the jury and who executes this task with diligence and a contagious enthusiasm.

I also take this opportunity to thank all the frontline professionals, directors, and members of the central administrations of the Belgian Houses of Justice who either directly participated in this study or provided the necessary conditions for conducting this research. This work would simply not have been possible without their generosity, interest, and patience.

It is often considered that the thesis is a solitary experience. However, this is not entirely accurate. During these four years, many colleagues from the Institute of Political Science Louvain-Europe became close friends of mine. My special thanks go to Jehan Bottin, Maximilien Cogels, and Benjamin Biard who all contributed to make this thesis a joyful experience through their cheerful disposition, sense humor, and intellectual qualities. Of course, these thanks also extend to Cécile Riche and Camilla Carvallo who provided collective support during the writing of our respective dissertations. My gratitude also goes to other (new, old, and past) members of the institute in Mons and Louvain-la-Neuve with whom many laughs and debates were shared: Colin Deneufbourg, Emilien Colaux, Lyla André, Rosetta Collura, Florine Meunier, João Paulo Ferraz Oliveira, Pierre Squevin, Laura Pascolo, Ramon Vanderdoes, and many others. It goes without saying that I thank the members of the Montesquieu Center for Public Policy Studies for their ever-stimulating academic input during the research center seminars.

I also express my thanks to Sandrine Delhaye, Karine Verstraeten, Isabelle Portzenheim, Marie Monteforte, Catherine Goossens and all the members of the UCLouvain administrative and technical staff in the Mons and Louvain-la-Neuve campuses. Their professionalism and enthusiasm helped me to navigate with serenity and efficiency through the complex administrative web of the institution.

I am of course also particularly grateful to my friends from all horizons who have always provided an indirect, yet vital, support in this endeavor. My thanks go to Raphaëlle De Loecker, Gaetan de Neve, Clémence Bocquet, Adil Hammoudi, Mattieu de Waen, Ralitza Staneva, Arige Haddad, Samuel McIsaac, Sergio Peignier, Thibault Lafouasse, Diane Semerdjian, and many others who, in their own personal way, have all contributed to make this experience more serene and pleasurable. I am well aware that I have not been very available during the past few months (or years?) and I wish to correct this as soon as possible.

Finally, my gratitude goes to my family. I consider myself lucky to be surrounded by such comprehensive and patient people. I want to thank my parents, Dominique and Wai-Yi, who always did their best to support me in this endeavor. They never judged my choices and always made sure that I could explore my centers of interests in life. My deep gratitude also goes to my brother Lukas. His patience, thoughtfulness, and excellent cooking abilities lightened up the writing process amid the COVID-19 lockdown. I also thank Marie-Anne, Frederik, Taeko, as well as my cousins for their encouragements.

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General introduction

On December 13th 2011, Nordine Amrani opened fire on a crowded square in Liège, Belgium's third largest city, resulting in 6 dead and 130 injured. Shortly before the shooting, the perpetrator had been charged with a new offense while under the supervision of a probation officer (PO). Yet, in the absence of information about this new charge, the PO did not ask for the revocation of Armani's conditional release. More recently, in May 2019, Steve Bakelmans was arrested for the rape and murder of Julie van Espen. Steve Bakelmans was already sentenced to four years in prison in 2017, but he appealed his sentence and his case was indefinitely postponed in 2018. In the meantime, Bakelmans had been taken in charge by a PO who filed a positive report on his compliance to judicial authorities.

Such dramatic events provide some limited insight into POs' multifaceted and moving work reality. In particular, these cases of reoffense by offenders monitored by POs spark some general questions regarding their role and the way they handle offenders: are they social workers or policing agents? Do they treat all their supervisees the same way? Are they always enforcing rules, or do they make exceptions with offenders they consider more reliable, or trustworthy? Despite the recurrent media attention, the public remains relatively uninformed about this discrete category of public officials. Yet, POs are civil servants with a crucial mission: they supervise citizens condemned to serve a probation sentence as an alternative to prison and they perform a unique blend of paperwork, social work, risk, and security management that involves the application of multiple rules. In doing so, they repeatedly make discretionary decisions with respect to the citizens. For these reasons, they are typical "street-level bureaucrats" (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010).

Frontline workers working in the correctional sector are understudied in public administration. POs, in particular, have received little attention from the street-level bureaucracy (SLB) research despite being depicted as typical street-level bureaucrats by Lipsky (2010, p. 13). So far, most of the research on POs has been produced in criminology without endorsing a SLB approach. Evidence from this literature suggests that POs are subjected to high caseloads and limited resources to make quick yet consequential decisions about offenders' future and the community's safety (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; Kerbs et al., 2009). POs are also increasingly confronted with regulations and tools that conflict with their own preferences about probation work (e.g., Grant, 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012): it is argued that new penology (Feeley & Simon, 1992), with its focus on managerialism and risk-based actuarial penal strategies, has been undermining the traditional social work values shared by POs since the 1980s (Pratt et al., 2013). Since Lipsky's original work, SLB scholars have identified several coping mechanisms used by frontline workers (e.g., Tummers et al., 2015; Vedung, 2015; Lipsky, 2010) to alleviate constraints and meet job requirements in high-pressure environments where resources are limited (e.g., Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2012). Yet, the way frontline workers cope in probation systems and under which circumstances remain generally unclear. Besides the clues provided by the literature in criminology, there is little empirical evidence about the specific constraints to which POs are exposed, how they deal which such constraints, and with what effect on the supervision of probationers.

In this context, POs' perceptions of their supervisees exert a significant influence on the decisions they make about them. More specifically, SLB scholars often argue that frontline workers make their decisions based on assessments of their clients' worth and characteristics (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). For instance, POs may decide to make exceptions or compromises with procedures in order to contribute to the reinsertion efforts of an offender whom they consider particularly worthy. In their reports to penal authorities, POs may also emphasize their concerns about a supervisee whom they perceive as unreliable (such reports are used to decide whether probation should be revoked or not).

However, only a limited number of studies have sought to explain frontline workers' decisions using the notions of trust and trustworthiness developed by the literature on organizational trust (e.g., Schoorman et al., 2016; 2007; Mayer et al., 1995). According to this perspective, the attributes of a trustee, such as his or her ability and goodwill (Das & Teng, 2001; Nooteboom, 1996**)**, should foster trust and behavioral manifestations of trust on the part of the trustor. Although some public administration studies confirm that frontline workers rely on their clients' trustworthiness to make their choices and decisions (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2018; Yang, 2005), many uncertainties persist regarding the individual and organizational determinants of trustworthiness perceptions and how other factors might affect the importance frontline workers attach to these assessments when they are actually making decisions.

The research about officer-offender interactions in probation services presented in this PhD dissertation is thus important for several reasons. Most of the empirical knowledge about POs derives from criminological studies. Although these studies provide clues about officers' frontline practices, they do not specifically address the nature and causes of discretion and coping during public service delivery in this policy sector. Compared to teachers (e.g., Baviskar,

2018) or social workers (e.g., Elis, 2011), POs are more exposed to risks of mediatic and political backlash in case of mistake (Kemshall, 2008), which suggests new perspectives on the practice of frontline work. Furthermore, although frontline workers' interactions with citizens has always been a focal point of attention in the SLB literature (e.g., Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010), only a handful of studies have explored this issue taking stock of trust research. Learning about the importance that POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness is crucial to a better understanding of decision making at the frontline of public service delivery. Beyond these theoretical and empirical considerations, POs' judgements and decisions also have a concrete influence on offenders' experience of supervision. Officers are crucial in nurturing desistance (Healy, 2012) and in saving their clients from social exclusion (Smith & Stewart, 2002). Therefore, the nature and causes of POs' frontline practices should not only attract the attention from public administration scholars, but also from practitioners, policymakers, as well as the citizens.

The present PhD thesis addresses the following research question: how do probation officers interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? This question will be explored with two successive studies addressing the following inquiries:

- How do POs cope during public service delivery, and in response to which specific constraints? How do these adaptations affect their interactions with probationers?
- To what extent individual and organizational factors affect the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a given course of action with offenders?

The goal of the present research is to determine how and why POs privilege certain courses of action when interacting with their supervisees during public service delivery. In doing so, the results will bring knowledge about an understudied group of frontline workers while bridging the SLB and trust literatures, in public administration research. The research is conducted in the "Houses of Justice", the institution in charge of probation in Belgium. To date, little is known about how new public management reforms engaged in the 2000s and other recent measures devised to manage POs' monitoring of offenders have affected frontline practices in this institution, especially in terms of discretion and coping. The results of this research will not only talk to other probation contexts, but they will also be relevant for public service delivery in other policy sectors where frontline workers manage high caseloads and operate a guidance of citizen-clients.

Framework of the research

To address the research question, I perform an exploration of the nature of frontline practices in probation systems and an examination of the individual and organizational factors explaining these practices. First, after a general overview of the relevant SLB and criminological research, I present the results of a systematic literature review of 46 articles addressing officer-offender interactions in the correctional sector. Most of the existing literature on that topic has been produced by criminology and penology research. This literature is analyzed using SLB concepts such as discretion and coping. The systematic review is performed using the PRISMA[1] protocol (Moher et al., 2015; 2009), thus ensuring the transparency and replicability of the reviewing process. The results provide key general insights into POs' practices and contribute to the conceptual framework of the research.

Two empirical studies have been conducted to identify how and why POs privilege certain courses of action when interacting with clients in the course of public service delivery. In a first empirical study, I use qualitative methods to examine how POs adapt the delivery of services to probationers when they are exposed to pressure and work constraints. In other words, I rely on the SLB literature about coping and on the results of the systematic literature review to develop a conceptual framework and hypotheses about the causes and nature of POs' ways of coping. The hypotheses are examined with a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of 29 semi-structured interviews conducted with frontline officers and several first-line managers. Using Tummers et al.'s (2015) typology of families of coping, I also determine what these practices tell about the way POs adjust their practices to offenders. Do they privilege benevolence in their courses of action with offenders? Or do they tend to be uninvested or confrontational?

In a second empirical study, I use quantitative methods to examine how individual and organizational factors affect the importance officers attach to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a given course of action with offenders. I build on the theoretical and conceptual insights provided by the literature on organizational trust to explore four hypotheses. Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) are used to analyze survey data from a sample of 370 Belgian POs and to test the hypotheses. The findings provide strong indications about how POs take into consideration the trustworthiness cues of the supervisees with whom they interact and how these cues affect their supervision.

[1] Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (Moher *et al.*, 2015).

Structure of the manuscript

How do probation officers interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? To answer this research question, the present manuscript is divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter, I present a quick overview of the existing SLB research before reporting on the criminal justice and criminological literature about probation and probation practice.

In the second chapter, I use an SLB perspective to present the results of the systematic literature review on officer-offender interactions in the correctional sector. This chapter is an adaptation of a paper that was recently accepted by Social Policy & Administration

In the third chapter, I present the analytical framework and the context of the research. Combining insights from SLB and trust research with the results of the systematic literature review, I explain the research question that serves as a guiding thread throughout this manuscript. I describe the objectives as well as the articulation between the qualitative and quantitative studies addressing the research question empirically. In this chapter, I also present the context of the research: the Belgian Houses of Justice. I briefly retrace their genesis, its main managerial reforms, and explain the relevance of the case study.

In the fourth chapter, I present the approach and methods used in this research. First, I explain the epistemological and ontological posture of the research. Second, I present the qualitative and quantitative methods that I implemented to collect the empirical data, i.e., semi-structured interviews for the first study and an online survey questionnaire for the second study. Third, I present the methods of data analysis: a thematic analysis (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of the semi-structured interviews and a two-step SEM analysis (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) of the survey data.

The fifth chapter is dedicated to the first study. Drawing on existing knowledge about coping, I explore four hypotheses regarding the nature and determinants of POs' coping practices during public service delivery. In doing so, I identify and present the main themes found in the data via a thematic analysis of the 29 semi-structured interviews conducted with Belgian POs. Not only do I report POs' frontline practices according to the classic coping styles described in the SLB literature, but I also categorize these practices according to the way they affect interactions with offenders. I conclude this chapter with a synthesis of the results and an examination of the hypotheses.

In the sixth chapter, I present the second study based on quantitative analyses of the survey data. I combine SLB and trust research to investigate the importance that POs attach to the assessments of their supervisees' trustworthiness when choosing a given course of action. I report the results of CFA and SEM analyses conducted on 370 questionnaires in order to test four hypotheses involving individual and organizational factors. Like in the previous chapter, I conclude with a synthesis of the results and an examination of the hypotheses.

The seventh chapter brings together the results of the fifth and sixth chapters. First, these results are synthesized. Then, they are discussed with regard to the research question and the state of the art. Last but not least, the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications of the findings are presented.

Chapter 1 – Street-level bureaucrats supervising offenders in probation services

Probation officers (POs) are civil servants who have daily interactions with probationers, i.e., citizens who serve a sanction within the community under conditions restricting their liberty. During supervision, POs monitor offenders' compliance to the conditions imposed by the judge and rely on interventions to work on their rehabilitation. They enjoy a considerable latitude in handling offender assessments, filing of recommendations to authorities, and dealing with offender issues such as rule violations.

Drawing on Lipsky's seminal work, these officers can be viewed as typical "street-level bureaucrats" (Lipsky, 2010) working in the judicial system. Thus, before moving on to the theoretical and empirical chapters of this manuscript, the present chapter provides a general overview of the existing streel-level bureaucracy (SLB) research as well as a review of the criminal justice and criminological literature on probation and POs' practices of supervision. The first section offers a short synthesis of the existing SLB research and presents some key concepts and research topics addressed in this literature. This section notices that SLB knowledge remains scarce in some respects, including regarding POs. The second section of this chapter briefly reviews the relevant criminological and criminal justice literature on probation, with an emphasis on how probation work is implemented by frontline officers.

Section I – Street-level bureaucracy: an overview

In this first sub-section, I deliver a brief overview of SLB concepts and overall research topics. First, I introduce street-level-bureaucrats: who they are and why they are significant for public administration research. In doing so, I also provide some examples of relevant SLB research across different policy sectors and contexts. Next, I summarize some findings about street-level bureaucrats' discretion: its nature, its determinants, and how it affects policy implementation. Third, I present a non-exhaustive list of some of the main coping mechanisms used by frontline workers to address work-related pressure and constraints. I conclude this section reporting on what SLB research tells us about frontline officers working in probation services, an underexplored policy sector in the literature.

A – Street-level bureaucrats: who are they, and why do they matter?

At a time when the study of public administration and public policy was dominated by top-down approaches, Lipsky (2010; 1969) advocated for a bottom-up vision of policy implementation. Instead of starting from a policy decision to examine "the extent to which its legally-mandated objectives were achieved over time and why", his approach was to examine the "multitude of actors who interact at the operational (local) level on a particular problem or issue" and analyze the objectives and strategies deployed by these actors (Sabatier, 1986, p. 22). In doing so, Lipsky emphasized the decisive role of frontline civil servants in shaping the way in which public services and policies are delivered to citizens. These *street-level bureaucrats* are "public service workers who interact directly with citizens" and who are entrusted with a high degree of discretion in the execution of their work (Lipsky, 2010, p. 3), meaning that they enjoy considerable autonomy to formulate and act based on their own judgments in the delivery of public goods and services to citizens.

Although it remains a convoluted concept (Hupe, 2013), the boundaries of which are sometimes elusive, street-level bureaucrats' discretion has received a great deal of attention in the literature (Evans & Hupe, 2020; Hupe et al., 2016; Hupe, 2013; Smith, 2003). Existing studies have explored how discretion is shaped by the organizational context in which frontline workers operate and how it is affected by changes such as managerialism (e.g., Ellis, 2011; Brodkin, 2011; Evans & Harris, 2004; Sandfort, 2000). Many contributions have also helped us to understand how street-level bureaucrats' characteristics, preferences, or perceptions of clients affect the use of discretion (e.g., Loyens, 2016; 2012; Henderson, 2013; Maynard-moody & Musheno, 2003). Another key contribution from Lipsky's work lies in the examination of how street-level bureaucrats adapt their practices to manage the various constraints that they encounter during frontline work. These so-called *coping mechanisms* (Lipsky, 2010) can take many forms, such as the selection and prioritization of a limited number of special clients (e.g., Baviskar, 2019) or the simplification of procedures to facilitate their mass processing. Although such practices often allow frontline workers to maintain adequate caseload management, they can also affect the way in which public services are delivered to citizens (Vedung, 2015; Tummers et al., 2015; 2013; Brodkin, 2012; Lipsky, 2010; Winter, 2002). Scholars have also explored how coping arises in response to limitations or inadequacies such as large caseloads (e.g., Winter, 2002), changes in management styles (e.g., Brodkin, 2011), or policy alienation[2] (e.g., Loyens, 2016).

Due to their unique position between the state and citizens, "street-level bureaucrats have significant opportunities to influence the delivery of public policies" (Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007, p. 154). Expanding on Lipsky's contribution, the existing research has shown how street-level bureaucrats' discretionary practices and coping mechanisms affect the delivery of public services, thus effectively producing public policies as they are experienced by citizens (Hupe et al., 2016; Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007; Smith et al., 2003). For instance, some authors have pointed out that, when requiring certain behaviors or denying services to some categories of citizens, frontline workers can effectively act as agents of social control and impose a certain vision of what constitutes (good) citizenship (e.g., Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Dubois, 1999; Vinzant & Crothers, 1998). In this regard, using a mix of narratives and quantitative data analysis, Epp et al. (2014) showed how institutionalized practices (investigatory stops) performed by US police officers actually perpetuate racial disparities and diminish the citizenship of victims.

SLB research has been conducted in a wide variety of policy fields and contexts (Brodkin, 2012; Maynard-Moody & Portillo, 2010; Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007). Much if not most of the existing research has targeted social workers so far (e.g., Baviskar & Winter, 2017; Brodkin, 2011; Ellis, 2011; 2007; Wastell et al., 2010; Oberfield, 2009; Evans & Harris, 2004; Sandfort, 2000; Ellis et al., 1999). These studies have often addressed the impact of the rise of managerial control and performance monitoring practices on welfare workers' discretion. Overall, the evidence suggests that professional discretion is not necessarily curtailed by managerialism and that social workers adapt to and find new ways around new managerial requirements (e.g., Brodkin, 2011; Ellis, 2011; 2007; Evans & Harris, 2004). For instance, in an ethnographic study of two organizations charged with the delivery of social welfare programs in the US, Sandfort (2000) noted a divergence between the management framework of these organizations and the everyday practices of frontline staff. Social workers are skeptical about new welfare reform initiatives and have difficulties altering their practices. Sandfort showed that this disjuncture results from social workers' production of "shared knowledge and collective beliefs from their day-to-day experiences", which are tied to their unique organizational contexts (Sandfort, 2000,

[2] Policy alienation is defined as a "general cognitive state of psychological disconnection from the policy programme being implemented" (Tummers et al., 2009, p. 686).

p. 751). In doing so, they "develop and utilize organizational resources in ways that reinforce those schemas" (p. 751).

A considerable amount of SLB research has also been conducted about police officers (e.g., Alcadipani et al., 2020; Brockmann, 2017; Buvik, 2016; Loyens, 2016; 2012; Portillo & Rudes, 2014; Epp et al., 2014; Portillo, 2012; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Such studies have often examined the mechanisms, or the factors, explaining why police officers use their discretion in certain ways during their encounters with citizens (e.g., Buvik, 2016; Epp et al., 2014; Portillo, 2012; Brockman, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). For instance, Buvik (2016) used ethnographic data to identify the factors explaining Norwegian police officers' patterns of decision making in nightlife settings in Oslo. The author notably found that an "officer's norms and attitudes will affect how he or she judges a situation or an offender, and an officers' approach to the job might predispose him or her toward one style of policing rather than another." (Buvik, 2016, p. 783). This finding explains why some officers privilege proactive or reactive responses when confronted with situations in which decision making is needed. In a qualitative study among US city administrators and police officers, Portillo (2012) found that female officers and officers of color are more likely to have their claims to authority challenged during their interactions with citizen-clients. Because they cannot use the rank and social status that are implicitly associated with their function as a basis for their authority, they tend to strictly rely on formal rules to explicitly assert their authority to clients. Incidentally, she noted that "people of color as well as women and young people, discussed rule conforming as limiting their discretion and constraining their behavior in situations" (Portillo, 2012, p. 104). Other studies have also shown how police officers cope in response to specific constrains (e.g., Loyens, 2016; 2012)

SLB scholars have also taken substantial interest in teachers (e.g., Baviskar, 2019; Oberfield, 2019; Siciliano, 2017; Gofen, 2014; Resh & Xu, 2014; Mutereko, 2009; Taylor, 2007; Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Studies have focused on how teachers interact with students and the mechanisms that guide their exercise of discretion (e.g., Resh & Xu, 2014; Taylor, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Some studies have also examined how teachers' discretion is affected by new public management reforms (e.g., Taylor, 2007; Taylor & Kelly, 2006). For instance, in a qualitative study, Taylor (2007) noted that teachers in England arguably lost some discretion in specific areas, although the significance and the extent of this erosion remain debated. Authors have also explored why some teachers deploy coping mechanisms for the prioritization of teaching to academically promising students (e.g., Baviskar, 2019; Mutereko, 2009).

Some SLB studies have also addressed frontline medical staff, such as nurses (e.g., Johannessen, 2019; Hoyle, 2014; Walker & Gilson, 2004) or emergency medical staff (e.g., Henderson & Pandey, 2013; Henderson, 2013). These studies have underscored the importance of health professionals' views and values (e.g., Hoyle, 2014; Henderson, 2013; Walker & Gilson, 2004), as well as their perceptions of clients in explaining their use of discretion (e.g., Johannessen, 2019; Hoyle, 2014; Henderson, 2013). For instance, in a qualitative study of frontline nursing staff's interpretation of policy in a Scottish hospital, Hoyle (2014) found some "resistance by nursing staff in the application of policies" since "nurses were willing to make extra allowances for those individuals who they felt were deserving" (Hoyle, 2014, p. 189). Hoyle interpreted these instances as forms of value-based use of discretion.

Beyond these examples, notable studies have also been conducted among judges (e.g., Biland & Steinmetz, 2017; Lens, 2012; Cowan & Hitchings, 2007), immigration officers (e.g., Alpes & Spire, 2014; Ellermann, 2006; Wagenaar, 2004), and regulatory services (e.g., Van de Walle & Raaphorst, 2019) such as tax, food, or building inspectors (e.g., de Boer & Eshuis, 2018; Raaphorst et al., 2018; Raaphorst, 2018; Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Cohen & Gershgoren, 2016; May & Wood, 2003).

B – Discretion at the frontlines

SLB research explores the way in which street-level bureaucrats manage their discretion and how this influences policy implementation (Evans & Hupe, 2020; Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010). Strictly speaking, discretion refers to frontline workers' "ability to make a choice among possible courses of action and inaction" (Davis, 1969, p. 4) when interacting with citizens and delivering public services. It is the very nature of frontline work, which implies contact with clients, that renders discretion indispensable (Lipsky, 2010; Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007). However, to ensure that citizens are treated equitably and in accordance with policy orientations, street-level bureaucrats operate within a set of rules constraining their discretion. In this regard, public managers are usually considered key regulators of frontline workers' discretion[3] (Lipsky, 2010, p. 19). However, rules and regulations themselves are not always exempt of ambiguity and contradictions since "nearly all rules embody matters of interpretation" (Hupe & Hill, 2007, p. 281). Furthermore, frontline workers' responsiveness to citizens' individual circumstances requires judgment and interpretation of policies. Hence,

[3] Although managers can also be result-oriented pragmatists who "encourage discretion where it works" (Evans, 2011, p. 371).

discretion can also be conceived as the "the space between the legal rules in which actors exercise choice" (Gilson 2015, p. 4).

Different conceptions of discretion cohabit in the existing literature. On the one hand, *juridical* or *economic* approaches to discretion have more emphasized rules and prescriptive considerations. Such approaches usually circumscribe discretion to street-level bureaucrats' ability to make choices and decisions within the limits of legal bounds (Vinzant & Crothers, 1998), allowing for the distinction of discretion as prescribed by an existing rule framework from the other street-level practices that fall beyond this framework. Deviations from what is permitted by rules, such as rule-breaking or rule-bending practices, are thus labeled *deviant* discretion (Kelley, 1993). In this perspective, studies tend to be more concerned with how rules are effectively translated into action and the extent to which frontline practices deviate or not from the prescribed implementation (Hupe, 2013). However, current research has mostly switched its attention from the implementation outcomes to the behaviors of implementers (and the mechanisms at work underlying their behaviors) (Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; May & Winter, 2009; Winter, 2006).

The juridical perspective allows scholars to draw useful distinctions between the various forms of discretion that are used at the frontline. Although they are often labeled differently, many contributions have tended to differentiate the discretionary choices and practices that are embedded in existing rules from those that are not. For instance, based on Dworkin's (1977) work, several SLB scholars distinguished between *strong* and *weak* discretion (e.g., Pivoras & Kaselis, 2019; Buffat, 2015b; Evans & Harris, 2004). Weak discretion "entails applying a standard or rule, or making a decision within the rules", whereas strong discretion involves the liberty to incorporate its own standards for decision making and making decisions (Gilson, 2015, pp. 4-5). A similar distinction was proposed by Goodin (1986), who contrasted *formal* discretion – whereby the options regarding beneficiaries are "explicitly written into rules" – with *informal* discretion – whereby the options regarding beneficiaries are "merely implicit in the statement of rule" (Goodin, 1986, p. 235). This distinction between formal and informal discretion was adopted by SLB scholars (e.g., Ellis, 2011; Bastien, 2009) such as Blackmore (2001), who explained that the "discrepancy between political intention and administrative action" lies in the exercise of informal discretion (Blackmore, 2001, p. 158). In the same vein, Riccucci and Meyers (2004) distinguished *low* discretion – which is primarily guided by existing rules and instructions – from *high* discretion – which is based on street-level bureaucrats' professional judgments. Other scholars have noted a distinction between *objective* discretion, referring to the style of rule application, and *subjective* discretion, which designates the adjustments made by workers to better manage workloads (such as coping mechanisms) (e.g., Winter, 2003). Finally, Hupe (2013) distinguished between discretion *as granted* (within prescribed limits) from discretion *as used* in practice by street-level bureaucrats. This is similar to Evans' (2010) distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* discretion.

Conversely, *sociological* approaches to discretion do not confine street-level bureaucrats' discretion within the boundaries of what is prescribed or not by rules (Evans & Hupe, 2020; Hupe, 2013), which is why some authors have favored broader definitions of discretion. For instance, Tummers and Bekkers' (2014) viewed discretion as the "perceived freedom of street-level bureaucrats in making choices concerning the sort, quantity, and quality of sanction, and rewards on offer when implementing a policy" (Tummers & Bekkers, 2014, p. 529). In this perspective, the use of discretion encompasses a very diverse set of practices in the hands of street-level bureaucrats (including the implementation of coping mechanisms, for instance) (Vedung, 2015; Winter, 2003). This vision is shared by a considerable number of SLB scholars as "the study of street-level bureaucracy itself bears a substantial sociological imprint" (Hupe, 2013, p. 428). Instead of solely focusing on how frontline workers' practices deviate or not from rules and policies, many scholars have adopted an open empirical stance to study how discretion actually works (e.g., Buffat, 2015a; Brodkin, 2011; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Dubois, 1999). For instance, coping mechanisms – conceived as a form of discretion – have been the subject of a considerable number of studies that have sought to explore its individual and organizational determinants (Tummers et al., 2015). Concepts such as policy alienation (Van Engen et al., 2016; Loyens, 2016; Tummers et al., 2009) or goal ambiguity (e.g., Keiser, 2010; Bastien, 2009) have also been used to consider frontline workers' discretionary choices and decisions.

Sociological approaches allow for a better understanding of the complex inner workings underlying street-level bureaucrats' use of discretion. For instance, in a study examining how new managerialism interacts with welfare workers' use of discretion, Brodkin (2011) found that welfare caseworkers use their discretion to produce informal practices that help them to adjust to new performance incentives. However, their use of discretion derives "from specific organizational conditions that interact with performance incentives (and preferences) to create a street-level calculus of choice" (Brodkin, 2011, p. 272). Dubois (2010; 1999) noted that street-level bureaucrats working in welfare offices are compelled to make "arrangements" because they cannot limit themselves to the mere implementation of regulations (Dubois, 2010; 1999). Frontline workers' use of discretion is embedded in the roles and identities that are constructed during interactions with clients, the need to maintain consent over the institutional order, and existing institutionalized practices. As such, Dubois (2010) considered that frontline workers interpret and apply rules in their interest, which can sometimes lead to injustice and the unequal treatment of clients. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) found that frontline workers' accounts of their practices are predominantly centered around their encounters and moral judgments about their citizen-clients (citizen-agent narrative), instead of the respect of rules and procedures (state-agent narrative). However, since frontline workers "cannot reject the state-agent role", and rules are needed to rationalize judgments (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003, p. 156), the way in which they use their discretion lies at the intersection between their state and citizen agency.

The concept of discretion is pivotal to SLB research because discretionary choices can positively or negatively affect citizens and influence policy implementation (Hupe et al., 2016). Existing research has examined how frontline workers' discretionary practices and the underlying individual and organizational factors underlying these practices ultimately shape public policies on the ground (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Lindhorst & Padgett, 2005; Smith & Donovan, 2003). Variations in discretion use have invited scholars to turn their attention to the context in which discretion is exerted and to the characteristics of the actors who wield it (Evans & Hupe, 2020; Hupe, 2013). The characteristics of the institutional context in which frontline workers operate, such as the administrative culture or the degree of precision of the rules involved, are determined (e.g., Brodkin, 2011; Jewel, 2007; Evans & Harris, 2004; Sandfort, 2000; Dubois, 1999). However, the characteristics of the street-level bureaucrats themselves is also a determining factor in their use of discretion. Studies have explored how frontline workers' demographic closeness with their clients and the idea of representative bureaucracy affects the delivery of public services (e.g., Marvel & Resh, 2015; Christensen et al., 2012; Watkin-Hayes, 2011). Other characteristics, such as their bureaucratic attitudes and values (e.g., Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Sandford, 2000), their adherence to bureaucratic goals (e.g., May & Winter, 2009; Bastien, 2009), or their assessment of clients (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Harrits & Møller, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Winter, 2002; Hasenfeld & Steinmetz, 1981), have been found to affect the use of discretion. Recently, a limited number of studies have also explored how frontline workers' trust and trustworthiness assessments affect their use of discretion. The existing research remains sparse, but some evidence suggests that street-level bureaucrats rely, at least partially, on their assessments of clients' trustworthiness to make their decisions. In other words, trust and perceptions of clients' trustworthiness seem to influence frontline workers' use of discretion (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Raaphorst et al., 2018).

At the end of the day, policy on the ground results from a mix of political signals, managerial influence, and discretionary implementation by street-level bureaucrats (May & Winter, 2009). Street-level bureaucrats' reliance on discretion is inevitable and based on their own perceptions of reality. They are bound to interpret policies, rules and procedures before undertaking action. In practice, the exercise of discretion leads to a form of "adaptive implementation" of public policies (Schofield, 2001, p. 256), which turns street-level bureaucrats into the "ultimate policymakers" (Maynard-Moody & Portillo, 2010).

C – The nature and conditions of frontline workers' coping mechanisms

Coping refers to what an individual thinks and does to transform a stress-inducing relationship into a specific environment and to regulate emotional distress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). In the context of street-level bureaucracies, *coping mechanisms* (Lipsky, 2010) designate the set of informal routines and compromises that street-level bureaucrats develop so that they can meet managers' demands and adequately implement their professional activities in a high-pressure environment (Tummers et al., 2015). This topic has been a central point of attention for public administration research because "coping mechanisms indirectly but significantly shape policy on the ground" (Brodkin, 2012, p. 943). Even when the level of discretionary power is formally limited by a set of rules, frontline workers still attempt to better manage their activities. In doing so, street-level bureaucrats' behaviors do affect the way in which public service is delivered to citizens (e.g., Bartels, 2013; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; Hill & Hupe, 2009). Early in his work, Lipsky suggested a series of ideal types of coping that have been further tested and expanded by scholars over the years (Tummers et al., 2015; Vink et al., 2015; Vedung, 2015; Winter, 2012; 2003). A nonexhaustive list of well-known coping styles includes the following frontline practices.

First, street-level bureaucrats can resort to rationing to limit, or ration, citizens' access to public goods and services that should be made available to most (Lipsky, 2010). Rationing techniques can involve both a reduction in the amount of services delivered to clients and the implementation of strategies aiming to limit clients' demand for services (Vedung, 2015). To some extent, rationing can imply an uneven distribution of public goods and services to citizens if a frontline worker chooses to restrict the provision of public goods and services to a limited number of clients. So far, rationing has been successfully observed in many contexts, such as among medical frontline staff (e.g., van Loon & Jakobsen, 2017; Vassy, 2011; Butler, 1999) and welfare caseworkers (e.g., Baviskar & Winter, 2017; Weiner et al., 2004; Arksey, 2002;

Clark-Daniels & Daniels, 1995). For instance, in a qualitative study of the categorization of patients in a French hospital emergency department, Vassy (2011) found that "some staff perceived the rationing of care as a strategy for coping with growing demand in the context of limited human resources" (Vassy, 2011, p. 628). Vassy further noted that the registering and processing of patients are based on assessments of their medical condition, social background, and moral righteousness.

Second, frontline workers can decide to select and prioritize clients who appear worthier and "most likely to succeed in terms of bureaucratic success criteria" (Lipsky, 2010, p. 107) (see also: Vedung, 2015; Tummers et al., 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Smith & Donovan, 2003). Also referred to as creaming (Lipsky, 2010) or cherry picking (Vedung, 2015), such practices are often intertwined with instances of rationing. Vedung (2015) reported that "all creaming involves cherry-picking", which implies "selecting or accepting the best or most desirable" (p. 17). Such practices are usually relied upon to achieve better management of work-related activities when confronted with limited resources (Lipsky, 2010; Tummers et al., 2015). They can be encouraged by several motives, such as the achievement of substantive outcome goals or the improvement of the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Evidence of the prioritization and cherry picking of clients is common in the literature (e.g., Baviskar, 2019; Borelli, 2018; van Loon & Jakobsen, 2017; Fuertes & Lindsay, 2016; Vink et al., 2015; Darrow, 2015; Winter, 2002; Scott, 1990). For example, Baviskar (2019) used a quantitative survey to examine the factors explaining the cream-skimming behavior of Danish schoolteachers. He found that teachers discriminate among clients by prioritizing the teaching of academically promising students. Such practices were notably related to the "lack of teaching time" (p. 543), as well as teachers' perceptions of parental satisfaction and engagement.

Third, when encountering stressful problems during public service delivery, street-level bureaucrats can rely on instrumental actions (Skinner et al., 2003) to find long-lasting solutions to their problems that also fit their clients' needs (Tummers et al., 2015; Tummers & Rocco, 2015). Generally, frontline workers overcome these challenges with a creative use of "their networks and skills" (Tummers & Rocco, 2015, p. 818). For instance, Wagenaar (2004) described how Dutch immigration officers devise long terms solutions to address the challenges posed by the management of a large group of immigrants. Wagenaar argued that, to perform administrative work despite constraints, bureaucrats develop solutions based on a mixture of contextual knowledge, interactions, and pragmatic judgments.

Fourth, street-level bureaucrats can seek to manage complexity and render their tasks more manageable by routinizing and simplifying the mass processing of tasks and clients

(Tummers et al., 2015; Vink et al., 2015; Lipsky, 2010). Examples of routinization are multiple and include Danish frontline medical staff treating all of their patients in the same way despite some being in evident need for more attention (Van Loon & Jakobsen, 2018) or the implementation of simplified assessment routines by Swedish social workers (Thorén, 2008). Other studies have reported the implementation of standardized or impersonal contacts with clients, instead of in-depth and personalized interactions (e.g., Tummers & Rocco, 2015).

Finally, rule-bending and -breaking behaviors can also be understood as situational coping practices when they are intentionally performed by frontline workers who are juggling conflicting demands, interactions with clients, and work pressure (Tummers et al., 2015). In this vein, Brockmann (2017) showed that German police officers regularly bend rules to achieve procedural improvement (improving task efficiency). As argued by Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003), such behaviors can also arise when rules and guidelines interfere with frontline workers' normative judgments and perceptions of clients' needs (also see: Fleming, 2020; Tummers et al., 2012; Loyens, 2012). For instance, Fleming (2020) showed that high rule consistency in welfare organizations is associated with an increased willingness to break rules among frontline social workers. He argued that social workers likely want to break rules "because of the universal application of such rules", which is perceived as "limiting their professional discretion and autonomy in meeting clients' needs and demands" (Fleming, 2020, p. 16). Portillo (2012) concluded that rule bending is a particularly effective strategy for frontline workers "to build social capital and a positive reputation" with citizens (p. 89).

Coping mechanisms can have direct consequences for how public services are ultimately delivered to citizens (Hupe et al., 2016; Brodkin, 2012; Hill & Hupe, 2009). In a systematic literature review of coping, Tummers et al. (2015) identified three main families of coping according to the outcomes that street-level bureaucrats seek to produce for clients via their coping practices. First, according to the authors, frontline workers can cope by *moving toward clients*. This first category describes instances in which frontline workers cope by adjusting their actions to their clients' benefit. Second, the authors asserted that street-level bureaucrats can *move away from clients*, referring to cases in which frontline workers actively take steps to avoid any meaningful interactions with clients. Finally, frontline workers might *move against clients*, which occurs when they are deliberately intransigent, confrontational, or hostile with clients (Tummers et al., 2015). The authors also considered how different coping styles (e.g., creaming, rationing, routinizing) should be nested within each of these families of coping. For instance, Tummers et al. (2015) argued that moving toward clients is generally associated with rule-bending or -breaking practices, cherry picking, implementation of instrumental actions, and use of personal resources to help clients. Moving away from clients typically involves routinizing and rationing, while moving against clients can entail rigid rule following and aggression (Tummers et al., 2015, p. 1103). This classification of families of coping was successfully used in an empirical study of how frontline workers cope when implementing e-government policies (Tummers & Rocco, 2015).

In addition to identifying and categorizing ways of coping, the SLB literature has emphasized several factors that foster the implementation of coping mechanisms. Broadly speaking, street-level bureaucrats require resources to perform properly (Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2011; 2012; Lipsky, 2010), and resource limitations or inadequacies "overdetermine the development of informal practices" (Brodkin, 2012, p. 943). The term "resources" can refer to either frontline workers' personal resources – such as training, values, and experience – or their organizational resources, such as the amount of time available to make decisions or the size of caseloads (Lipsky, 2010). Among the sources of coping, large workloads and caseloads have been regularly highlighted in the literature (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Hupe et al., 2016; Berkel & Knies, 2016; Tummers & Rocco, 2015; Brodkin, 2011; Lipsky, 2010; Mutereko, 2009; Winter, 2002). Heavy workloads affect client preferences (Fraser & Estabrooks, 2008) and limit frontline workers' time and ability to adequately process information (Godfrey & Yoshikawa, 2012). For instance, Tummers and Rocco (2015) noted that, when pressured by high workloads, navigators and assisters implementing care and patient protection policies tend to ration services by not addressing all of their clients' demands (Tummers & Rocco, 2015). Similarly, Van Berkel and Knies (2016) showed the detrimental effect that high caseloads have on Dutch welfare-to-work caseworkers' provision of services. The authors argued that "workers respond to high caseloads by focusing attention on part of their caseload, but this excludes considerable proportions of their total caseload" (p. 79).

Frontline workers' role and moral conflicts are also pinpointed as a source of coping (e.g., Graaf et al., 2016; Vink et al., 2015; Tummers et al., 2012; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Conflicts between roles occur when frontline workers have difficulties balancing work instructions and objectives with their own perceptions of clients' needs, often deriving from normative preferences and professionalism (Tummers et al., 2012; 2009). More generally, it has also been argued that frontline workers' normative judgments and preferences about clients can interfere with work instructions and lead to rule-bending or -breaking practices (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000; 2003). Similarly, it has been shown that the perceived client meaningfulness, i.e., frontline workers' perception of the value of a policy for clients, can strongly affect street-level bureaucrats' willingness to implement a policy and its related tools and instruments, which can result in coping (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2013; Tummers, 2011; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). For example, Loyens (2016; 2012) used the concept of policy alienation, implying workers' disconnection from a policy that lacks meaningfulness, to explain how federal police officers cope in Belgium. Loyens mentioned several original ways of dealing with policy alienation, including the use of rule-bending and rule-breaking practices.

The literature also pinpoints that changes in management styles – in particular with the advent of new public management – can be associated with coping behaviors (e.g., Brodkin, 2011). In particular, the growing importance of managerialism in street-level agencies has resulted in an increase in work constraints, such as paperwork (e.g., Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Wright, 2003), and has fostered the adoption of informal strategies to counter managerial control (Brodkin, 2011; Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007).

D – SLB research in probation services

Over the past few decades, the SLB approach has proven quite successful in bringing valuable insights to PA scholars about how frontline workers carry out public service delivery across a large variety of contexts. However, some policy sectors have evidently received more attention than others in the SLB literature. In particular, welfare caseworkers and social workers, in general, have been substantially more studied than any other group of street-level bureaucrats so far. Although police officers have also received some attention (e.g., Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), other law enforcement agents, such as prison officers (e.g., Paanakker, 2020; Stohr & Zupan, 1992), have been considerably less studied. In the same vein, frontline officers working in probation services have also received less attention.

The few SLB studies conducted in probation services tend to focus on why POs' practices diverge from the intended policy implementation. For instance, in an ethnographic study exploring how and why POs make decisions that alter the fidelity of policies in the US, Kras et al. (2019) found that POs refer to several rationales when diverging from the intended implementation. Those rationales include the need to foster efficiency to compensate for the "organizational constraints impeding daily work" (p. 11), such as a lack of material resources and impractical computerized tools. Another rationale is the mitigation of an offender's blameworthiness, especially when a policy is deemed unnecessarily punitive given the circumstances. POs also use organizational justice as a rationale when trying to alleviate perceptions of unfairness and injustice caused by "overbearing workloads and rigid procedural policies" (p. 14). Maupin (1993) used both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine if US parole officers' involvement in the design of a decision-making program could improve implementation conformity with the expectations of top administrators. Maupin observed that POs perceived their involvement in the program design as an additional "administrative intrusion into their daily routines" and that they resented the "decisionmaking instrument as a device that would both restrict their options for managing their client caseloads and add to their paperwork burdens" (p. 343). He concluded that, despite their involvement in the design process, POs are "unlikely to produce street-level behavior that conforms to the norms desired by top administrators" (p. 352). Organizational time constraints and practical considerations, such as preferences for certain settings when meeting offenders, disrupted the conformity of POs' program implementation.

A third study focused on a different perspective. Using ethnographic methods, Halliday et al. (2009) explored Scottish POs' uncertain professional status and how they try to gain credibility as criminal justice professionals in the eyes of other penal professionals, such as judges. The authors argued that POs tend to feel "undervalued and marginalized by other professions" and that this induces a "response of deference and status seeking in relation to those same professionals" (p. 424). Since POs lack confidence in their ability to affect judges' legal decision-making, they develop strategies to alleviate their status anxiety. For instance, the authors found that officers tend to promote their "welfarist ambitions" (p. 414) by using contextualized narratives and telling judges the offenders' stories, when writing their reports. However, when recommending sanctions, POs also try to anticipate and recommend sanctions that the judge would likely regard "as being within the appropriate range of possible sentences" (p. 419).

Although existing SLB research remains scarce, other research fields such as criminology and criminal justice have produced considerable knowledge on probation and the delivery of supervision. Hence, the following section provides a review of the existing criminological and criminal justice literature on probation with an emphasis on frontline probation practice by POs.

Section II – Probation practice: a criminological perspective

In this second sub-section, I provide a brief review of the literature on probation and probation practice in criminology and criminal justice. First, I introduce the notion of probation and some of its associated concepts, such as rehabilitation and restorative justice. I also address how the literature reflected on the profound changes that affected probation in the advent of the new penology and the rise of actuarial risk management. Next, I summarize some of the key principles for effective practice in probation. In other words, I present what the literature tells us about how POs' interventions can be effective in fostering offenders' rehabilitation and desistance from crime. Third, I concentrate on the delivery of probation work by practitioners themselves. I notably report what the existing literature says about how POs' characteristics can affect decisions towards offenders and how they make use of new actuarial tools and technologies during supervision.

A – Probation? Definition and related concepts

1 – Probation, restorative justice, and the notion of rehabilitation

Probation is a widely used term that designates the community sanctions and measures that can be pronounced on an offender. However, what probation encompasses varies greatly across criminal justice systems since it refers to practices that can take many shapes and forms, depending on specific contexts. In an effort to compare probation systems around the world, Hamai et al. (2005) synthetized the key features that characterize what probation constitutes. Their definition is built around the five following aspects:

> "*Distinct organization:* the administration of the probation system should be dealt with separately within the criminal justice system; *Judicial function:* probation should have a judicial function in the criminal justice system and placing a person on probation should be the result of a judicial decision; *Legal mandate:* probation should be based on a legal mandate; *Supervision:* being placed on probation should imply that the offender receives supervision […]; *In the community:* probation should not only control offenders but it should also help them to readjust in the community." (Hamai et al., 2005, p. 17).

Hence, probation refers to a wide variety of legal sanctions that are carried out within the community but that contain some form of restriction of liberty for the offender (usually under the form of conditions or obligations). The sanction is served under the supervision of a specialized caseworker working for a criminal justice organization designated in law (McNeill et al., 2016; McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Mair, 2013; Hamai et al., 2005; Diana, 1960). Sanctions such as community work, conditional release (parole), or pretrial supervision are thus technically all classifiable as “probation”. Probation sanctions also bear close ties with prison penalties since they are often devised as an alternative to imprisonment or a way to reintegrate (or resettle) former prisoners into communities.

Historically speaking, probation emerged in different contexts as a response to the pragmatic and moral issues associated with imprisonment (Vanstone, 2016; 2008)[4]. Indeed, imprisonment is not devoid of counterproductive effects for offenders and for society at large. Many studies have pointed out the nefarious impact of imprisonment on offenders’ mental health (e.g., Haney, 2012; 2003; Dye, 2010; Kupers & Toch, 1999) and their ability to successfully reintegrate into society (e.g., Liem & Kunst, 2016; Anderson-Facile, 2009; Visher & Travis; 2003). Growing evidence has also indicated that imprisonment does not adequately prevent recidivism (e.g., Di Tella & Schargrodsky, 2013; Bales & Piquero, 2012; Spohn & Holleran, 2002). Morally speaking, imprisonment is also problematic because it inflicts unnecessary pain and damage on families and on the broader social entourage of offenders (e.g., Codd, 2013; Arditti, 2005; Loucks, 2004). Furthermore, there is a moral duty for the state to ensure that punishment is carried out in ways that respect individuals’ rights and dignity. However, since imprisonment hampers individuals’ ability to successfully return to society, offenders who have served their sentences should also “have a right to be *reconciled with the community*” (Vanstone, 2016, p. 131) (see also: Raynor & Robinson, 2009; Ward, 2009; Duff, 2003; Mathieson, 1976).

Such concerns over the welfare and reintegration of prisoners in society were already present at the beginning of the 19th century. Early initiatives emerged throughout Europe and North America in the form of charities that offered temporary housing, job opportunities, or religious training to prisoners and ex-prisoners (e.g., Vanstone, 2016; Durnescu, 2015; Forsythe, 1987). States progressively took interest in and responsibility for the rehabilitation of prisoners, and by the end of the 19th century, many European countries had established early

[4] The emergence of probation as a modern form of punishment can also be examined from a Foucauldian perspective. According to Foucault (1975), the evolution from corporal punishment to more gentle forms of control, such as imprisonment, denotes the spread of a new form of disciplinary power. This mode of control is geared toward the production of compliant, or docile, individuals via surveillance and correction, instead of bodily force. Following this perspective, many scholars have observed that probation denotes an extension of Foucault’s disciplinary power via a widening of the social control apparatus beyond prison (e.g., Bloomberg & Cohen, 2003; Garland, 2001; 1985; Simon, 1993; Cohen, 1985; Garland & Young, 1983).

forms of parole and supervision in their legislation (Vanstone, 2016). However, the consolidation of states' involvement via the creation of specialized services and dedicated agents in charge of offender supervision occurred at different rates across contexts.

The last few decades saw a rapid growth in importance of probation as a sentence, the extent of which has led some scholars to qualify this phenomenon as *mass supervision* (e.g., McNeill, 2018; 2019; Miller & Stuart, 2013; McNeill & Beyens, 2013). A considerable part of this increase in North America and Europe can be attributed to practical concerns over the important operating costs of prisons. For instance, part of the rapid development and success of probation in Belgium can be attributed to the potential savings that probation offers compared to the costs of imprisonment. In 2009, it was estimated that, although electric monitoring is expensive compared to other forms of offender supervision, a single day of electric monitoring costs only one third of what is spent in one day on an average prisoner in a Belgian prison (McNeill & Beyens, 2013). However, and as will be further discussed, the recent evolution and growth of probation are also tied to the rise of punitive and actuarial penal strategies in the 1980s (e.g., McNeill, 2013; McIvor et al., 2010).

Probation has often been associated with the idea of *restorative justice*. Restorative justice is an approach to crime that "involves the parties themselves, and the community generally, in an active relationship with statutory agencies" (Marshall, 1999, p. 3). It supports the idea that the parties involved in an offence should not only attempt to collectively find solutions to repair the harm committed. They must also support the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders into working communities that help to prevent crime. In other words, instead of focusing solely on retribution[5], restorative justice is more concerned with the reparation of harm involving the offender, the victims, and the community (Johnstone, 2013; Walgrave, 2008; Braithwaite, 2002; Marshall, 1999). Although it was first conceptualized in North America during the late 1960s (Aertsen, 2004), the principles of restorative justice have inspired probation policies and practices in many other Western countries. Under the initial impetus of the UK, the European Union actively supported the adoption of policies promoting restorative justice practices in the community justice systems of member states (e.g., Gavrielides, 2016; Lauwaert & Aertsen, 2012; Pelikan & Trenczek, 2006). However, while restorative justice has been a key source of inspiration for probation policies and practices worldwide, recent studies have seemed to

[5] Retributive justice is rooted in the idea that the punishment imposed on an offender should inflict suffering that is proportional to the harm caused by the offense. It is also a philosophy of punishment in which the imposition of punishment is unilateral (Wenzel et al., 2008).

indicate a resurgence of retribution at the expense of reparation and rehabilitation in community sanctions (e.g., McNeill et al., 2016; Pamment, 2016; McIvor, 2010; McIvor et al., 2010).

Since its early beginnings, the guiding principles of probation were also closely associated to the notion of *rehabilitation* (Mair & Burke, 2013; McWilliams & Pease, 1990). Rehabilitation is a strength-based approach (Maruna & LeBel, 2002) that emphasizes providing the offender with the means necessary to reintegrate into society as a normal and functional member (Lewis, 2005; Rotman, 1990). It designates both the final objective and the process by which it is achieved via a number of steps and procedures (e.g., Robinson & Crow, 2009; Lewis, 2005; Rotman, 1990). Offender rehabilitation also contains both symbolic and behavioral dimensions (Robinson & Crow, 2009). On the one hand, rehabilitation alludes to the process by which an offender symbolically leaves the status of the *offender* and returns to society as a full-fledged citizen. On the other hand, it also refers to the behavioral changes that characterize an individual who returns to conventional law-abiding behavior. Related terms, such as resettlement (for ex-prisoners) or reintegration (into society), also share this rehabilitative dimension of a return "to a former, favorable state" for offenders (Robinson & Crow, 2009, p. 2).

In the midst of the 20th century, this close association between probation and rehabilitation was largely endorsed by positivist criminology. Inspired by Adolphe Quetelet's (1796-1874) *social mechanics of crime*, positivist criminology rested on the belief that research would ultimately identify and solve all of the biological, psychological, and social causes of crime in modern societies (Beirne, 1987). The idea that offenders could be *treated*, or *cured*, from crime by acting on the external causes of offending was largely dominant in probation practice and policy (Robinson & Crow, 2009; Lewis, 2005). However, this so-called *rehabilitative ideal* (Allen, 1959) gradually faded as a form of pessimism based on the consideration that *nothing works* in altering crime took hold over scholars in the 1970s and 1980s (Robinson & Crow, 2009; Cullen & Gendreau, 2001; Martinson, 1974). In the late 1980s, the decline in positivist criminology was followed by renewed optimism with the emergence of the *what works* movement in the US and UK. Revisiting previous work and initiating new paths for research, scholars sought to identify and share practical evidence about the type of interventions that yield positive results in terms of offence reduction and rehabilitation (e.g., McGuire, 1995; Lipsey, 1992; Andrews, 1990). The evidence and principles brought by the "what works" movement had some influence on probation practices and the policy beyond Anglo-Saxon contexts (McNeill et al., 2016; Ugwudike & Raynor, 2013; Robinson & Crow, 2009)[6]. This influence was, for instance, observed in Scandinavian countries via the introduction of standardized assessment tools in Sweden (e.g., Persson & Svensson, 2011) and Denmark (e.g., Wandall, 2010). Similarly, most of the historical advancements in Dutch community sanctions were inspired by changes in the UK (Boone, 2005). However, the pursuit by *what works* of *effective practice* converged with growing concerns over public safety and protection in postmodern societies. This ultimately favored the emergence of a new breed of evidence-based and actuarial approaches of criminal justice centered on risk prediction and management in the 1980s (e.g., McNeill, 2013; McIvor et al., 2010; Robinson & Crow, 2009; Chui & Nellis, 2003).

2 – Risk management and the rise of the new penology

Scholars across various disciplines have argued that postmodern societies are increasingly concerned with risk (e.g., Giddens, 1990; Beck, 1986; O'Malley, 1998; Kemshall, 2003; 2008; Hudson, 2003) or, more precisely, the idea of unanticipated danger "in an age when we think we should have greater control" (Nash, 2005, p. 16). This sense of insecurity in modern societies stems from a paradox: disasters still occur on a regular basis at a time when we should be in control thanks to our knowledge and our growing technical capabilities (Giddens, 1990). This generalized sense of insecurity translates into an exacerbated fear of crime that far exceeds the actual risk posed to the communities and citizens (Kemshall, 2003; Hudson, 2003). The media's tendency to publicize the most spectacular and extreme cases further fuels this common sense of insecurity regarding crime (e.g., Lee, 2013; Chiricos et al., 1997; Heath & Gilbert, 1996). In this context, governments are compelled to act and demonstrate that they are taking active steps to mitigate risks. Such a perspective on risk is often mobilized by criminologists to account for the progressive rise of the notion of risk management in the criminal justice systems of Western countries (e.g., Kemshall, 2008; 2003; Nash, 2005; Hudson, 2003; O'Malley, 1998). Risk management assumes that an offender's likelihood of reoffending – and the potential danger that he might pose to himself and/or to the community – should be managed and made more predictable by criminal justice agencies (Winstone & Pakes, 2005; Robinson, 1999; O'Malley, 1998). Since the 1980s, this notion has been a defining trait of many criminal justice reforms in the Western world.

[6] Some countries, such as France, have arguably been less exposed to the dissemination of evidence-based practices and ideas from the *what works* literature (Herzog-Evans, 2011).

Criminologists often employ the notion of *new penology* (Feeley & Simon, 1992) to characterize the growing dominance of actuarial penal strategies, risk management, and system efficacy in criminal justice reforms. Such transformations are also concomitant with a general growth in punitiveness across jurisdictions (Pratt et al., 2013; Wacquant, 2009; Miller, 2009; Garland, 2001), with tougher stances against crime and harsher punishment indicating an overall transition from *penal welfarism* to a *culture of control* (Garland, 2001). The first signs of this paradigmatic shift manifested in the US, following the emergence of the *get tough on crime* rhetoric under the Reagan and Bush administrations. However, this transition did not remain confined to the American context. To varying degrees, reforms in the vein of the new penology were also adopted in a wide variety of criminal justice systems across the Western world (Dunbar & Langdon, 1998). Examples notably include the UK (e.g., Deering, 2016), Canada (e.g., Cotter, 2004; Vacheret et al., 1998); Italy (e.g., Corda, 2016); France (e.g., Gautron, 2016; Wacquant, 2009), and the Netherlands (e.g., Downes & Van Swaaningen, 2007; Pakes, 2004).

Practitioners in probation services have been greatly impacted by the change in perspective brought by the new penology. In many Western countries, the *collapse of the rehabilitative ideal* (Bottoms & Preston, 1980; Allen, 1981) meant that POs had to trade the traditional rehabilitative objectives of offender supervision for offender monitoring and control imperatives via the systematic assessment and prediction of offenders' risk of reoffending (e.g., Deering, 2016; Pratt et al., 2013; Kury & Shea, 2011; Robinson, 2002; 1999; Hudson, 2001). Since the 1980s, this shift has materialized into gradual adoption of evidence-based and actuarial tools devised to enhance and manage POs' assessment and monitoring of offenders. The widespread adoption of risk assessment tools[7] is particularly illustrative of this shift in the philosophy of probation practice. Risk assessment tools were not only adopted in the US (e.g., Vincent et al., 2012; Johnson et al., 2011), Canada (e.g., Ballucci, 2012; Shaw & Hannah-Moffat, 2000), and the UK (e.g., Lancaster & Lumb, 2006; Mair & Burke, 2013). They were also adopted in many countries and areas of continental Europe (e.g., Jiricka et al., 2014; Hildebrand et al., 2013; Yoon et al., 2011) including Scandinavia (e.g., Persson & Svensson, 2011; Långström, 2004) and France (e.g., de Larminat, 2013). Although some countries, such as Belgium, have been resistant to the introduction of risk assessment tools (Beyens & Scheirs,

[7] Risk assessment tools are standardized protocols used by officers to evaluate an offender's likelihood of reoffending. Many assessment tools draw upon the risk/need/responsivity model (Bonta & Andrews, 2007; Andrews, 1990) whereby officers identify offenders' criminogenic needs and proportionally deliver treatment to target the appropriate risk factors.

2010; Snacken, 2007), recent years have seen an overall convergence of surveillance and control in European jurisdictions (Razac et al., 2014; Durnescu, 2013; McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Cliquennois, 2012; Mary, 2001).

Studies have shown that the growing importance of the risk and security agenda poses serious concerns for practitioners who perceive a contradiction with their traditional professional ethos rooted in social work and the rehabilitation of offenders (e.g., Fitzgibbon et al. 2010; Fitzgibbon, 2008; Allard et al., 2003; Ellis, 2000; Clear & Latessa, 1993). As is further discussed in the following subsections, the tension that POs feel between their rehabilitative role and enforcement role was repeatedly observed in many contexts and has been suspected to affect probation practice. Furthermore, although many actuarial risk management tools and procedures have been introduced since the 1980s, scholars have argued that it remains difficult to accurately predict risk, especially when considering unpredictable individuals (e.g., Nash, 2005; Sparks, 2000). This uncertainty exerts considerable pressure on POs since they can be blamed by public authorities for their lack of success in predicting offender reoffenses (e.g., Kemshall, 2019; 2009; 2008; Nash, 2005).

B – What is *effective practice* in offender supervision?

Under the influence of the *what works* movement, a considerable amount of criminological research has focused on identifying the factors that would help to improve the effectiveness of POs' interventions. In doing so, many studies have sought to assess the outcome and effectiveness of specialized programs and methods designed for the management and rehabilitation of offenders. Scholars have also sought to improve our knowledge about the processes by which offenders end up leaving their criminal activities (the desistance process). The results of these studies have brought key insights into which interventions work in which specific circumstances. These lessons have contributed to the identification of the principles of effective practice in probation work, which are now widely shared among criminologists and probation practitioners. In this subsection, I first present some research insights into what is known to affect offenders' desistance from crime. Then, I introduce the key principles of effective practice and illustrate them with existing studies.

1 – Explaining and predicting desistance

Definition, desistance is usually accepted as a form of remission from crime or, more generally, the mechanism by which offenders retire from their criminal careers (Kazemian, 2007; Farrall & Calverley, 2005; Laub & Sampson, 2001). It is the process by which the frequency, severity, and variety of offences committed by an offender decline after reaching a culminating point (Le Blanc & Loeber, 1998; Le Blanc, 1990). Desistance is commonly accepted as a process (e.g., Wetekamp & Kerner, 2012; Maruna, 2001; Laub & Sampson, 2001), but dichotomous measures of desistance are often used by quantitative researchers to indicate offenders' cessation of criminal activities, or nonrecidivism (Kazemian, 2016). Studies about desistance have usually sought to identify and analyze the factors that might affect the "length, intensity and seriousness of criminal careers" (Kazemian, 2016, p. 35) and explain why some offenders persist in a life of crime while others desist (Laub & Sampson, 2001). Four main categories of predictors have been identified in the literature to explain offenders' desistance from crime: social factors, substance use, cognitive factors, and biological factors.

Regarding social factors, the existing research has repeatedly pointed out the relevance of employment and job stability (e.g., Skarghamar & Savolainen, 2014; Savolainen, 2009; Kruttschnitt et al., 2000). Although debated (e.g., Giordano et al., 2002), studies have indicated that stable employment does support desistance, particularly among older offenders (e.g., Morizot & Le Blanc, 2007). Others have found that employment does not necessarily trigger the desistance process but significantly contributes to sustaining it since it tends to be associated with longer crime-free periods before an eventual reincarnation (e.g., Tripodi et al., 2010; Sampson & Laub, 2003). Studies have also shown that marital status is associated with desistance (e.g., Rayburn & Wright, 2018; Craig & Foster, 2013; Maume et al., 2004; Theobald & Farrington, 2009; Horney et al., 1995). In an influential longitudinal study of the criminal history of 500 delinquent boys, Laub et al. (1998) concluded that marriage has a preventive effect on crime since it diverts individuals from criminal associations. More generally speaking, cohabitation has also been acknowledged by some researchers as contributing to desistance (e.g., Forrest, 2014; Savolainen, 2009). Scholars have argued that the effect of social circumstances, such as marriage or employment, is often mediated through social contacts with peers. For instance, employment was found to restructure social networks by increasing interactions with prosocial coworkers[8] and reducing contacts with deviant individuals (e.g.,

[8] Individuals whose actions are generally oriented toward the benefit of others (Batson & Powell, 2003).

Wright & Cullen, 2004). Similar conclusions were drawn for marriage (e.g., Warr, 1998). Studies have also shown that imprisonment has a negative effect on desistance (e.g., Liebling & Maruna, 2013; Cullen et al., 2011; Maruna & Toch, 2005; Gendreau et al., 1999). For instance, Drago et al.'s (2011) study of Italian prisons showed that imprisonment does not necessarily affect criminal activity and sometimes leads to an increased likelihood of recidivism when inmates are isolated.

The second factor impeding successful desistance is substance use and addiction (Belenko, 2006; Laub & Sampson, 2003; Maruna, 2001). Drug use was found to be associated with violence, impulsivity, and an overall increased risk of reoffense (e.g., White et al., 2015; Schroeder et al., 2007). Similarly, Laub and Sampson (2003) found that heavy alcohol use has a negative impact on social bonds (either marital or job related) and substantially contributes to the persistence of criminal behavior. This outcome is consistent with a considerable amount of research providing evidence for the negative impact of heavy alcohol use on desistance (e.g., Wooditch et al., 2014; White et al., 2012; Schroeder et al., 2007).

Cognitive factors – such as emotional state, motivation, self-perception, and attitudes – also affect desistance from crime (Kazemian, 2016; Loeber et al., 2007; Maruna, 2001). For instance, some specific shifts in individuals' narrative identities, attitudes toward crime, and cognitive skills have been associated with desistance (Anderson & McNeill, 2019). In particular, the development of pro-social values, ease in social interactions, or compassion has been linked with desistance (Gove, 1985). Individuals who display higher peer resistance skills (Walters, 2018) and who are more determined to exit a cycle of criminal activity are more likely to embark on a desistance process (e.g., Shover, 2018; Burnett, 2004). Overall, such studies have stressed the significance of identity transformation, or self-reconstruction, in fostering and supporting desistance (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Laub & Sampson, 2003, Maruna, 2001).

Finally, a limited pool of studies have pointed to the role of biological factors in explaining desistance. For instance, scholars have noted a strong association between desistance and the aging process (e.g., Sparkes & Day, 2016; Collins, 2004; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Gove, 1985). However, the nature of this relationship is debated since the effect of age is likely mediated by other cognitive factors (e.g., Shover & Thompson, 1992; Gove, 1985), such as individuals' subjective understanding of what adulthood is (Massignola & Uggen, 2010). Other studies have suggested that physiological and genetic factors might also affect desistance (e.g., Loeber et al., 2015; Portnoy et al., 2013; Cauffman et al., 2005). For instance, in a longitudinal study revisiting the link between marriage and desistance, Barnes and Beaver (2012) showed that genetic factors affect both marital propensity and the likelihood of desisting from crime.

Desistance research has brought valuable evidence to better target and improve the effectiveness of probation practitioners' interventions (e.g., McNeill, 2006; Bonta et al., 2008). This issue is discussed next.

2 – Effective practice in promoting rehabilitation and preventing reoffense

Following the impetus of the *what works* movement, criminological studies have sought to evaluate the effectiveness of specific methods and approaches in offender supervision and rehabilitation. Research has focused on the evaluation of special programs and pilot experiments under the patronage of governments (Raynor & Robinson, 2009). Although most studies have been conducted in Anglo-Saxon jurisdictions, some research has also been conducted in other Western countries, such as in the Netherlands and in the Scandinavian countries (McNeill & Beyens, 2013). In an influential book, McGuire (1995) compiled the main research lessons of *what works* in a number of principles for effective probation practice. In the present subsection, I report some key findings about effective practices in offender supervision with regard to the principles outlined in McGuire's book.

The first principle articulated by McGuire (1995) is risk classification. According to the risk principle, offenders should be assessed and categorized according to their risk of reoffending. High-risk probationers should ideally be targeted with intensive treatments and interventions because they are more responsive to these approaches than low-risk individuals (e.g., Lowenkamp et al., 2016; Bonta et al., 2000; Andrews et al., 1990). Similar conclusions were drawn by Lovins et al. (2007), who successfully tested the application of the risk principle to female offenders. According to the authors, high-risk female offenders exposed to intensive correctional interventions display lower reoffense rates than lower-risk female offenders exposed to similar treatments. Such evidence in favor of the risk principle was concomitant with the massive adoption of risk assessment tools in many jurisdictions. As a result, many studies have assessed, and sometimes demonstrated, the effectiveness of such tools in predicting risk (Luong et al., 2016; Wong & Gordon, 2006).

The next principle is the identification and treatment of offenders' criminogenic needs. Evidence has indicated that POs' interventions are more effective when they specifically match the issues and problems that might contribute to offending or the persistence of criminal behavior (Baglovio et al., 2018; McGuire, 1995; Antonowicz & Ross, 1994; Andrews et al., 1990). For instance, Brooks-Holliday et al. (2012) assessed the effectiveness of a short re-entry program targeting some of offenders' specific criminogenic needs. The authors concluded that offenders' participation in the program was associated with significant risk reduction. Similarly, other studies have pointed to the necessity of assessing probationers' access to protective factors, such as social and emotional support (e.g., Ulrich & Coid, 2011), to better target interventions and prevent reoffense. In this regard, the existing knowledge about the predictors of desistance provides useful insights for practitioners who wish to better target their interventions (e.g., Wooditch et al., 2014; Andrews & Bonta, 2010; McNeill, 2009; 2006).

McGuire (1995) also noted that POs' interventions should preferably be carried out according to the principle of responsivity. In other words, interventions, treatments, and programs are more effective when they are adapted to the abilities, motivations, personality traits, and learning styles of offenders (e.g., Bonta et al., 2010; Antonowicz & Ross, 1994; Andrews et al., 1990). For instance, Bourgeon and Gutierrez (2012) noted that reoffending rates are significantly reduced when POs adapt their interventions with offenders using cognitive interviewing techniques. More generally, the effectiveness of cognitive and behavioral techniques in bringing about change with respect to offenders' individual factors has been well documented (e.g., Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Wilson et al., 2005) and has been integrated into the now widely adopted Risk-Need-Responsivity framework[9] (Polaschek, 2012; Andrews et al., 2011; Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Another key principle advocated by McGuire (1995) is that the most effective interventions are those that act on various relevant aspects of offenders' issues. POs' intervention should ideally consider multiple dimensions of offenders' problems and characteristics, such as substance use, relational problems, or gender-specific factors (e.g., Gelsthorpe, 2013; Bonta & Andrews, 2007; Taxman, 2002; Funk, 1999). In addition, POs' interventions should also aim to provide new practical skills to the offender so that he or she can find solutions to his or her problems (e.g., Antonowicz & Ross, 1994). For instance, studies have shown that cognitive and problem-solving skill programs help to reduce offenders' disruptive behaviors, including among offenders presenting signs of mental illness (e.g., Yip et al., 2013; McGuire & Hatcher, 2001). Similarly, programs that seek to enhance offenders' motivation and self-esteem, through discussions (e.g., Raynor, 2013) or cooperation (e.g., Ross et al., 2011), have usually been associated with greater offender compliance during supervision (Ugwudike, 2013).

[9] The Risk-Need-Responsivity framework proposes an evidence-based approach to identify offenders' criminogenic needs, evaluate the risk of future offenses, and adapt the response to offenders' characteristics (Bonta & Andrews, 2007).

Finally, McGuire (1995) stressed the importance of program integrity to achieve positive offender outcomes. In other words, the way in which a program is implemented should be faithful to its intended theory and design, implying that correctional programming should be well structured (e.g., Gendreau et al., 1996), that caseloads should not be excessive (e.g., Jalbert & Rhodes, 2012; Jalbert et al., 2010), and that frontline workers should be properly trained (Hollin, 1995) – or sufficiently skilled (e.g., Bourgon & Gutierrez 2012; Skeem et al., 2007) – to deliver programs and improve outcomes. For instance, in a quasi-experimental study of the impact of POs' skills, Raynor and Ugwudike (2014) found that offenders' reconviction rates were significantly lower when supervised by officers who were able to use a broader set of skills during supervision. More generally, staff competency has been associated with positive offender outcomes (e.g., Marshall & Burton, 2010; Bonta et al., 2008; Marshall, 2005).

C – Officers' actual practices of supervision

A considerable amount of probation research has sought to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs and instruments in predicting risk and encouraging desistance. However, surprisingly little is known about how professionals themselves deliver probation work in light of their preferences about practice and the multiple (organizational, legal, and cultural) contexts in which they operate (McNeill & Beyens, 2013; McNeill et al., 2010). In other words, what are officers' everyday practices and interactions with offenders? How do they manage new actuarial and evidence-based tools and instruments? How do their personal preferences and characteristics affect practices?

This general lack of knowledge about the *black box* of supervision (Farrall, 2002) is further accentuated by the fact that probation practice and culture can substantially differ between countries (e.g., Herzog-Evans, 2011a; Hamai et al., 2005). There is also a considerable disparity in the amount of empirical evidence coming from different contexts, with Anglo-Saxon countries (such as the US, Canada, and the UK) accounting for most of the research conducted in Western contexts. In an influential book about offender supervision in Europe, McNeill and Beyens (2013) pointed out that such empirical disparities also exist within Europe. However, although England and Wales have largely dominated knowledge production about probation practices in Europe, some significant contributions have also emanated from the Nordic countries (e.g., Persson & Svensson, 2012; 2011; Wandall, 2010), France (e.g., de Larminat, 2015; Herzorg-Evans, 2011a; 2011b), the Netherlands (e.g., Butter & Hermanns, 2011; Boone, 2005), and Belgium (e.g., Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b).

In the present subsection, I take stock of a diverse pool of contributions to report what we know about POs and their practices of offender supervision.

1 – Evidence-based tools and technologies in offender supervision

The demise of the rehabilitative ideal, the quest for effective practices, and the rise of new penology gave way to a multiplicity of actuarial evidence-based tools and strategies devised to better anticipate and manage the risks posed by offenders. The managerialization of probation work also came with increased proceduralization and monitoring of officers' practices. In this way, it was assumed that assessments and interventions would be more effective since they would be "less likely to be influenced by professionals' subjective feelings and experience" (Nash, 2005, p. 22). However, studies have acknowledged that officers do not mechanically implement new actuarial tools and instruments**.**

Studies have explored POs' perceptions and implementation of new actuarial risk assessment techniques. Rather than focusing on the predictive accuracy of risk assessments and the factors facilitating their adoption (e.g., De Boeuf et al., 2020; Viljoen et al., 2018; Levin et al, 2016; Vincent et al., 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; Oleson et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2010), these studies have examined how they are perceived and implemented on the ground by professionals. Findings have indicated that POs do not always implement risk assessment tools as anticipated by their designers or take their results into consideration to inform their decisions only to a certain extent (e.g., Viglione, 2019; 2017; Peterson-Badali et al., 2015; Viglione et al., 2015; Guy et al., 2014; Perrault et al., 2012; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Hannah-Moffat et al., 2009). For instance, in a qualitative study of the implementation of risk assessment tools in the US, Viglione et al. (2015) found that the vast majority of POs routinely administer risk assessments when working with offenders. However, assessment results are seldomly relied upon for case management and supervision. Furthermore, POs tend to focus on risk rather than on criminogenic needs when assessing offenders. The authors noted that such a misapplication expresses POs' general discomfort and a misunderstanding regarding the purpose and added value of the tool itself. Similarly, Hannah-Moffat and colleagues (2009) concluded that the adoption and implementation of risk technologies by Canadian POs are negotiated processes in which POs still heavily rely on their non-actuarial professional knowledge when selecting information, calculating risk scores, and interpreting assessment results. Some scholars have understood these reluctances or discomforts as signs of resistance in the face of a potential loss of professional autonomy (e.g., Schaefer & Williamson, 2018; Persson & Svensson, 2011;

Phillips, 2011; Fitzgibbon et al., 2010; Hamilton, 2010; Young et al., 2006; Ferguson, 2003). For instance, Persson and Svensson (2011) interpreted Swedish POs' limited implementation of risk assessments tools as a form of resistance based on a professional logic. Officers' doubts and concerns over the new tools' intents and purposes express their fears of losing their professional discretion.

Overall, the existing research has suggested that POs struggle to fully integrate actuarial risk assessment tools into their work routines. Even if assessment tools are used, assessment results tend to be inadequately connected to case planning and decision making (e.g., Viglione et al., 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Fizgibbon et al., 2010; Hannah-Moffat et al., 2009). The findings also suggest that perceptions, attitudes, and opinions about the purpose and added-value of actuarial risk assessment tools can affect POs' implementation and use of said tools (e.g., Viglione, 2019; 2017; Canty, 2015; Viglione et al., 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012; 2011). POs' fear of losing their professional autonomy and discretion due to the standardization of risk assessments and decisions has been notably cited as a source of resistance (e.g., Schaefer & Williamson, 2018; Persson & Svensson, 2012; 2011; Fizgibbon et al., 2010; Hamilton, 2010; Ferguson, 2002).

These findings are consistent with a stream of studies examining how POs accept and adapt to the introduction of new technologies governing probation practice in an *information age* (e.g., Phillips, 2017; Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b; Robinson & Svensson, 2013; Bullock, 2011; Mair, 2001). In an ethnographic study conducted in a French-speaking probation agency in Belgium, Jonckheere (2013a; 2013b) analyzed officers' adoption, perception, and use of a new integrated data management system. The author noted that adjustment to the new instrument was not easy since POs felt stripped of their professional ability to assess and treat cases. She further argued that the adoption of this computerized system contributed to a reconfiguration of officers' professional identities from social workers to case managers. Incidentally, these findings also resonated with a number of studies expressing concerns over the potential of electronic monitoring in diverting attention away from human agency in the implementation of offender supervision (e.g., Hucklesby, 2011; Paterson, 2007; Mair, 2001).

2 – POs' professional identities, role orientations, and attitudes

As previously mentioned, officers can be hesitant in integrating new actuarial tools and instruments into their practices when they conflict with their own conceptions and ideals about probation work. This observation has naturally prompted some scholars to further explore how

POs define their professional identities (McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Rudes et al., 2013; Newman & Nutley, 2003; Annison et al., 2008). Such interest in officers' professional identities and work-related preferences has been further amplified given that past decades saw significant changes in the way in which probation work is conceived and executed. The rapid development of actuarial and evidence-based tools in a logic of risk management required considerable readjustments from officers' perspectives. Probation practice – which was traditionally rooted in clinical interviews, a rehabilitative ideal, and social work values (e.g., Grant, 2015; McNeill & Beyens, 2013; Jonckheere, 2013; Bauwens, 2011; Gergory, 2010; Newman et al., 2003) – had to incorporate a growing number of actuarial risk management techniques in line with fact checking and offender monitoring. It was feared that such changes would lead to a *prisonization* of probation staff, with POs moving away from their traditional habits and goals to embrace monitoring and control-related objectives (Herzog-Evans, 2013; Boone & Herzog-Evans, 2013).

Throughout the years, a stream of studies sought to identify and describe POs' professional identity and its associated values and beliefs in the wake of the new penology. Some explored the reconfigurations and changes that affected POs' traditional work ethos, rooted in humanistic values, social work, and rehabilitation. Although elements pointed to an erosion of POs' traditional roots and professional culture (Mair & Burke, 2012), a substantial number of studies, especially in the British Isles, stressed the unexpected resilience of POs' traditional professional identities. Often relying on Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977), such studies highlighted the remarkable continuity and stability of a welfare-oriented ethos among POs (e.g., Grant, 2015; Robinson et al., 2014; Butter & Hermanns, 2011; Deering, 2011; Forbes, 2011; 2010; Annison et al., 2008). The continuity of this work ethos was also observed among younger recruits. For instance, examining the professional identity of two cohorts of new probation trainees in England and Wales, Deering (2010) concluded that young officers continue to enter service with *traditional* beliefs about probation work. Similarly, in a qualitative study, Forbes (2010) noted that new probation recruits are still "motivated by idealistic, humanitarian values akin to the tradition of social work […] despite the fact that it is now more than 10 years since probation and social work training were separated with the intention of eradicating the 'softer' elements of the old culture" (Forbes, 2010, p. 87). Scholars have also observed POs' concerns over the loss of professional autonomy as a result of actuarial risk management techniques (e.g., Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Persson & Svensson, 2011;

Fitzgibbon et al., 2010), suggesting that professional autonomy and discretion are critical parts of POs' professional identity.

Other studies have hinted at a reconfiguration of professional identities, often characterized by the emergence of new transitional ones (Lovins et al., 2018; Robinson et al., 2016; de Larminat & Jonckheere, 2015; de Larminat, 2015; 2012a; 2012b; Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b; Gregory, 2010; Svensson, 2009; Lhuillier, 2007; Newman & Nutley, 2003). For example, it was argued that the computerization process of the Belgian (Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b; de Larminat & Jonckheere; 2015) and French (de Larminat & Jonckheere, 2015; de Larminat, 2015; 2012a) probation services served as a catalyst for a reconfiguration of POs' professional identities around three poles: appropriation, diversion, and contestation (de Larminat & Jonckheere, 2015). Both authors, however, noted a transition in Belgian and French POs' professional identities from social worker figures to case managers or criminologists. In a similar vein, in an ethnographic study of the construction of professional identities among POs working for privatized probation entities in England and Wales, Robinson et al. (2016) argued that new identities sit halfway between "the old and the new; the public and the 'outsourced'" (Robinson et al., 2016, p. 173).

Another group of studies examined POs' professional orientations by focusing on their role preferences and attitudes. Such studies typically explored POs' stance regarding two opposed professional roles that epitomize their personal preferences and attitudes about the goals of offender supervision. Stated differently, how officers articulate these roles synthetizes their "working philosophy" (Klockars, 1972, p. 550). On the one hand, officers can lean toward a rehabilitative role orientation, emphasizing social work and offender change in their conception of probation work**.** On the other hand, POs can display a preference toward punishment, indicating that their working philosophy favors law enforcement, as well as the compliance and control of offenders. Overall, the existing research has indicated that POs "hold a mixture of rehabilitative and punitive beliefs" about their role (Bolin & Applegate, 2016, p. 324) with a more pronounced emphasis on rehabilitation in comparison to prison staff (e.g., Bolin & Applegate, 2016; Fulton et al., 1997; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992; Harris et al., 1989). Authors also have argued that officers can experience *role conflicts* due to tensions between contradicting roles (e.g., Allard et al., 2003). Although uncertainties persist (Miller, 2015; Clear & Latessa, 1993), role conflicts have been linked to burnout and emotional exhaustion among officers (e.g., Gayman & Bradley, 2013; Allard et al., 2003; Whitehead, 1987).

The conditions of POs' role preferences are somewhat difficult to isolate. At the individual level, officers' ages are sometimes considered to have effects on role orientations.

For instance, Ward and Kupchik (2010) found that younger juvenile POs are more likely to be punishment oriented than their older colleagues. However, the evidence remains limited or inconclusive since other findings have suggested otherwise (e.g., Bolin & Applegate, 2016; Deering, 2010). Gender also appears to affect role preferences since some studies have shown that male officers are more likely to endorse a punitive role (e.g., Sluder & Reddinton, 1993; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992), but again, other studies did not find conclusive results (e.g., Leiber, 2000). Some specificities of the organizational context also seem to determine role preferences (e.g., Ward & Kupchik, 2010; Lopez & Russell, 2008; Fulton et al., 1997; Clear & Latessa, 1993). Organizational policy (e.g., Clear & Latessa, 1993) and participation in decision making (e.g., Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992) were associated with rehabilitative role preferences. However, the results have sometimes been conflicting regarding the impact of POs' specialization on their role orientation. For example, some studies have indicated that officers working with juvenile offenders are significantly more oriented toward rehabilitation compared to other POs (e.g., Sluder & Reddington, 1993), while others have concluded that juvenile officers are not different from their colleagues working with adult offenders (e.g., Bolin & Applegate, 2016).

Finally, some authors have created typologies of officers. In an extensive study of the identify of probation workers in England and Wales, Mawby and Worall (2013) identified three types of POs based on how they were trained and when they joined the probation service. The *lifers* refer to the officers who joined the service many years ago and who contemplate probation as a vocation and lifelong career. The *second careerists* are those who joined probation after a previous experience in another health or social work sector. The *offender managers* are usually recent recruits who are younger, more pragmatic, and adaptable. The authors argued that – despite generational differences – lifers, second careerists, and offender managers still share similar humanistic views about offenders' capacity to change (Mawby & Worrall, 2013). Similarly, in a context marked by a shift toward the new penology in France (see: Chantraine & Scheer, 2020; Gautron, 2016), de Larminat (2012a) proposed a typology of officers based on their sentiments about the current professional and organizational reconfigurations. The *disappointed* are POs who are either disenchanted or resigned in the face of new managerial reforms. In contrast, the *opponents* are those who disagree and voice their opposition to these changes. The *convinced* designate those who welcome these new approaches as an opportunity to construct a new professional identity that is distinct from social work (de Larminat, 2012a). Using latent class analysis, Miller (2015) also proposed a typology based on officers' engagement in supervision practices in the US. Higher engagement corresponds to greater intensity and diversity in the supervision tactics used by the officer. On this basis, the author distinguished *high engagers*, *medium engagers*, and *low engagers*. Miller noted that all of the offender classes are *synthetic*, meaning that they all combine both rehabilitative and law enforcement tactics (Miller, 2015).

3 – The delivery and practice of offender supervision

To this day, POs' decision-making process and their everyday practices with offenders have attracted a limited amount of interest from scholars, particularly in European contexts (Boone & Evans, 2013; Robinson & Svenson 2013). More specifically, how POs' personal characteristics and preferences affect their judgments and the delivery of supervision remains somewhat neglected in the existing literature. To a lesser extent, the way in which POs interpret and inform their decisions based on offenders' characteristics is also rather underexplored. In this subsection, I present some findings from studies that have addressed these topics.

Several contributions have focused on how POs' individual and organizational conditions affect their judgments and behaviors toward offenders. Although research has been scare and the findings not always univocal (e.g., Bolin, 2019), a first group of studies has successfully linked POs' professional role preferences (conceived as attitudes) with specific behaviors or behavioral intentions (e.g., Viglione & Blasko, 2018; Steiner et al., 2011; Schwalbe & Maschi; 2009). For example, in a study of the effects of officers' attitudes on supervision strategies of young offenders in the US, Schalbe and Mashi (2009) found that POs who endorse punishment have fewer contacts and spend less time with juvenile offenders compared to those who express a preference for rehabilitation and treatment. Second, another group of studies indicated that officers' gender could be linked to distinctive ways of practicing offender supervision. Studies have found that female POs are generally more prompt in giving second chances to offenders and promoting lenient sentencing, while male officers are more likely to favor control ideals and to put them into practice (e.g., Zettler, 2019; Leiber & Brubaker, 2010; Walsh, 1984). Third, studies have linked POs' caseloads and workloads with specific supervision practices. Examining the effects of parole officers' attitudes on supervision practices in the US, Steiner et al. (2011) incidentally found that, in comparison to POs with smaller caseloads, "officers responsible for supervising larger caseloads were less likely to initiate revocation hearings" and issue sanctions to offenders (Steiner et al., 2011, p. 916). Although some findings have indicated otherwise (Kerbs et al., 2009), most scholars have emphasized that POs who are subjected to larger workloads and caseloads are less likely to issue sanctions and pursue hearings when confronted with minor rule violations from offenders (e.g., Steiner et al., 2011; Schneider et al., 1996; Petersilia & Turner, 1993; 1990; Clear et al., 1992; McLeary, 1978). Authors have argued that this tendency is likely the result of, when managing a large number of offenders, POs likely feeling the need to prioritize work on more severe cases and violations. Fourth, some studies have suggested that the geographical localization of the agency in which POs operate can affect their enforcement-related behavior. Indeed, the existing research has found that officers working in urban areas are usually stricter and more exacting than those working in rural areas (e.g., Van Deinse et al., 2018; Olson et al., 2001; Ellsworth & Weisheit, 1997), possibly due to a difference in offender profiles between rural and urban areas (Ellsworth & Weisheit, 1997) or the more limited treatment availability to accompany those with special needs in rural areas, loosening officers' supervision requirements (Van Deinse et al., 2018).

Other studies have examined how offender characteristics can induce specific responses among POs. First, some evidence suggests that probationers' race and ethnicity can affect officers' judgments and decisions during offender supervision. Although authors have rarely concluded intentional racial discrimination, considerable evidence indicates that POs tend to be less tolerant, less invested, and more inclined to recommend severe punishment with offenders from racial and ethnic minorities (e.g., DeMichele & Payne, 2018; Leiber et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2013; Steen et al., 2013; Williams, 2005; Hudson & Bramhall, 2005; Graham & Lowery, 2004; Bridges & Steen, 1998; Bishop & Frazier; 1996). For example, when analyzing the determinants of complaint-filing parole officers, Steen et al. (2013) found that "Black parolees are more than twice as likely as White parolees to have complaints filed against them" and that they are more susceptible to receiving negative outcomes (Steen et al., 2013, p. 20). As exposed in a study by DeMichele and Payne (2018), Black offenders are not only subjected to stricter supervision. They also receive less attention since US officers spend significantly less time supervising them. Although most of these studies originated in the US, some similar findings were also reported in Europe. After conducting an observation of the interactions between Dutch POs and clients from different cultural backgrounds, Boone (2013; 2002) concluded that the services delivered to ethic minority offenders are more limited and of lower quality. Ethnic minority offenders are also more likely to be assessed as problematic because of their cultural backgrounds and the language barrier (Boone, 2013; 2002). Second, studies have also revealed that officers can adopt different supervision styles depending on offenders' genders. More specifically, some evidence has suggested that the "probation decision making process is guided by gender stereotypes" (Erez, 1989, p. 321) and that POs tend to be more lenient when supervising female offenders (e.g., Leiber et al., 2018; 2016; Verrecchia & Ling, 2013; Erez, 1990; 1989; Frazier et al., 1983). Scholars have argued that POs have been socialized to protect women following a paternalistic *chivalry perspective* (Chesney-Lind, 1977), which explains why female offenders tend to be considered less dangerous than their male counterparts. For instance, in an analysis of the factors explaining probation revocation decisions, Verrecchia and Ling (2013) found that male offenders tend to have a greater likelihood of revocation. Similarly, when examining POs' sentencing recommendations, Leiber et al. (2018) noted that "females were more likely to receive community sanctions as a probation recommendation and judicial sentence compared to males" (Leiber et al., 2018, p. 119). Men – and Black men in particular – were more likely to receive longer sentences or incarceration as a sentence recommendation. Third, findings suggest that POs tend to adopt more punitive stances during the supervision of offenders with mental disorders (e.g., Lounden et al., 2018; 2013). For example, in a study of the role of stigma toward mental illness in offender case management and risk perception, Louden et al. (2018) revealed that, among offenders of the same risk classification, offenders with mental illness are still perceived as riskier than nondisordered offenders. In case of violation, they also received more punitive responses than their nondisordered counterparts. Finally, the type of offence and the seriousness of the offense committed by the offender also seem to shape the way in which POs perform supervision (e.g., Steen et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2010; Jones & Kerbs, 2007; Huebner & Bynum; 2006). Evidence suggests that sex offenders are more likely to be treated more severely than other types of offenders. In case of violation, they are at greater risk of receiving harsher punishment or probation revocation (Steen et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2010).

Conclusion of the first chapter

Public administration research adopting a street-level perspective to POs' delivery of public services to offenders is relatively scarce. So far, most studies have been conducted in penology and criminology without necessarily adopting an SLB perspective. Hence, the second section of this chapter presented a review of the existing literature in criminology and criminal justice on probation and offender supervision practice.

This literature review stresses the extent to which the demise of the rehabilitative ideal and the rising concerns over risk management in postmodern societies transformed probation philosophy and the idea of probation practice. The reviewed studies indicate that POs tend to have difficulties integrating new actuarial tools and standardized risk assessments into their daily work routines (e.g., Viglione et al., 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012). When implementing new tools, officers still heavily rely on their professional knowledge to select information and interpret results. Furthermore, evidence suggests that POs feel threatened in their ability to professionally assess and process cases due to these new actuarial tools (e.g., Jonkheere 2013a). Studies have also exposed the reconfigurations of POs' professional identities in the wake of new penology. Although some results indicate an unexpected resilience of POs' traditional beliefs centered around social work and offender rehabilitation (e.g., Grant, 2015; Deering, 2010), others suggest a reconfiguration of POs' professional identity, with a transition from social worker to criminologist or case manager (e.g., de Larminat & Jonkheere, 2015; de Larminat, 2012a). Besides, the literature review suggests that POs' judgments and delivery of supervision can be affected by some of their personal characteristics, such as their professional role preferences (e.g., Viglione & Blasko, 2018; Steiner et al., 2011) or their gender (e.g., Zettler, 2019). Similarly, POs' organizational conditions – such as their workloads (e.g., Steiner et al., 2011) and the agency setting (e.g., Ellsworth & Weisheit, 1997) – are either associated with more punitive, or more lenient, approaches of offender supervision in the hands of officers. Offenders' race and ethnicity (e.g., Steen et al., 2013), their gender (e.g., Leiber et al., 2018), and their mental health status (e.g., Lounden et al., 2018) are also associated with specific officer responses in the course of supervision.

On another note, these results suggest that the SLB approach, and its associated concepts, is particularly relevant to the study of POs' delivery of offender supervision. For instance, the reported signs of resistance to the implementation of new actuarial tools and procedures could be interpreted as signs of coping (rule-bending or rule-breaking) due to a lack of perceived meaningfulness in work instructions (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2013; Tummers, 2011). Similarly, it seems that officers consider that new work instructions and guidelines interfere with their normative preferences and professional judgements about what is best for citizen-clients (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Consistent with the SLB literature, it also seems that POs' use of discretion is affected by their assessments of clients (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), workloads (e.g., Winter, 2002), as well as managerial changes (e.g., Brodkin, 2011). Ultimately, the concepts of state- and citizen-agency (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000) should be particularly instrumental in understanding how POs balance the new risk management requirements with the traditional rehabilitative ideals of probation in their everyday practices.

This is why, to expand on this observation and to import research insights from criminology into PA research, the next chapter proposes to adopt an SLB perspective to report a systematic literature review on the topic of officer-offender interactions.

Chapter 2 – Officer-offender interactions in the correctional sector: a systematic literature review

Preliminary note: although the present dissertation focuses on probation officers (POs), the systematic literature review presented in this chapter addresses officer-offender interactions in both prisons and probation services. An overview of existing studies in both sectors is relevant before focusing on probation work, in the empirical studies of this research. The present chapter reports an adapted version of a collective paper[10] that was submitted and recently accepted by Social Policy & Administration. The published paper is accessible via: http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/spol.12633.

Introduction

In the course of the last decades, policy reforms in many Western countries have promoted a more punitive approach of probation and prison work (Wacquant, 2009; Garland, 2012; Pratt et al., 2013). While institutional approaches used to emphasize social work and rehabilitation, the 1980s' managerial and conservative turn of new penology (Feeley & Simon, 1992) shifted the priorities of correctional institutions towards "public protection, risk management, punishment and accountability" (Healy, 2012, p. 379). This new rhetoric materialized into additional penalties in cases of non-compliance and policies that further criminalize deviant behaviors (e.g., Miller, 2009; Pratt et al., 2013). In many countries, POs had to trade treatment, social work and rehabilitation-oriented activities for punishment and control imperatives (Pratt et al., 2013; Kury & Shea, 2011). In the United States (Garland, 2012), but also in other contexts such as France (Wacquant, 2009) or Italy (Corda, 2016), the overall increase of the demand for punishment resulted in prison overcrowding and a shift of priorities in probation. At the managerial level, new penology is often enforced with actuarial strategies and tools. Risks and needs assessment tools, for instance, provide POs with a systematic framework assessing offenders' individual situation and the danger they represent for society. Such tools also provide the grounds on which decisions to maintain or adapt sentences should be made, supposedly restricting officers' reliance on their own arbitrage.

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While the nature of this new policy environment is well documented, its effects on public service delivery by frontline correctional workers still require some clarification. In a point of departure from top-down approaches of public administration and policy, Lipsky (2010) draws attention to the street-level bureaucrats, i.e., civil servants who hold a high degree of discretion and directly interact with citizens. Yet, surprisingly enough, public administration research adopting a street-level perspective on officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services is very scarce. Most SLB research focuses on social services (e.g., employment, care, or welfare: Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Keiser, 2010; Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007) and the lack of studies conducted in correctional settings remains paradoxical as Lipsky argues that the correction field provides a "highly refined example of street-level bureaucratic discretion" (Lipsky, 2010, p. 13).

Hence, it is key to adopt a street-level perspective on officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services. More specifically, the lack of SLB research on this topic and the evolution of the correctional policy environment do bring about several questions about the frontline practices of correctional workers. First, these uncertainties invite to look at how correctional officers' use of discretion, in particular in regard to the objectives of official regulations. Do their choices conform with regulations? Do they develop patterns of practice and behaviours that are in tune with rules and policy objectives or not? Little is known about how correctional workers use their discretion in this policy sector. Second, the SLB literature points that frontline workers implement coping mechanisms (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010) in response to the constraints and pressures they encounter at work. However, little is known about those mechanisms in prison and probation services. What are their symptoms? For example, do officers prioritize work with some offenders? In response to which constraints? But also, how do these adaptations affect the delivery of services to offenders? So far, there are limited answers to these questions. Third, just as New Public Management challenged established practices in street-level organizations (Brodkin, 2012; 2011), new penology is undermining the traditional work approaches and values shared by frontline correctional officers. This suggests that a profound readjustment between state and citizen agent narratives (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000) is under way at the frontlines of the correctional sector. This brings the following question: given the new policy environment, how do prison officers and POs articulate their state and citizen agency during public service delivery?

Using the PRISMA approach (Moher et al., 2009), the present chapter addresses these inquiries by adopting a street-level perspective to report a systematic review about officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services. The reviewed literature is rooted in public administration research and criminology, which is prolific on issues related to the correctional field. I adopt an SLB perspective to report how correctional officers' use their frontline discretion and cope in the reviewed studies. I also discuss what these practices uncover about how officers manage and articulate conflicting agency logics given the rise of new penology.

After two sections presenting the theoretical insights as well as the methods and scope of the review, I report the results. First, I address correctional officers' use of discretion before turning to their use of coping mechanisms. I also briefly discuss what these practices reveal about the struggle between officers' state and citizen-agency in a new policy environment. Finally, I conclude this chapter with a synthesis of the results and some considerations about the study of officer-offender interactions in the correctional sector

Section I – Dealing with conflicting agencies at the frontline

Strictly speaking, frontline officers' discretion refers to their power to make choices among possible courses of action when interacting with citizens and delivering public services (Lipsky, 2010; Davis, 1969). The concept of discretion is pivotal because it acknowledges that street-level bureaucrats use their judgements and interpret policies to respond to their clients' individual demands (Hupe & Hill, 2007). For this reason, discretionary decisions can influence policy implementation and thus shape policy "on the ground" (Brodkin, 2012, p. 943). To make sure citizens are treated equitably and according to policy decisions, frontline workers operate within a set of rules constraining their discretion. In that regard, first-line managers are considered as key regulators of frontline workers' discretion (Lipsky, 2010, p. 19). At the end of the day, policy on the ground results from a mix of political signals, managerial influence, and discretionary implementation by frontline workers (May & Winter, 2009).

This classical perspective on discretion is prevalent in the "state-agent narrative" of frontline work depicted by Maynard-Moody & Musheno (2012; 2003; 2000). The state-agent narrative is essentially about law abidance, i.e., frontline officers' use of discretion in accordance to their understanding of law, procedures and bureaucratic rules (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). It also emphasizes how self-interest may guide frontline workers' practices when trying to achieve policy goals, organizational objectives, or to improve work conditions. For instance, to reconcile organizational and job goals with daily work constraints, frontline workers may develop shortcuts, informal routines, and compromises commonly referred to as "coping mechanisms" (Lipsky, 2010). Various forms of coping mechanisms have been acknowledged so far (Tummers et al., 2015; Winter, 2003), such as routinization (frontline officers develop routines to make tasks manageable), creaming (they privilege the worthiest clients) or client control (they implement strategies to achieve client cooperation). Several constraints fostering coping mechanisms have also been highlighted, such as excessive workload (e.g., Brodkin, 2011), role conflicts (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), managerial styles (e.g., Walker & Gilson, 2004), red tape, but also limited competences. In other words, confronted with work constraints, frontline workers would establish priorities and routines motivated by the achievement of policy goal and/or by self-interest.

While the state-agent narrative could be prevalent in the literature (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and, often, encouraged by public managers and the administration (e.g., Tummers, 2017), many frontline officers would rather consider themselves as "citizen-agents" (de Witte et al., 2015; Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). According to the citizen-agent narrative, frontline officers rely on assessments regarding "the identities and moral character" of their citizen-clients (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003, p. 9). It draws on the idea that frontline workers make sense of their encounters and act based on moral judgements rather than on legal premises. Thus, according to the circumstances, frontline officers might decide not following the rules or relying on "pragmatic improvisation" (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; 2003) to provide what they consider as the most adequate answer to the needs of their citizen-clients. Even when confronted with work constraints, frontline officers would not necessarily opt for the most efficient or comfortable solutions but, rather, for those fitting to their perceptions of their clients' worth (e.g., Borrelli & Lindberg, 2018; Tummers, 2017).

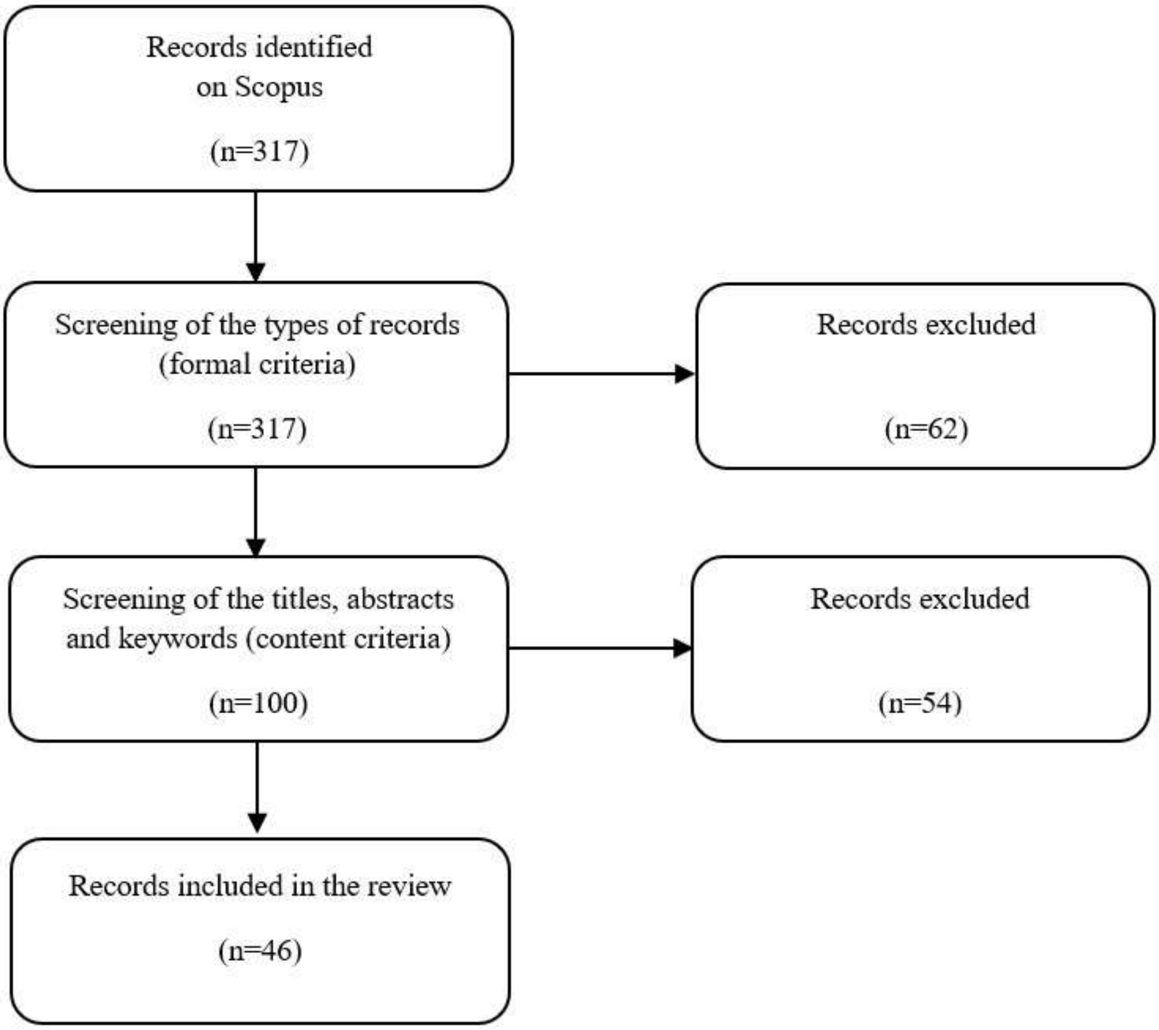
Narratives are powerful analytical devices that demonstrate that frontline workers act according to distinct – and sometimes conflicting – agency logics that are embedded in institutional structures and socio-cultural norms (Harrits & Møller, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012). In this literature review, we examine how frontline officers in prisons and probation services articulate state- and citizen-agency in making discretionary decisions regarding offenders and when implementing coping mechanisms.

Section II – Method and scope of the review

The systematic literature review presented in this article draws upon the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA: Moher et al., 2015; 2009). This approach ensuring the transparency and replicability of the reviewing process has been used for other recent systematic reviews in public administration (e.g., Moyson et al., 2018; Tummers et al., 2015). This section presents the search strategy of the review, the eligibility criteria of the articles, the main characteristics of the reviewed articles, and the variables of the analysis.

I searched for peer-reviewed English-speaking articles recorded on Scopus until the first of January 2018 in the "social sciences" subject area. Three clusters of keywords were used. The first set of keywords addresses the settings of interest: "prison", "probation" or "jail". The second set – "officer" or "civil servant" – and third set of keywords – "convicted" or "offender" – focus on the actors. Additional terms, such as "prison guard" or "detainee" did not significantly increase the number of results. Furthermore, keywords related to SLB research (e.g., "discretion" or "coping") were not used since most research about officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services have been conducted without adopting such a perspective. Articles were selected when at least one keyword from each cluster appeared in the title, abstract or keywords, resulting in a list of 317 articles. Formally, I selected articles published in journals of "public administration" and "criminology and penology" following the 2017 subject categories in the Web of Science citation index (Clarivate Analytics, 2017), shortening the list to 100 articles. Articles published in journals listed under the "social work & social policy" category were indirectly included since a significant overlap exists in the classification of journals listed in public administration, criminology and social work. Two of the authors independently screened the title and abstract of those articles. They selected those that actually look at officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services: either the comparison of two lists revealed an agreement on including/excluding the article or a decision was made together after discussion, which led to a consensual set of 46 articles – 40 empirical articles and six conceptual articles – that the first author reviewed. In order to foster internal consistency, the coding was executed intensively during a few weeks rather than split over several months. Although the search procedure primarily focused on articles written in English, I addressed the language bias (Moher et al., 2009) by repeating the search with the same parameters translated in French, Spanish and Danish, providing no record. That being said, this result does not necessarily indicate that research is inexistent in other languages since social science databases tend to be biased in favor of English-speaking publications (Albarillo, 2014). The search statistics and selection processes are summarized in the following flow diagram (figure 1). The 46 studies were analyzed using a coding grid.

Figure 1 – Flow diagram of the search strategy

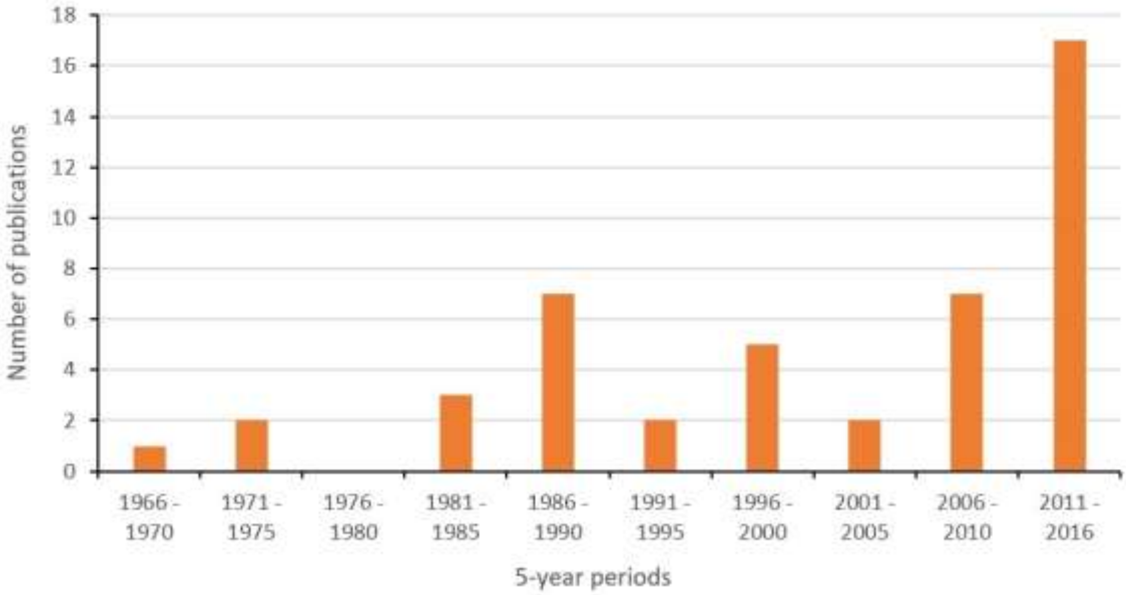


During this process, I gathered general information about the publications themselves. I also looked at the manifestations of discretion and at the nature and causes of correctional workers' coping mechanisms. As anticipated, many reviewed studies examined the tensions resulting from the punitive turn of contemporary correctional reforms. Considering that these tensions could tell a lot about conflicts of narratives at the frontline, I also coded them. The categories of these coding criteria were inductively designed throughout the analysis of the articles in order to highlight recurring patterns in the existing research. The outcomes of this coding are summarized in appendix 1. The results reported in the next section rely on these outcomes. In a short analysis, I also interpret how the reported practices of correctional officers (in terms of discretion and coping) fit with the defining traits of citizen and/or state-agency at the frontline.

Compared to criminological research, public administration research is very scarce in the reviewed articles. The most represented journal is the Journal of Criminal Justice (24%), followed by Criminal Justice and Behavior (11%), Crime & Delinquency (8.5%), Prison Journal (8.5%) and Social Policy & Administration (8.5%). Overall, the sample is composed of 42 studies in criminology and only four studies in public administration. Furthermore, only six studies directly refer to SLB research, all of them in criminological journals. In addition, SLB research is not central in the analytical framework of these studies. Rather, findings are related with SLB considerations at a general level. For instance, with respect to correctional officers' use of discretion (Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Persson & Svensson, 2012), to the normative implications and effects on policy implementation (Viglione et al., 2015; Schneider et al., 1996; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992), and to the use of coping mechanisms (Persson & Svensson, 2012; Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986).

There has been an ever-increasing interest in officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services: 23 (50%) of the reviewed studies were published between 2009 and 2016. However, figure 2 suggests that this increase did not remain constant. Most of the research on officer-offender interactions in prisons and probation services has been conducted in the United States (28, or 61% of the reviewed articles). This is not surprising, since the 1970s were marked by the rise of a "punishment imperative" (Clear and Frost, 2014) in the United States, which has resulted in mass incarceration and has drawn considerable scholarly and media attention. Nonetheless, some other countries are also involved in the production of research on this topic, especially the United Kingdom (eight articles) and Canada (five articles). It has to be noted that these results only account for the literature that was published in English. As discussed earlier, I acknowledge that other publications should exist in other languages but those are probably not referenced under the SCOPUS database.

Figure 2 – Number of publications over time



Most studies look at probation services (82.61%), rather than at prisons (13.04%) or at both types of agencies at the same time (4.35%). As far as populations are concerned, most studies collect data or discuss academic knowledge on officer-offender interactions based on officers' viewpoints (71.74%), rather than focusing on offenders (15.22%) or contrasting officers' and offenders' perceptions (13.04%). Overall, table 1 shows that existing research tends to focus on officers working in probation services.

Overall, quantitative methods are prevalent in the corpus: out of 40 empirical studies, 20 were fully quantitative, while only 11 did solely rely on qualitative methods. Nine articles did use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. Although quantitative articles appear predominant, interviews where used in almost half of the reviewed articles (18 articles in total). In comparison, questionnaire surveys, the most common quantitative method for data collection, were used in 19 articles. I acknowledge that the choice of methods may influence the way of reporting results in the studies. However, this issue should not hamper the analysis. On the contrary, quantitative and qualitative methods are complementary in the study of frontline work (Hupe & Hill, 2015). Further details about the methods used in the reviewed articles are available in appendix 2.

Table 1 – Cross tabulation of sectors and populations examined by the reviewed articles

	Probation	Prison	Both	% total
Officers	28	3	2	71.74%
Offenders	4	3	0	15.22%
Both	6	0	0	13.04%
% total	82.61%	13.04%	4.35%	

Section III – Results of the review

A – Discretion and frontline agency

Prison and probation officers have to make choices among several courses of actions when interacting with offenders (Irwin, 1990). While 37 (80.5%) studies acknowledge the conceptual relevance of discretion, only 24 (52%) of them actually examine the discretionary practices of officers. Officers' discretion is usually contrasted with the objectivity and formality of rules and procedures. In this respect, a pool of studies suggests that the lack of formal structuring of officers' decision processes may result in inconsistent judgements and unequal treatment of probationers (Persson & Svensson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Wolff et al., 2009; Benson, 1985; Cohen & Palmor, 1985) or prisoners (e.g., McIntyre et al., 1999). The implementation of adequate assessment and decision-making tools (Viglione et al., 2015; Baglivio et al., 2015, Bosker et al., 2013; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Ballucci, 2012; Bonta et al., 2011; Nash, 2011; Schneider et al., 1996) is often viewed as a possible contribution to such a structuring.

According to 13 (28 %) studies, correctional officers tend to focus on the social aspects of their work while digressing from established institutional objectives, such as risk management and public protection. This behavioral pattern was mostly observed among POs who put a particular emphasis on rehabilitation and social work at the expense of offender monitoring and control. For example, Whitehead and Lindquist (1992, p. 18) find that, although formal procedures in Alabama should encourage officers to "remain distant from offenders", POs are still particularly prone to favoring rehabilitation. Similarly, Digard (2014) notices that during the community supervision of sex offenders in England and Wales, officers give priority to their rehabilitative ideals and practices via motivational and transformational interventions. He notes that this approach is in contradiction with the current institutional focus on risk management, and public protection. Similar patterns are observed in prisons. Nielsen and Kolind (2016) report that the fuzzy identity of drug-dependent inmates' – halfway between client and offender – alters the perceptions and practices of Danish prison officers. Rather than maintaining a strict adherence to rules and non-fraternization, officers soften their views on punishment and promote a therapeutic, relaxed and respectful approach during interactions in the cell blocks (see also: Morash et al., 2016; Baglivio et al., 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Healy, 2012; Ballucci, 2012; Flory et al., 2006; Fulton et al., 1997; Clear et al., 1992; Waters, 1988; Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986). These studies reveal that prison and POs often act as citizen-agents, privileging their own approaches to frontline work over established procedures and bureaucratic rules. Their decisions appear to primarily rely on moral judgements of what is good – or what should work – for the citizen-clients (citizen-agency) rather than on a logic of law abidance (state-agency).

Twenty-five (54%) studies pinpoint the influence of new penology in recent policy orientations. Such studies also emphasize that correctional officers' professional values and beliefs are guided by a rehabilitative ideal that contrasts and conflicts with the new policy imperatives. POs, in particular, tend to share "common sets of values and principles" (Grant, 2015, p. 5) that emphasize transformative work, welfare, social justice and the rehabilitation of offenders. Most authors argue that their professional culture is historically embedded in a tradition of social work (e.g., Grant, 2015; Digard, 2014; Sparrow & McIvor, 2013; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Healy, 2012; Nash, 2011; Corrado et al., 2010; Gross, 1966;). As a consequence, many of the reviewed articles describe instances in which probation and prison officers are caught in a dilemma between their ideals and the institutional approach to risk, coercion, and punishment (e.g., Nash, 2011; Kemshall, 2000b; Whitehead, 1987).

Consequently, tensions between narratives are quite apparent in frontline officers' practice of discretion. Accounts of resistance to new institutional imperatives are numerous: twenty-eight (61%) of the reviewed studies provide evidence about such dynamics. For instance, Persson and Svensson (2012, p. 187) depict officers discarding institutional tools in favor of their "professional ideology" to assess risks. Similarly, Grant (2015, p. 10) evokes "deeply inculcated layers of ethical or moral schemata" that help officers resisting external punitive discourses. Digard (2014) notices that the current emphasis on risk management conflicts with officers' beliefs in probationers' capacities to change. But despite injunctions, some officers still engage in transformative work with offenders, emphasizing trust, self-esteem and stimulating changes in behavior. These acts of resistance often transcend the intentions of policies and procedures, sometimes decreasing the diversity in officers' attitudes toward offenders as much as rules can do (Corrado et al., 2010). In other words, correctional officers are deeply attached to their professional values and ethos which provide a normative framework regarding the ideal course of action to adopt with offenders. As a result, officers are likely to act as citizen-agents and resist new punitive injunctions according to their shared moral principles.

Other articles provide similar insights when scrutinizing correctional officers' implementation of new administrative instruments, such as risks and needs assessment tools. Based on the analysis of 1320 pre-sentence reports, Persson and Svensson (2012) reveal that in 2010 only 4.4 percent of Swedish POs' reports were based standardized tools. In fact, POs tend to rely on impressions and pragmatism when making a judgment rather than on the tools and procedures at their disposal (Miller et al., 2015). As a result, their assessments focus on their own evaluation of individual offenders' specific needs, rather than on factors leading to repeated offenses (Viglione et al., 2015). These results are consistent with the findings of four other studies on this topic (Grant, 2015; Bosker et al., 2013; Ballucci, 2012; Schneider et al., 1996) and further support the idea that POs, in particular, tend to make judgements and decisions according to a citizen-agency logic.

That being said, eight studies provide evidence that officers' use of discretion sometimes results in unfairness, discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of offenders' characteristics. Such practices often derivate from self-interest or a willingness to achieve rule enforcements at all costs. For instance, Benson (1985) demonstrates that POs prefer to focus on cases of "lower class criminality". Their uninvested supervision of white-collar offenders often results from practical reasons since officers feel ill-prepared to supervise their "social equals or betters" (Benson, 1985, p. 435-436). Peterson-Badali and Koegl (2002) reveal that some prison officers turn a blind eye – or even exacerbate existing tensions among juvenile offenders – to maintain control over a secure custody institution in Ontario, Canada. Other studies discuss discriminatory treatments based on race (e.g., Wolff et al., 2009; Waters, 1988; Cohen & Palmor, 1985) or health status (McIntyre et al., 1999). The effect of disrespectful treatments on offenders' attitudes and behaviors was less frequently examined. However, Reisig and Mesko (2009) demonstrate that prisoners who evaluate prisons officers as procedurally just are less likely to report misconducts or rule violations.

Overall, the reviewed studies reveal systematic patterns rather than isolated acts of discretion transcending policy and procedures. Consistent with the citizen-agent narrative of frontline work, officers' confidence in discretion seems to be rooted in "the assumption that positive outcomes will be achieved" (Grant, 2015, p. 10) for the offenders. This assumption is deeply embedded in officers' professional norms and values which in turn provide a powerful moral justification to resist new punitive injunctions. That being said, while the state-agency logic does not appear to be prevalent when scrutinizing officers' use of discretion, a limited number of studies still provide evidence of unfairness, discrimination, or preferential treatment based on self-interest and the achievement of organizational goals (state-agency).

B – Coping mechanisms and frontline agency

Coping mechanisms allow public officials to carry their job despite work constraints. Twenty-six (56%) studies provide indications about these mechanisms in prisons and probation services. In this section, I look at routinizing, control and creaming, before turning to the main types of constraints and agency logics they correspond to.

First, correctional officers develop routines to alleviate the burden induced by administrative tools and instruments. When POs implement risks and needs assessment tools, they rarely rely on their results when making decisions because of the additional procedures that are involved (Viglione et al., 2015). Similarly, Schneider et al. (1996, p. 119) note that some POs do not accurately record offenders' socio-economic issues while others avoid reporting minor rule violations (Clear et al., 1992) to lessen workloads and limit additional administrative paperwork (see also: Grant, 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Kemshall, 1997; Martin et al., 1972). In some instances, routinizing also refers to "extra precautions" (Denney & O'Beirne, 2003, p. 59) when dealing with probationers. Some will use risk-reducing strategies during interactions or delayed appointments to adequately prepare themselves.

Second, prison officers rely on control mechanisms to achieve work requirements, especially to maintain social order. Peterson-Badali and Koegl (2002) note that peer violence among juvenile offenders is allowed, and sometimes induced, by prison staff to achieve order maintenance. To steer probationers away from day-to-day crime opportunities, some POs spontaneously develop informal and indirect forms of control, such as promoting organized and constructive activities (Miller et al., 2015). These examples are consistent with other, similar depictions of control strategies in the literature (Ahlin et al., 2016; Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Kerbs et al., 2009; Steiner et al., 2012; Lazzaretto-Green et al., 2011).

Third, correctional officers rely on coping to prioritize the supervision of some offenders to the detriment of others. Prioritization is used to meet pressing institutional demands. For example, Ahlin et al. (2016) find that U.S. POs preferably rely on kiosk reporting with compliant probationers, thus facilitating workload transfer to higher-risk offenders who require more time and effort (Ahlin et al., 2016, pp. 703-704). Stewart and Smith (1987) find that POs working in a custodial environment struggle at overcoming the contradiction with their probationary objectives. Being constrained by a lack of resources, officers prefer spending their time and energy with other supervisees. Benson (1985), Digard (2014) and Steiner et al. (2012) report other instances of similar creaming strategies.

Such coping mechanisms mainly result from organizational work constraints or the lack of personal resources: 24 out of 46 studies (52%) provide indications about those factors. On the one hand, organizational work constraints mainly refer to instances in which officers develop strategies to cope with work overload. POs' caseloads are a recurring concern in the literature (Ahlin et al., 2016; Steiner et al., 2012; Payne & DeMichele, 2010; Schneider et al., 1996; Clear et al., 1992; Stewart & Smith, 1987; Lindquist & Whitead, 1986). For example, heavy caseloads and reduced staff lead POs to rely on external judiciary assistance rather than on their own sanctioning power (Kerbs et al., 2009). In the custodial context, the number of prisoners also pushes officers to rely on control strategies to maintain order in a facility (Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Wolff et al., 2009; Peterson-Badali & Koegl, 2002). Other constraints can result from the relationships between first-line managers and frontline officers. For example, Denney and O'Beirne (2003) report the lack of coordination and consistency in managerial responses to offenders' acts of violence on frontline officers. Officers may also experience a lack – or inadequacy – of organizational support in their daily work activities (Schneider et al., 1996; Rosecrance, 1988; Whitehead, 1987; Martin et al., 1972). Organizational constraints seem to provide a breeding ground for coping practices that are anchored in a logic of rule abidance. When pressured by heavy workloads, for instance, correctional officers try to maintain a minimal degree of operating efficiency to meet organizational goals. In doing so, they tend to act as state-agents: prioritizing, routinizing, and controlling offenders. That being said, citizen and state-agency logics can also converge (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016): prioritization, for instance, can simultaneously derive from a moral drive (citizen-agent) but also from a pragmatic need to improve caseload management (state-agent).

On the other hand, coping mechanisms also result from inadequate personal skills or knowledge, such as a misunderstanding or a defiance towards administrative tools and rules. For example, Viglione et al. (2015) show that POs struggle with the implementation of RNA tools because they do not understand their purpose and show little trust in the information obtained through their implementation (see also: Grant, 2015; Digard, 2014; Ballucci, 2012; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Kemshall, 1997). A lack of appropriate skills and knowledge can also lead to prioritization (e.g., Benson, 1985). For example, McIntyre et al. (1999) shows that officers with lower levels of education and knowledge about HIV consider themselves at higher risk when around HIV-infected prisoners. This leads to the implementation of segregating measures against these prisoners. When lacking the appropriate knowledge, or facing rules and procedures that contradict professional ideals, correctional officers tend to cope in accordance to their moral judgements. Simply put, individual constraints lead correctional officers to cope according to a citizen-agency logic.

Overall, correctional officers develop routines to make their job easier, but also to make it compatible with their professional ideals. They rely on extra control mechanisms, not only to maintain social order in prisons, but also to facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders. They prioritize some offenders over others, not only to meet institutional demands, but also to help the offenders who need it the most. In other words, coping practices demonstrate that correctional officers are simultaneously state-agents and citizen-agents. Officers resist the new punishment imperatives using their citizen-agency while simultaneously retaining a loyalty to core organizational goals such as order in prisons facilities or access to individualized services.

Conclusion of the second chapter

A – Discretion, coping, and agency logics at the frontlines of the correctional sector

In the correctional sector, street-level bureaucrats and offenders regularly interact with a decisive influence of the former on public service provision to the latter. Paradoxically, prisons and probation services have received little attention from SLB researchers so far. Most studies about officer-offender interactions have been produced by criminology and penology research, without adopting a street-level perspective. Following the PRISMA approach (Moher et al., 2015; 2009), this chapter adopted such a perspective to review 46 articles about officer-officer interactions in prisons and probation services. In doing so, the review imported crucial research evidence from criminological research in public administration research about frontline work. How do correctional workers use their discretion discretionary practices when interacting with offenders? Which coping mechanisms do they implement during public service delivery? In response to which constraints? I also looked at how correctional officers articulate conflicting agency logics during the delivery of public services to their citizen-clients (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). More precisely, I examined what officers' coping practices and use of discretion would tell about the exercise of citizen and state-agency in an increasingly punitive policy context.

First, probation and prison officers rely on their discretionary power when confronted to situations that call for an interpretation of the policy rules and tools and, or when a specific response to individual circumstances is needed (e.g. sex offenders, drug addicts, juvenile offenders, etc.). A common aspect stressed by the review is that POs tend to avoid using some instruments, especially risk assessment tools, to make their decisions regarding offenders. The reviewed studies suggest the existence of at least three patterns of *adaptive* policy implementation that manifest in systematic ways: First, a focus on rehabilitation over punitiveness and control (especially among POs); Second, differential treatments based on offender's characteristics (especially among prison officers); Third, and an inadequate implementation of administrative tools (especially risk assessment tools). While all these patterns often depart from prescribed implementation, their impacts on policy on the ground, and on citizens-offenders are very different from each other.

Second, the review provides evidence of coping mechanisms are consistent with existing SLB depictions of coping mechanisms in other sectors. Correctional officers rely on coping mechanisms when confronted with organizational constraints, such as excessive caseloads. This leads to practices such as routinizing which sometimes involve *letting slide* supervisees' minor rule violations in order to lessen workload. Similarly, creaming involves prioritizing work with some offenders in order to achieve a better caseload management. Control strategies can also help officers to meet specific job requirements, such as maintaining social order (in prisons) or limit reoffense. The review suggests that the perception of managerial support by correctional officers may sometimes lead to coping when officers do not feel properly supported. This hint local managers' influence on frontline officials' discretion and professionalism (Evans, 2011). A lack of personal resources, such as competences and trainings, also push prison and probation officers to rely on coping mechanisms. In particular, many studies reviewed in the present article suggest that frontline officer's ethos often privilege social work whereas institutions typically emphasize offender control and risk management. This tension can lead to conscious or unconscious practices of resistance and coping, such as overriding risk assessment tools or refusing to sanction a minor violation on the grounds of rehabilitation ideals. This speaks to the SLB literature that pinpoints role conflicts caused by dissonances between frontline officer's professional culture and the objectives of their institution. Such conflicts exert an influence on officers' decisions and practices (e.g., Tummers, 2012; Meyers & Vorsanger, 2007; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; Sandfort, 2000).

Third, an obvious finding of this review is that officers in prisons and probation services are simultaneously citizen and state-agents. Consistent with existing SLB research (e.g., de Witte et al., 2015; Tummers & Rocco, 2015; Durose, 2011), frontline practices in prisons and probation services reveal that correctional workers often act as citizen-agents during the implementation of policy measures and administrative instruments. The review also highlights many instances of officers who cope in the hopes of improving work conditions or meting organizational demands (state-agency). To that regard, Clear et al. (1992) provide a powerful illustration of POs who avoid reporting supervisees' minor rule violations to improve overall caseload management (by evading unessential administrative tasks). Citizen and state agency are not irreconcilable (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and I found evidence that citizen and state-agency can indeed converge when organizational responsibilities and moral preferences are aligned (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; McIntyre et al., 1999).

The review particularly stresses how prison and probation officers' rehabilitative ideals conflict with contemporary correctional reforms (e.g., Nielsen & Kolind, 2016; Sparrow & McIvor, 2013; Healy, 2012). New institutional approaches to risk, public protection, and risk management brought new, conflicting role expectations on the shoulders of correctional officers. Yet, rather than simply accepting these new punishment imperatives, correctional officers tend to resist and act as citizen-agents. They make discretionary choices based on assumptions derived from their professional norms and values (e.g., Grant, 2015; Digard, 2014) and cope as a result of their defiance towards new tools and procedures (e.g., Viglione et al., 2015; Ballucci, 2012). However, at the same time, correctional officers still act as state-agents to fulfill core organizational goals that do not necessarily contradict their own professional ideals, such as minimal order maintenance in prisons or the provision of individualized supervisions to probationers. Consequently, it can be argued that the new policy environment drives correctional officers (POs in particular) to practice an increasingly elaborate and fragile articulation between state and citizen-agency at the frontline. As new tools and guidelines are progressively brought to the frontline, it is also getting increasingly difficult for correctional officers to act according to their professional ethos without bending or breaking rules.

B – Empirical, methodological, and practical considerations

Empirically speaking, the studies reviewed in this article have been conducted between 1966 and 2016. While 26 (56%) of them are post-2000, no distinction was made between old and recent results, when reviewing them. The evolution of correctional systems supposes some prudence when interpreting some of the oldest research results with contemporary lenses. However, no important differences were noted between old and recent studies regarding the theoretical findings reported in this review, which suggests that they are valid. Similarly, a majority (74%) of the studies reported in this review have been conducted in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. However, regulations, cultures, and research vary across countries. More specifically, the correctional models of Anglo-Saxon countries, Scandinavian countries and continental Europe may be distinguished (Snacken, 2010, p. 276). Anglo-Saxon criminological literature has focused on the rise of managerialism and risk-based penal strategies (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). This is particularly striking in the United States (Clear & Frost, 2014). However, to date, the correctional approach of some other countries remains relatively unique.

On the methodological level, quantitative methods (63%) predominate over qualitative approaches (43,5%) in the reviewed studies. Consistent with the main research methods used in criminological research (Kleck et al., 2006), questionnaire-based surveys and semi-structured interviews are the two main tools of data collection. Analyses of documents, files and records are also pragmatic responses to the challenge of accessing data in prisons and probation services. With some exceptions, the reviewed studies using both qualitative and quantitative methods are very rare.

Practically speaking, correctional officers have to develop professional competences and knowledge to implement policies and guidelines in complex situations. SLB research in general, attaches an overall "confidence in human judgment and discretion" (Schneider et al. 1996, p. 110). Such confidence recognizes various beneficial outcomes of frontline workers' discretion, such as their adaptation to the specific needs of a client. Surprisingly, criminological research seems more suspicious with respect to officers' discretion. The main concerns relate to the quality of practice (in terms of supervision, control, and rehabilitation) and the consistency of judgement (fairness). At the same time, this review pinpoints correctional officers' tendency to prioritize social work over punishment and control. Hence, there are good reasons to believe that beneficial impacts of frontline discretion do also exist in the correctional sector.

C – Final thoughts on officer-offender interactions

These results still beg the question: How to characterize correctional officers' interaction with offenders? In other words, how to portray their use their discretion and their reliance on coping mechanisms when interacting with offenders during public service delivery? To that regard, an inspiring insight is provided by Tummers et al.'s (2015) typology of families of coping. In a systematic literature review on coping, the authors identified three main families of coping according to the way frontline workers adapt their behaviors to clients when coping during public service delivery. The authors consider how different styles of coping (creaming, rationing, routinizing, etc.) should be associated to distinct families of coping (also see: Tummers & Rocco, 2015). First, the authors argue that frontline workers can *move towards* citizens. This first category describes instances in which frontline workers cope by adjusting their actions to citizens' benefit. In this review, this is for instance illustrated by the depictions of POs disregarding offender monitoring and control procedures to privilege their own views on support and rehabilitation (e.g., Grant, 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012). Second, the authors argue that street-level bureaucrats can *move away* from citizens, thus referring to cases when frontline workers take steps to avoid any meaningful interactions with them. In this case, this would for instance designate the instances in which POs avoid reporting some minor issues to the authorities in order to avoid a surplus of paperwork (e.g., Schneider et al., 1996; Clear et al., 1992). Finally, frontline workers are also susceptible to *move against* citizens when they deliberately use intransigence, confrontation, or hostility with the clients. Examples of such practices where uncovered in the carceral context: for instance, when prison officers deploy segregating measures against HIV-positive prisoners (McIntyre et al., 1999) due to their lack of knowledge about the illness and the appropriate measures to take.

Expanding on this typology, it would arguably be possible to apply a similar logic to frontline workers’ choices and decisions regarding citizens in general (not only when coping). Considering that frontline workers’ choice on a given course of action simply reflects their use of discretion, it is possible to distinguish three main forms of discretion use (or choices on a course of action) regarding citizens. First, frontline workers can choose *benevolent* courses of action, whereby they deploy their efforts and resources in ways that benefit citizens. This would not only include cases when frontline workers cope by moving *towards* citizens, but it would generally designate instances in which they act in a positive and well-intentioned way towards citizens. Second, frontline workers can opt for *uninvested* courses of action, whereby they avoid investing meaningful efforts into the delivery of services to the citizens. In those cases, frontline workers simply use their discretion in pragmatic ways, allowing them to carry their tasks as required by instructions but without spending too much time and efforts with a citizen. Third, frontline workers can choose *confrontational* courses of action, whereby they deliberately oppose and confront citizens through their actions.

Chapter 3 – Analytical framework and context of the research

Introduction

The systematic literature review presented in the previous chapter shows that POs implement coping mechanisms (Lipsky, 2010) in order to handle constraints. Such constraints include high workloads and dilemmas between officers' social work ethos and the institutional guidelines that increasingly focus on offender control and monitoring. As a result, they break rules, routinize, and prioritize work with some probationers to the detriment of others. POs also make various uses of their discretion, but they often seem to privilege their own rehabilitative values and principles over offender control and monitoring.

That being said, there is still room for an empirical study using an SLB approach to explore officer-offender interactions in probation services. Although the systematic review did highlight some key aspects of POs' ways of coping and use of discretion, most of the reviewed studies came from criminology research and did not directly address officer-offender interactions from a PA perspective. The review provided limited evidence about POs' trustworthiness assessments of offenders and how it may affect their own use of discretion. This speaks to a more general observation, that is, there are a limited number of PA studies addressing public officials' trust towards citizens. Although public officials' trust has seen increasing interest in the SLB literature, few studies have built upon the conceptual and theoretical insights brought by the trust literature. Moreover, most of the reviewed studies originated from certain countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. This observation points to an underrepresentation of smaller, and perhaps atypical, correctional contexts that would bring a complementary perspective to the question of officer-offender interaction in probation services.

This research proposes to address these issues with an analysis of the nature of POs' frontline practices and with an examination of the individual and organizational factors involved in such practices. Two different yet complementary approaches will be mobilized to determine how and why POs privilege certain courses of action when interacting with probationers in the course of public service delivery. In using these approaches, I propose taking stock of both the SLB literature – more specifically on coping – and of the theoretical and conceptual insights provided by the literature on organizational trust.

The first section of this chapter depicts the insights into frontline workers' trust towards citizens provided by the literature on organizational trust. I also present the research question and the articulation between the two empirical studies of this research. The second section presents the context of the research: the Belgian Houses of justice.

Section I – Research question and analytical framework

The way frontline workers handle their interactions with citizens during public service delivery has always been a central point of attention in the SLB literature (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010). Not only do street-level bureaucrats cope during public service delivery (Tummers et al., 2015), but they also adapt their actions and use their discretion based on assessments of clients' key characteristics (e.g., Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Scott, 1997).

Frontline workers tend to rely on situational judgments based on perceptions of their client's worth (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000; Maynard-Moody & Leland, 2000) or, more precisely, their perceptions of clients' trustworthiness (Yang, 2005). However, surprisingly, only limited attempts have been made to account for discretion and coping with trustworthiness assessments, i.e., between the SLB literature and the trust literature. In this first section, I examine this *missing link*. First, I present some key conceptual insights provided by the trust literature before tackling how frontline workers' perceptions of their clients' trustworthiness are addressed in the SLB literature.

A – Trust and trustworthiness

The conceptualization of trust is complicated since there has often been confusion with "its antecedents and outcomes" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 709). When studying trust, two parties are generally considered: the trusting party (trustor) and the party to be trusted (trustee). Trust has often been studied in the context of organizational and regulatory relations. Within organizations, the trustee often designates an employee working with his supervisor (trustor) (e.g., Weibel & Six, 2013). The trustee can also designate a public institution with which citizens (trustors) are interacting, for instance, the courts and the police (e.g., Tyler & Huo, 2002) or the tax authorities (e.g., Murphy, 2004). Trust is usually defined (Six, 2005) as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon the positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). It consists of a trustor's intention to allow personal vulnerability or willingness to take a risk and be vulnerable (Mayer et al., 1995).

Trust, as the willingness to take a risk, depends on the trustor's assessment of a trustee's trustworthiness. Both trust and the perception of the trustee's trustworthiness are usually considered "perceptual/attitudinal variables" (Schoorman et al., 2016, p. 82). The trustor's perceptions of trustworthiness are based on an assessment of the trustee's key characteristics. The literature usually points to several characteristics of the trustee: his ability, his benevolence, and his integrity (Schoorman et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995). Ability refers to the perceptions of the trustee's aptitudes, skills and competences associated with a specific domain or task. Benevolence designates the extent to which the trustee is "believed to want to do good to the trustor" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 718). Integrity refers to the perceptions of the trustee's adherence to principles that are deemed acceptable by the trustor. Recent studies tend to refer to the trustee's personalized goodwill instead of his benevolence and integrity separately (e.g., Li, 2007; Levin & Cross, 2004; Das & Teng, 2001; Davensport et al., 1998).

Trust also has some antecedents that are linked to the characteristics of the trustor. For instance, Mayer et al. (1995) pinpoint the role of trustors' "propensity to trust" (p. 716) in fostering a willingness to trust other people in general. Propensity to trust is defined as generalized expectations about other people's trustworthiness (Rotter, 1971). The higher this propensity, the higher the willingness to take risks. Some of the trustor's demographic factors also seem to affect trust. For instance, strong evidence shows that trust tends to increase with age (e.g., Li & Fung, 2013; Castle et al., 2012; Sutter & Kocher, 2007). Similarly, several studies uncovered gender-based differences, indicating that male individuals generally exhibit more trust than female individuals (e.g., Dittrich, 2015; Buchan et al., 2008). Studies have also shown that trust and propensity to trust vary depending on the cultural background of individuals (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; 1980).

A willingness or an intention to take a risk does not necessarily translate into action. Hence, there is often a differentiation between a trustor's *willingness to take a risk/to be vulnerable* (trust) and the actual *risk taking in the relationship* (the behavioral manifestation of trust) (Mayer et al., 1995). This approach is consistent with Fishbein and Ajzen's (2011) theory of reasoned action framework in that it intends to make a clear distinction between attitudes, behavioral intentions, and actual behaviors towards trustees.

B – Uncertainties about frontline workers' reliance on trustworthiness assessments

Many SLB studies have demonstrated the relevance of client assessments in frontline workers' judgments and decisions (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Epp et al., 2014; Harrits & Møller, 2014). When street-level bureaucrats opt for a given course of action with a client, they inform their choice with an assessment of their client's key characteristics (e.g., Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Scott, 1997). However, despite the interest in frontline workers' assessments of clients, few SLB studies have approached this issue in light of conceptual and theoretical insights brought by the trust literature. Public officials' trust towards citizens is often considered a *missing link* in the PA literature (Yang, 2005), and the trust literature itself mostly focuses on citizens' trust towards public officials rather than on public officials' trust towards citizens (Van Craen, 2016).

Although research is relatively sparse, trust and trustworthiness assessments have been successfully mobilized to explain some decisions following citizen-official encounters. For instance, Yang (2005) shows that public administrators' propensity to trust and their perceptions of citizens' trustworthiness are predictors of proactive involvement efforts with citizens. Raaphorst and Groeneveld (2018) conclude that Dutch tax officials tend to assess various aspects of entrepreneurs' trustworthiness (their intentions and competences) to inform their decisions on firm auditions or on agreements or fines. Similarly, some citizens' trustworthiness cues may lead to indirect forms of stereotyping by public officials (Raaphorst et al., 2018). Perceptions of citizens' status (a characteristic that is associated with competence) seemingly affect the standards used by officials to evaluate clients. Growing interest is now devoted to looking not only at the trustworthiness characteristics of clients but also at how officers interpret and make sense of this information according to different interpretative frames (Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2018). Overall, the existing studies suggest that perceptions of clients' trustworthiness can affect the pattern of practice that frontline workers privilege when interacting with them. Given the current knowledge about frontline workers' trust towards citizens, it is thus safe to assume that frontline workers do rely, at least partially, on their assessments of clients' trustworthiness to privilege a given course of action with them.

That being said, there is still some uncertainty about how frontline workers perceive, interpret, and then rely on their perceptions of clients' trustworthiness. Assuming that a client is objectively trustworthy (in terms of ability, benevolence, and integrity), little is known about how other factors may affect frontline workers' reliance on perceptions of clients' trustworthiness. For instance, how do organizational and individual factors affect the importance street-level bureaucrats give to their assessments of clients' trustworthiness when they are making specific choices on the frontline? Are some frontline workers susceptible to giving more importance to their trustworthiness assessments due to their personal characteristics or the work environment in which they operate? Individual factors might be rooted in personal values and preferences (Hupe & Buffat, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), such as role perceptions (e.g., Loyens et al, 2019), or personal traits, such as a general propensity to trust (e.g., Mayer et al., 1995; Rotter, 1971). Frontline workers' demographic characteristics, such as age, gender and cultural background, might also play a role. Some clues suggest that trust might be affected by contextual factors (Moyson et al., 2016; Van de Walle & Lahat, 2012). Do organizational factors, such as workloads (Baviskar, 2018; Winter, 2002) and the endorsement received from managers (Evans, 2016a), also affect frontline workers' trustworthiness assessments? Overall, how trustworthiness assessments of citizen-clients influence frontline officers' decisions and how much individual and organizational factors account for these assessments remain uncertain, theoretically speaking.

C – The need for more PA research on officer-offender interactions in probation services

To date, most studies on the topic of officer-offender interactions in probation services have been conducted in penology and criminology without adopting a street-level perspective. This comes as a surprise since Lipsky (2010) argues that frontline workers operating in this sector do provide some of the "most highly refined example of street-level bureaucratic discretion" (Lipsky, 2010, p. 13). In the second chapter, I implemented a systematic literature review that adopted an SLB perspective on these studies. The review revealed that POs use coping mechanisms in act in reaction to a series of individual and organizational constraints, such as excessive caseloads, a lack of knowledge, and role conflicts. For instance, some POs break the rules by not implementing the recommended supervision tools and procedures (such as RNA tools) because they are uncertain about their usefulness and reliability (e.g., Viglione, 2015; Digard, 2014). Other POs devise strategies to achieve better management of caseloads by reducing their involvement with some offenders while prioritizing work with others (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; Steiner et al., 2012). POs also make various uses of their discretion with offenders, but generally, their choices are deeply rooted in their values and principles regarding their role towards the offenders and "the assumption that positive outcomes will be achieved" (Grant, 2015, p. 10). POs seem to favor the social aspects of their work over the control and punishment imperatives (e.g., Healy, 2012; Persson & Svensson, 2012).

However, the results of this systematic review should be taken with a grain of salt. First, as mentioned, the reviewed studies did not directly address the interactions between officers and their supervisees from a public administration perspective. Although the review did pinpoint POs' tendency to use their discretion to the advantage of their supervisees, such a result should be empirically tested using an SLB perspective. In other words, there is still a need for a proper empirical study using an SLB approach in probation services. Not only would such research add to PA research by contributing knowledge about a relatively new group of frontline officers, but it would also provide complementary indications to practitioners in the judicial sector (Portillo & Rudes, 2014).

Second, most of the studies reported in the review were conducted in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, while many other contexts are understudied. However, correctional approaches vary across countries (Snacken, 2010, p. 276), and although many Anglo-Saxon countries experienced an early shift towards managerialism and risk-based penal strategies in the 1980s, this was not necessarily the case in other contexts (e.g., Clear & Frost, 2014; Snacken, 2010; Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). For instance, the Belgian probation system has experienced a relatively late managerialization process, and it is still debated whether there has been a shift towards punitiveness. It is argued that probation work is still mostly driven by a "fit-for-needs-based approach" that requires high levels of discretion, which contrasts with many other contexts (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010, p. 324).

Third, the systematic literature review provides limited information about POs' perceptions of the trustworthiness of their supervisees and how these perceptions influence their choice on a course of action with offenders. POs' preferred course of action with an offender may vary according to their assessment of the trustworthiness of supervisees. An officer may choose to avoid any meaningful interactions by, for instance, limiting the duration and the frequency of meetings, because he does not consider the offender to be trustworthy. Alternatively, another officer may choose to disregard the trustworthiness cues of supervisees when making decisions because of his own personal preferences or the nature of his work environment.

Overall, the systematic literature review stresses that there is a need for more PA research on officer-offender interactions in probation services, especially in smaller and less studied contexts. Furthermore, little information was uncovered about POs' perceptions about the trustworthiness of their supervisees and how it affects their practices. This hints at another, more general, limitation in the literature: despite growing interest in the matter, few studies effectively brought together the trust literature and the SLB literature to look at frontline workers' interactions with citizens. From a theoretical standpoint, it is still uncertain how individual and organizational determinants affect frontline workers' assessment of citizen-client's trustworthiness and the importance they give to these assessments when making decisions.

D – Research question and analytical framework: two studies to fill the gaps

How do probation officers interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why?

To address this research question, the present dissertation proposes an exploration of the nature of frontline practices in probation systems as well as an examination of individual and organizational factors involved in such practices. In this research, I mobilize two different yet complementary approaches to identify how and why POs privilege certain courses of action when interacting with clients in the course of public service delivery. First, taking stock of the SLB literature on coping, I examine how POs adapt the delivery of services to probationers when exposed to daily work constraints. Second, based on the theoretical and conceptual insights provided by the literature on organizational trust, I analyze how individual and organizational factors affect the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a given course of action with offenders.

1 – First empirical study: how do POs cope during public service delivery?

In a first empirical study, I examine how POs interact and deliver public services to their supervisees by looking at how they cope during public service delivery. In doing so, this study relies on a classical SLB approach of frontline work, focusing on the dilemmas experienced by POs during public service delivery. To analyze the collected data, I implement a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of interviews conducted with frontline officers.

I examine how officers deal with individual and organizational constraints using the classical ideal types of coping described in the literature (Lipsky, 2010) and how it affects the way they deliver services to citizens. For instance, I look at how officers ration their services (e.g., Van loon & Jakobsen, 2018; Baviskar & Winter, 2017) and how they cherry-pick and prioritize clients (e.g., Vedung, 2015; Smith & Donovan, 2003) in response to specific individual and organizational constraints. In particular, I look at how workloads and time shortages might push POs to implement some of these adaptations (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Brodkin, 2011). I also explore how managerialism affects POs' coping practices (Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Brodkin, 2011). On the individual level, I explore how role conflicts (e.g., Tummers et al., 2012; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and the perceived meaningfulness of work instructions (Bekkers et al, 2013; Tummers, 2011) might affect POs' use of coping mechanisms during public service delivery.

Ultimately, I distinguish the main patterns of practice when officers interact with offenders. Are POs benevolent in their frontline practices with offenders? Are they uninvested, or confrontational? Using Tummers et al.'s (2015) typology of coping to assess how POs adjust their behaviors towards offenders when delivering public services, I identify officers' most salient pattern of frontline practice when dealing with their supervisees (given the organizational and individual factors to which they are exposed).

2 – Second empirical study: the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness

In a second study, I narrow my attention to the most salient result of the previous study (i.e., that POs tend, in fact, to be benevolent towards their supervisees). Building on the trust literature, I explore POs' reliance on their perceptions of supervisees' trustworthiness when making decisions. More precisely, this study tries to determine how some individual and organizational factors affect the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action with offenders. To that end, a two-step SEM (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) is applied to data collected via a survey questionnaire[11]. On the organizational level, I examine how workloads (Baviskar, 2018; Winter, 2002) and the endorsement received from managers (Evans, 2016a; 2016b) affect the importance POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. I also examine the effects of officers' role perception (Tummers et al., 2012) and general propensity to trust (Yang, 2006) on the importance POs give to their assessments of probationers' trustworthiness.

[11] The dependent variable – i.e., the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments (when opting for a benevolent course of action) – and the independent variables are measured with this questionnaire. The independent variables include POs' propensity to trust, role perceptions, perceived workloads, and managerial support. Controls such as POs' age, gender, language, and educational level were also measured.

Thus, this study bridges two fields of the literature: the SLB literature and the literature on organizational trust. Although there is some evidence that frontline workers rely on their perceptions of clients' trustworthiness to make their decisions (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005), little is known about the factors that may positively or negatively affect the importance they give to these assessments when making choices regarding their clients. Studying the amount of importance POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness is not only meaningful from a theoretical standpoint but also significant from a practical perspective. On the one hand, an officer who gives too much value to his trustworthiness assessments might end up ignoring some rules and procedures. On the other hand, an officer who disregards offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a given course of action might lack flexibility in his supervisory approach with offenders.

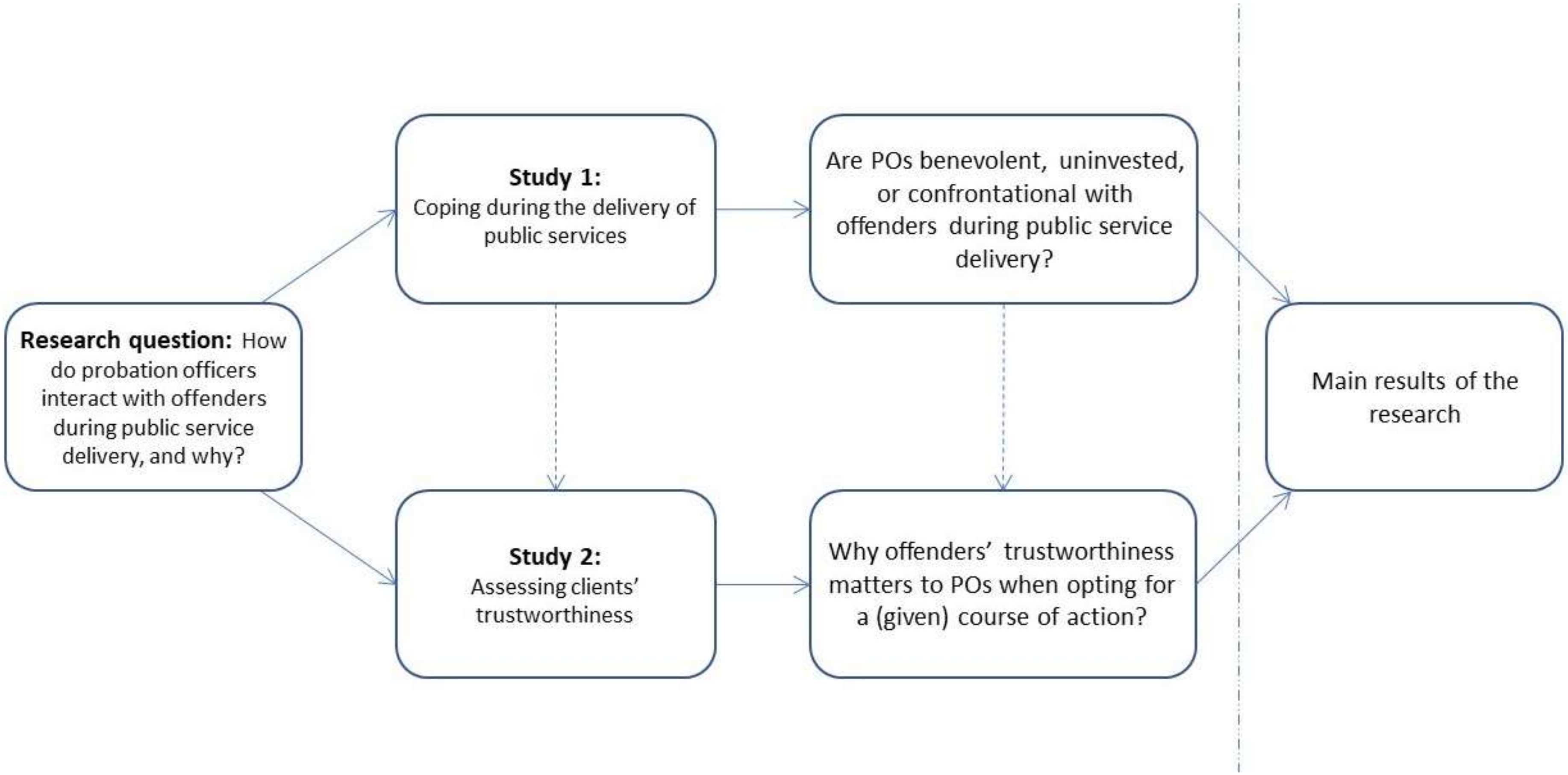
3 – Bringing the two studies together

The first and second studies address different yet related aspects of the research question. The first study tackles POs' interactions with offenders via an analysis of their coping practices. The second study accounts for the benevolence of these practices through the importance given by POs to their assessment of supervisees' trustworthiness.

Not only do these two studies address the same research question, but they also do speak to each other, since the design of the research is built around a sequential approach. While the first study explores how POs deal with organizational and individual constraints, it also provides the exploratory material that makes way for the implementation of the second study. In particular, the first study draws on the qualitative analysis of data obtained via semidirected interviews conducted with POs. The exploratory data collected via these interviews are expected to contribute to the construction of the online survey questionnaire destined to collect the quantitative data needed in the second study. Furthermore, the main results of the first study are relied upon to construct the analysis of the second study. More precisely, the second study concentrates its attention on the most salient pattern of practice uncovered in the first study (i.e., that officers are benevolent towards their supervisees). The results of both studies are then combined to propose a joint answer and discussion with regard to the research question.

Although two different methods are employed (both in terms of data collection and analysis), this research does not strictly mobilize a mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) to compare qualitative and quantitative results in a *convergent* approach or to explain the results obtained via the first (qualitative) study by the second (quantitative) study in an *explanatory sequential* approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Instead, both analyses and the associated results will be presented separately before proceeding to an aggregation of the findings and their discussion. The following figure (figure 3) illustrates how each study relates to the other and the research question.

Figure 3 – Analytical framework



Section II – Context: the Belgian Houses of Justice

This research will be conducted in the context of Belgian probation services. In Belgium, the management of probationers is a defederalized competence. The French, Flemish and German communities rely on judicial assistants working in Houses of Justice to supervise probationers, whereas prisons are administered by the federal administration. Different strategies exist for case selection (Flyvberg, 2006). In particular, I contend that the Belgian context is *atypical* in the sense that it presents some unusual characteristics in comparison to other probation systems in Western countries. However, the Belgian probation system can also be considered a *critical* case in the sense that the results produced by research on this case might allow for a certain degree of generalization.

More broadly speaking, Belgium is often considered a case of interest for scholars in public administration and in political science in general due to its unique characteristics[12] that set it apart from other contexts (e.g., Lijphart, 2012; Swenden, 2006; Schiffino, 2003)

In this section, I introduce a short history of this institution. In a second subsection, I present what *probation* entails in the Belgian context and how it is managed by judicial assistants. Third, I tackle the managerialization of Houses of Justice in Belgium and discuss how some recent changes may suggest a *punitive turn* in probation practice. I conclude this section with the reasons why the Belgian is actually atypical and critical.

A – A short history of the Belgian Houses of Justice

The Houses of Justice are relatively recent entities in the Belgian institutional landscape. Although community-based alternatives to detention have existed since the 1960s[13], it took more than 30 years until a dedicated institution was created to carry out the implementation of these criminal sentences. Prior to the creation of the Houses of Justice in 1999, Pos operated under the tutelage of the penitentiary administration. Three successive rounds of institutional reforms (Jonckheere, 2013) punctuated the genesis and evolution of Belgian probation services. The first group of reforms was associated with the start of the federalization process of Belgium in 1980[14]. Some competencies regarding the treatment of offenders were transferred from the

[12] Belgium is, for instance, an ideal type of consociationalism (Lijphart,1999).
[13] Law of the 29th of June 1964 regarding deferments, suspended sentences, and probations, *Moniteur Belge*, 17 July 1964 (updated on the 30 December 2016).
[14] Special law of the 8th of August 1980 on institutional reforms, *Moniteur Belge*, 15 August 1980.

Federal state to the Flemish and French-speaking communities. Those competences included the welfare and support of offenders in detention and postdetention. The technical execution of criminal decisions – such as social enquiries, the monitoring of probationers, and the implementation of parole – was, however, kept under federal control.

At the end of the 1990s, a second collection of reforms led to the creation of the Belgian para-judicial sector and of the Houses of Justice. During the summer of 1996, Belgium was deeply shaken by the discovery of the bodies of An and Eefje, two missing children, victims of the infamous pedophile and murderer Marc Dutroux[15]. Prior to committing his multiple crimes, Dutroux had been granted an early release from prison, against the advice of his psychiatrist and the public prosecutor. The particularly gruesome nature of the case, as well as the poor handling of the investigation and penal processes, revealed some severe dysfunctions in the Belgian judicial system, including penitentiary administration (SPF Justice, 2009). It was soon concluded that public officials who oversaw offenders serving parole and probation were in urgent need of a more coherent and suitable work environment. Hence, the intention to create "Houses of Justices" was publicly voiced in June 1996 by Minister of Justice Stefaan De Clerck[16]. In 1999, a royal decree listed the mission of the newly created Houses of Justice[17] and enshrined their dissociation from the penitentiary sector. The penal mission of the Houses of justice included probations, parole, and pretrial detention. One such Houses of Justice was established in each judicial district.

The third main reform that affected Belgian probations was the 2011 institutional agreement for the 6th reform of the Belgian state[18]. Once enacted in 2012, this agreement furthered the federalization process of the Belgian state by distributing additional federal competences to the Belgian communities and regions. As a result, the Houses of Justice became a competence of the communities in 2014. By 2015, the services were actually split between the three Belgian communities: the Flemish community (Flemish Region), the French community (Wallonia-Brussels Federation), and the German community. The transfer to the communities was a chaotic and uncertain process for both the management and the personnel of the Houses of Justice (Jonckheere, 2016). Ultimately, 686 workers were transferred to the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (*Maisons de Justice*), 662 to the Flemish Region (*Justitiehuizen*),

[15] Marc Dutroux had other child victims, most notably, Julie and Melissa, whose disappearance was already highly mediatized before their bodies were discovered in August 1996. Two other victims, Sabine and Laëtitia, were rescued.
[16] General policy note of the Minister of Justice Stefaan De Clerck, 12 June 1996.
[17] Royal decree of the 13th of June 1999 regarding the organization of the Houses of Justice Service of the Department of Justice, *Moniteur Belge*, 26 June 1999.
[18] Institutional agreement on the Sixth State Reform, *la Chambre*, 11 October 2011.

and 9 to the German community (*Justizhaus*). In the process, new competencies were attributed to the Houses of Justice, including social and civil missions such as the support and counseling of victims, first-line legal assistance for citizens, and social assistance for prisoners.

Currently, there are 28 Houses of Justice in Belgium. Fourteen are under the tutelage of the Flemish Region, while thirteen of them belong to the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. The German Community has only one House of Justice. In 2016, the Belgian Houses of Justice collectively employed a total of 1372 workers: 642 in the *Justitiehuizen*, 721 in the *Maisons de Justice*, and 9 in the *Justizhaus*[19] (SPF Justice, 2018). Most of the personnel work in the local agencies, either as judicial assistants or as administrative staff. The Belgian Houses of Justice collectively received and treated a total of 59825 new cases in 2017 (concerning all types of mandates) (SPF Justice, 2019). Although they are now separated, both the *Justitiehuizen* and the *Maisons de Justice* inherited an identical structure in 2014. Local agencies work in collaboration with a central administration (per community) that steers the general orientations and compiles the data provided by local agencies. Local agencies also have their own first-line management: the directors and associate directors of the Houses of Justice. The directors manage judicial assistants' caseloads via the attribution of the new case files that they receive from the penal authorities. They also assess whether their subordinates' work is performed in accordance with the rules. They provide guidance and support to ensure that the judicial assistants work in the best conditions.

B – What is probation and how is it performed in Belgium?

Probation mainly consists of alternatives to the custodial sentences imposed as principal penalties: probationary deferments and suspended sentences whereby probationers must comply with the conditions imposed by the judge during a given period of time (one to five years). These probationary conditions are supposed to be individualized depending on the type of offense and the background of the offender. For instance, depending on the circumstances, an offender could be asked to join a drug rehabilitation program or to enroll for psychological follow-up. The judge can also decide to prohibit the offender from frequenting certain places or interacting with certain people. A probation board monitors probationers' compliance with probationary conditions with the help of POs' periodic reports. In case of noncompliance, the probation board may notify the court, which can lead to the revocation of probation and the

[19] This House of Justice was not included in the study for linguistic reasons.

implementation of the principal penalty[20]. As of May 2016, probations can also be pronounced as a principal penalty[21]. However, this new tool still shows limited use compared to the traditional alternatives to custodial sentences (SPF Justice, 2019).

The supervision of probationers is managed by judicial assistants. These frontline officers are in charge of a wide variety of specialized services ranging from penal to civil and social missions. At the penal level, they implement and follow penal mediation, the supervision of suspects and offenders sentenced to an alternative to pretrial detention, community service, electronic surveillance, or probation. At the civil and social levels, judicial assistants run the reception, counseling, and support of victims throughout the judicial process. In practice, judicial assistants tend to specialize according to a limited set of specific missions. This implies that most of them are not exclusively in charge of probations. The supervision of probationers consists of controlling offenders' compliance with probationary conditions while providing social work and help for the reinsertion process. The objective is to "avoid reoffence, to limit the damages caused by the intervention of the penal system, and to work on the reconstruction of social ties"[22]. The officers are expected to use nonjudgmental approaches and to adopt an intermediary position, halfway between the probationer and the penal authorities (criminal court, investigating judge, probation board, etc.). To that end, the judicial assistants regularly interact with probationers in dedicated parlors and do home visits at offenders' place of residence. The judicial assistants also produce reports for the administrative and judicial authorities so that they can make appropriate decisions regarding the supervisees. Since the end of the 2000s, judicial assistants are expected to carry probation work in accordance with an adapted Business Process Reengineering (BPR) protocol that provides hands-on systematic guidelines for each of the individual steps of the supervisory process. For instance, the BPR lists the matters that should be discussed during the first interview with a probationer. The BPR is also regularly updated with new work instructions as new directives are enacted.

Data on new probation cases are published in the annual reports of the Houses of Justice and data compilations from the federal Ministry of Justice (SPF Justice). The most recent data for the French-speaking Houses of Justice were published in a 2018 annual report (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2019). The most recent data for the Flemish

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[20] Law of the 29th of June 1964 regarding deferments, suspended sentences, and probations, *Moniteur Belge*, 17 July 1964 (updated on the 30th of December 2016).
[21] Law of the 10th of April 2014 introducing probation as a principal penalty in the criminal code, *Moniteur Belge*, 19 June 2014 (entered into force on the 1st of May 2016)
[22] "[le but est] d'éviter la récidive, de limiter les dommages provoqués par l'intervention du système pénal et de travailler à la restauration les liens sociaux". Circular of the 28th if July 2003 detailing the deontological principles of judicial work with probationers.

Houses of Justice were published in a 2017 report of the SPF Justice (SPF Justice, 2019). The following histogram (figure 4) displays the number of new probation cases and other penal missions received by the *Maisons de Justice* and *Justitiehuizen* in 2017. In both cases, probationary deferments and suspended sentences represent a major portion of the new penal cases received by Houses of Justice. In 2017, the Flemish Houses of Justice received 4426 new probation cases, while the French-speaking houses received a total of 5637 (SPF Justice, 2019). Strikingly, the number of new probation cases have followed an upwards trend in the last few years. The reports indicate that the number of new cases grew by 13.4% between 2013 and 2017 in the Flemish Region. This increase was even sharper in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, with an 86.6% increase in new probation cases between 2013 and 2017 (SPF justice, 2019). This trend is still ongoing in the French-speaking Houses of Justice, with a total of 6459 new probation cases for the year 2018 (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2019). The figure 5 presents the progression of new probation cases in the Flemish Region and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

Figure 4 – Number of new penal missions and mediations in 2017

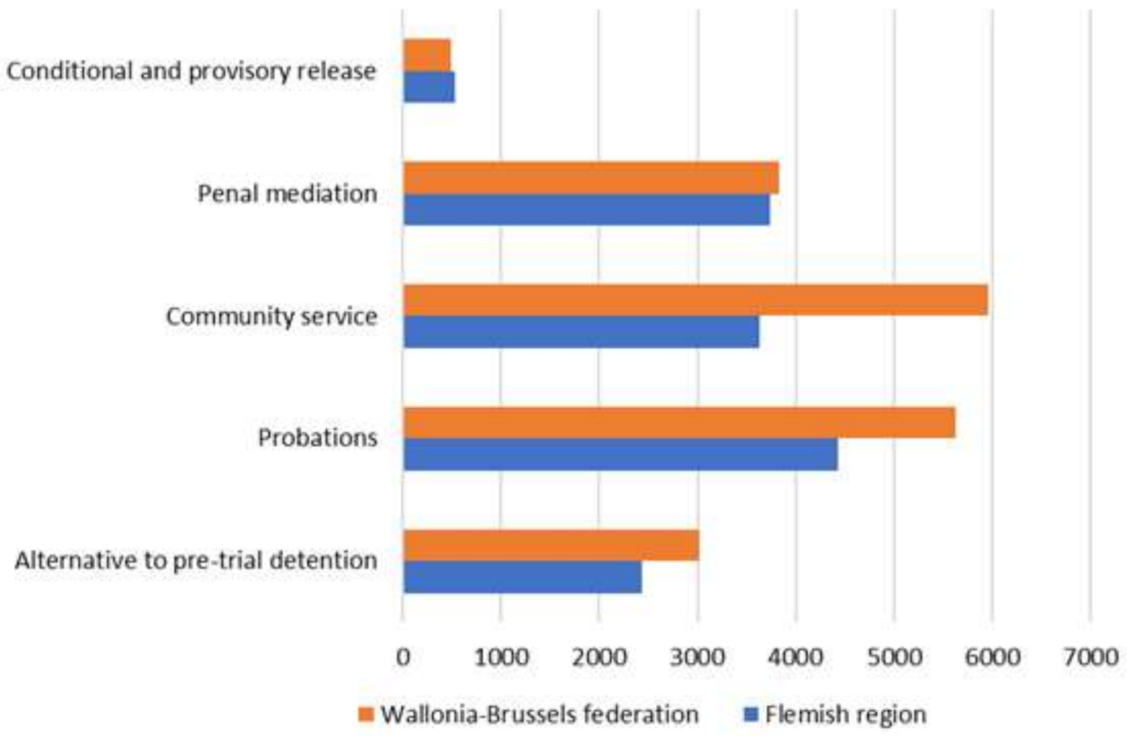
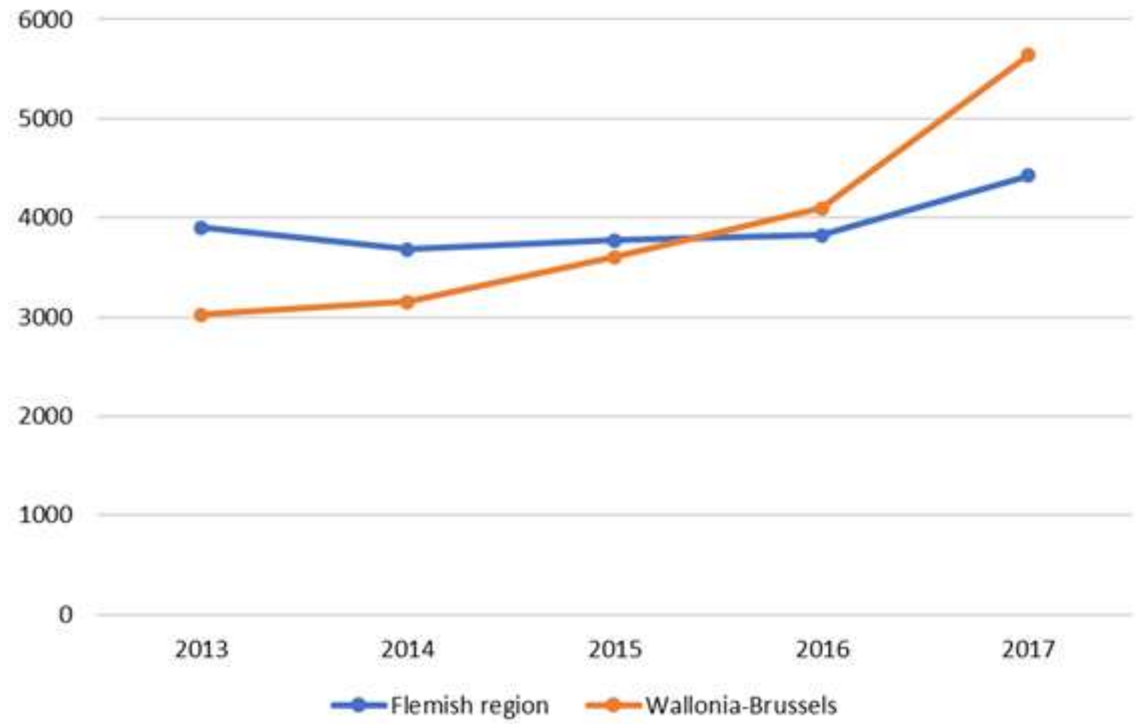


Figure 5 – Number of new probation cases between 2013 and 2017



C – The managerialization of probation work (and the rise of punitiveness?)

Like many other public services in Belgium, the reforms of the management of the Houses of Justice have been influenced by the principles of New Public Management (NPM) (Piraux, 2010; 2004). Prior to the 6th reform of the Belgian state in 2011, federal public services underwent a major legitimacy crisis. Recurring institutional deficiencies and scandals such as the dioxin crisis of 1999[23] called into question citizens' confidence in institutions (Thijs & Van de Walle, 2005). The government agreement of the 7th of July 1999 acknowledged these deficiencies and paved the way for a reform of public services at the federal level. The resulting "Copernic Plan"[24] called for a profound modernization and rethinking of the administrations according to four main streams of action: a new vision of human resources, a new approach to work, new organs and structures, and a new managerial culture (Piraux, 2010; 2004). Among other changes, the reform led to the redesign of the old federal departments into ten federal public services (FPS) and revised the mandates and appointment process of high-ranking

[23] In May 1999, traces of polychlorodibenzo-p-dioxine (a dangerous contaminant) were discovered in food supplies in Belgium. The resulting sanitary crisis led to the resignation of the federal health and agriculture ministers.
[24] Federal government, « *Vers une modernisation des administrations publiques. Rapport des groupes de travail Structure de l'organisation et Gestion du personnel* », Brussels, Ministry of the Civil service, 16 February 2000.

officials (see: de Visscher & Randour, 2014). The Copernic Plan focused on a radical redesign of the existing work process to achieve dramatic gains in performance. The progressive introduction of the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) in federal administrations stems from this ambition to *reengineer* existing processes (as is usually done in industrial assembly chains: Piraux, 2017).

In this context, the Belgian Houses of Justice also developed their own repository of procedures that was finalized and introduced in 2008. The BPR of the Houses of Justice decomposes the different missions of the judicial assistants in specific tasks. For each of these tasks, the BPR specifies the objectives, the means at the officers' disposal (including the needed documents), and the criteria for evaluation. The modernization and rationalization of the federal administration ambitioned by the Copernic Plan also led to the development of new technologies and computerized management tools (Piraux, 2017). In 2004, the Houses of Justice finalized the development and testing of SIPAR (*Système informatique PARajudiciaire*, or para-judiciary informatic system). This integrated data-processing platform comprises a database that compiles all the information concerning the offenders (criminal record, ongoing processes, etc.), staff members, and third-party actors (police, probation board, etc.). SIPAR also includes a series of dedicated tools that support judicial assistants and local managers with their tasks. SIPARDOCS, for instance, automatizes the production of appropriate templates for administrative documents (Jonckheere, 2013). This managerial trend in the Belgian probation system was acknowledged by several scholars (e.g., Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Beyens & Roosen, 2013; Jonckheere, 2013; Ficet, 2012) who noticed a progressive shift towards a more *rational-technical* (Ferguson, 2011) approach to probation work and its management.

However, whether NPM reforms were accompanied by a *punitive turn* in the handling of probation is still debated. In comparison to other Western countries, it seems that new penology (Feeley & Simon, 1992) and the adoption of actuarial penal strategies had a limited reach in Belgium (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010; Snacken, 2007). For instance, some instruments typically associated with new penology – such as risk assessment tools – are still absent from judicial assistants' toolkit. Furthermore, The Houses of Justice still emphasize their commitment to the traditional rehabilitative goals of probation, social work values, and the use of frontline discretion (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). That being said, the debate over the punitive turn of Belgian probation grew in importance throughout the past decade. In that regard, the 2011 mass shooting in the city of Liège[25] left a considerable mark on public opinion and on the Houses of

[25] On the 13 of December 2011, Nordine Amrani, an offender under parole, opened fire with an assault rifle on a crowded square in the city of Liège. The attack left six people dead and 125 injured.

Justice. The perpetrator was a parolee under the supervision of a judicial assistant at the time of the shooting. Although no irregularity was found in the handling of the case, the resulting public outcry nevertheless brought the Houses of Justice under the mediatic spotlight (e.g., Le Vif, 2012) and fostered an internal debate over the necessity of ensuring a better consistency in judicial assistants' monitoring practices. During the following years, the looming issue of terrorist threats in Europe[26] further accelerated the development of procedures to better manage probationary monitoring and control. This was illustrated by the adoption of the 2015 *directive verification* and its revision in 2016 (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). This new directive added guidelines for verification procedures such as the systematization of home visits and the compulsory consultation of the criminal records of both the offender and his or her entourage. It also aimed at enhancing judicial assistants' contacts with third party services such as the police (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2016). Ultimately, these new requirements were integrated into a BPR update and thus added to the standard procedures for the supervision of probationers.

D – A critical and atypical case

The Belgian probation system, particularly the Houses of Justice in the Flemish Region and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, has been the subject of NPM reforms in the wake of the Copernic Plan (e.g., Jonckheere, 2013; Ficet, 2012). They have also been increasingly solicited in the past few years, as attested by the considerable increase in the number of new probation cases (SPF Justice, 2019). In this context, they offer an interesting and relevant opportunity to examine officer-offender interactions on the frontline.

On the one hand, the Belgian Houses of Justice present the characteristics of an *atypical* case (Flyvberg, 2006). The Belgian context is relatively unusual in comparison to other Western probation systems because of its late and mild exposure to managerialism and punitiveness in the wake of new penology (Feeley & Simon, 1992). Other countries, especially Anglo-Saxon countries, were exposed to new management styles and actuarial penal reforms as early as the 1980s (e.g., Pratt et al., 2013; Garland 2012, Miller, 2009). To this day, the absence of typical features inherited from new approaches of punishment (such as risk assessment tools) sets Belgian probations apart from other contexts (e.g., Beyens & Scheirs, 2010; Snacken, 2007). That being said, recent changes seem to point otherwise: a series of computerized procedural

[26] This threat materialized, among other things, in the Paris attacks on the 13th of November 2015, the Brussels bombings on the 22nd of March 2016, and the stabbing of Belgian police officers on the 5th of October 2016.

and technical tools devised to better manage officers' work and systematize aspects of offender monitoring have been progressively introduced since the mid-2000s (Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Jonckheere, 2013). Since many other countries have already operated a transition towards a more punitive and managerialist approach of probation work, this study will document the effects of a turning point in the Belgian context. Studying the Belgian case will provide some unique information about the effects of an ongoing managerial and punitive shift on POs' interactions with citizens and public service delivery.

On the other hand, the Belgian Houses of Justice can also be characterized as a *critical* case (Flyvberg, 2006). More precisely, given the available information, it does not seem that the (new) constraints to which judicial assistants are exposed should radically differ from those that are depicted in other contexts. For instance, the data suggest that Belgian POs are probably exposed to growing caseloads, given the escalation of new probation case numbers (SPF Justice, 2019). Similarly, the systematic literature review pinpointed high caseloads and workloads as a recurring constraint in other contexts. In the same vein, the ongoing managerial and punitive turn in Belgian probations is likely to provoke tensions between POs' own values and ideals about probation work and the new control imperatives. Similar tensions were similarly uncovered in other contexts in the literature review. In other words, the constraints and dilemmas to which Belgian POs are increasingly exposed are *most likely* similar (Flyvberg, 2006) to those that can be observed elsewhere. Hence, the results obtained from an analysis of the frontline practices of Belgian POs are most likely applicable to other contexts that are already exposed to similar constraints.

Conclusion of the third chapter

The SLB literature suggests that frontline workers rely on their trustworthiness assessments to make decisions about their clients. Research is sparse, however, and little is known about the (organizational and individual) conditions that may affect the way frontline workers interpret and make use of their trustworthiness assessments of citizen-clients. Although the second chapter provided limited evidence about this *missing link* in the context of probation services, it still brought about some key insights into the way POs cope and use their discretion when interacting with probationers. At the same time, the review highlighted that there is still a need for an SLB study about officer-offender interactions in an original context, since most of the existing research was produced by criminologists working in Anglo-Saxon countries. The present research thus aims to take stock of these elements and address the following question: How do probation officers interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why do they interact that way?

Two studies will address this inquiry. The first study will examine how officers cope in response to individual and organizational constraints and how these actions affect the way they interact with supervisees. The second study will analyze the extent to which individual and organizational factors affect the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a given course of action with supervisees. These two studies will be conducted in a sequential manner so that the contextual data collected for the first study will help to refine the survey of the second study and so that the most salient result of the first study (i.e., that POs tend to privilege benevolent courses of action) will be used to orient the analysis in the second study.

This research will be implemented in the context of the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Flemish Region. The Belgian Houses of Justice were created in 1999 and then transferred to the Belgian Communities in 2014 as part of the 6th reform of the Belgian state. Although these services are now separate, they still operate in an almost identical fashion and are both experiencing a rise in external demand. Belgian probation services are an *atypical* case due to their comparatively late exposure to managerialism and punitive approaches of probation work. They provide an opportunity to study POs' interactions with offenders in an original context that has only recently undergone some changes in that direction. The Belgian Houses of Justice also constitute a *critical* case that offers some room for result generalization since most of the constraints and dilemmas to which Belgian POs are exposed are likely to be similar to those observed in probation services elsewhere.

Chapter 4 – Approach and methods

Introduction

The present research examines POs' frontline practices and the individual and organizational factors that foster such practices. In the first study, I used qualitative methods to look at how POs cope with the various constraints they encounter during probation work and what these constraints tell us about their preferred way of dealing with offenders. In a second study, I used quantitative methods to explore how individual and organizational factors affect the importance that POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent, uninvested, or confrontational course of action with offenders. This chapter describes the methods that were mobilized in both studies for data collection, data management, and data analysis. By using these methods, I understand the coordination of the ensemble of techniques (practical steps, approaches, and processes) that are mobilized to achieve a given research objective (Grawitz, 1993, pp. 301-303).

In the first section, I describe the ontological and epistemological approach of this research. The two next sections describe the methods that were used for data collection in the first (qualitative) and then in the second (quantitative) study. In the last section, I address the issue of data analysis. For each of the two studies, I provide details about the qualitative and quantitative methods used to analyze the collected data.

Section I – Epistemological and ontological approach

The present research endorses a postpositivist approach. Positivism is based on the ideas laid out by the contributions of Aristotle, Locke, and Kant but was recognized and characterized by Auguste Comte (1798-1557), who distinguished its logic from that of classical philosophy (Comte, 1839). Comte stresses the importance of empiricism in positivism, which supports a "deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes" (Creswell, 2017, p. 7) and follows the principle that social phenomena can be apprehended and studied in the same ways as phenomena in the natural world (see: Durkheim & Fauconnet, 1903). Positivism as a paradigm was progressively replaced by postpositivism after World War II (Mertens, 2010). Postpositivism presents key differences with positivism that encapsulate the epistemological and ontological approach of the present research.

At the ontological level, postpositivism distinguishes itself by acknowledging the limitations of *naïve positivism* (Mertens, 2010). Postpositivists, similar to positivists, are realists in that they posit that reality exists in itself and that tools can be used to improve the understanding of reality. However, postpositivists are also *critical* in the sense that they acknowledge that reality cannot be fully grasped or correctly apprehended because of the researcher's own limitations (his or her senses, values, beliefs, etc.) (Maxwell, 2004). In this regard, postpositivists' critical realism can *align* with the constructivist paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) in the sense that it is consistent with the idea of multiple, socially constructed realities (O'Leary, 2004). The present research falls into this ontological perspective. Both the first and the second study aim to explain individual actions and attitudes (e.g., trust, coping, discretion) by developing a better understanding of the ways in which actors perceive and interpret reality. While the first study used qualitative methods for data collection and analysis, the second used quantitative methods.

At the epistemological level, post-positivism stresses the importance of objectivity and the neutrality of the researcher to enable knowledge construction. In contrast, with positivism, postpositivism acknowledges that personal biases might affect the investigation and the observation. Hence, researchers should be aware of these limitations and must seek to promote objectivity by preventing their biases from affecting the investigation whenever possible (Mertens, 2010). From that perspective, a priority consists of developing the most rigorous propositions in accordance with scientific standards and rigorously following validated procedures. My research endorses this postpositivist approach of knowledge construction by proposing a detailed and transparent account of the different steps and techniques that will be deployed to acquire and analyze data in the first and second study. For instance, the detailed interview guide used for the qualitative data collection will be presented in the next section. Similarly, details of the operationalization of the variables in the quantitative survey will be presented.

Due to its approach of knowledge construction, postpositivism values the use of empirical indicators and hypotheses and promotes bias reduction via systematic and rigorous methods. This is why postpositivism is often associated with experimental protocols and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis (Mertens, 2010). However, this does not mean that qualitative methods cannot be used in postpositivist research (O'Leary, 2004); qualitative methods can also be used for theory or hypotheses testing against data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). In other words, qualitative methods should not be opposed to quantitative approaches, as they can both be operated under a postpositivist philosophy (Clark, 1998). As will be further elaborated in the next sections, the present research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. The choice of these methods and their anticipated use was made in accordance with the critical exigences of the postpositivist philosophy. The statistical control of covariates (in the quantitative analysis) and the use of a systematic method for theme identification and analysis (in the qualitative analysis) illustrate this attention to postpositivist principles.

Section II – First study: data collection through semi-structured interviews

While the systematic literature review provided some hints about the nature and causes of coping in probation services in Western countries, it is not entirely certain that the same processes will also be observed in this case study. As previously stated, the Belgian case demonstrates the characteristics of both a *critical* and an *atypical* case (Flyvberg, 2006). While commonalities likely exist between the Belgian Houses of Justice and other probation services, the Belgian case remains relatively unique due to its late exposure to NPM reforms and informatized tools. In this first study, I relied on a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of semi-structured interviews with Belgian POs to determine how they cope during public service delivery and uncover the causal links explaining these practices.

In the first subsection, I present the techniques that were used for data collection and sampling. I then delineate the scope of analysis by presenting the participants and in which context they were interviewed. The third subsection presents the interview guide and the type of information that I expected to obtain via the interviews.

A – Semi-structured interviews

The first study proposes an examination of the nature and causes of Belgian POs' coping practices during public service delivery. Coping mechanisms (Lipsky, 2010) designate a wide variety of practices that result from numerous intertwined and often context-specific factors (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010). Because the processes that lead to coping are often embedded in frontline workers' subjectivity, it appears that qualitative approaches are particularly suited for its study (Edmonds et al., 2012). In fact, a considerable amount of research on coping has been conducted using qualitative methods (e.g., Borrelli & Lindberg, 2018; Loyens, 2016; Tummers & Rocco, 2015; Halliday, 2009).

The data was collected via semi-structured interviews (Flick, 2014; Smith, 1995). Semi-structured interviews are used for the collection of complex data that authorize an in-depth understanding of interviewees' experiences and perceptions of reality (Savoie-Zajc, 2009). This implies that a list of the needed information and topical areas to be addressed has to be constructed prior to the interviews (Flick, 2014). The main topics and illustrative questions were compiled in an interview guide[27], thus ensuring consistency between each of the interviews. Although the topics of interest have to be addressed in a systematic way during the encounters, this form of interviewing allows the exchanges "to unfold in a relatively flexible fashion" (Kapiszewski et al., 2015, p. 217) in a manner that resembles a conversation (Savoie-Zajc, 2009). Open-ended questions were thus used whenever possible to avoid steering and restricting the participants' answers. When needed, I reignited the discussion to obtain further precisions.

The sampling process was implemented according to the principle of *maximal variation* (Marshall, 1996), whereby "the number of individuals or situations studied is less decisive than the differences between cases involved" (Flick, 2014, p. 130). Following this principle, I did not necessarily try to integrate the largest number of cases in the study. Instead, I tried to make sure that each case was as insightful as possible. Sampling ceased when *theoretical saturation* was reached. In other words, the addition of new cases was halted when the new observations did not add any further knowledge (Glaser & Strauss, 2017).

B – With whom and where?

From February to October 2018, I conducted 29 semi-structured interviews with POs. The places and times of the interviews were selected to best suit the convenience of the participants. Discourses were usually collected at officers' workplace, during work hours, and in their managers' absence. With a few exceptions, most interviews took place in parlors (rooms that are dedicated to officer-offender interactions) or in POs' offices. After a brief introduction and an explanation of the objective of the research, I assured the respondents of their anonymity and asked if they agreed to being recorded for research purposes. The interviews lasted 56 minutes on average. The collected audio records were then manually transcribed and anonymized using code letters.

[27] The interview guide will be presented in the third subsection.

In this second subsection, I provide details about the participants and the places where the interviews were conducted.

1 – With whom? French-speaking judicial assistants

Judicial assistants are susceptible to taking charge of a wide variety of missions. These missions include the legal and social support of citizens (victims and offenders), penal mediations, the production of social inquiries (reports that are used by judges to adapt the procedures of sentence enforcement), and the supervision of penalties that are executed outside of prisons. Among the latter, POs are in charge of parole, community service, probationary deferments and suspended sentences. In this study, the interviews were implemented with judicial assistants who are actively involved in the supervision of probations. Exploratory interviews performed in December 2017 with local administrators and managers of French-speaking Houses of Justice revealed that, in practice, POs tend to informally specialize according to a reduced set of civil, social, or penal missions. In other words, although all judicial assistants are susceptible to and able to perform the supervision of probationers, not all of them are actively in charge of probation cases. That being said, probations mobilize most of the staff due to the ever-increasing number of new probation cases and because supervisions can take up to 5 years to complete. Furthermore, most of the POs had at least one experience with probation supervision during their career (before specializing for other missions, for instance). Thus, the interviews targeted judicial assistants who were actively engaged in the supervision of probationers at the time of the study.

The semi-structured interviews were only performed with French-speaking judicial assistants. The decision to focus on the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation was motivated by two reasons. First, judicial assistants of the Houses of Justice within the Flemish Region operate in conditions almost identical to those of their French-speaking counterparts, i.e., they work in almost identical structures and follow the same procedures. Hence, I do not expect that the data collection in the Flemish Region would yield a different perspective on coping and officer-offender interactions. Second, this choice was also made for practical reasons; conducting the interviews in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation allowed me to use my first language (French) to establish contacts with the local agencies and implement the interviews. This approach permitted a better handling of the interviews and a finer understanding of the exchanges with participants.

In the end, most of the interviewees were women (80%) who were aged in their forties and had an average of 13 years of experience. Experience varied widely among the participants, ranging from four to twenty years. This means that some of the participants had previously worked as POs prior to the creation of the Houses of Justice in 1999. A majority of the respondents had graduated as social workers (60%), with other main educational backgrounds being criminology (20%), psychology (15%) and sociology-anthropology (5%).

2 – Where? The Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

There are thirteen Houses of Justice in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation: Arlon, Brussels, Charleroi, Dinant, Huy, Liège, Marche-en-Famenne, Mons, Namur, Neufchâteau, Nivelles, Tournai, and Verviers. However, these agencies do vary greatly in size. For instance, several hundred judicial assistants currently work at the House of Justice of Brussels, while a small agency such as that of Neufchâteau hosts fifteen officers. Furthermore, local agencies can be located in very contrasting social and geographical environments. For instance, the Houses of Justice of Liège, Brussels, and Charleroi are located in large urban centers. In contrast, the agencies of Marche-en-Famenne and Arlon are located in much smaller towns. Local agencies also operate in territories of varying sizes and characteristics. For example, the House of Justice of Dinant oversees a particularly vast judicial district (2 501 ^{km2}) but with a limited population density. In contrast, the House of Justice of Nivelles operates on a much smaller territory (1 090 ^{km2}) but one with a much higher population density and a higher average income. Another significant difference between agencies can be found at the managerial level; some agencies (usually smaller ones) tend to share their local mangers, as is the case for the three Houses of Justice of the Luxembourg province (Neufchâteau, Arlon, and Marche-en-Famenne). All these differences tend to produce very contrasting work environments that all present unique challenges for officers.

The following map (figure 6) displays in colors the main judicial districts of Belgium. In 2014, a reform[28] merged the 27 old judicial districts into twelve larger districts. Although Belgian Houses of Justice are now technically attached to larger judicial ensembles, they still operate in subdivisions that correspond to the old judicial districts (delineated in black within the new districts). The thirteen Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation are

[28] Law of the 1st of December 2013 regarding the reform of the judicial districts and modifying the Judicial Code to reinforce the mobility of the members of the judicial order, *Moniteur Belge*, 10 December 2013.

located in subdivisions of the judicial districts of Hainaut (yellow), Namur (beige), Liège (orange), Brabant-Wallon (dark gray), Bruxelles (light gray), and Luxembourg (cyan).

Figure 6 – The Belgian judicial districts

(SPF Justice, 2015)

In April 2017, the central administration of the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation gave me the authorization to conduct interviews and implement a questionnaire survey in their local agencies. Starting in December 2017, I contacted several local directors in preparation of the qualitative data collection. After explaining the objectives of the research, I officially received the organizational e-mail addresses of some judicial assistants who were actively involved with probation cases. Using these addresses, I contacted judicial assistants who were willing to participate in an interview. The initial contact with these officers was made possible with the help of the directors of local agencies. This is why, to limit the any potential bias associated with the eventual preselection of respondents by local managers, I also asked the POs who accepted to meet with me if they would recommend me to a colleague for an interview.

To attain a maximum of variability in the sampling process, I made sure that the targeted agencies varied in size and covered territories facing different demographic and social challenges. The interviews were ultimately conducted in nine out of the thirteen Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. An average of four interviews were conducted in the large-to-medium-sized agencies (more than twenty officers), and an average of two interviews were conducted in the smaller agencies. Six agencies fell into the large-to-medium-sized category, whereas three were included in the smaller category. The largest agencies included in the sample are situated in major French-speaking urban centers and host up to several hundred judicial assistants. Smaller agencies are mostly set in smaller towns and rural areas and employ less than a dozen collaborators. These smaller agencies tend to oversee vast judicial districts, which exposes their POs to unique challenges, such as longer trips to perform home visits.

Upon completing the interviews, I also noticed that the host buildings for Houses of Justice varied greatly in terms of their location relative to the nearby populated areas, internal configuration and state of maintenance. Some agencies were installed in brand new buildings but were also located relatively far from the nearest urban area. Other agencies were located in city centers but were sometimes accommodated into old and ill-adapted buildings in poor states of maintenance. Depending on the size and nature (urban or rural) of the judicial districts, the location of the agencies within these districts and their state of maintenance, the implementation of frontline probation work had to face unique logistical challenges.

C – Empirical objective

The implementation of the semi-structured interviews with the targeted population aimed at collecting the data to be analyzed in the first study. Beyond the collection of demographic information about the respondents (such as their age, years of experience, etc.), the interviews paid particular attention to the ways in which POs interact with offenders and to the conditions in which they carry out their work with offenders. The following table (table 2) presents the interview guide that served as a common thread during the interviews. Based on the research question, this guide presents the main topics and subtopics to be discussed with the participants, along with illustrative examples of questions.

Table 2 – Interview guide with probation officers

Topic	Subtopic	Examples: questions, memos, precisions…
General Information	➢ Getting to know the respondent ➢ Discovering the profession and work environment ➢ Learning about the local context	• Before we start: introductions, brief explanation on the objective of the research; ask if it is possible to record the interview • **Could you briefly introduce yourself? (age, training, experience, etc.)** • **Could you please describe a typical workday?** • **What is special about working in this House of Justice?**
The implementation of supervision	➢ Typical interactions during supervision ➢ The implementation of work instructions and procedures ➢ Identification of constraints ➢ The use of procedural tools and instruments	• **How do you typically handle the first steps of a new supervision?** Why? Please specify/provide an example • **What are your typical interactions with offenders during supervision?** Please specify/provide an example • **Could you please describe an atypical supervision experience with an offender and how you dealt with it?** Why? Please specify/provide an example • **Do you believe that some factors tend to interfere/hinder the supervision of offenders?** Why? Please provide an example. • **How do you typically deal with these issues?** • **Could you tell me about your experience with SIPAR and the BPR?** Please specify/provide an example

Perceptions of supervisees	➢ The assessment of offenders ➢ The characteristics of the *good*/*problematic* probationer	• **Do you believe that there is such thing as an ideal offender profile?** Why? Please specify/provide an example • **What are your expectations regarding offenders?** Why? Please specify • **In your experience, are some offenders more complicated/easy to supervise than others?** Why? Please specify/provide an example • **How does it impact the supervision process?** Why? Please specify/provide an example
Officers' work experiences	➢ Articulation between care and control; role conflicts ➢ Managerial & punitive changes ➢ Most challenging aspects of probation work	• **Did you ever experience tension between your values/preferences and what is expected from you at work?** Why? Please specify/provide an example. • **Did you notice a recent change in the institutional approach of offender supervision?** Why? Please specify/provide an example. • **What are the most challenging aspects of probation work in your opinion?** Why? Please provide an example. • **What is your personal experience with trainings?**
Local managers and colleagues	➢ Relationship with managers ➢ Interactions with colleagues	• **How would you describe your relationship with the local managers?** Why? Please explain. • **How would you describe the work that local managers provide (feedback, counseling, etc.)?** Why? please explain/provide an example • **What is your relationship with colleagues in general?** Why? Please specify.
General thoughts	➢ Institutional and societal changes ➢ General thoughts about probation work	• **How do you foresee the future of the Houses of Justice and their role in society?** • **Is there something that we forgot to mention? Any last thoughts?**

First, the interviews collected POs' accounts about the implementation of offender supervision. The officers were asked about the ways in which they typically handle their direct interactions with offenders (including during the first steps of supervision). They were also invited to express how they follow work instructions and procedures (including SIPAR and BPR) during the various steps of offender supervision. The multiple constraints that might possibly affect the implementation of probationers' supervision were also addressed during the interview. When possible, I made sure that the discussion about these constraints and the ways they are dealt with was brought about by respondents themselves. In this way, the POs' answers provide a broad and faithful picture about their frontline practices during public service delivery.

Second, the interviews addressed the respondents' perceptions of their supervisees. In other words, the POs were asked about how they usually assess offenders and according to which criteria, i.e., according to them, what are some positive or problematic traits that can be found among supervisees? The POs' answers allow us to determine to what extent these assessments affect their supervision of offenders.

Third, the interviews addressed the POs' perceptions about their personal work experiences. The idea was to collect the POs' impressions about the tensions they experience between their own values and preferences about probation work on the one hand and the (new) work instructions on the other. When such tensions were manifested by the respondents, precise questions were asked about how they might affect their practice. General questions were also asked to respondents about the aspects of probation work that they find personally challenging. In doing so, the officers' responses provided additional details about the personal difficulties they encounter during public service delivery.

Fourth, the respondents were asked about their perceptions and relationships with the local managers (directors and associate directors of Houses of Justice). The POs' answers provide information about the ways in which they feel supported and endorsed by their superiors when carrying out frontline work. Similarly, although they work independently on their respective caseloads, the respondents were asked about the relationship they have with their colleagues.

Finally, the interviews concluded with a general question about the current situation and future of the Houses of Justice. This was also the opportunity to ask participants if they felt as though something was left to be said before ending the interview. Such practice provides a good opportunity for free speech on any matter related to our interview.

Overall, coping mechanisms were not frontally discussed during the interviews to avoid influencing participants' accounts of their practices. Rather, questions mostly addressed the typical interactions officers have with their supervisees, their perceptions and assessment of offenders, and the ways in which they implement supervision. The various constraints encountered by POs during probation work were also addressed. Further details and illustrative examples were, however, asked to learn how the participants deal with such constraints, especially when they seem to affect the supervision of probationers. During the interviews, some room was also given to the broader reflections that the participants brought forward regarding their general work experience as POs, i.e., their personal dilemmas and their opinions regarding the evolution of their institution.

The empirical objective of this data collection process was to obtain insights about how officers interact with offenders and about the conditions in which they carry out their work. However, since I did not collect any observational data to document officers' practices with offenders, the collected data only account for POs' own experiences and perceptions of their practices with offenders. In other words, the analysis of POs' ways of coping and interactions with offenders is only based on accounts provided by officers themselves.

Section III – Second study: an online survey questionnaire to collect the data

The second study explores how organizational and individual factors impact the importance that POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion. To study this inquiry, I rely on the structural equation modeling (SEM) of the data collected among Belgian POs via an online survey. To date, most of the research on trust and trustworthiness has relied on quantitative data collected using experimental settings (e.g., Buchan et al., 2008; Sutter & Kocher, 2007) or questionnaire surveys (e.g., Ristig, 2009; Colquitt et al., 2007; Yang, 2005; 2006).

In the first subsection, I present the technique that was used for data collection, i.e., an online survey questionnaire. Then, I present how the questionnaire was constructed before briefly reporting how the implementation of the survey unfolded. In the last subsection, I explain how the management of the collected data was approached.

A – An online survey questionnaire

The quantitative data were collected via an online survey questionnaire (Van Selm & Jakowski, 2006; Evans & Mathur, 2005; Wright, 2005). This survey technique facilitates the sampling and collection of a large volume of data about the variables of interest. Online survey questionnaires offer many advantages over traditional surveys (Evans & Mathur, 2005; Wright, 2005). They are practical and convenient for both the researcher and the respondents; all the questionnaires can be sent at once – regardless of the geographical distance and the number of cases – and the collection of responses is automated. Respondents can react to the survey at their convenience and take as much time as they need to answer the questions. Online surveys also increase the range of options regarding the type of questions and the ways in which they are presented to respondents (by adding conditions to questions or randomizing the appearance of items, for instance).

The response rate of online surveys is, however, a contentious topic; evidence suggests that online (e-mail) surveys tend to be associated with lower response rates than those of other survey techniques (e.g., Shih & Fan, 2009; Manfreda et al., 2008). It is often argued that, given the growth of unsolicited mail, survey invitations can be disregarded as *junk mail* by respondents who "have a tough time distinguishing between a legitimate survey and a spam message" (Evans & Mathur, 2005, p. 201). To avoid this issue, special efforts were dedicated to the preparation of survey invitation letters (explaining the objectives and usefulness of the survey) and follow-up messages.

Instead of relying on a randomized or a stratified sample, this study targeted the whole population of POs working in Belgium. The online survey was sent to all the POs working for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Flemish Region using their professional e-mail addresses. These professional addresses were obtained through contacts with the central administration offices of the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Flemish Region. After several meetings, the central administration offices in both areas kindly agreed to sharing the addresses of their frontline collaborators for the purpose of this study. I had to guarantee the anonymity of respondents and assure that all professional e-mails would be deleted after the completion of the study.

B – Construction of the questionnaire

The construction of the questionnaire items was facilitated by the adaptation of existing (and validated) scales. For instance, scales measuring the general propensity to trust (Rotter, 1971; 1980) or the subjective role perceptions of POs (Schaefer & Williamson, 2017; Fulton et al., 1997) have already been successfully implemented in previous studies. The questionnaire was constructed in two steps. Prior to the implementation of the semi-structured interviews, an initial pool of variables and associated items was prepared and ready to be incorporated into the survey. Then, the insights brought to light by the semi-structured interviews with POs were used to provide much-needed information to adapt the wording of the items of the questionnaire and construct of new (adapted) items. This fine-tuning process was implemented to ensure the adequate measurement of our dependent and independent variables. For instance, the identification of the offender traits that POs tend to associate with trustworthiness proved useful for measuring trustworthiness assessments in the survey. Most of the work did, however, consist of choosing the appropriate vocabulary so that the items could make more sense for the respondents.

I now briefly present the measures that were used to acquire the data. The operationalization of the variables and their link with the literature will be presented in greater detail in the sixth chapter. All the survey items are also available in the appendix 5 (in English):

- First, the dependent variable – the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments (when opting for a benevolent course of action) – was measured with four items. The POs were asked to picture themselves in a meeting situation with an offender. Then, they were invited to rate four of the offender's attributes according to the extent to which they would entice them to opt for a given course of action during supervision. The offender's attributes were depicted in terms of ability and goodwill, i.e., traits that are typically associated with favorable trustworthiness perceptions (Das & Teng, 2001; Nooteboom, 1996; Mayer et al., 1995). The third and fourth offender attributes were constructed using the exploratory data obtained via the semidirected interviews conducted with French-speaking POs. The socio-professional integration of offenders and the absence of addiction were added as positive traits accounting for specific dimensions of trustworthiness. All four items were measured on a 9-point Likert scale.
- Second, the POs' workload was measured with two items capturing the degree to which POs feel pressured by the amount of work during a typical workweek (the sentiment of

having enough time to carry all the required tasks and the necessity to work overtime). The respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point Likert scale.

- Third, the POs' perceptions of <u>managerial support</u> were measured with eight items. Since the original items were part of an existing scale (Garland, 2004), the phrasing had to be adapted to the context of the study. These items measure the respondents' perceptions of several dimensions of their first-line managers' support, such as their receptiveness to POs' inputs, their endorsement of initiatives, or their stance on autonomy. The respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point Likert scale.
- Fourth, the respondents' <u>policing stance</u> was measured with a *subjective role scale* (Fulton et al., 1997) comprising seven items. The wording of the original items was adapted to the context of the present study and changed to in the first person (I …) to ensure consistency with the rest of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to reply to these statements using a 9-point Likert scale.
- Fifth, the respondents' <u>general propensity to trust</u>, defined as respondents' expectations about the trustworthiness of other people (Rotter, 1980; 1971), was measured with three items. I reused a version of this scale that was successfully implemented by Yang (2005). The respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point Likert scale.
- Finally, some <u>control variables</u> were also measured in the questionnaire. Those included the respondents' gender, age (the respondents were asked to pick an age group corresponding to their age), and their educational level (the respondents were asked to pick their highest qualification achieved among categories constructed using the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education).

The questionnaire was structured in a succession of coherent sections corresponding to specific areas of interest. For instance, the first section of the questionnaire addressed general questions about the respondents' characteristics (age, gender, etc.) The following section was dedicated to the measurement of the POs' organizational conditions (workloads, managerial support). Once the structure and the questions were stabilized, the questionnaires were uploaded and encoded in LimeSurvey. LimeSurvey is an online survey tool that allows the creation, personalization, and implementation of online surveys. Using the tool's functionalities, I made sure to randomize the order of apparition of the scale items in the questionnaire. This step should negate the risk of systematic bias induced by the order in which the items are presented to the respondents (Lavrakas, 2008).

LimeSurvey possesses a repertoire comprising all the encoded e-mail addresses of the studied population. The software uses this information to attribute tokens, send survey invitations, follow-up e-mails, and manage respondents' answers. The invitation letters consisted of a brief description of the study, a personal URL giving access to the questionnaire itself, and my personal contact information. Follow-up emails were usually sent after a few weeks to the individuals who did not complete the questionnaire. Those who completed the survey received a confirmation message thanking them for their time and participation. An English version of these e-mails is available in the appendix 4. All the participants had the possibility to contact me personally if they had difficulties accessing the questionnaire. The respondents' answers were anonymized so that they could not be traced back to the individuals. The survey remained accessible for a duration of four months so that a maximum number of POs could participate.

Two versions of the questionnaire had to be created to reach both French-speaking and Dutch-speaking respondents. These two versions were separately uploaded and then implemented using LimeSurvey. The first version of the survey was constructed in French and was distributed to POs working for the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. This version was then translated into Dutch using the specialized translation services offered by the Living Languages Institute of UCLouvain. The new Dutch version was then distributed to the officers working for the Houses of Justice of the Flemish Region.

C – The implementation of the survey

I used the LimeSurvey software to implement the online questionnaire survey among all POs working for the French-speaking *Maisons de Justice* and the Flemish *Justitiehuizen* in Belgium. The data were collected in two steps. The first round of data collection was implemented between mid-July 2018 and mid-October 2018 among all POs working for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. A total of 459 POs were invited via their professional e-mail addresses to participate in the survey. Two reminder emails were then sent to nonrespondents after the start of the study: the first one on the 26th of July 2018 and the second one on the 25th of September 2018. By the end of the surveying process, a high response rate was achieved at 70.6%, with a total of 324 returned questionnaires, of which 227 were complete questionnaires.

The second round of data collection was conducted among the POs working for the Flemish community. The survey was initiated in May 2019 and ended at the end of August 2019. A similar process was applied with the remainder of the e-mails. A first reminder was sent on the 23rd of June 2019, and a second reminder was sent on the 6th of August 2019. A total of 466 POs were contacted via their institutional e-mail addresses. A total of 238 Flemish POs returned their questionnaires, of which 188 were complete questionnaires. The survey ultimately achieved an acceptable response rate of 51%.

In total, 925 Belgian POs were invited to complete the questionnaire. With the exception of POs working for the German community (approximately 20 to 30 POs), this number arguably accounts for the total population of POs who were active in Belgium when the data were collected. With 562 returned questionnaires, the overall response rate can be considered high at 60.7%. As a comparison, most e-mail surveys tend to achieve a response rate of approximately 35% (Shih & Fan, 2009; Sheehan, 2001). This result has positive implications since it considerably improves the external validity of the study.

Table 3 – Number of invitations and responses by community

	Number of invitations sent to POs	**Number of returned questionnaires**	**Number of complete questionnaires**
Wallonia-Brussels Federation	459	324	227
Flemish Region	466	238	188
TOTAL	925	562	415

Overall, the data collection process was executed without any major setbacks. The only complication was related to the timeframe during which the two surveys were implemented. Upon contacting the central administration offices of the Flemish and French-speaking Houses of Justice, I learned that they were not keeping any up-to-date listing of the professional e-mail addresses of judicial assistants. In both cases, this information was decentralized at the level of the local agencies. As a result, the two central administration offices had to compile the e-mail addresses themselves before sharing the information, which understandably took some time. In both cases, summer was already approaching by the time I received the full e-mail listings from the central administration offices. Initially, my goal was to avoid sending the questionnaires in July and August because of the negative impact this might have on the response rates. Indeed, many judicial assistants tend to take their holidays during this time period, and the remaining personnel are usually put under pressure because of the lower level of effectiveness. Ultimately, I ran both surveys long enough to avoid this issue, and the survey eventually reached an acceptable response rate by the time we concluded the data collection process.

D – Managing the collected data

Once the data collection process was concluded, I carried out all the data management procedures using SPSS statistical software. The first step was to merge the two datasets. Although the French-speaking and Flemish POs have effectively worked for separate institutions since the 2014 Belgian state reform, I decided to treat them as one group in the same data set. These two institutions still operate in an almost identical fashion. They still share the same institutional goals and the same hierarchical structure, and both the French-speaking and Flemish frontline workers are expected to carry out probation work in accordance with the same procedures.

In preparation for the upcoming SEM analysis, I dealt with missing data using a listwise deletion procedure (Brown, 1983). Listwise deletion is a conventional ad hoc method that is commonly used to handle missing data in SEM (Carter, 2006; Allison, 2003). In total, 147 incomplete questionnaires, 97 among French-speaking POs and 50 among Flemish POs, were removed from the questionnaire using listwise deletion. A data screening procedure was also performed to eliminate the unengaged respondents, i.e., the respondents whose answer pattern does not fluctuate for every single item (Gaskin, 2012). These individuals were identified in two steps. First, I created a variable computing the SD of the POs' responses for each separate group of items. For instance, the SD_manag variable was created to measure the SD in the POs' responses to the eight items measuring the amount of perceived managerial support (manag1-8). An SD score of zero means that the respondent provided the same answer to all the items. A new filter variable was then computed to count and filter off all the respondents who displayed abnormally low SD scores (SD = 0) in their answers to three or more groups of items. In total, 45 unengaged respondents, 29 among the French-speaking POs and 16 among the Flemish POs, were identified and eliminated from the analysis. Thus, the final data set compiles the answers of 370 Belgian POs.

Various possible causes can be attributed to the relatively high number of incomplete questionnaires and unengaged respondents, such as the length of the questionnaire or the timeframe during which the questionnaire was submitted. However, the total number of cases included in the study is largely above the minimal threshold needed to implement our statistical analysis. N = 100 to 150 is often considered a minimum sample size for conducting SEM (Ding et al., 1995). The current sample size can be considered high (N > 300) by the standards of SEM analysis (Kline, 2010).

Table 4 – Number of filtered cases and remaining sample

	Number of returned questionnaires	Number of incomplete questionnaires	Number of unengaged respondents	Remaining cases
Wallonia-Brussels Federation	324	97	29	198
Flemish Region	238	50	16	172
TOTAL	562	147	45	370

Several transformations had to be performed on the data to proceed to the statistical analyses. In particular, a reverse coding procedure was implemented on some specific survey items to ensure that all values conveyed the same meaning within each particular scale. This was especially needed for specific items that used negatively worded phrasing. To some extent, this procedure was also applied across the different scales so that all groups of items could vary in the same direction, with higher scores indicating a greater agreement to positively worded statements. The following survey item values were reverse coded.

I reverse coded the two items relative to the POs' workload perceptions (otherworkload1-2). In the questionnaire, these items were formulated so that higher scores designated lower amounts of perceived workload. For instance, the first item presented the following statement to the respondents: "During a typical workweek, I have enough time to carry out all the tasks that are expected of me". This statement was then assessed using a 9-point Likert scale where "1" stands for *fully disagree* and "9" stands for *fully agree*. POs who chose the lower values in the Likert scale were in fact perceiving a great amount of workload when answering the questionnaire. Conversely, those who selected higher values were not perceiving important workloads at the moment of the study. The reverse coding of these two items allows higher values to correspond to greater amounts of perceived workload. The original values were transformed using the same formula as above. A new name was also attributed to the reverse coded items by adding "_r" to the original item names.

Section IV – Data analysis

In the first study, I will implement a thematic analysis to analyze the semi-structured interviews conducted with the POs. In the second study, I will rely on an SEM analysis of the data collected via the online survey. The choice of these specific methods is adapted with the object of each of those studies and consistent with other similar research on SLB (e.g., Hunter et al. 2016; Hysing, 2014) and trust (e.g., Frazier et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2007). For each of these studies, I present the method that will be used for data analysis, i.e., its choice, its specificities, and how it will be implemented.

A – First study: analyzing the qualitative data

In this subsection, I present the method that was used for data analysis in the first study.

1 – A thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews

In the first study, I applied a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Bryman, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994) to the semi-structured interviews conducted with Belgian POs. A thematic analysis "is a method for identifying and interpreting patterns of meaning across qualitative data" (Clarke & Braun, 2014, p. 6626). It consists of the transposition of a given corpus of texts (official documents, press articles, interview transcripts) into a number of themes that are representative of the qualitative data under analysis and connected with the object of the study (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 236). A theme is a group of words that conveys meaningful indications about the content and significance of a coherent excerpt from a text document in relation to the research question (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006). As its name suggests, the main mode of operation of this type of analysis consists of the systematic identification, aggregation, and interpretation of the various themes contained in a corpus. This process is otherwise known as the *thematization process* (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016). Thematization has two main functions. First, it serves a screening purpose with the identification (in the data) of all the themes that bear some relevance with regard to the research problem. Second, it faithfully documents the recurrences, similarities, divergences, and overlaps between the themes found in a corpus. In other words, when systematically applied to all the documents of a corpus, this process allows us to draw up a general panorama that exposes the main patterns found in the data with regard to the object of the study. Ultimately, the thematization process culminates with the construction of a general thematic tree of the analyzed data (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016). This synthetic representation of the qualitative data compiles all the themes found in the material, merging themes that convey similar meaning and substance, displaying their relations, and sorting them according to higher categories of items.

Thematic analysis is a common and intuitive tactic used in qualitative data analysis to transparently and systematically summarize data and generate meaning (Bryman, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Although it is mostly used in psychology, health and wellbeing studies (Clarke & Braun, 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2006), it has also been successfully implemented in public administration (e.g., Schiffino et al., 2015) and in SLB studies in particular (e.g., Hughes & Condon, 2016; Hunter et al. 2016; Scourfield, 2015; Hysing, 2014). This approach is especially adapted to the study of coping and discretion because it has the advantage of flexibility; not only does it allow the identification of themes that are anticipated by the conceptual framework (the causes of coping, for instance), but it also leaves the door open to unanticipated themes contained in the data. In other words, thematic analysis can be used both deductively and inductively, favoring the emergence of unexpected themes and associations. In the context of a postpositivist approach, this approach offers the opportunity to let the frontline actors speak and be heard.

2 – In practice

To perform this analysis, I privileged a *continuou*s thematization process of the semi-structured interviews. The continuous thematization allows for a more complex and finer analysis of the corpus in comparison to *sequenced* approaches that produce more streamlined and uniform analyses (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 241). A sequenced thematization requires two successive steps. First, a limited number of random transcriptions are analyzed. Then, the list of themes that emerges from the first round of analysis serves as a template for the analysis of the rest of the corpus. This approach is particularly adapted when dealing with a large number of interviews. However, what sequenced thematization gains in efficiency, it loses in granularity because less attention is paid to the emerging themes in the second step of the analysis. In contrast, the continuous thematization is operated in one unique step. All the transcriptions are successively broken down into themes and categories and continuously compiled in one unique document (a general theme record or a thematic three). This means that obtaining a complete panorama of the different patterns of meaning in the data is only possible when the last transcript has been thematized. Although it promises a richer analysis of the corpus, this approach also presents some downsides, as it is much more complex and time-consuming to implement (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016).

Despite these challenges, I opted for a continuous thematization process for two main reasons. First, the number of interviews to analyze (29) was relatively manageable, allowing the implementation of this approach without any major constraints. Second, using this approach can maximize the quality and quantity of information extracted from the source material. This is particularly valuable since little is still known about Belgian POs' frontline practices, and the continuous thematization facilitates the emergence of unexpected themes from the data.

In practical terms, each interview transcription was broken down into themes and categories. Theme identification required finding the right balance in the level of inference; themes can neither be too abstract nor too precise to convey usable information. Adding a sense of directionality to the themes[29] particularly helped to convey the adequate amount of substance and meaning. This process initially required some trial and error but progressively led to the identification of themes and their classification according to abstract categories of items. For each interview, I produced a theme record summing up all the verbatim excerpts, the associated themes, and the theme categories that were identified during the analysis. Simultaneously, I constructed a general theme record compiling all the themes found in the analyzed transcriptions. The relevant themes and categories were regrouped when they conveyed a similar meaning and substance. Oppositions and overlapping themes were signaled using new categories (if needed). The following table (table 5) provides an illustration of the basic structure I used to organize the theme records for both single interviews and the entirety of the corpus. Once a complete theme record was constructed, I started constructing the full thematic tree. This tree displays the themes, main categories, subcategories, and their connection with salient thematic ensembles (or thematic axes). In the fifth chapter, I will thoroughly present the branches of this tree to introduce the results of the analysis.

[29] For instance, a theme such as *"workloads are too important"* is preferred to a theme entitled *"workloads*" (which is better suited for a more abstract theme category)

Table 5 – Structure of the theme records

Theme record of interview n° …			
Categories	**Subcategories**	**Themes**	**Excerpts**
Category 1	Subcategory 1	Theme 1	Excerpt for theme 1
		Theme 2	Excerpt for theme 2
	Subcategory 2	Theme 3	Excerpt for theme 3
		Theme 4	Excerpt for theme 4
		Theme 5	Excerpt for theme 5

Instead of relying on specialized software to implement the analysis, such as Dedoose or Nvivo, all the transcribed interviews were manually thematized. This choice was made to better fit with the requirements of the continuous approach (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016). Indeed, continuous thematization is a process that requires considerable back and forth in the analysis (a constant check of the reformulation of themes, deconstruction, and reconstruction of the thematic tree), which is not necessarily possible in the same way as most automatized programs.

The conceptual framework was then confronted with the discourse of the respondents. Indeed, the use of a systematic method for data collection and data analysis ensured that a structured and comprehensive account of the participants' structures of thought and action (Van Campenhoudt et al., 2017, p. 290) was provided via the thematic tree. Furthermore, theme saturation was reached through the repeated observation of similar themes or the contradiction of others, from one interview to another. The use of a continuous approach also ensured that a maximum of data was extracted from the source material, thus "revealing explanatory perspectives that were not anticipated at the beginning of the research[30]" (Van Campenhoudt et al., 2017, p. 290). Overall, this analysis tries to meet the criteria of observability (empirical verification), replicability of the research, and intersubjectivity that are key for conducing qualitative research in social sciences (Mellos, 2009).

[30] Translated from « révélant des perspectives d'explication non perçues au départ de la recherche » (Van Campenhoudt et al., 2017, p. 290).

Although the themes reported in the analysis provide insights into how and why POs cope and interact with clients during public service delivery, it should be kept in mind that the data was collected via interviews rather than via direct observations of officer-offender interactions. In other words, the practices reported in the analysis are based on officers' own accounts. This imposes some caution when interpreting the results. This is further discussed in the conclusion of the fifth chapter.

B – Second study: analyzing the quantitative data

In this subsection, I now present the method that was used for data analysis in the second study.

1 – Structural equation modeling of the collected data

SEM is an increasingly popular method that allows the determination of whether the researcher's a priori theoretical model (i.e., predicted relations among variables) is supported by the data. SEM can be described as the combination of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and multiple regression. Not only does it test for the observed variables included in the model, but it also tests the relationship among the latent variables of the model (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2012). Latent variables are variables that are not directly observed but are instead inferred on the basis of a group of observed variables (indicators). In other words, SEM both assesses the factorial structure of latent variables, or how well "groups of variables define a construct" (Crockett, 2012, p. 31), and tests the relationships among the different constructs of a model. SEM tends to be used as a confirmatory technique. Hypothesis testing is used to make sense of the relationships among the latent constructs and observed variables of the model. For instance, a researcher could use an SEM analysis to test the validity of an a priori theoretical model where an exogenous (independent) latent variable is expected to predict an endogenous (dependent) latent variable.

Beyond the estimation of the relations between latent constructs, SEM techniques offer several other advantages over traditional multivariate approaches (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). For example, while multiple regression analyses simply assume the absence of measurement errors between explanatory variables, SEM takes into consideration observed variables' measurement errors. This ensures a high reliability of the results because it reduces the risk of drawing biased conclusions resulting from erroneous interpretations (Tarka, 2018;

Grewal et al., 2004). Furthermore, SEM permits a simultaneous analysis of all the variables and indicators included in complex models. This allows the researcher to reliably test all the hypotheses of his model at once (Acock, 2013; Werner & Schermelleh-Engel, 2009).

SEM is a powerful tool that can be used to test complex relationships among the latent and observed variables of a model. This technique has been repeatedly and successfully implemented in a wide variety of social science research (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2012; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). SEM receives a growing interest in public administration (e.g., Wright et al., 2012; Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2008; Camillieri, 2006) and has already seen some successful, yet limited, use in SLB research (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Wellstead & Stedman, 2010). The research on trust also heavily relies on SEM techniques. Trust tends to be conceived as a latent construct, and the validity of trust models is often tested using SEM (e.g., Alarcon et al., 2018; Frazier et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2007). An SEM analysis is thus particularly adapted for the second study of the present research. The second study looks at how individual and organizational factors affect the importance that POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a given course of action with offenders. In other words, this study tests a theoretical model (that will be presented in the sixth chapter) where a series of exogenous latent variables are expected to predict an endogenous latent variable. For instance, using SEM, the study tests whether POs' propensity to trust (a latent exogenous variable measured with three indicators) predicts the importance that POs give to their trustworthiness assessments (a latent exogenous variable measured with four indicators).

2 – In practice

A two-step SEM (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) was implemented to analyze the quantitative data collected with the online questionnaire survey. The analysis was applied using the model building and estimation functionality of STATA 16 statistical software. In accordance with the two-step approach, the first step of the analysis was dedicated to a CFA. A CFA is a theory-driven confirmatory technique that allows to confirm the factorial structure of the variables included in the analysis (Byrne, 2016). During the construction of the measurement model (essentially the CFA), I first specified the theoretical model, i.e., determined which were the observed and latent variables of interest and then made sure that the model was identified[31]. Then, I estimated the measurement model and examined the relationship between the latent variables and their measures (indicators). A fairly conservative cuff-off point of .45 (Comrey & Lee, 1992) was used to drop the indicators that did not contribute enough to their respective latent variables. At this point, I also relied on fit indices to assess the degree to which the measurement model was supported by the observed data (Byrne, 2016). The following fit statistics were used to determine the degree of model fit: the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and the P-value for the model fit statistic (Acock, 2013). Modification indices provided by the statistical software were used to improve model fit and to minimize the differences between the observed covariance matrix (in the data) and the estimated theoretical covariance matrix.

Once the measurement model was adequately fitted, I proceeded with the construction of the structural model. First, I specified the relationships among the latent variables of the model in accordance with the theoretical model (i.e., drawing the adequate regression paths among the latent variables of the model). Then, the whole model, including its measurement and structural components, was estimated and tested using the same fit statistics used for the measurement model. A good model fit indicates that the relationships among the exogenous and endogenous variables of the model can be reported and interpreted.

Conclusion of the fourth chapter

I conclude this chapter with a brief personal account about the implementation of the qualitative and quantitative data collection methods used in this research. Although efforts were made to sequence the semi-structured interviews and the implementation of the online survey, a series of shortcomings (public transportation strikes, rescheduled interviews, etc.) delayed the finalization of the qualitative data collection process. This led to a short overlap period during which the online survey was already sent to French-speaking POs and a few last semi-structured interviews still had to be conducted. At that point, most of the interviews were already performed and in the process of being analyzed.

Hence, the last few interviews were somewhat peculiar in the sense that these POs were simultaneously subjected to two contrasting forms of inquiries. The ensuing informal

[31] i.e., there are two or more latent variables in the model with a minimum if three indicators loading on each of them (although two are also acceptable under certain conditions). Model identification also typically involves fixing at least one loading per factor (Kline, 2010)

discussions with these participants were enlightening in that they revealed contrasting perceptions and reactions to different forms of data collection methods. The discussions with the interviewees hinted at a form of frustration and tiredness with regard to the online survey format in general (which is not only used by researchers but also by the administration itself). The interviewees expressed some mild discontent with the rigid nature of questionnaires and the lack of nuance that is allowed in one's answers. They were, however, quite enthusiastic at the idea of expressing their experiences and perceptions on a conversational mode in a dynamic of mutual exchange.

Overall, this speaks to the complexity of data collection in social sciences. It is unclear to what extent participants' personal views or preferences for a mode of inquiry might, or should at all, be taken into consideration when designing a research study. However, researchers should perhaps consider the possible tiredness and frustration associated with some of the most common forms of data collection methods. Such phenomena might be susceptible to affecting the response rates of surveys, although this was arguably not the case in the present research.

Chapter 5 – Frontline practices in probation: how do Belgian probation officers cope during public service delivery?

Introduction

According to scholars, POs face substantial challenges on the front lines, such as high caseloads and limited time and resources to make quick yet consequential decisions about offenders' futures and community safety (see: Ahlin et al., 2016; Kerbs et al., 2009). The literature also stresses that these frontline officers are increasingly confronted with new regulations and tools that conflict with their own personal values and judgments about how to carry out their work with probationers (e.g., Grant, 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012). Since the 1980s, correctional reforms in western countries have placed greater emphasis on system management and risk-based actuarial penal strategies (Pratt et al., 2013). Just as new public management challenged established practices in street-level organizations (Brodkin, 2012; 2011), the so-called new penology has undermined the traditional values and practices of correctional practitioners (Pratt et al., 2013). However, POs do not remain idle in the face of these constraints and challenges. In other words, similar to most street-level bureaucrats, POs implement coping mechanisms (Hupe et al., 2015; Lipsky, 2010) to deal with the constraints and changes they experience on the front lines (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Brodkin, 2011; Thorén, 2008; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Although the systematic literature review provided some hints about the nature and causes of POs' frontline practices in western countries, there is still a need for an empirical study using a street-level perspective to assess how POs cope and under what circumstances.

This is particularly the case in less-studied contexts. Indeed, most of the studies included in the review originated from Anglo-Saxon countries (see: Albarillo, 2014). It is thus not certain that similar conclusions should apply to smaller-scale and less-common contexts, such as probation services in Belgium. In contrast to other major western countries, Belgium has long remained relatively unscathed by new penology (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010) However, in the past few years, publicized incidents, such as the Amrani case and the terrorist threat in Europe, have fostered reforms to better manage and monitor aspects of POs' work (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). The adoption of new directives, such as the *directive verification* of 2016, further supports the thesis of a managerial and punitive trend in Belgian probation systems (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). In that regard, Belgium provides a unique opportunity to study the repercussions of an ongoing managerial and punitive shift in correctional workers' frontline practices. At the same time, Belgian probation services have been increasingly solicited in the past few years. This is particularly true in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, where the probation services documented an 86.6 % increase in the number of new cases between 2013 and 2017 (SPF justice, 2019). However, little is known about how these changes and new constraints are perceived and dealt with by Belgian POs. This raises the following questions: how do Belgian officers cope during public service delivery and with what outcomes for offenders? In response to which specific constraints do officers cope? To what extent are these constraints related to some of the most recent managerial innovations and changes in practice guidelines?

The objectives of this chapter are twofold. The first is to determine how Belgian officers cope while providing public services. Not only do I seek to describe frontline practices according to the classic coping styles described in the SLB literature, but I also aim to categorize these practices according to the outcomes they yield for clients (Tummers et al., 2015). The second core objective of this chapter is to examine the causal links explaining Belgian POs' coping practices – in other words, determining why officers cope during public service delivery. To that end, special attention will be paid to identifying the specific constraints explaining POs' adaptations.

Drawing on the conceptual framework presented in the third chapter, this fifth chapter will explore a series of hypotheses regarding the nature and determinants of Belgian POs' coping practices during public service delivery. Coping mechanisms refer to a wide variety of practices that manifest in different ways across contexts (Hupe & Hill, 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard Moody & Musheno, 2003). To accurately explore the multifaceted nature and causes of coping, I will use an inductive approach to analyze 29 semi-structured interviews conducted with Belgian French-speaking POs. Identifying recurring patterns of meaning in the data via a thematical analysis (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) will then enable me to detect causal links and compare and contrast them with the literature. The first section presents a brief reminder of the conceptual framework and hypotheses that will be explored in this chapter. In the second section, I report the results of the thematization process before interpreting the results in the third section. I synthesize the findings in the final section of this chapter.

Section I – Conceptual framework and hypotheses

In a broad sense, coping mechanisms are "the cognitive and behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate, or reduce external and internal demands and conflicts among them" (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, p. 223). In other words, this term refers to the set of routines, shortcuts and compromises that street-level bureaucrats develop to ease working conditions and better manage their activities to attain imposed objectives (Tummers et al., 2015; Winter, 2012; Lipsky, 2010). These frontline practices are a central focus of attention in public administration research because coping mechanisms shape policy on the ground (Brodkin, 2012) and affect the way public services are delivered to citizens (Bartels, 2013; Hill & Hupe, 2009). In this section, I first provide a brief overview of some of the main coping styles and the factors that are usually associated with the implementation of these practices. I then introduce my hypotheses regarding the nature and causes of coping.

A – The nature and conditions of coping

Early in his work, Lipsky suggested some ideal types of coping that have been further tested and expanded by scholars over the years (Tummers et al., 2015; Winter, 2012). A non-exhaustive list of well-known coping styles includes the following frontline practices. First, street-level bureaucrats can resort to rationing (Lipsky, 2010), whereby frontline workers limit, or ration, citizens' access to public goods and services that should be made available to most. To some extent, rationing may involve an uneven distribution of public goods and services to citizens if a street-level bureaucrat chooses to restrict the provision of public goods and services to a limited number of clients. So far, rationing has been successfully observed in many contexts, such as among hospital employees and child welfare caseworkers (e.g., van Loon & Jakobsen, 2018; Baviskar & Winter, 2017; Ellis et al., 1999). Second, frontline workers can decide to select and prioritize clients who appear the worthier (e.g., Vedung, 2015; Smith & Donovan, 2003) and the "most likely to succeed in terms of bureaucratic success criteria" (Lipsky, 2010, p. 107). Creaming (or cherry-picking) is often relied upon to achieve better management of work-related activities when confronted with limited resources (Tummers et al., 2015; Lipsky, 2010). Third, street-level bureaucrats can seek to manage complexity and make their tasks more manageable by routinizing and simplifying the mass processing of tasks and clients. Examples of routinization are numerous and range from complaint processing by consumer protection attorneys (Silbey, 1980) to implementation of assessment routines by Swedish social workers (Thorén, 2008). Fourth, when encountering stressful problems during public service delivery, street-level bureaucrats can rely on instrumental actions (Skinner et al., 2003) to find long-lasting solutions that also fit their clients' needs (Tummers et al., 2015; Tummers & Rocco, 2015). Frontline workers overcome these challenges by "using their networks and skills and, in the end, improving public service delivery" (Tummers & Rocco, 2015, p. 818). For instance, Wagenaar (2004) describes how Dutch immigration officers devised solutions to deal with the challenges of tense long-term management of a large group of immigrants. Finally, rule-bending or -breaking behaviors can to some extent be understood as situational coping. As argued by Maynard-Moody & Musheno (2003), such behaviors arise when rules and guidelines interfere with frontline workers' professional values and perceptions of clients' needs (also see: Tummers et al., 2012).

Coping mechanisms can have direct consequences for how public services are ultimately delivered to citizens (Hupe & Hill, 2015; Hill & Hupe, 2009). In a systematic literature review on coping, Tummers et al. (2015) identify three main families of coping according to the outcomes street-level bureaucrats seek to produce for clients via their coping practices. First, according to the authors, frontline workers can cope by *moving toward clients*. This first category describes instances in which frontline workers cope by adjusting their actions to their clients' benefit. Second, the authors assert that street-level bureaucrats can *move away from clients*, referring to cases where frontline workers actively take steps to avoid any meaningful interactions with clients. Finally, frontline workers might *move against clients*, which occurs when they are deliberately intransigent, confrontational, or hostile with clients (Tummers et al., 2015). The authors also consider how different coping styles (e.g., creaming, rationing, routinizing) should be nested within each of these families of coping. For instance, Tummers et al. (2015) argue that moving toward clients is generally associated with rule-bending or -breaking practices, cherry-picking, implementation of instrumental actions, and use of personal resources to help clients. Moving away from clients typically involves routinizing and rationing, while moving against clients can entail rigid rule following and aggression (Tummers et al., 2015, p. 1103). This classification of families of coping was successfully used in an empirical study of how frontline workers cope when implementing e-government policies (Tummers & Rocco, 2015).

In addition to identifying and categorizing ways of coping, the SLB literature highlights several factors that foster implementation of coping mechanisms. Broadly speaking, street-level bureaucrats need resources to perform properly (Brodkin, 2011; Thomann, 2015), and resource limitations or inadequacies “overdetermine the development of informal practices” (Brodkin, 2012, p. 943). The term resources can refer to either frontline workers’ personal resources – such as training, values, and experience – or their organizational resources, such as the amount of time available to make decisions or the size of caseloads (Lipsky, 2010). Among the commonly cited sources of coping, large workloads and caseloads are regularly highlighted in the literature (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Hupe et al., 2016; Brodkin, 2011; Lipsky, 2010). Heavy workloads affect client preferences (Fraser & Estabrooks, 2008) and limit frontline workers’ time and ability to adequately process information (Godfrey & Yoshikawa, 2012). Frontline workers’ role conflicts are also pinpointed as a source of coping (Tummers et al., 2012; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Conflicts between roles occur when frontline workers have difficulties balancing work instructions and objectives with their own perceptions of clients’ needs, which often derive from normative preferences and professionalism (Tummers et al., 2012; 2009). More generally, it is argued that normative preferences and interpretations of rules can alter frontline workers’ compliance with work instructions, sometimes leading to rule-bending or -breaking practices (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). Similarly, it has been shown that perceived client meaningfulness – or, in other words, frontline workers’ perception of the value of a policy for clients – can strongly affect street-level bureaucrats’ willingness to implement a policy and its related tools and instruments (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2013; Tummers, 2011; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). The literature also pinpoints changes in management styles, particularly with the advent of new public management, as other sources of coping (Brodkin, 2011). In particular, the growing importance of managerialism in street-level agencies has resulted in an increase in work constraints such as paperwork (e.g., Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Wright, 2003) and fostered the adoption of informal strategies to counter managerial control (Brodkin, 2011; Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007).

B – Picturing the nature and conditions of POs' coping behaviors

Based on the evidence found in the systematic literature review on officer-offender interactions in probation services and in existing SLB research, I now propose an outline of the likely nature and causes of coping in Belgian probation systems. First, I will explore how organizational factors might impact Belgian POs' coping styles before moving to the potential effects of individual factors. Note that unanticipated causal links are also expected to emerge as a result of the inductive component of the method that will be implemented to analyze the qualitative data.

1 – Organizational factors: a lack of organizational resources

The systematic literature review revealed several factors associated with implementation of specific coping mechanisms in probation services. Among these, excessive workloads and caseloads were indicated as one of POs' most recurring constraints inhibiting the proper implementation of probation work (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; Kerbs et al., 2009). For instance, POs tend to develop routines in supervision to minimize the extra work imposed by administrative tools and obligations. This notably involves overlooking some of their supervisees' minor rule violations to avoid paperwork (e.g., Viglione et al., 2015, Clear et al., 1992). Similarly, workload was found to be associated with prioritization strategies (cherry-picking), which typically involve giving additional attention and effort to certain specific probationers to manage caseloads more efficiently (e.g., Ahlin et al., 2016; Benson, 1985).

These results tend to be consistent with examples in the SLB literature. Workloads and the resulting time constraints are some of the main drivers of coping (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Brodkin, 2011; Lipsky 2010). Studies have shown that street-level bureaucrats in all sectors tend to ration the delivery of services (e.g., Hayashi, 2011; Clark-Daniels & Daniels, 1995) and cherry-pick their clients "to secure a fair and manageable workload" (Vedung, 2015, p. 18) (also see: Van Berkel & Knies, 2016, Thorén, 2008). Similarly, research shows that frontline workers regularly use routinization and simplification techniques to deal with heavy caseloads (e.g., Jewell & Glaser, 2006; Brintnall, 1981).

> **H1.** – If exposed to heavy workloads and time constraints, POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders.

As previously mentioned, Belgium has long remained relatively unscathed by the managerial reforms and actuarial penal strategies inspired by new penology (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). However, scholars argue that the Belgian probation system is currently experiencing a progressive shift toward managerialism and a *rational-technical* (Ferguson, 2011) approach to probation work (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). Since the mid-2000s, a slew of highly procedural and technical tools, guidelines, and procedures have been progressively introduced to manage and guide judicial assistants' work. For instance, POs are expected to perform probation work in accordance with an adapted Business Process Reengineering (BPR) protocol, which provides hands-on and systematic, yet cumbersome, guidelines for each individual step of the supervisory process. It was also in this time period that Belgian POs became acquainted with SIPAR (Système informatique PARajudiciaire). SIPAR is a dedicated data-processing system that contains a database, dedicated interfaces and specialized computer software to help managers and judicial assistants with their daily tasks. However, while this system quickly proved to be an indispensable tool, it also sparked varying levels of criticism among judicial assistants who saw it as time-consuming and poorly designed (Jonckheere, 2013). This trend toward managerialism has further accelerated during the last few years. Publicized events, such as the 2011 mass shooting in Liège and the terrorist threat in Europe, precipitated the adoption of new practice guidelines to better manage and monitor some aspects of POs' supervision of offenders (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). In 2016, an internal directive (*directive verification*) updated the BPR protocol by adding supplementary guidelines and further requirements for verification procedures. This directive was also aimed at enhancing judicial assistants' contacts with third-party services, such as the police (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2016). However, all these changes arguably increased the complexity of the requirements and procedures that judicial assistants must follow in offender supervision.

Managerialism and managerial control in street-level agencies often exacerbate frontline work constraints (Brodkin, 2011). These include mounting paperwork and accountability (Taylor & Kelly, 2006) but also increased time pressure in general (Wright, 2003). Brodkin (2011) empirically demonstrated that frontline workers adapt to new managerial constraints with routinization and rationing practices, such as "shifting administrative costs to clients, favoring speed over need, substituting ritual for resources, and de-legitimating claims for help" (Brodkin, 2011, p. 273).

H2. – Because of the current shift toward managerialism, POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders.

2 – Individual factors: a lack of personal resources

As shown in the systematic literature review, POs often experience conflict between their own ideals about offender rehabilitation and institutional policing imperatives (e.g., Nash, 2011; Kemshall, 2000b; Whitehead, 1987). Usually, such role conflicts emerge when POs are exposed to an "external punitive discourse" that challenges their own professional values and ideals about offender supervision (Persson & Svensson, 2012, p. 10). Such role conflicts are also likely to be prevalent among Belgian POs. The Belgian probation system is currently at a crossroads. On the one hand, it is still attached to the traditional rehabilitative goals of probation, emphasizing social work values and frontline professionals' discretion (Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). For instance, risk and need assessment tools – whereby offenders are ranked according to categories of statistically predicted risk – are still nonexistent in Belgium despite their widespread adoption in the wake of new penology. On the other hand, it is argued that the latest updates to rules and procedures, such as the 2016 *directive vérification*, support the thesis of an ongoing punitive trend in the Belgian probation system (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). Given these ongoing changes, Belgian POs are probably struggling to reconcile new punitive imperatives with their established views and ideals of probation practice.

Role conflicts exert an influence on officers' use of discretion and the implementation of coping mechanisms (Tummers et al., 2012). The systematic review provides evidence that POs overcome role conflicts by breaking rules – for instance, when POs engage in transformative work with offenders, emphasizing trust and self-esteem, instead of implementing the appropriate tools and protocols (e.g., Digard, 2014; Corrado et al., 2010). This is consistent with other rule-breaking behaviors described by Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003), which arise when rules and guidelines interfere with frontline workers' professional values and normative ideals (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003).

H3. – If POs experience conflict between their roles, they tend to break the rules during public service delivery.

As previously mentioned, normative preferences and professional judgments can affect frontline workers' compliance with rules (e.g., Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). Rule-breaking might also arise when frontline workers consider the tools and procedures that they have to implement as inappropriate or of little value given the specific needs of their clients. In other words, frontline workers might refuse to comply with rules when they do not see that work instructions would benefit clients. The literature indicates that limited (perceived) client meaningfulness reduces frontline workers' willingness to implement a policy and its related tools and instruments (e.g., Tummers & Bekkers, 2013; Tummers, 2011; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). So far, no studies have directly explored the effects of frontline workers' perceived client meaningfulness on coping in public service delivery. However, I contend that POs do not comply with certain work instructions when they fail to perceive meaningfulness or value of these instructions for probationers.

H4. – If POs perceive work instructions as meaningless[32], they break the rules by not following these instructions.

Section II – Thematization process report

I implemented a continuous thematization process (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016) with the transcribed interviews. Thematic analysis consists of systematic identification, aggregation and interpretation of themes discussed in a given corpus. It is a proven method for summarizing and identifying patterns of meaning across qualitative data (Bryman, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994) that has also been successfully implemented in some SLB studies (e.g., Hunter et al. 2016; Hysing, 2014). The main benefit of this method lies in its flexibility: it can be used both deductively and inductively, favoring the emergence of unexpected themes and associations.

From February to October 2018, I performed a total of 29 semi-structured interviews among French-speaking judicial assistants. The interviews were conducted in nine of the thirteen Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Each interview transcription was broken down into a number of themes that were progressively associated with higher

[32] They do not perceive any significant value (or meaningfulness) in the tools and procedures they have to implement given the specific needs of their supervisees.

categories and sub-categories of items. The theme identification process was performed using printed versions of the transcribed interviews. The main themes found in each interview were then categorized and documented in separate theme records. After the thematization process was complete, all the documented themes and categories were regrouped into a unique theme record. In the process, relevant themes and categories were combined when they conveyed a similar meaning and substance. A thematic tree was subsequently constructed based on the full theme record. This complete thematic three provides a visual and synthetic representation of all the relevant themes and categories present in the corpus. The full thematic tree is available in appendix 3.

This section reports and describes the main thematic axes, categories, sub-categories, and themes that were extracted from the interviews. I also illustrate some of the topical themes and categories using relevant branches of the thematic tree.

A – Characteristics of the participants

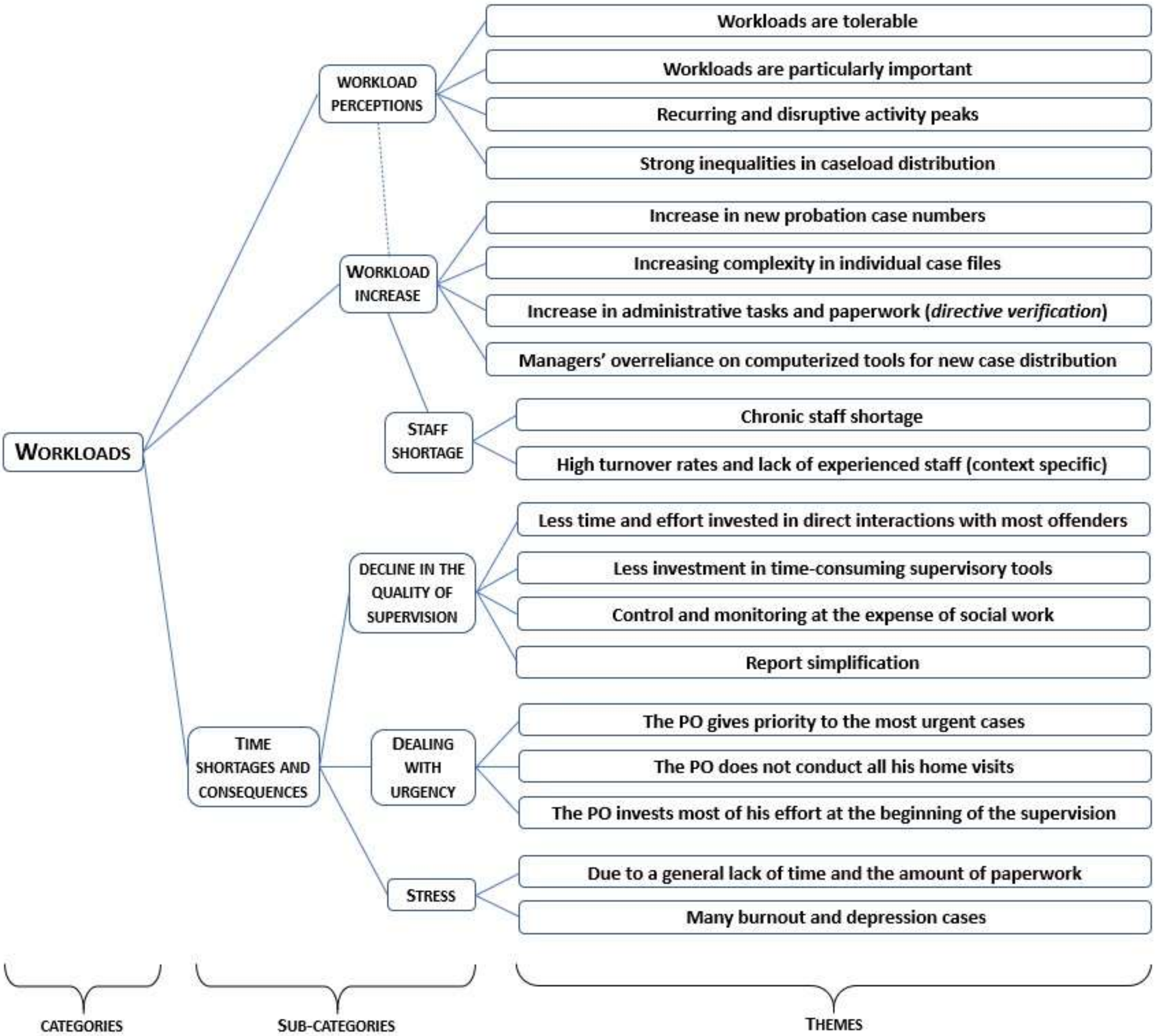
I systematically compiled demographic data about the interviewees over the course of the thematization process. A vast majority of the participants were women (80%). Judicial assistants had on average 13 years of experience, ranging from four to twenty years. In terms of educational and professional background, 60% of the respondents had graduated with degrees in social work. Other main educational backgrounds were criminology (20%), psychology (15%) and sociology-anthropology (5%). Most of the respondents were in their forties. Overall, these numbers are consistent with the data published in the 2018 annual activity report of the Houses of Justice (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2018). This suggests that this sample is fairly representative of the French-speaking PO population in Belgium.

B – Organizational conditions

The first, and most prevalent, thematic axis found in the interviews consists of participants' accounts of their organizational conditions. Three main theme categories were identified in the transcribed interviews on that specific topic. The first theme category is POs' relationships with and perceptions of their local managers (the directors or associate directors of local agencies). The themes belonging to this category are polarized in content. On the one hand, a significant number of POs expressed general satisfaction with how their local managers handle their work-related doubts, questions, and difficulties. Some officers also praised their local managers for the protection and legitimacy they can offer in cases of hardship or difficult decisions. On the other hand, the analysis uncovered a large number and variety of themes alluding to POs' dissatisfaction with the relational and physical barriers separating them from their local managers. A considerable number of officers expressed frustration at their managers' overall lack of physical presence. Although their managers proclaim themselves accessible via phone and email, POs expressed a preference for face-to-face interactions to address work-related issues. This situation seems especially common in smaller Houses of Justice where local management is shared with other local agencies. On another level, judicial assistants criticized local managers' lack of awareness of frontline work pressures (especially regarding workloads). To some extent, this growing disconnect can also be attributed to dissatisfaction with some of the managerial choices made by directors. For instance, officers repeatedly highlighted managers' unwillingness to communicate on the issue of subjective workloads. Others voiced their disapproval, or open distrust, of managers' reliance on computerized tools to monitor and direct POs' work activities.

The second main theme category is POs' perceptions of their workloads. As illustrated in figure 7, workloads and the associated sub-categories of themes appear particularly critical to judicial assistants. First, the thematization results provide some evidence of how officers feel about their current workloads. Strikingly, only a handful of participants reported having acceptable workload levels. Most officers complained about heavy workloads and expressed annoyance at the recurrent and disruptive peaks of activity when caseloads are updated. Others criticized the extra pressure brought by unequal caseload distribution. Second, a significant number of officers noted that they have been subject to a long-lasting trend of increasing workloads in the Houses of Justice. Four explanations for this trend were suggested by the participants in this theme sub-category. First, many respondents expressed concern about soaring numbers of new probation cases. Growing caseloads weigh heavily on the shoulders of these officers. Second, other POs noted that individual cases are gradually becoming more complex, further draining their time and energy. Notably, these officers described witnessing a general deterioration in offenders' social environment over recent years. Third, some judicial assistants reported being overwhelmed by the additional administrative tasks and paperwork brought by the *directive verification*. This new directive added supplementary guidelines and requirements for verification procedures. Fourth, POs blamed the way managers handle the caseload distribution process. As discussed later, managers rely on indicative workload estimates to distribute new cases to their subordinates. However, officers asserted that the computerized tool that produces these numbers tends to underestimate actual workloads. Some argued that managers use this tool to justify unequal case distribution. Concurrent with these growing demands, judicial assistants also noted chronic staff shortages in the Houses of Justice. Finally, most of the POs spontaneously mentioned a generalized lack of time as a direct consequence of their workloads. The thematic analysis revealed three sub-categories of themes referring to various consequences of time shortages. Inadequate time was first associated with an overall decline in the quality of offender supervision. For instance, many POs reported investing less time and effort in preparing for and conducting direct interaction with offenders. Several officers also reported cutting back on use of time-consuming supervisory tools, such as home visits. Others admitted to reducing performance of social work aspects of supervision practice while maintaining less time-intensive control and monitoring activities. Some judicial assistants also noted simplifying reports for judicial authorities. Second, time shortages appear to be met with a sense of urgency in caseload management. For instance, in a recurring theme, judicial assistants voiced their proclivity for establishing priorities among cases, thus selecting and diverting their time and effort to the most demanding ones. The final theme sub-category highlights the stress, burnout and depression that some POs describe witnessing among their colleagues as a result of time pressure.

Figure 7 – Organizational conditions: workloads and time constraints



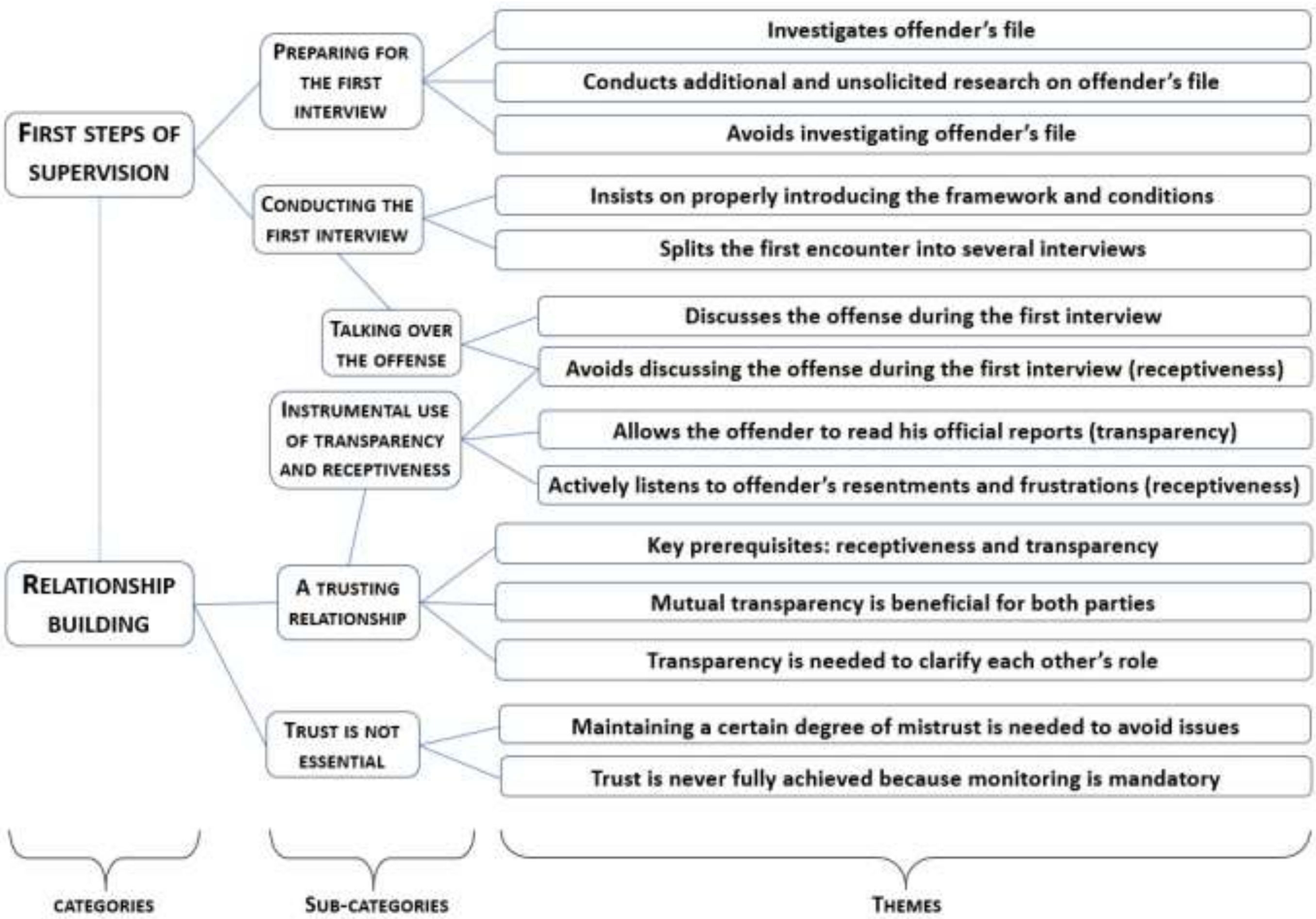
The third main theme category alludes to the specificities of the local environment and its impact on POs' work experiences. First, the analysis provides insight on how the socio-demographic characteristics of the local population affect the types of cases on which POs focus. For instance, some judicial assistants highlighted migration, terrorism, and radicalization as salient issues in their specific judicial districts. Others mentioned frequently dealing with poverty and social isolation. A second sub-category of themes voiced in the interviews described how the size of the agency impacts officers' relationships with managers. During the interviews, judicial assistants working in smaller Houses of Justice voiced two themes that alluded to incoherent local management and overall unavailability of managers. This is mostly because many smaller Houses of Justice share their management staff with other local agencies. Local managers must travel between agencies to ensure a minimal presence on the ground. However, this situation creates many inconsistencies, since each local agency is confronted with specific challenges that managers are not always able to take into consideration. The participants also consistently noted that working in smaller agencies requires a higher degree of polyvalence because staff numbers are limited. Conversely, larger agencies seemingly provide more opportunities for officers to specialize in specific tasks. Finally, judicial assistants frequently mentioned themes referring to how geographic constraints, such as the size of a judicial district or the accessibility of a local agency, can affect offender supervision. Offenders who cannot afford a car, who have disabilities, or who have limited access to public transportation can have serious difficulty reaching a local agency operating in a large judicial district. Furthermore, officers working in large judicial districts feel compelled to make home visits to compensate for offenders' mobility issues. However, officers acknowledged that relying heavily on home visits has some drawbacks, such as a large amount of time lost in travel.

C – Implementing offender supervision

A second notable entry in the interview data consists of POs' statements regarding how they usually implement offender supervision. In this subsection, I elaborate on four key facets of POs' supervision work with offenders. The first concerns how officers handle the first steps of supervision – in other words, how they prepare for and then conduct their first meeting with offenders. The analysis reveals that three approaches are generally preferred by officers when preparing for a first meeting with offenders. As required by work instructions, the participants reported performing a quick investigation of offenders' files in preparation for the meeting. Some, however, stated that they prefer to conduct a more thorough investigation of offenders' criminal records (beyond what is usually solicited) to avoid unpleasant surprises during supervision. In contrast, other POs claimed to avoid studying offenders' files to prevent developing preconceived ideas and judgments about offenders. The next theme sub-category compiles POs' approaches to conducting the first interview. Most POs stated that they always properly introduce the supervision framework and conditions to the offender during the first meeting, as suggested in work instructions. Some, however, choose to split the first encounter into several meetings and take more time to exhaustively address these topics. Remarkably, POs are split regarding discussing an offender's crime during the first interview. Although discussing the offense is required at this stage, some judicial assistants said that they avoid addressing this topic during the first interview to favor relationship building with the offender. In contrast, other POs claimed that they always try to discuss the offense in the first meeting because doing so enables quick identification of issues that will need to be resolved during the supervision process.

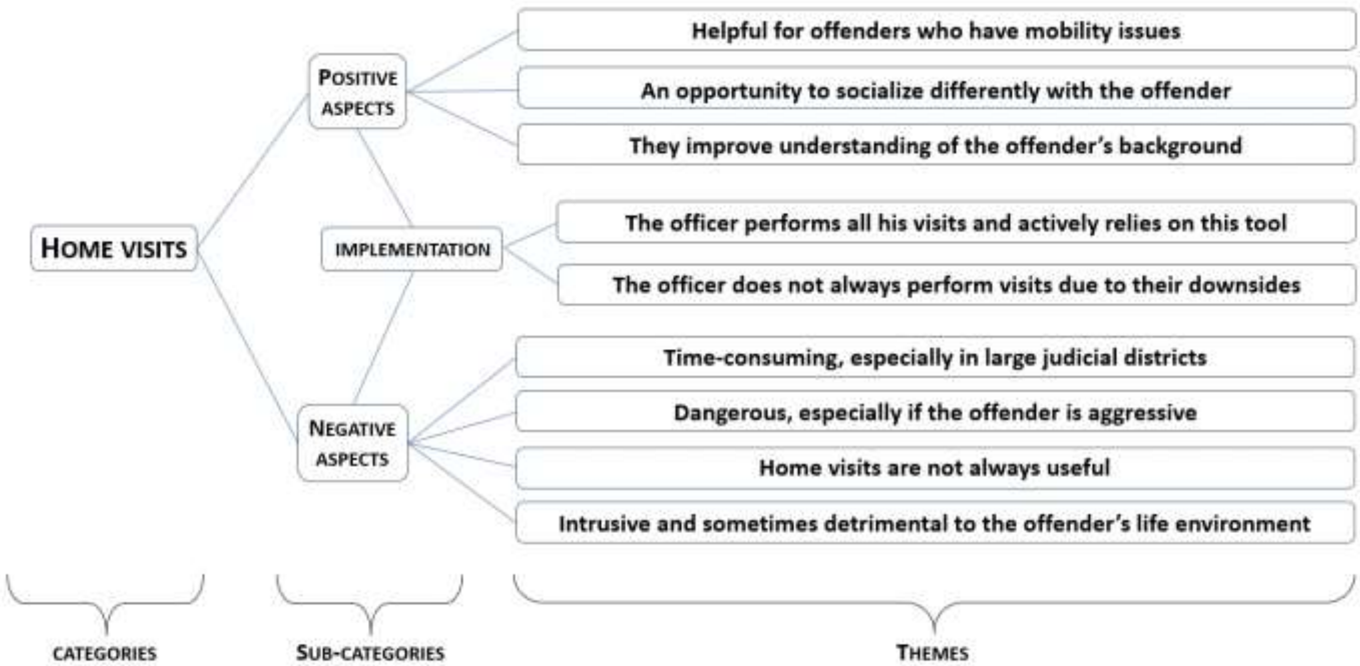
The second general theme category that emerges from the interviews relates to POs' efforts to build relationships with probationers (figure 8). Officers frequently referred to the notion of a trusting relationship to describe how they conceive their ideal interactions with offenders. Many stated that the key prerequisites for a trusting relationship are mutual transparency and receptiveness to offenders' problems and needs. In the eyes of many judicial assistants, reaching mutual transparency with an offender is beneficial for both parties. It reduces the time and effort allocated to supervision because the offender openly communicates with the officer. It also improves the quality of supervision for the probationer. The thematic analysis also reveals that POs make instrumental use of transparency and receptiveness to create trusting relationships and, ultimately, facilitate offender supervision. For instance, some judicial assistants reported that they allow offenders to read their official reports (written for the probation board) to foster mutual transparency. Others defuse probationers' resentment and frustration by actively listening to them. In doing so, they ease offenders' acceptance of the supervisory process and foster the construction of a mutually beneficial relationship. As noted above, not talking about the offense during the first interview was also cited by officers as a way to support the relationship-building process. By avoiding a controversial topic during the first meeting, the PO demonstrates his receptiveness to and consideration for the offender's difficult situation. Remarkably, the thematization reveals that officers do not necessarily consider relationship building to require trust in the conventional sense. Some argue that they will never fully trust an offender because of the risks involved and that probation work imposes mandatory control over offenders, which reduces the need for trust.

Figure 8 – Implementing offender supervision: the first steps of supervision and relationship building with offenders



The third main theme category reports officers' views and practices regarding home visits. Since implementation of the *directive vérification*, POs are required to perform at least one home visit during offender supervision. The thematic analysis shows that perceptions of this supervision tool are particularly polarized among POs (figure 9). On the one hand, three themes suggest that officers value home visits in the course of offender supervision. First, as previously noted, home visits are often praised by officers for the support they bring to probationers who struggle with traveling to the local agency due to mobility issues. Second, officers acknowledge that this tool provides a unique opportunity to socialize outside the austere meeting rooms of the House of Justice. Meeting in a familiar environment helps quell some of offenders' misgivings about supervision. Third, some judicial assistants stated that performing home visits improves their understanding of offenders' background and life environment, which in turn greatly improves the quality of supervision. On the other hand, four themes indicate that officers also see drawbacks to home visits. First, judicial assistants often emphasized that home visits can be particularly time-consuming, especially in large judicial districts. Second, POs expressed concern about meeting offenders in an unfamiliar environment. Officers are not trained to deal with aggressive individuals, and some feel anxiety at the idea of performing home visits. Third, other judicial assistants criticized home visits for their lack of usefulness in certain situations. They believe that sometimes visiting the offender will not provide any additional useful information that will improve the supervision. This is especially the case if the offender is compliant and integrated in a stable social and professional environment. Fourth, some POs dislike home visits due to their intrusiveness in offenders' private lives. Imposing a home visit can sometimes exert unwanted and detrimental pressure on an offender's family and close relatives. Positive and negative perceptions about home visits were usually accompanied by statements regarding their implementation. The POs who hold positive views about this tool usually professed to rely quite heavily on home visits in offender supervision. Conversely, those who voiced concerns and criticisms tend to be less systematic in conducting home visits.

Figure 9 – Implementing offender supervision: performing home visits



The fourth and last theme category focuses on officers' anxiety about offender reoffense in the course of supervision (figure 10). In cases of reoffense, the probationer's file can be scrutinized by penal authorities and managers, who check whether the judicial assistant conducted supervision in accordance with work instructions. Although it was not fully anticipated, this topic spontaneously emerged as a regular subject of discussion during the interviews. On the one hand, a sub-category of themes indicates that POs particularly dread the possibility of being blamed in the aftermath of a reoffense. Many judicial assistants expressed being in constant fear of making a mistake. In other words, they fear being held responsible for an offender's actions due to lack of foresight, poor judgment, or general lack of attention during supervision. POs added that this fear is further amplified in the case of a major, publicized reoffense. In those cases, officers are particularly worried about the potential involvement of other actors in the public sphere. Public awareness would probably draw the attention of politicians and the media. According to respondents, these actors are usually eager to assign responsibility and designate culprits, which puts further pressure on POs. On the other hand, many participants voiced their desire to hedge against potential consequences of offender reoffense. Two themes alluding to self-protective measures were identified in the interviews. First, some participants admitted to shielding themselves from any risk of accusation by being overzealous in their case management. For instance, these officers double-check their supervisees' signs of compliance so that nothing can be held against them in the event of a reoffense. Second, officers voiced their proclivity to seek the support and protection of local managers in cases of problems with offenders. In doing so, they ensure a form of support from their superiors if penal authorities demand additional details on the handling of an offender's case.

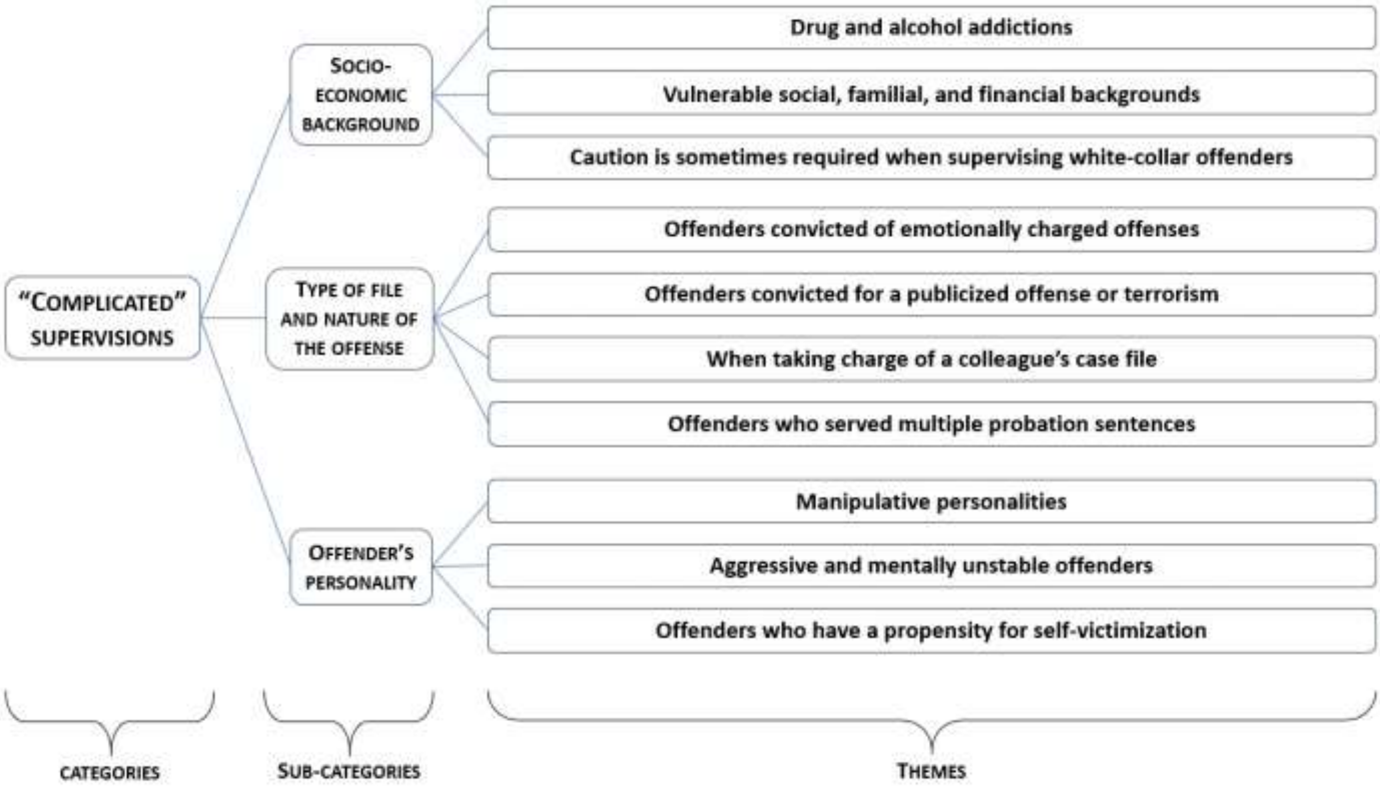
Figure 10 – Implementing offender supervision: fearing offender reoffense

D – Offender profiles and supervision dynamics

The third thematic entry in the data reports POs' comments about how offenders' characteristics can affect the dynamics of the supervision process. Three main categories of themes emerge in the analysis. The first addresses how judicial assistants assess new probationers and predict how they will fare in supervision. Overall, officers tend to be attentive to three sets of characteristics when forming their first impressions of a new probationer. First, they look at offenders' general ability to comply with the probation framework. For instance, punctuality and proactivity are usually regarded as positive traits auguring successful probation. Second, officers give attention to socio-economic factors, such as offenders' social and professional integration. A stable familial environment, financial security, and active employment are usually perceived as factors contributing to successful supervision. Third, officers scrutinize offenders' attitudes regarding their sentence. Offenders who reject the judge's verdict and view themselves as victims tend to have compliance issues during the supervision process. Officers are, however, mixed regarding their ability to predict how offenders' supervision will progress. Some officers doubt the reliability of their first impressions. Although they develop some intuitions about offenders, they cannot safely predict how offenders will fare in supervision. Others declared confidence in their ability to quickly and accurately determine how well a new offender will fare. Experienced officers, in particular, claimed that one encounter is generally sufficient to determine whether the supervision process will be problematic.

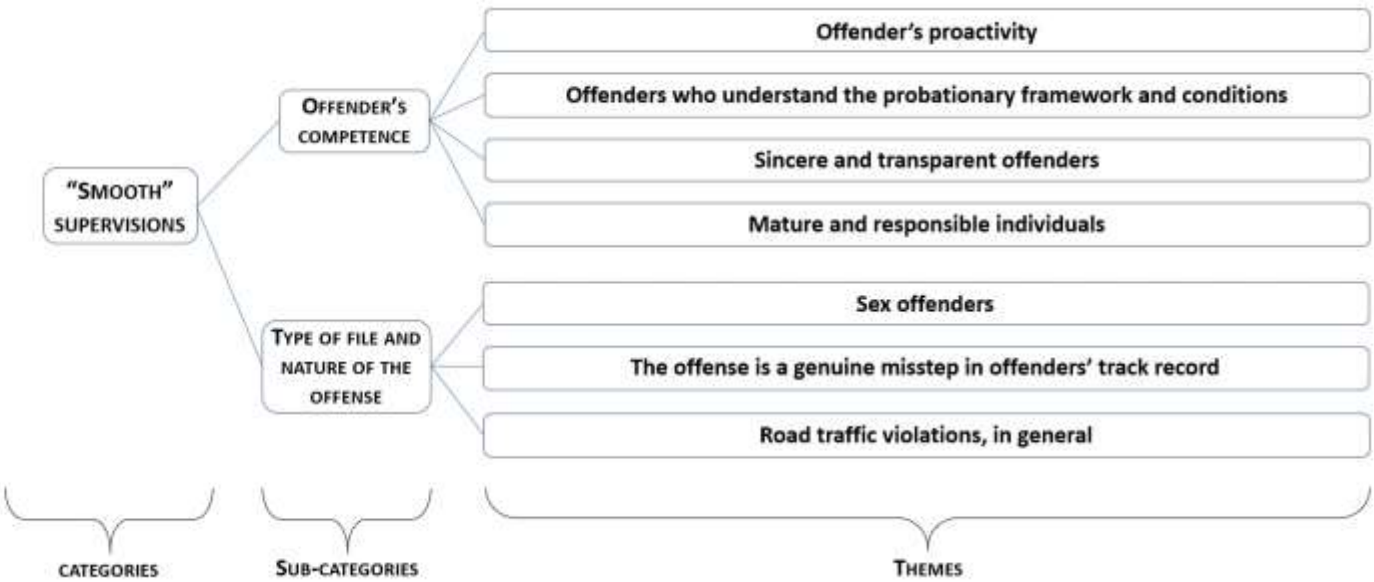
The second main theme category compiles POs' descriptions of offender profiles that are, in their experience, generally associated with complicated and demanding supervision. As depicted in figure 11, three theme sub-categories – each alluding to a set of challenging offender traits – were identified in the interviews. The first regroups themes referring to offenders' socio-economic situations. Many officers cited drug or alcohol addiction as a negative trait that increases the odds of reoffense and proof counterfeiting. Addictions tend to jeopardize the success of rehabilitation because they add a layer of unpredictability in the course of supervision. Consequently, POs stated that probationers who struggle with addiction issues usually require more vigilance than others. Judicial assistants also cited individuals with vulnerable social, familial, and financial circumstances as requiring constant attention. These offenders are at higher risk of experiencing a major breakdown due to their situation and thus require special attention. POs also noted that caution is sometimes needed in supervising white-collar offenders. This is especially the case with offenders who know the rules (e.g., judges, police officers, prison guards) and are willing to bend these rules to their advantage. The second set of challenging offender traits involves characteristics of offenders' cases. For instance, POs emphasized that supervising cases involving emotionally charged offenses can be mentally demanding. It is sometimes difficult for offenders to maintain emotional distance with cases of domestic violence, harassment, and child abuse. POs also reported walking on eggshells when supervising offenders who have been convicted of publicized offenses or terrorism. According to participants, these cases are particularly demanding since they are a source of pressure and require constant attention to detail. Other challenging cases include those that are handed over by colleagues. Taking charge of a colleague's case was often described as problematic because the offender can be unwilling to adapt to the new officer in charge. POs also noted that probationers who have already served multiple probation sentences due to past reoffenses are difficult to supervise. These offenders usually know how to use the rules to their advantage and show limited interest in the goals of supervision. The third and final theme sub-category compiles POs' accounts of problematic personality traits found among offenders. Some officers struggle in dealing with manipulative personalities, while others feel powerless and unsafe when confronted with aggressive or mentally unstable offenders. According to participants, offenders who have a propensity for self-victimization are also challenging to supervise because they tend to avoid self-questioning and oppose the probationary framework.

Figure 11 – Offender profiles and supervision dynamics: "complicated" supervisions



The third main theme category compiles judicial assistants' descriptions of offender profiles that are, in their experience, usually associated with straightforward and problem-free supervision (figure 12). Two sub-categories of themes, each alluding to a set of favorable offender characteristics, were identified in the interviews. The first regroups four themes referring to probationers' competence and reliability. Many officers cited offenders' proactivity as a positive trait that usually predicts a successful outcome in the supervision process. For instance, officers argued that offenders who prepare for their meeting in advance tend to have a better understanding of the supervision framework and an awareness of the consequences of noncompliance. In other words, proactivity often goes hand in hand with other positive qualities that facilitate the success of supervision. Some officers also value probationers' sincerity and transparency, while others are more confident when working with mature and responsible individuals. Probationers who have responsibilities, such as a stable job or a family, are seen as displaying more stability and reliability. The second set of positive offender traits covers characteristics of offenders' cases. Surprisingly, some POs emphasized that sex offenders usually have a straightforward and successful supervision process. These probationers are often remorseful for their actions and tend to take the supervision seriously as an opportunity to change (by actively attending psychological counseling, for instance). Finally, POs are usually confident about the progress and outcome of supervision of offenders who admit and regret their wrongdoing. This is especially the case when the offense appears to have been a genuine misstep in an offender's track record.

Figure 12 – Offender profiles and supervision dynamics: "smooth" supervision



E – Administrative tools and instruments

The fourth thematic axis assembles POs' views about the main administrative tools and instruments they rely upon for task planning and caseload management. Two main theme categories emerge from the analysis. The first focuses on officers' impressions and use of the BPR protocol. On the one hand, most judicial assistants appear to hold positive views of the BPR. Many participants highlighted the positive impact the BPR had on standardizing practices. This standardized work protocol helps reduce variations and, sometimes, contradictions among individual practices in the Houses of Justice. Officers are also pleased with the clear and useful reference points the tool provides for decision making. This is particularly the case in complex situations, or when an officer is inexperienced. Judicial assistants are also satisfied with the relative flexibility permitted in the application of the BPR according to specific circumstances. According to the officers, the protocol usually allows sufficient flexibility in practice and does not interfere with offender supervision. On the other hand, participants identified three themes regarding their challenges in using the BPR. First, some officers noted that the protocol is difficult to fully adapt to because it is constantly changing and being updated. For instance, new instructions were added after the directive verification, and POs are not always able to keep detailed track of all the changes in the protocol. Second, some judicial assistants criticized the BPR for standardizing the behavior of younger recruits. These participants stated that the BPR discourages the use of situational judgment and professionalism, especially among younger recruits, who now simply follow the instructions provided by the protocol without question. Finally, some participants noted a lack of detail in the protocol. According to them, the BPR does not contain sufficient instructions on how to handle certain specific situations**.**

The second theme category focuses on officers' accounts of SIPAR. SIPAR is an integrated data-processing system containing a database and computer interfaces supporting officers' task planning and case management. During offender supervision, judicial assistants are required to enter all their activities into the SIPAR database. Opinions are divided about this electronic tool. On the one hand, a sub-category of themes indicates that SIPAR is sometimes appreciated by officers for pragmatic reasons. In particular, some participants praised its usefulness for task planning and management. They argued that SIPAR effectively enables active management of large caseloads. POs also appreciate SIPAR for the reassurance it offers in cases of problems with offenders. Since most actions are entered into the database, SIPAR is a safe and reliable way for officers to prove that they have followed all the work instructions. On the other hand, many participants voiced doubts about this tool. Four themes alluding to the constraining aspects of SIPAR were identified in the interviews. First, some judicial assistants mentioned that entering data in SIPAR is painstaking and time-consuming. The data-entry process is not only repetitive but also particularly burdensome because every minor action must be entered (such as phone calls). Second, officers criticized SIPAR and its multiple interfaces for being poorly designed. Participants reportedly spend considerable time trying to find electronic files and dealing with bugs and other software issues. Third, some participants stated that they are now dependent on SIPAR to do their work. SIPAR has become such a vital tool for POs that they are now helpless when it fails. Finally, a non-negligible number of POs regard SIPAR as a tool for managers to monitor them. Judicial assistants feel monitored by their managers as a result of entering their actions in the database. This theme has some commonalities with a final theme sub-category addressing POs' considerations regarding *resource planning*. Resource planning is a software used by managers to compute POs' occupation rates based on the SIPAR database. Occupation rates are then used by managers to distribute new cases among judicial assistants. POs tend to have negative views about this tool and its use by managers. Many argued that the algorithm that estimates officers' occupation rates tends to severely underestimate actual workloads. For instance, many argued that the algorithm fails to take into consideration the time needed to handle exceptional situations. Judicial assistants also claimed that local managers tend to instrumentalize these occupation rates to justify contentious managerial choices regarding case distribution.

F – Changes in institutional philosophy

The final thematic entry in the data consists of POs' perceptions of changes in the values and guiding principles of the Houses of Justice. Two main theme categories emerge from the analysis. The first assembles participants views about the future evolution of the Belgian probation system, while the second addresses their perceptions of an ongoing punitive and managerial trend. In this sub-section, I mostly elaborate on the four themes that make up the second of these theme categories. First, the thematization revealed that many POs feel that expectations are currently changing regarding the practice of probation work. Officers asserted that they increasingly feel compelled by work instructions to control and monitor offenders instead of helping them during supervision. Overall, POs noted a growing emphasis on quantity (measurable targets, mostly related to offender monitoring) over the social aspects of their work. They observed that these changes have been particularly salient since the adoption of SIPAR in the early 2000s and the *directive verification* in 2016. Second, many officers believe that SIPAR and the *directive verification* have undermined their autonomy and professionalism. Participants tend to fault the procedural nature of these new administrative tools and requirements. They believe that their ability to adequately comply with rules and procedures is now more valued than their ability to make situational judgments and decisions about their clients. Third, participants stressed how terrorism and other publicized events have fostered some of the recent punitive and managerial changes. Houses of Justice are sometimes put under a media spotlight after a dramatic event. Participants particularly mentioned a mass shooting that took place in the city of Liège in 2011. In that event, the perpetrator was already under the supervision of a PO at the time of the shooting. Although the officer in charge had followed all the required procedures prior to the attack, the event still sparked debate over the need for additional safeguards and verification procedures during supervision. The participants argued that the growing terrorist threat in Belgium in the following years further fueled the need for punitive reforms, which ultimately materialized in the form of the *directive verification*. Fourth, some participants appear less pessimistic regarding the recent changes in the values and guiding principles of the Houses of Justice. These judicial assistants claimed that despite the increase in control requirements, the *directive verification* still seeks to further most of the social objectives of supervision.

Section III – Analysis results: overcoming the challenges of offender supervision

Building on the results of the thematization process, I now provide evidence regarding POs' ways of coping before linking these coping styles to specific factors mentioned in the interviews.

A – A coping florilegium

1 – Rationing: privileging quantity over quality

The analysis suggests that probationers tend to receive less active support on a collective scale. Seventeen respondents acknowledged that there has been a decline in the average time and effort allocated to individual face-to-face interactions with probationers. Officers are not able to properly manage their caseloads in the current conditions. At the same time, they cannot afford to reduce their monitoring of offenders' compliance with supervisory conditions. This leaves them with no other choice but to prioritize the most urgent cases while shortening the overall length of interactions and rationing the provision of care and support. In brief, POs describe an overall loss of *quality* in their services to privilege *quantity*.

> I think it hurts the quality of our work and our relationship with the offender. In the first place, because we don't have enough time to prepare for the interviews: to take say… 45 minutes to dip back into the file record, to properly read the notes, and prepare for the interview. Currently, I take five minutes before an interview. I grab the folder, I skim through the last elements and voilà, the offender is already there. (PO B)

As PO F argued, she has no choice but to shorten the overall length of interactions and ration care and support, while maintaining some availability for the most urgent cases, to keep up with the work:

> These days I honestly dedicate less time to my files than before, I mean less than a few years ago. This means that my interviews are indeed shorter, that I no longer systematically dig into things that I would have explored before and that I do skip some part of the aid I should otherwise provide to people. I can't skip the part that concerns offenders' compliance with probationary conditions though. But if one of my supervisees is in trouble, if he has drug issues for instance… then yes, I will help him. But I don't have enough time for my probationers anymore. (PO F)

2 – Prioritization: picking the most demanding cases

Nearly half (fourteen) of the POs stated that they dedicate significantly more time, preparation and care to supervising specific categories of probationers. Most POs tend to practice a form of intuitive offender profiling when beginning the supervision process. On that basis, they quickly identify and eventually prioritize probationers who require more attention. Eleven respondents, however, insisted that such judgments must be made with caution since they are often based on little more than intuition.

The most common criteria for prioritization derive from POs' immediate perceptions of probationers' characteristics. Officers target the probationers who appear to need social support from their point of view. Socially isolated probationers, those with complicated social and familial backgrounds, and those who show signs of alcohol or drug addiction are particularly watched. Other criteria for prioritization are linked to the specifics of the case record. Some cases are viewed as intrinsically demanding. Those involving terrorism and publicized offenses, for instance, require more attention, as POs feel they are "constantly walking on eggshells" in those situations (PO I). Other cases are considered lower priority, judged by the causes of condemnation and the associated probationary conditions. Probationers who have been convicted of traffic violations often fall into this category; probationary conditions usually consist of short specialized trainings in road safety that do not require much PO involvement.

> I'll be honest: there are people that I'll just see for fifteen minutes, even less… because they are not in a social situation that requires my help and support and so our meetings are sometimes very brief. I just collect the evidence showing that he respects the conditions... For others, well it takes more time.

> You see, from a social perspective, people are sometimes facing dire situations and so… we contribute to helping. (PO H)

> There is also a huge difference between someone who drove at 85 kilometers per hour and got caught by a speed camera and someone who has a criminal record and committed an offense while under the influence of alcohol. I will obviously allocate more time to the case where there is a drinking problem. (PO T)

Prioritization is common and occurs when POs adjust their behavior to respond to the needs of a limited number of probationers. It is often intertwined with rationing: there is an overall tendency to ration services, but it seems that judicial assistants make exceptions when they encounter offenders who need more help according to their standards.

3 – Routinization and simplification: narrowing supervision efforts to monitoring

In addition to the new work instructions that already emphasize control and verification procedures, some POs routinize their tasks in ways that further privilege monitoring and self-preservation. Eleven respondents expressed anxiety about offender reoffense, noting that such an event would put them at risk of blame if the file records are not kept up to date. To these POs, the appropriate response is implementation of double-checking practices. This involves performing unsolicited control and monitoring procedures, such as actively seeking any evidence required by the supervisory conditions, double-checking offenders' formal signs of compliance, strict rule following and extra contacts with police.

> With the swelling number of cases, the administrative tasks that are getting increasingly demanding, the verification directive, the events that we witnessed here, like the attack on the boulevard… we start thinking that we should get tougher! Because if by misfortune one of our supervisees gets involved… well, they are going to check on our files and, unfortunately, none of us are perfect… They say that we should file a report after two unanswered meeting notices. Personally, I tend to send [the probationer] a third meeting notice just to be sure. (PO I)

Routinization is often implemented at the expense of time-consuming activities, such as care and support (see rationing). However, by narrowing efforts to monitoring and checking offenders' formal signs of compliance, the supervision process tends to become increasingly automated. This unfortunately leaves little space for social work and contextualization. This process is apparent in the simplification of administrative tasks. For instance, five POs acknowledged simplifying periodic reports for the probation board. These *simplified* reports typically minimize the amount of contextual information provided about offenders' social and familial conditions.

> Well, there are reports that I write without really paying attention to the person. It's not an automatism but well… I write them because I have to write them, and that's it. The problem is that now I'm just focused on writing instead of asking myself if my reports are comprehensive. The report is written because it had to be written […] I am under the impression that I manage files instead of people, it's my impression and it's really a pity because it's a shame to get to that point. (PO C)

4 – Instrumental actions: long-lasting solutions to ease supervision

A majority of POs (nineteen) described the use of long-term solutions to solve frontline work issues while simultaneously responding to the needs of probationers. Offenders often show distrust toward POs at the beginning of supervision. This is challenging for officers because if not addressed, a defensive posture can strain the relationship and seriously hamper the social and monitoring objectives of supervision. This situation often occurs with probationers who depict themselves as victims of an unfair court proceeding. According to participants, these offenders are notoriously difficult to work with. They are generally unwilling to accept the supervision framework and comply with the conditions of probation. Consequently, POs have to spend considerable time and energy to keep these offenders invested in the supervision process.

> It's hard to put words to this. It's in his attitude: if he is withdrawn, if he still refuses to accept the judge's sentence, if he still doesn't admit his guilt at this point… that's someone who will unwillingly go through his supervision

> during the next three or five years instead of sharing it with me. He will be antagonistic right from the beginning, closed, and uncommunicative. (PO I)

> The worst are those who don't agree with the probationary conditions. In those cases, it's very difficult to work with them. I'm currently supervising such a case, it's just terrible… (PO Q)

Judicial assistants' approach to solving this issue is to invest in relationship building with problematic offenders. Ideally, officers hope to achieve a mutually beneficial *trusting relationship* with offenders. The analysis reveals that judicial assistants devise various strategies to facilitate relationship building with their supervisees. These solutions are instrumental in the sense that they ultimately serve the purpose of facilitating supervision work by achieving a mutually beneficial relationship with offenders. A first group of eight respondents reported reading aloud or allowing their supervisees to read reports for the judicial authorities. Through these actions, judicial assistants try to foster mutual transparency with their supervisees. Offenders progressively realize that they can trust their PO and that concealing any relevant information can be counterproductive to the supervision process. Although this practice is highly informal in nature, it is not expressly discouraged in institutional guidelines. To some extent, judicial assistants use this gap in the existing rules to the benefit of probationers and to their own advantage.

> Well, another interesting trick to use is when I make them read my reports […] this puts them in a position of confidence, meaning that they will start thinking: 'well, I know she's not going to backstab me. It's transparent; I understand what is happening…' (PO W)

> Each time that I produce a report, I read it to the offender during the following interview. He always knows what is in the report. If there is an issue, he is informed about it before I send the report [to the competent authorities]. (PO D)

A second group of sixteen POs said they adopt a listening strategy with defensive offenders. These officers allow, and sometimes invite, offenders to express their grievances about the penal process. In doing so, judicial assistants demonstrate their receptiveness to and consideration for offenders' feelings of injustice and mistrust. According to respondents, this mindful attention usually defuses offenders' resentment about the probationary conditions and the supervision framework. In the end, this active listening strategy promotes the construction of a mutually beneficial relationship with the offender.

> After being able to express himself and seeing that I was able to relate to his own reality, he completely changed his stance. And so, from an antagonistic stance he changed to become really, really… collaborative. I think that he is one of the most collaborative offenders I ever had to supervise. (PO A)

Reducing offenders' wariness and distrust by encouraging the establishment of a trusting relationship yields two main benefits for the judicial assistant and his supervisee. First, dealing with a transparent and compliant probationer vastly facilitates supervision work for the judicial assistant. The officer has easier access to information and need not invest additional time and effort to keep the offender invested in the supervision process. Second, the probationer also vastly benefits from these practices. By becoming more transparent, the offender reveals useful details that can be used to better adjust, target and support his efforts of reinsertion.

5 – Rule breaking: non-compliance with work instructions

Seven POs reported breaking the rules to ease offenders' adaptation to the supervisory process. The PBR requires POs to discuss probationers' offenses during the first meeting. However, some POs view this rule as counterproductive since broaching this topic may generate unnecessary tension and further entrench new supervisees in their defensive postures. Furthermore, these officers believe that there are more important matters to address during the first meeting, such as relationship building and explaining the supervisory framework. As a result, they refuse to discuss the offense during the first encounter with offenders, or at least avoid doing so. They asserted that probationers are more *at ease* and in a better mindset to comply with the probation framework when this topic is not discussed, which ultimately facilitates supervision work.

To some extent, this rule-breaking behavior can also be assimilated to a form of instrumental action. Not discussing the offense during the first meeting is a way to facilitate relationship building with supervisees. By avoiding a controversial topic, the judicial assistant shows receptiveness to and consideration for the offender's difficult situation. He ensures that the relationship begins in a non-confrontational way, which ultimately serves the purpose of facilitating supervision work.

> I try to make sure that the person is at ease. I do not systematically evoke the offense and the facts that brought the person here during the first interview, but instead I try to explain why it is important to discuss life trajectories. (PO H)

Respondents did mention breaking other rules. Since the adoption of the *directive vérification*, judicial assistants are required to perform at least one home visit during offender supervision. Some officers, however, consider home visits to be particularly time-consuming, especially those operating in large judicial districts. Others view this tool as superfluous or even counterproductive depending on the individual situation of the probationer. Consequently, nine respondents reported not always performing home visits. These officers tend to confine their use to cases where they seem the most relevant.

> They made it compulsory [conducting home visits], but I don't find it relevant in some cases. So, I take full responsibility when I don't implement them. I explain my point of view in my reports to my superiors and to the penal authorities… so far, they have never asked about anything. Maybe someday it will become an issue… (PO B)

> We enter into the person's private sphere and we meet with people who are part of his life environment. In some cases, it's really beneficial, but in other cases… You see, I have the feeling that sometimes I do it because it's a formality, but it has no real interest. […] I usually do it because it's compulsory, but sometimes I feel like I won't. In those cases, I explain in my reports why I didn't do it. (PO C)

Notably, judicial assistants generally take full responsibility for their behavior. They usually explain to their managers and to the penal authorities why they did not perform the visits. This means that managers are probably aware of, and perhaps turning a blind eye to, some of their staffs' decisions regarding home visits.

B – A matter of survival

1 – The common denominator: increasing workloads and time scarcity

Time management appears to be POs' most salient issue. Eighty-three percent of respondents reported facing time limitations that disrupt adequate management of their cases. POs invoked time constraints to explain either fully or partly the use of each of the coping styles described above. All the POs linked time scarcity with the rationing of social work and the overall decline of face-to-face interaction with probationers.

> Yes, I think that we have less time to dedicate to the offenders, we… well, I personally make my interviews a bit shorter so I can fit a few more appointments during the day. That's a little frustrating because we would like to go a bit further in our work with people… but we don't have the time. Materially speaking, we don't have time… we could possibly work overtime but that's also complicated. In the end, I believe that we are at risk of losing some quality in our work because of that. (PO V)

POs also try to better manage their time by privileging work with high-priority probationers. Due to time limitations, most participants stated that they focus their work efforts on the most urgent, demanding, and challenging cases. Those include offenders presenting addiction issues and those with vulnerable psychological, familial, or financial situations. Terrorism and publicized offenses are also given priority due to their pressing nature and the accountability involved. Other cases are considered lower priority, such as those involving traffic violations.

> It forces us to find some 'criteria' to determine who we will meet later and who we will see right away. This is somehow inevitable if you want to keep priorities straight. So, all those who have addiction problems, well, we will try to see them more regularly than others. […] I clearly try to keep more regular contacts with unstable and insecure people. But also, we must say so, with the cases that 'smell bad'… the things that might eventually break out. It is not currently my situation, but if I had a terrorist case, I would very

regularly meet with the offender... even in case of work overload. […] In turn, I would limit my interactions with road traffic offenders. (PO R)

Rule-breaking practices are also associated with time pressure. When their time is limited, judicial assistants tend to perform a cost-benefit analysis before making home visits. They try to balance the potential benefits of the visit with the amount of time it will take, which could be used to perform other tasks instead. Sometimes, POs choose to break the rules to save time:

> We have less time to allocate to our people. This means, for example, that I will be making fewer visits. There are some people that I was comfortable visiting before, but it takes so much time to make a home visit… so now, I know that I am not going to visit them because I don't have time anymore! The time I spend going on a home visit equates to two interviews that I could be doing here [at the office]. So, I really have no choice at some point. (PO F)

Judicial assistants also use instrumental actions to ease offenders' acceptance of the supervision process. Officers deploy strategies to defuse offenders' resentment, wariness and defensive postures. In doing so, they also aim at reducing the amount of time and effort that would otherwise be needed to supervise an uncompliant probationer.

> Well, I think that the offenders need to feel that someone is finally listening to them because they were not necessarily listened to during the court hearing. Sometimes they arrive here and they don't really know why. Yes, they had an attorney who defended them… but the attorney sought to avoid the prison sentence, and they just acquiesced. In the end, they accepted a sentence but without really understanding its implications and what it meant. Once they get here, it's finally the moment when they can express what they have gone through and feel that someone is actually listening to them […] All of that will contribute to build a trusting relationship and foster the offender's collaboration. Perhaps he will mobilize himself and actively commit to the objective of supervision… […] In this way, we might avoid working with someone who is uninvested in the supervision and who will just come to the

> interviews because he is required to. And I also believe that the risks of reoffense are vastly reduced. (PO N)

Time scarcity, however, remains a loose argument that encompasses a wide variety of interconnected institutional and organizational factors. Participants usually referred to the general notion of *workload* to explain the issue of time constraints. Overall, POs revealed four explanations for an ongoing increase in perceived workload. Most of the time constraints noted by judicial assistants are rooted in these four factors. First, a majority of the interviewees linked time scarcity with an increase in the sheer volume and complexity of caseloads. Eleven attributed time constraints to a significant increase in the raw number of cases they must manage. Most of these cases are low-priority cases, such as probationers convicted of mild traffic violations. However, POs affirmed that, contrary to what is generally assumed by managers, management of these cases is unexpectedly time-consuming. Surprisingly, however, a few other respondents did not necessarily notice such an increase in case numbers. Rather, they reported a gradual increase in the complexity of individual cases due to a worsening societal environment. They argued that supervision now requires additional commitment, which adds an extra burden to POs' workloads.

> I started in a somewhat particular context because it was in the middle of the Dutroux case, in 1996. This case sparked a 'mini-revolution' in the Houses of Justice… they were saying: 'we have to provide judicial assistants with a certain work comfort…' and at that time this comfort was more or less 50 cases before going full-time. But now I, for example… I work at four-fifths time and I just passed the 100 cases mark. All the while, with offenses and problems that are getting more and more serious, with additional demands from our managers such as contacts with the police or data entry in SIPAR, and so forth… I remember when I arrived [here], I had cases of neighborhood conflicts and frog poaching… Now I can't even imagine getting cases like that. Nowadays, these cases are shelved or closed without further action. The population has more and more difficulties in general and we end up with files that are getting increasingly problematic and complex. We no longer have a small problem to manage. (PO T)

The second factor noted by officers is staff shortages. This issue is intimately linked to the growth of individual caseloads and managerial choices. Nearly half of the respondents consider their team numbers insufficient to absorb the ever-increasing work volume. Apart from localized counterexamples, few POs mentioned any recent increase in team numbers. The respondents' demographic characteristics support this idea: only one PO had less than five years of experience at the time of the study. Staff shortages coupled with increasing demands ultimately impose severe time constraints on POs.

> There are two issues. On the one hand, you have growing workloads and, on the other hand, you have the limited number of judicial assistants. We lack four full-time judicial assistants in here. It has been a recurring issue for years. They already sent us reinforcements but we have always simultaneously lost an equal amount in staff. We had several waves of departures and arrivals, but the new recruits never really compensated for the departures. In the end, we still lack four full-time judicial assistants. Workloads are soaring in the meantime. Since January, we almost doubled the number of probation cases. Its huge… and we can't really explain why it's happening. (PO S)

Third, POs blamed managerial choices regarding new case distribution. Following the advent of SIPAR, local managers adopted an informatized tool to assess POs' caseloads and produce indicative figures about individual occupation rates. Local managers use these workload estimates to assign new cases to officers. Two-thirds of the respondents agreed that this *resource planning* software severely underestimates actual workloads, since it fails to take exceptional circumstances into consideration and does not adequately weight cases. Consequently, many POs blamed local managers' overreliance on this computerized tool for their large workloads and resulting time constraints. Some even argued that the resource planning software is being deliberately instrumentalized by local managers to justify assigning extra cases.

> It's a very complicated system because new case files account for a lot [in the calculation], and the old cases account for much less. But clearly it doesn't always portray the truth. We can have a case that goes very well for two years and then it starts causing trouble after the second year. However, at that point, the case will only be worth a few X percent according to SIPAR. (PO R)

> I think that the only number that should really matter is the number of files that are currently open in your file cabinet. But the central administration created a subterfuge so that we can now exceed the 65-file threshold... […] That was the rule before: we could not add more than 65 cases to a judicial assistant's caseload. I don't remember where it was written… uh, it was written somewhere, in a directive. And then, they created something else because they realized that with 65 files per officer, they were not able to deal with the constant backlog. So, they created this resource planning that calculates each moment of supervision in terms of work percentages. (PO I)

Finally, POs noted the additional time pressures brought about by the verification directive. This directive introduced new requirements, such as contacting and asking police services about any potential new offenses before writing a report. While some interviewees acknowledged the necessity of such reforms, thirteen respondents agreed that they contributed to the ever-increasing complexity and burdensomeness of the probationary framework. With even less time on their hands, POs try to adapt and conform to the new guidelines. In the process, many are tempted to ration time-consuming activities such as social work, which produces less quantifiable outcomes than verification procedures.

> [The verification directive] brought about more administrative work for each case. Yes, a lot more, because you have to manage different categories of mail, new contacts, additional interviews, email exchanges, search for new police reports when they are out there, etc. Yes, administratively it's much more unwieldy. And we would have preferred to see new recruits coming along with the directive, but this didn't happen. (PO V)

2 – Walking on thin ice: the weight of accountability

In addition to time constraints, two distinct yet interconnected forms of accountability were mentioned by respondents to explain routinization practices. The first is POs' accountability to management in cases of offender reoffense. When a reoffense occurs, the probationer's file is scrutinized by penal authorities and managers who check whether the PO conducted the supervision in accordance with work instructions. However, probationer reoffense is particularly difficult to predict, and POs are never fully prepared for this eventuality. Twelve respondents expressed their anxiety at the prospect of being blamed if *something goes wrong* during the supervision of an offender. These POs experience constant fear of missing signs of potential reoffense due to lack of foresight and attention. Participants' anxiety at the idea of being held responsible for offenders' actions are illustrated by the following testimonies:

> It already happened, you know? He took a gun and killed people while he was under supervision by a PO […] So, they react, but the first thing they do is to check our files, without even asking us. […] They may well say: 'no worries, your job is well done, a small mistake is not a problem'… but in fact we know very well that we will be put on the back foot. (PO Y)

> I need my work to be kept in order, up to date. Otherwise yes, it can generate stress. Personally, it's mostly related to the recent events … you know, I really fear having one of my cases getting out of control after having missed something important. It can always happen of course, but I always make sure that all the important stuff is done. […] I immediately deal with it, otherwise it will end badly for me. (PO G)

Consequently, these POs continuously assess and adjust their practices to comply with guidelines. They tend to shield themselves from any risk of accusation by devising self-protective measures, such as routinizing monitoring practices. They increase their unsolicited contacts with the police or double-check their supervisees' signs of compliance so that nothing can be held against them in the event of a reoffense.

The second form of accountability is oriented toward the general public, beyond the boundaries of the institution. POs are sometimes assigned to supervise highly publicized or sensitive cases, such as offenders allegedly sharing ties with terrorist networks. Twelve respondents stated that in the case of a reoffense, the ensuing public exposure would leave the PO in a particularly vulnerable situation. Public awareness would urge the media and the political sphere to establish responsibility and identify potential scapegoats. Since public exposure considerably increases the odds of being held responsible, POs try their best to avoid uncertainty and seek the protection of their managers by following the rules. The following excerpts illustrate this fear of media and political backlash:

> You have to hope that the offender doesn't mess it up, that there are no new offenses… because sure enough, I have the feeling that politicians will want to point fingers at someone. They will try to find someone who did not do his job properly. (PO N)

> It is clear that when we have a somewhat publicized offense and the first thing that happens is: 'Ah give me your file, we will look at what happened'…, well we sure have some fears about what will happen next. I would really not want to be in the shoes of the judicial assistants who are currently managing all the terrorist files and things like that. Or anything where the media is involved, because the judicial assistant is really… well, he is at the end of the chain, so to speak, and it's always the 'little guy' who will pay for all the consequences. (PO A1)

Officers are aware of the severe emotional and professional consequences if disavowed by their managers or used as scapegoats by politicians and the media. In the hopes of eluding the grim prospect of blame, POs adjust their routines during offender supervision. These routines mainly consist of enhanced monitoring strategies to check on supervisees' formal signs of compliance. They serve a dual purpose: detecting any potential risk of reoffense and, more important, averting any risk of being blamed. Routinization of control strategies is considered an unpleasant yet cost-effective way to address accountability issues.

3 – The (muffled) virtues of circumstantial professionalism

POs acknowledged breaking some specific rules. Two work instructions were particularly scorned by respondents on the grounds that they contradict some of their professional judgments and preferences. The first concerns home visits. Home visits are not a new addition to the POs' toolbox. However, since 2015, POs are required to carry out at least one home visit during the supervision process. They are also expected to meet with the probationer's entourage on that occasion. Eighteen POs noted at least one of the following concerns regarding this tool. The first is the time-consuming nature of home visits. Home visits take considerable time to perform, notably due to the amount of time spent on transport. This was particularly stressed by POs working in large judicial districts. Those same officers also reported that they must sometimes carry out extra home visits to substitute for office meetings when probationers are unable to reach the local agency on their own. Safety issues are a second source of concern, as some POs feel ill-prepared to meet an aggressive probationer in his or her own house. Finally, POs questioned the actual usefulness of home visits. These officers doubt the meaningfulness of this tool for clients, arguing that, depending on individual circumstances, home visits may prove irrelevant or even detrimental to the probationer – for instance, when the probationer is trying to keep his or her friends and family unaware of the ongoing penal procedures.

> I really avoid going to people's homes, for safety reasons I would say, because I feel much safer at the idea of meeting the offender here at the office. At the offender's house, the spouse might get upset, for instance. Anyway, there is always a risk of escalation. (PO F)

> Well, in my opinion, a home visit is already a constraint in itself… Therefore, if it doesn't make sense for the client, it turns it into a double constraint for me. I am saying that I generally don't argue if someone tells me that he lives all alone and that he does not see the interest of the visit. If he tells me: 'I do not see what you are looking for, you know where I live, I do not move…'. It's true that when we go on a visit we generally think: 'Ok, we are going to take this opportunity to help him sort through his mail, his documents…'. And to be fair, that's good for the offender because he didn't have to move from his home. But other than that, I see little added value to this. (PO O)

POs voiced their disagreement with another work instruction. Along with other topics, the BPR requires POs to discuss probationers' offense during the first meeting. However, one-third of the respondents criticized this rule. New supervisees can prove reluctant to collaborate with the POs and, if not swiftly addressed, this resistance can hinder both the social and monitoring aspects of supervision. In that context, some POs believe that bringing up the offense during the first encounter might be misinterpreted by probationers. This could trigger probationers' defense mechanisms and potentially make supervision a grueling task. Thus, when meeting new probationers, these POs prefer to focus on relationship building instead of following counterproductive work instructions.

> In principle, we are supposed to talk over the offense. Why is he here? How does he perceive his actions? According to work instructions, we are supposed to discuss the offense during the first meeting but personally, I don't… as a matter of principle, I mean. I almost never do it. Why? First, because getting information about offenders' situation and explaining the probationary framework already takes a lot of time. […] And the second aspect is that I give so much importance to relationship building that… you see, I don't know him, he doesn't know me. It can be very tricky to mention the offense during the first meeting. (PO C)

As illustrated by the previous examples, judicial assistants do not passively perform probation work. PO C refuses to discuss the offense despite the work instructions because she sees doing so as an obstacle to relationship building. PO O and PO F, on the other hand, sometimes abstain from home visits because they can be dangerous, time consuming and irrelevant. These officers assess and interpret the tools and guidelines they are required to implement. When faced with instructions that challenge their practical knowledge about the best course of action in the given circumstances, POs simply choose not to comply with the rules.

Main findings and conclusion of the fifth chapter

I conducted a thematic analysis of 29 semi-structured interviews with POs working in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Belgium. The analysis revealed that POs employ a wide range of coping mechanisms during public service delivery. The interviewed POs also provided some evidence about the underlying factors for these adaptations. The causes of coping were subdivided into three general categories that were linked with specific coping styles.

In this section, I examine the hypotheses presented earlier in this chapter with the results of the thematic analysis. Then, I briefly synthesize some of the unexpected results of the analysis before concluding this chapter with a general portrait of POs' frontline practices when interacting with offenders. The theoretical implications of these findings will be discussed in the seventh chapter.

1 – Supervising offenders amidst time shortages and managerialism

> **H1. –** If exposed to heavy workloads and time constraints, POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders.

The thematic analysis yields considerable evidence supporting the first hypothesis. First, the results show that POs prioritize work with a limited number of specific probationers as a direct result of growing workloads and the resulting time shortages. POs admit devoting considerably more time and effort to direct interactions with a limited number of cases that they consider more urgent and demanding. The common criteria cited for case prioritization are offenders' socio-economic status, addictions and characteristics of cases (such as the type of offense and the media coverage it received). For instance, many participants reported cherry-picking and dedicating considerably more time and effort to supervising offenders who are at risk of a major breakdown due to their complicated social and financial situations. Yet to some extent, this specific result questions the appropriateness of the concept of cherry-picking in accounting for the observed phenomenon. Cherry-picking implies a selection of clients, but this selection is usually made in favor of the most desirable clients: the best or those who are the most likely to succeed (in bureaucratic terms) (Vedung, 2015). Cherry-picking is thus embedded in a logic of cost-effectiveness since its purpose is to improve or facilitate the management of work-related activities in an environment where resources are limited. By contrast, the evidence presented it this research suggests that heavy workloads and time constraints encourage POs to deliberately target and prioritize the most complex, difficult, and time-consuming offender cases. Instead of reasoning in terms of self-preservation and cost-effectiveness, POs seem mostly motivated by a desire to support those whom they consider the most in need. Such results are consistent with Nielsen's (2006) argument that frontline workers are enticed to cope when positively motivated by the prospect of gratifying job experiences. One could thus argue that instead of cherry-picking the easiest and most desirable cases, POs are in fact chasing the high hanging fruits in the pursuit of meaningful and rewarding experiences.

Second, the analysis confirmed that POs ration the delivery of services due to time shortages. Officers often struggle to properly manage their caseloads given the current time constraints. Consequently, many reduce their average involvement in each individual case to make large caseloads more manageable. The time-consuming aspects of supervision, such as care and other social aspects of POs' work, are particularly affected by rationing. According to some officers, this has resulted in a loss of *quality* of services to privilege *quantity*.

Finally, POs routinize and simplify supervision work because of time shortages. Due to time limitations, POs tend to narrow their supervision efforts to simply checking offenders' signs of compliance by only collecting the required attestations and documents, for instance. Such routinization of monitoring practices is considered a cost-efficient way to ensure minimal involvement with offenders. It is usually implemented at the expense of other time-consuming activities, such as care and support. POs, however, complain that offender supervision becomes increasingly automated and impersonal due to such practices.

Beyond prioritization, rationing, and routinizing, time constraints also appear to be closely associated with other coping mechanisms. First, the analysis reveals that POs sometimes break rules when pressured by time limitations. This is, for instance, the case when officers refuse to conduct home visits because of the time they take. Second, POs devise and take instrumental actions to ease offenders' acceptance of the supervision framework. In doing so, they also aim to reduce the amount of time and effort that would otherwise be needed to supervise uninvested or noncompliant offenders.

> **H2.** – Because of the current shift toward managerialism, POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders.

Strong evidence was found in support of the second hypothesis. Many participants mentioned the changes brought by the introduction of new technical tools and procedures devised to manage and guide their work. Overall, POs associated these managerialist changes with increasing workloads and time constraints. For instance, POs blamed the SIPAR database for placing additional pressure on them because of the highly fastidious and time-consuming nature of the data-entry process. Participants were also highly critical of local managers' heavy reliance on computerized tools, such as the *resource planning* software that produces indicative data on POs' workloads. Officers not only criticized the tool itself, arguing that it underestimates their actual workloads, but also voiced disapproval of managers' reliance on this tool to justify new case distribution. In fact, many officers blamed managers' overreliance on this computerized tool for their excessive caseloads and resulting time constraints. They argued that, given the soaring numbers of new probation cases, managers tend to instrumentalize the figures produced by the *resource planning* to justify assigning extra cases and keep up with rising demands. A considerable number of participants also pointed to the *directive vérification* as causing further time constraints. Officers are particularly displeased with the growing amount of paperwork and new requirements imposed by this new directive.

POs evidently struggle to conform to the new technical and procedural guidelines. To keep up with the added demands and time restrictions, officers ration time-consuming activities (such as care and support) and shorten the overall length of interactions with offenders. They also prioritize work with the most urgent cases, while others simplify the mass processing of clients. In other words, the current shift toward managerialism is imposing many additional constraints on POs. By further contributing to increases in workloads and time limitations, managerialism indirectly contributes to prioritization, rationing, and routinization practices.

H3. – If POs experience conflict between their roles, they tend to break the rules during public service delivery.

The thematic analysis produces limited support for the third hypothesis. Considerable evidence was found of POs' dissatisfaction with the ongoing punitive trend. However, this dissatisfaction is not directly oriented to the punitive nature of new guidelines and procedures. POs share a somewhat nuanced view of the new instructions that expand the monitoring and control aspects of supervision. Officers are not fundamentally against the addition of new control and verification procedures as long as these requirements do not interfere with the proper implementation of the social aspects of their work. Instead, POs' dissatisfaction with the punitive trend is mostly due to time constraints. Time shortages make it difficult to do anything besides monitoring offenders, which is problematic for officers who are still deeply attached to the social aspects of probation work.

Contrary to expectations, no coping behavior was reported by officers in direct response to conflict between roles. Officers' coping mechanisms are not conceived as acts of resistance to new punitive requirements. In fact, participants do not appear particularly conflicted between the monitoring and social aspects of their work. Many argued that offender care and support are not viable without strong control mechanisms. They also stressed that the social and monitoring aspects of offender supervision are complementary in probation work. The analysis ultimately revealed that POs sometimes break rules, but not to express opposition to punitive imperatives. Instead, officers break rules because of time constraints and their limited value.

H4. – If POs perceive work instructions as meaningless, they break the rules by not following these instructions.

Strong evidence was found in support of this hypothesis. A considerable number of participants spoke of their uncertainty about specific work instructions because of their limited value for probationers. The analysis revealed that POs tend to circumstantially evaluate and interpret supervision tools and guidelines according to the benefits they yield for supervisees. Officers sometimes refuse to comply with rules when they are perceived as superfluous, irrelevant, or even counterproductive given probationers' specific needs and circumstances. For instance, some officers simply avoid making home visits when they suspect a negative consequence for a probationer's life environment. Others refuse to broach the offense during the first meeting with an offender because of the potential negative effects of doing so on the offender's acceptance of the supervision framework.

However, the analysis also shows that officers break the rules not only to meet supervisees' needs but also to surmount their own difficulties with specific work requirements. This was, for example, apparent in officers' discussion of their concerns regarding home visits. Many respondents identified major drawbacks to home visits, such as their time-consuming nature and the potential safety issues. To some extent, this means POs are also driven by pragmatic thinking and self-preservation when breaking rules.

2 – Weighty responsibilities and the swan song of professionalism

The thematic analysis also yielded a number of unexpected results. First, the interviews revealed that workloads, time constraints and the limited meaningfulness of work instructions were not the sole factors fostering the use of coping mechanisms. Strong accountability is another form of pressure felt by POs. Many participants expressed a certain anxiety at the idea of having their files scrutinized by superiors in the event of a serious offender reoffense. They reported being subject to two forms of accountability in that situation. On the one hand, POs noted that they would be subject to vertical accountability to managers and correctional authorities. Officers are afraid of being held responsible and accused of mismanaging an offender's case. Therefore, many respondents live in constant fear of making mistakes and lacking foresight in their case management. On the other hand, participants also mentioned a general form of accountability to actors in the public sphere. This is particularly the case if the reoffense is publicized: POs are afraid that public awareness will draw unwanted attention from the media and politicians. To better anticipate risks and shield themselves from blame, some judicial assistants cope by implementing routinized monitoring practices with their supervisees. This involves implementing systematic double-checking routines, for instance.

Second, the analysis revealed that POs tend to be somewhat critical of the current shift toward managerialism and its effects on probation work practices in the Houses of Justice. POs voiced general dissatisfaction with the highly procedural nature of the new tools and work instructions that have been devised to manage and guide their work. Participants not only argued that these new requirements have a negative effect on workloads but also believe that they discourage professionalism and pragmatic thinking, especially among younger recruits. In other words, many officers feel they are gradually being stripped of their ability to make situational judgments and decisions about their supervisees. POs also report feeling increasingly watched and monitored by their managers (when entering data on the SIPAR database, for instance). However, despite these negative feelings, officers still acknowledged the benefits of these procedural and technical tools for active management of large and complex caseloads.

Third, the interviews brought out additional information about the causes of time constraints. Most POs identified time constraints as a decisive factor in most of the aforementioned coping styles. However, time scarcity itself was explained by a variety of other factors. These include the ever-increasing volume and complexity of caseloads, chronic staff shortages, managerial choices regarding case distribution, and growing paperwork caused by new administrative tools and procedures.

3 – Under severe pressure, yet still benevolent?

In the Houses of Justice, POs are exposed to severe constraints that can hamper the proper management of supervisees. The thematic analysis of the interviews shows that officers declare adapting to these constraints in ways that affect the interactions and the delivery of services to probationers. Officers cope by rationing care and direct interactions while prioritizing work with the most urgent cases. They also routinize their encounters and the mass processing of offenders, facilitate offender supervision using instrumental actions, and sometimes refuse to comply with specific work instructions.

Coincidentally, these results enable drawing a general portrait of POs' frontline practices when they deliver public services to their supervisees. Strikingly, POs never seem to deliberately *move against* offenders (Tummers et al. 2015) in response to a lack of individual and organizational resources. The interviews did not provide significant evidence about instances of coping whereby officers make deliberate use of intransigence, confrontation, or hostility toward probationers. However, POs' adaptations to growing workloads, time shortages, and accountability tend to drive POs *away* from their supervisees. Officers declare taking active measures to avoid meaningful interactions with clients by implementing rationing and routinizing techniques. In doing so, they try to reduce their overall involvement in an environment where time is of the essence.

Although POs declare rationing services and routinizing their encounters due to increasing internal and external demands, they still select and prioritize work with the cases that they consider the most urgent and challenging. In doing so, most officers *move toward* a limited number of offenders who are in particular need of care and support because of their difficult socio-economic situation. Surprisingly enough, these results show that POs do not necessarily select and prioritize work with the probationers who are the most reliable or the most likely to succeed from a bureaucratic standpoint. Rather, by concentrating their efforts on the most challenging cases, POs often demonstrate a selfless desire to *make a difference* in probationers' lives despite the current circumstances.

The thematic analysis uncovered other examples in which officers cope by adjusting their actions to probationers' benefit. This is, for instance, the case when POs break the rules to privilege relationship building over procedural requirements that dictate the content of the first meeting with offenders. Similarly, officers *move toward* offenders when they refuse to make home visits on the grounds that they would be detrimental given probationers' unique circumstances. Another example is when POs take instrumental action to defuse offenders' resentment, frustration, and defensiveness. In doing so, officers actively promote mutual transparency and demonstrate receptiveness to and consideration for probationers' problems and needs.

Overall, the results suggest that POs try to privilege benevolent courses of action to the best of their abilities when interacting with offenders. Given the current work context, officers are surprisingly likely to adjust their behaviors to the benefit of probationers who particularly need care and support. However, despite a common propensity to promote benevolent practices with the most complex and challenging cases, POs also showed a preference for working with offenders who display some degree of competence and reliability. This means that officers not only select their supervisees according to their socio-economic circumstances and type of offense but also assess them according to other parameters, such as their degree of proactivity, maturity, or sincerity.

4 – Conclusive note

A caveat should however be mentioned at this point. The analysis of POs' coping behaviors, and how those affect the delivery of services to probationers, is based on POs' own accounts of their practices. In other words, the practices and interactions between probation officers and their supervisees are examined from officers' perspective. Caution should thus be applied when interpreting these results. In particular, there is a possibility that POs' accounts of their practices and interactions with offenders are distorted by a social desirability bias (Bergen & Labonté, 2020; Collins et al., 2005) whereby officers would avoid presenting themselves under a punitive or confrontational light. For example, the lack of evidence of POs moving against offenders could perhaps result from this bias. Similarly, the fact that POs tend to present themselves as moving towards clients also potentially participates to an effort to appear socially desirable.

However, there are also several reasons why this specific bias is unlikely to have affected the analysis and the results. First, and in contrast with what might be assumed, I argue that POs might actually have few incentives to present themselves as particularly benevolent towards probationers. Indeed, it is likely that officers would rather avoid having their accounts of benevolent practices interpreted as signs of excessive leniency towards offenders. Such leniency would not be in line with collective expectations and concerns over risk management in post-modern societies (Kemshall & Wood, 2008; Giddens, 1990). Second, anonymity and confidentiality were strictly guaranteed to respondents on several occasions before and during the interviews. Theoretically, POs should have had limited incentives to frame their interview answers to appear socially desirable to their superiors, their peers, or the interviewer. Finally, the results obtained via the analysis appear consistent with findings from other studies in criminology and criminal justice. Such studies have highlighted POs' overall preference for rehabilitative practices and social work over control and monitoring of offenders (e.g., Grant, 2015; Robinson et al., 2014; Deering, 2010; Annison, et al., 2008). These results were consistently obtained using a variety of methods for data collection and analysis, including interviews (e.g., Robinson et al., 2014), and quantitative surveys (e.g., Deering, 2010).

Other limitations can include an elite bias – whereby the researcher gives more importance to more articulated and well-informed, yet underrepresented, respondents – and the risk for the investigator of "going native" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 263) and losing his own bracketing ability in the process. However, I argue that the methodological rigor and the process transparency permitted by the thematic analysis allows to reduce the risk of such biases. The continuous thematization (and theme validation) process, the methodical production of theme records, and the careful construction of the thematic three allow to produce a rigorous and representative picture of the collected data (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016). Furthermore, the choice of the continuous approach (Paillé & Muchielli, 2016) permitted to draw the attention to a wider diversity of less frequent and emerging themes in the interview corpus, thus limiting the risk of putting too much emphasis on the accounts of some specific POs at the expense of others.

Chapter 6 – Accounting for officers' benevolent practices: the role of individual and organizational factors in the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness

Introduction

In their work instructions, Belgian POs are not particularly compelled to privilege benevolent courses of action. The current concerns for public safety and the recent changes brought by the latest directives should logically discourage POs from acting benevolently toward offenders. The previous chapter highlighted the role of recent reforms and the weight of accountability in explaining POs' decisions to move away from clients. Strikingly, the results also suggest that POs do maintain some degree of benevolence in their interactions with offenders despite recent shifts toward managerialism and offender control in the Belgian correctional sector. For instance, POs tend to move toward clients using instrumental actions to defuse offenders' defensiveness and ease their acceptance of the supervision process. This observation prompts a new question: why do officers still opt for benevolent approaches with offenders?

The present chapter analyzes the factors involved in POs' decisions to make benevolent use of discretion. Discretion is defined as frontline workers' ability to choose between different possible courses of action (Davis, 1969). Thus, opting for benevolent use of discretion simply means privileging empathy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness in the chosen course of action toward clients. As suggested in the SLB literature, I assume that the discretionary choices of frontline workers are – at least partially – based on an assessment of their clients' key characteristics (e.g., Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). In other words, street-level bureaucrats use their trustworthiness assessments to make decisions about the citizens with whom they interact (Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005). Following this logic, benevolent use of discretion most likely results from a positive assessment of a trustworthy client. In contrast, a negative perception of a client's level of trustworthiness will probably not result in benevolent use of discretion. While there is some agreement on the use of trustworthiness assessments on the front lines, little is known about the factors that might affect the importance that frontline workers attach to their trustworthiness assessments when making discretionary decisions regarding their clients. This is particularly the case when those decisions involve a positive assessment of clients' characteristics (opting for a benevolent use of discretion, for instance). What are the factors that account for the importance that street-level bureaucrats give to their assessments of clients' trustworthiness when choosing a benevolent course of action? The present analysis will focus on individual and organizational factors.

It is with this guiding thread that this chapter seeks to bring together public administration research on SLB and on trust. To date, most studies have explored citizens' trust in public institutions and civil servants. This study adds to the SLB literature by analyzing a missing link (Yang, 2005) in SLB research: frontline workers' trust toward citizens. More precisely, I will investigate street-level bureaucrats' assessments of citizens' trustworthiness and the importance of these assessments in their use of discretion. On a practical level, learning about the importance that frontline workers give to their trustworthiness assessments when dealing with citizens is critical to understanding how some decisions are made on the front lines.

Based on the conceptual framework developed in the third chapter, the present chapter will explore four hypotheses concerning the effect of individual and organizational factors. As presented in the methodological chapter, the data and the analyses implemented in this chapter are quantitative in nature. In a first section, I will present a brief conceptual framework and the hypotheses that will be explored in this chapter. In the second and third sections, I will give some descriptive statistics before reporting the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) of the data. The last section of this chapter is dedicated to a synthesis of the results and a brief discussion of the hypotheses.

Section I - Conceptual framework and hypotheses

In this section, I present and discuss the theoretical argument behind the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action during offender supervision. I also reiterate the reasons why a relationship should be expected between individual and organizational conditions. Individual conditions include POs' role perceptions (policing vs. social work), their general propensity to trust, and some demographic traits (age, gender, education). By Organizational conditions I designate the amount of perceived managerial support and the amount of perceived workload.

A – POs' reliance on trustworthiness assessments when using their discretion

The findings of the previous chapter confirm some of the insights provided by the systematic literature review: POs do indeed maintain a significant degree of benevolence in their use of discretion when interacting with offenders despite time constraints and the managerialization of probation services. However, opting for a benevolent course of action toward offenders is not a trivial choice: As shown in the previous chapter, privileging empathy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness toward offenders can be seen as risky from an instrumentally rational or self-protective standpoint. The latest evolutions of the Belgian correctional sector and frontline workers' perceptions of public accountability can act as strong deterrents to benevolent practices. It is thus important to investigate the processes involved in POs' choice to use discretion benevolently.

Given the current knowledge about frontline workers' trust toward citizens, it is safe to assume that street-level bureaucrats rely on their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a course of action with clients (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005). However, little is known about the factors that may positively or negatively affect the importance frontline workers attach to their trustworthiness assessments when using discretion with clients, particularly when street-level bureaucrats opt for a benevolent use of discretion that requires a positive assessment of a client's characteristics. In this study, I assert that POs effectively opt for a benevolent use of discretion when they decide to privilege empathy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness to support an offender during the supervision process. The systematic literature review presented in the second chapter highlighted POs' predisposition to such welfare-oriented uses of discretion during interactions with offenders (e.g., Digard, 2014; Healy, 2012; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992).

However, the qualitative analysis presented in chapter five suggests that POs will not blindly engage in a potentially risky course of action without gathering sufficient evidence about their clients' worth. Opting for this specific use of discretion requires a positive assessment of an offender's characteristics. However, when presented with an objectively able, benevolent, and integer offender (a trustworthy client), it is not assured that all POs will give an equal degree of importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for benevolent use of discretion. In other words, I assume that the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments varies from one officer to another according to some individual and contextual factors. The ways these factors potentially affect the importance POs give to their assessments are addressed in the following sub-sections.

B – Organizational factors and the importance given to trustworthiness assessments

Street-level bureaucracies are busy places where time and resources are limited (Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2012; 2011; Lipsky, 2010). Workloads and managerial support are key aspects of these organizational conditions that might affect frontline workers' assessments of clients. Here, I first discuss how POs' workloads can affect the importance that they attribute to their trustworthiness assessments when engaging in benevolent use of discretion with offenders. I will then address the relationship between the managerial support received by POs and the dependent variable.

1 – The amount of perceived workload

Ever since Lipsky's (2010) groundbreaking work, it has repeatedly been shown that street-level bureaucrats' frontline judgments and decisions are affected by organizational constraints (Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2012; 2011; Lipsky, 2010). Workloads, in particular, are one of the most common forms of pressure weighing on frontline workers. Heavy workloads tend to stiffen time constraints and reduce frontline workers' ability to adequately process cases and information (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Thorén, 2008; Jewell & Glaser, 2006; Winter, 2002). Therefore, in the hopes of better managing their workloads and meeting managers' objectives, frontline workers tend to assess and prioritize their clients to better allocate their efforts (e.g., Vedung, 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003).

This process is especially visible when frontline workers implement coping mechanisms such as creaming, prioritizing, and cherry-picking (Lipsky, 2010). These practices substantiate instances in which street-level bureaucrats assess their clients' characteristics and concentrate their efforts on the clients who seem worthier (e.g., Vedung, 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). Admittedly, most clients do not benefit much from cherry-picking and prioritization practices. Worthy clients, however, will profit from the extra effort, time and commitment of the frontline worker. Coping strategies of this type are observed in many policy sectors, such as in child welfare (e.g., Smith & Donovan, 2003) and among activation workers (e.g., Brodkin, 2011).

When pressured by heavy workloads, street-level bureaucrats actively assess their clients' characteristics to better allocate their work efforts. Instead of maintaining high levels of commitment with all clients, frontline workers assess their clients and concentrate their efforts on carefully selected ones. As previously stated, I contend that frontline workers' assessments are based on their perceptions of their clients' ability, benevolence and integrity (see: Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005). In other words, street-level bureaucrats rely on their assessments of clients' trustworthiness to make choices regarding clients. In that logic, an objectively able, benevolent and integer client is likely be perceived as trustworthy by a frontline worker. If pressured by a heavy workload, the public official will most likely decide to concentrate his efforts on this trustworthy client.

In a nutshell, I argue that relying on trustworthiness assessments is a pragmatic way for POs to target and concentrate their efforts on special offenders. This is especially the case when officers face heavy workloads and are thus constrained to better allocate their work efforts. I expect that when feeling pressure from large workloads, POs attribute more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion toward an offender. Since they cannot afford to maintain high levels of commitment with most supervisees under heavy workload conditions, POs seek to concentrate their time and efforts on the offenders they consider the most trustworthy.

Opting for a benevolent use of discretion does, however, require considerable investment of time and effort. A PO must thus consider an offender as sufficiently trustworthy to take this course of action. It is thus likely that POs tend to give considerable importance to offenders' trustworthiness when choosing to make benevolent use of discretion. Conversely, if workloads are more limited, POs probably will not give as much importance to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. Indeed, without workload pressure, POs are less likely to feel the need to better allocate their work efforts by concentrating on trustworthy clients.

> **H1**: POs who are exposed to large workloads tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action.

2 – Perceived managerial support

To date, the management of street-level bureaucrats has been relatively under-investigated (Winter, 2012). The traditional approach to managers is that they are key regulators who seek to control frontline workers' discretion (Lipsky, 2010). However, the nature of their control over street-level bureaucrats' discretion is increasingly debated in the literature. Given their position in street-level organizations, first-line managers are both accountors and accountees: they manage frontline workers, but they are also accountable to high-ranking officials and directors (Hupe & Hill, 2007). Evidence suggests that, instead of only constraining their subordinates' use of discretion, first-line managers can also choose to endorse the discretionary practices of their subordinates (Evans, 2016a; Evans, 2010). For instance, first-line managers can disagree with policy goals and "seek to use their discretion to reduce the impact of what they see as damaging policies" (Evans, 2016b, p. 89). In doing so, frontline managers can cooperate and provide street-level bureaucrats with space to rely on their own professional skills and judgments to make decisions instead of work instructions and guidelines (Evans, 2016b). One possible explanation for managers siding with frontline workers is that they are often "drawn from the profession" and thus have first-hand knowledge of the challenges faced by their subordinates (Hupe & Hill, 2007, p. 290; also see: Shanks et al., 2015; Evans, 2011).

One important consequence of managers' active support and endorsement is the legitimacy that is provided to frontline workers' judgments and decisions (Lipsky, 2010). Studies have shown how frontline workers can actively seek guarantees and protection from their superiors (Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). POs, in particular, greatly value having their decisions backed by managers (Dale & Trlin, 2010). For example, the qualitative analysis in the previous chapter revealed that refusals by POs to make home visits are sometimes tolerated by the first-line managers who are kept informed about the officers' decisions. In other words, when backed and endorsed by their superiors, frontline workers can sometimes escape the grip of formal rules and procedures and use their professional judgment, normative preferences, and intuitions.

Building on these observations, I argue that there is a positive relationship between the support that POs receive from their managers and the importance that they give to their perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for benevolent use of discretion. Indeed, when given sufficient latitude to follow their own intuitions and professional judgment instead of work instructions, POs will probably privilege their trustworthiness perceptions to make decisions about an offender. Consequently, officers who report being supported and by their first-line managers will likely credit their trustworthiness assessments more when opting for a benevolent course of action.

H2. – POs who perceive more managerial support tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action.

C – Individual factors and the importance given to trustworthiness assessments

I now discuss how subjective role perceptions and general propensity to trust are likely related to the importance POs attribute to their trustworthiness assessments when privileging a benevolent course of action with offenders.

1 – POs' subjective role perceptions

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of role perceptions and normative choices in shaping frontline workers' discretionary practices. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2012; 2003; 2000) demonstrated that to provide individualized responses to citizens' needs, street-level bureaucrats can act as citizen-agents by grounding their decisions in their normative preferences (also see: de Witte et al., 2015; Dias and Maynard-Moody, 2007; May & Winter, 2007). In other words, instead of relying solely on formal rules and procedures, frontline workers also engage in value-rational actions in the pursuit of ideals, or what they view as meaningful and rewarding experiences (e.g., Halliday et al., 2009; Nielsen, 2006). Understanding how street-level bureaucrats perceive and define their own roles is thus critical to apprehending frontline workers' choices and actions during public service delivery (see: Carter, 2017; Thomann, 2015; Tummers et al., 2012).

Frontline officers working in probation services are no exception. As shown in the first chapter, criminological studies have stressed that POs can have role preferences that define their working philosophy with offenders (e.g., Bolin & Applegate, 2016; Ward & Kupchik, 2010; Klockars, 1972). Some officers might emphasize social work values and rehabilitation when defining their conception of offender supervision while others might favor policing and control of offenders. The criminological literature suggests that these role preferences can effectively influence the way POs deliver offender supervision (e.g., Viglione & Blasko, 2018; Steiner et al., 2011; Schalbe & Mashi, 2009). During offender supervision, POs can also experience conflicts between their rehabilitative ideals and social work values on the one hand and institutional policing imperatives on the other (e.g., Nash, 2011; Kemshall, 2000b; Whitehead, 1987). To some extent, officers' conflicting perceptions about their role toward offenders mirrors the tensions between the citizen-agent and state-agent narratives that frontline workers experience during public service delivery. In this regard, the literature provides many examples of POs resisting institutional injunctions to offender control and monitoring (e.g., Grant, 2015; Persson & Svensson, 2012; Nash, 2011; Kemshall, 1997). In those instances, officers act as citizen-agents by privileging their own normative judgments over the tools and procedures they are expected to use to inform their decisions.

Depending on how POs define their role preferences, they might have very different perspectives on what choosing a benevolent course of action might entail. The degree to which POs lean towards one of these two competing role definitions (either social work or policing) is likely to have diverging effects on the importance they attach to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness.

On the one hand, POs who mostly define their role as policing and monitoring are probably more apprehensive about choosing a benevolent course of action with offenders. Not only does such an approach contradict with their own conceptions and ideals about offender supervision, but it might also be interpreted as a riskier option than a more rigorous use of discretion. As highlighted in the literature and in the previous chapter, the risk of offender reoffense and its consequences[33] are a source of serious concern for many POs (e.g., Kemshall, 2008; Nash, 2005) to the point that some try to reduce uncertainties and anticipate risks by routinizing offender control and monitoring. Due to their role preference, control-oriented POs should be particularly attentive to such issues. In particular, these officers might be worried that lenient supervision practices would hinder offenders' compliance with rules and increase the risk of reoffense. This implies that, in order to risk engaging in a benevolent course of action, these POs would have to perceive an offender as particularly trustworthy. I thus argue that POs who view their role as policing tend to attach considerable importance to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for riskier courses of action, such as a benevolent use of discretion with an offender.

On the other hand, POs who define their role as social work will probably be less hesitant about opting for a benevolent use of discretion due to their personal convictions. Some evidence suggests that POs who primarily view themselves as social workers are probably have less concerned about risk-avoidance. As illustrated by examples of resistance to institutional injunctions toward offender control (e.g., Persson & Svensson, 2012; 2011; Fizgibbon et al., 2010; Hamilton, 2010), some POs privilege their rehabilitative ideals about offender

[33] Indeed, officers are subjected to strong public accountabilities, especially in the event of a publicized offender reoffense (e.g., Kemshall, 2008).

supervision over the risk management tools and procedures that they are expected to use to inform their decisions. In those instances, the risks associated with loose offender control seem more acceptable to officers because these actions contribute to the ultimate goal of offender rehabilitation. Hence, it can be argued that the POs who value social work should be less concerned with trustworthiness assessments of their offenders when opting for a course of action that corresponds to their normative ideals. In that perspective, social-work oriented POs would not need probationers to appear as particularly trustworthy when opting for a benevolent course of action with them.

> **H3** – POs who define their role toward offenders as policing tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action.

2 – POs' general propensity to trust others

Among the dispositional factors that might affect the importance frontline workers attribute to their trustworthiness assessments, the most straightforward is probably their general propensity to trust. Trust propensity consists in someone's generalized expectations about the trustworthiness of other people (Rotter, 1971). This "general willingness to trust others" is rooted in individuals' past social experiences and affects the amount of trust a trustor has for a trustee without any knowledge about the trustee (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 715). Not only is this trait accepted as an antecedent of trust, but it is also positively associated with trustworthiness perceptions (Moyson et al., 2016; Frazier et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2007; Mayer et. al, 1995). It is thus not surprising that propensity to trust has been repeatedly shown to positively influence public officials' perceptions of citizens' trustworthiness (Lee & Yu, 2013; Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2012; Yang, 2006; 2005;). For instance, Yang (2006) demonstrated that public administrators who display a high propensity to trust report more positive views about citizens' trustworthiness than their colleagues.

In accordance with the literature, I suspect that propensity to trust is significantly related to the importance officers attach to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. Compared to officers who present a high disposition to "trust others regardless of the situation" (Frazier et al., 2013), POs with low trust propensity are likely to have different feelings about the importance that should be given to offender's trustworthiness when making a decision. More specifically, I consider that a high propensity to trust should lead officers to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a course of action with offenders. As previously mentioned, propensity to trust is often defined as a generalized expectation about the trustworthiness of others (Rotter, 1980; 1971; 1967; Yang, 2006; 2005). However, it is not always entirely clear what these expectations entail (Frazier et al., 2013). In particular, and although it is sometimes heavily implied (Rotter, 1971; 1967), it is unclear whether high expectations about others' trustworthiness go along with more general attention to others' trustworthiness. This would mean that people with high expectations are more invested and observant of others' trustworthiness characteristics than those with more limited expectations. Although the literature is limited on this topic, I suggest that POs who display high expectations about others' trustworthiness should also be more observant of and attentive to their supervisees' trustworthiness. Since they have expectations, these officers probably give considerable importance to their perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness in general.

> **H4.** – POs who display a high general propensity to trust tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action.

D – Operationalization and measurement synthesis

I now briefly present the measures used to acquire the data. All the survey questions are given in the appendix 5 in their English version. Before performing the quantitative survey, I conducted a total of 29 semi-structured interviews with French-speaking POs and their first-line managers. The interview guide addressed several key aspects of POs' probation work practices and their conditions, such as their experiences of officer-offender interactions, their relations with the management and their workloads. The results of this qualitative study contributed to the elaboration of the theoretical framework and operationalization of this study.

Four items are dedicated to measuring <u>*the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments*</u> (when opting for benevolent use of discretion). In the lead-in to the items, respondents were asked to picture themselves in a meeting situation with a new supervisee. The respondents were asked to rate four offender attributes according to the extent to which these would induce them to opt for a benevolent course of action in an offender's supervision. Each of these traits was presented as a separate item and is typically associated with favorable trustworthiness perceptions. The first two items directly refer to offenders' ability (Mayer et al., 1995) and goodwill. Along with ability, goodwill is often cited as one of the main components of trust and trustworthiness perceptions (e.g., Li, 2007; Levin & Cross, 2004; Das & Teng, 2001; Nooteboom, 1996). Scholars acknowledge that, among the components of the ABI model, benevolence and integrity are often intercorrelated (McKnight et al., 1998; Mayer et al., 1995) and can be conceptualized together as goodwill. The third and fourth items were constructed using the exploratory data obtained via the semi-structured interviews conducted with French-speaking POs. During the interviews, the officers strongly associated the social and professional integration of offenders with soundness and capability. Drug and alcohol addictions, however, were viewed as a source of unpredictability and unreliability. I thus added socio-professional integration (third item) and absence of addiction (fourth item) as positive traits accounting, respectively, for ability and integrity. All four items were measured on a 9-point scale with "1" meaning *Does not induce me at all to be benevolent* [with the offender] and "9" *Does really induce me to be benevolent* [with the offender]. Higher scores indicate that greater importance is given to trustworthiness assessments. In the dataset, these items refer to the variables behav1_1 to behav1_4.

The respondents' workloads were measured using two items capturing the degree to which POs feel pressured by the amount of work during a typical workweek. The lead-in to the items was "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements…". The first item was: "During a typical workweek, I have enough time to carry out all the tasks that are expected of me". The second item was: "During a typical workweek, I don't feel the need to work overtime". The respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point Likert scale with "1" meaning *fully disagree* and "9" *fully agree*. These items were reverse scored so that higher scores denote higher perceived workloads. In the dataset, items measuring officers' workload perceptions refer to the variables otherworkload1_r and otherworkload2_r.

Perceived managerial support was measured with items designed to capture the amount of support POs receive from their first-line managers. This variable was measured using an 8-item scale developed by Garland (2004) and Garland & McCarty (2006) to study how perceptions of administrative and managerial support vary among correctional officers according to personal and work-related variables. The items measure different dimensions of the support provided by first-line managers, such as their receptiveness to new job-related inputs, their endorsement of initiatives, the extension of autonomy, and general staff acknowledgement. The phrasing of the items was adapted to the context of the study. The lead-in to the items was "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements…".

An illustrative item is (manag2): “My first-line manager is genuinely open to my work-related ideas and suggestions”. The respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point Likert scale with “1” meaning *fully disagree* and “9” *fully agree*. Higher scores reflect perceptions of greater managerial support. In the dataset, these items refer to the variables manag1 to manag8.

The questionnaire also captured the respondents’ subjective views about their role regarding offenders. POs’ policing stance was measured with the “subjective role scale” that was developed by Fulton et al. (1997) and successfully implemented in subsequent studies (e.g., Schaefer & Williamson, 2017; Allard et al., 2003). This scale uses semantic differentials to capture respondents’ “reactions to pairs of words and concepts that are opposite in meaning” (Fulton et al., 1997, p. 304). In the present case, 7 differentials were designed to reflect the contrasting ways POs define their role toward offenders by asking them to situate themselves on a scale that opposes social work and policing and monitoring. The wording of the original items was adapted to the context of the present study, and all the statements were written in the first person (I …) to ensure consistency with the rest of the questionnaire. The lead-in to the items was “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements…”. Two illustrative items are: (srole7) “as a judicial assistant, my function most closely resembles”, to which respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point scale with “1” meaning *social work* and “9” *law enforcement*; and (srole2) “when I work with offenders, my primary concern is”, to which respondents were asked to reply using a 9-point scale with “1” meaning *their socio-professional reintegration* and “9” *making sure that they comply with rules*. Lower scores reflect a focus on social work, rehabilitation, and treatment. Conversely, higher scores reveal an emphasis on policing, enforcement, and control. In the dataset, these items refer to the variables srole1 to srole7.

POs’ general propensity to trust was measured with three items designed to capture respondents’ expectations about the trustworthiness of other people in general. These items were borrowed from a validated scale developed by Rotter (1971; 1980) and successfully implemented in public administration research by Yang (2005, 2006) and Lee & Yu (2013), for example. The lead-in to the items was “how would you describe your daily interactions with people?”. An example item is as follows (propenstrst3): “In everyday life, I always trust people, even those with whom I am not familiar”. The respondents were asked to assess statements using a 9-point Likert scale with “1” meaning *fully disagree* and “9” *fully agree*. Higher scores indicate a greater general propensity to trust other people. In the dataset, these items refer to the variables propenstrst1 to propenstrst3.

Four control variables were included to account for the demographic characteristics of the respondents. These include their age, gender, language, and educational level. With the exception of respondents' language, all these variables were measured in the first section of the LimeSurvey questionnaire. First, the respondents were asked to pick an age group corresponding to their current age. The respondents' ages (*age*) were divided into five categories from younger to older: 1 = under 25 years old; 2 = between 26 and 35; 3 = between 36 and 45; 4 = between 46 and 55; and 5 = older than 56. Second, the respondents were asked to state their gender. POs' gender (*gender*) was coded as a dummy variable with the value 1 designating male POs and 2 designating female POs. Third, the respondents were asked to pick their highest educational qualification achieved. The respondents' educational levels (*diplo*) were divided into seven categories according to their diploma: 1 = no diploma; 2 = primary education; 3 = secondary education; 4 = tertiary education (short cycle, other than university); 5 = bachelor's degree; 6 = master's degree; and 7 = PhD. These categories were constructed using the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Fourth, the respondents were not directly asked to report their language in the questionnaire. Instead, I coded a dummy variable (*language*) based on the language of the questionnaire itself. As reported in the fourth chapter, two versions of the questionnaire were used to collect the quantitative data. A French version of the questionnaire was distributed to POs working for the *Maisons de justice* of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, and a Dutch version was used among the officers working for the *Justitiehuizen* in the Flemish Region. The value 1 designates French-speaking officers, and the value 2 designates Dutch-speaking officers.

Section II – Descriptive statistics

I now provide some descriptive statistics about the variables that will be included in the quantitative analysis. All the dependent and independent variables described in this section were computed using the means of their respective items. For instance, the *propenstrst* variable, which describes POs' general propensity to trust, was created using the mean of the propenstrst1-3 items. Note that these resulting variables will not be used as such in the main analysis since that analysis will rely on a CFA before running the SEM.

In this section, I start with the control variables before moving on to the independent variables and the dependent variable.

A – Age, gender, and educational level

The descriptive statistics of the control variables show that the sample consists mostly of middle-aged adult (M = 2.95, SD = .88) and female respondents (M = 1.86, SD = .35). On average, the respondents tend to be bachelors (M = 5.31, SD = .63), and a slight majority works for the French-speaking Wallonia-Brussels Federation (M = 1.46, SD = .5). Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics for age, gender, educational level, and language.

Table 6 – Descriptive statistics for age, gender, language, and educational level

	Age	Gender	Language	Educational level
N	370	370	370	370
Mean	2.95	1.86	1.46	5.31
Std. Deviation	.881	.348	.499	.633
Range	1 - 5	1 - 2	1 - 2	1 - 7

Among the 370 respondents, 198 (53.5 %) use French as their work language and 172 (46.5 %) use Dutch. In terms of gender, 318 (86 %) identify as female and 52 (14 %) identify as male. The frequencies per age group (figure 13) show that only 7 % of the respondents were under 25 years old and over 56 years old. Overall, the bulk of the sample is aged between 36 and 45 (43.5 %) with lower effectives between 26 and 35 years old (27 %) and between 46 and 55 years old (22.4 %). The respondents only selected four categories of diplomas among the seven possibilities that were included the questionnaire. As shown in figure 14, most of the Belgian POs (51.9 %) have a bachelor's-degree level of education. Holders of a master's degree rank second in terms of frequency (38.9 %), followed by holders of a 1st-cycle diploma not issued by a university (8.6 %), and PhDs (0.5 %).

Figure 13 – Frequencies per age group

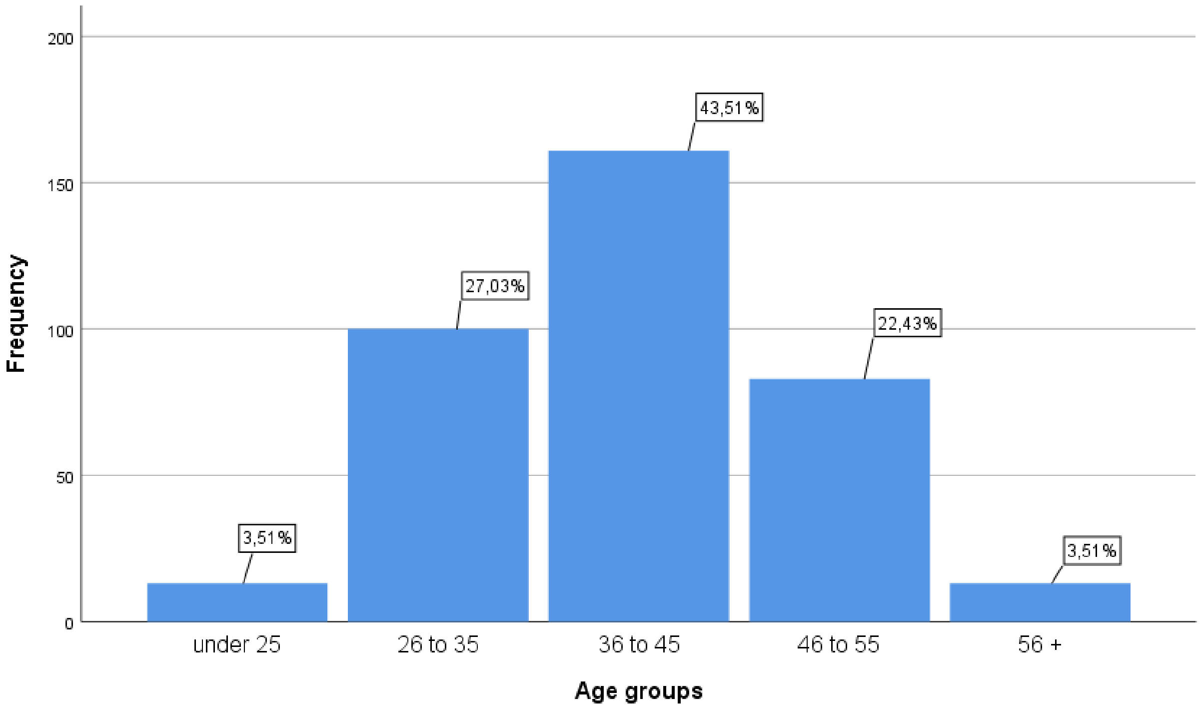
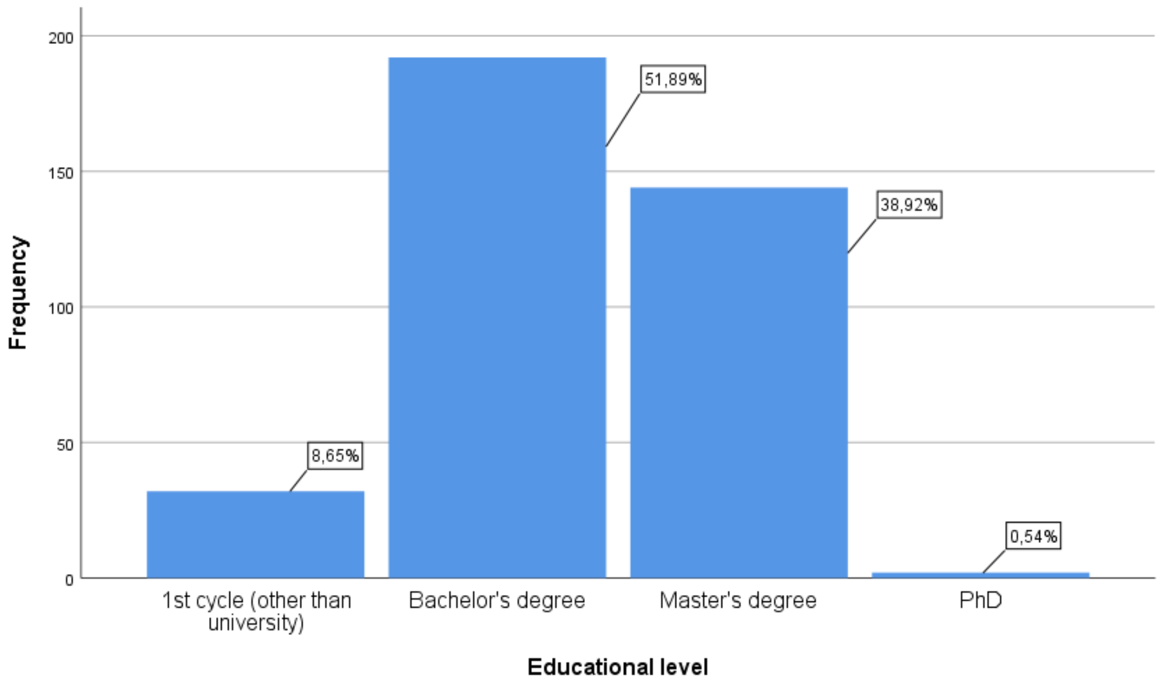


Figure 14 – Frequencies per educational level



Case summaries and cross-tabulations among gender, educational level, age, and language reveal some clear differences between groups (appendix 6). First, the reports show that female POs were proportionally more numerous than their male colleagues among Dutch-speaking respondents. Indeed, while male respondents represented 16.7 % of French-speaking POs, male respondents accounted for only 11 % of all the Dutch-speaking POs in the sample.

Second, clear differences between groups appear when crossing Belgian POs' educational level with their gender and language. While male (M = 5.23) and female (M = 5.33) POs share similar levels of education on average, female POs tend to hold higher diplomas than their male counterparts. For instance, 49.9 % of female POs said they held a master's degree, while only 32.7 % of male POs did. A similar discrepancy is observed at the bachelor's level: 57.7 % of male POs said they had a bachelor's degree, while only 50.9 % of females did. Differences in educational level are also striking using language as a grouping variable. On average, Flemish POs hold higher qualifications than their French-speaking colleagues. For instance, 44.8 % of Flemish POs said they held a master's degree, while only 33.8 % of French-speaking officers declared so.

Third, male respondents are generally older than their female counterparts. Female POs are proportionally more numerous than men in younger age groups. For instance, 34.6 % of male respondents are aged between 46 and 55, while only 20.4 % of female POs belong to this age category. Conversely, 29.2 % of female POs are aged between 26 and 35, while only 13.5 % of male respondents belong to this age category.

Similar crosstabulations for age and language reveal that Flemish POs tend to be younger than their colleagues working for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. They are proportionally more numerous than their French-speaking colleagues in younger age groups. Only 19.7 % of French-speaking respondents are aged between 26 and 35, while 35.5 % of Flemish respondents belong to this age group. Conversely, French-speaking POs are consistently more numerous in older age groups. For instance, 50 % of French-speaking officers are aged between 36 and 45, while only 36 % of their Flemish counterparts belong to this category.

B – General propensity to trust, subjective role, workload perceptions, and perceived managerial support

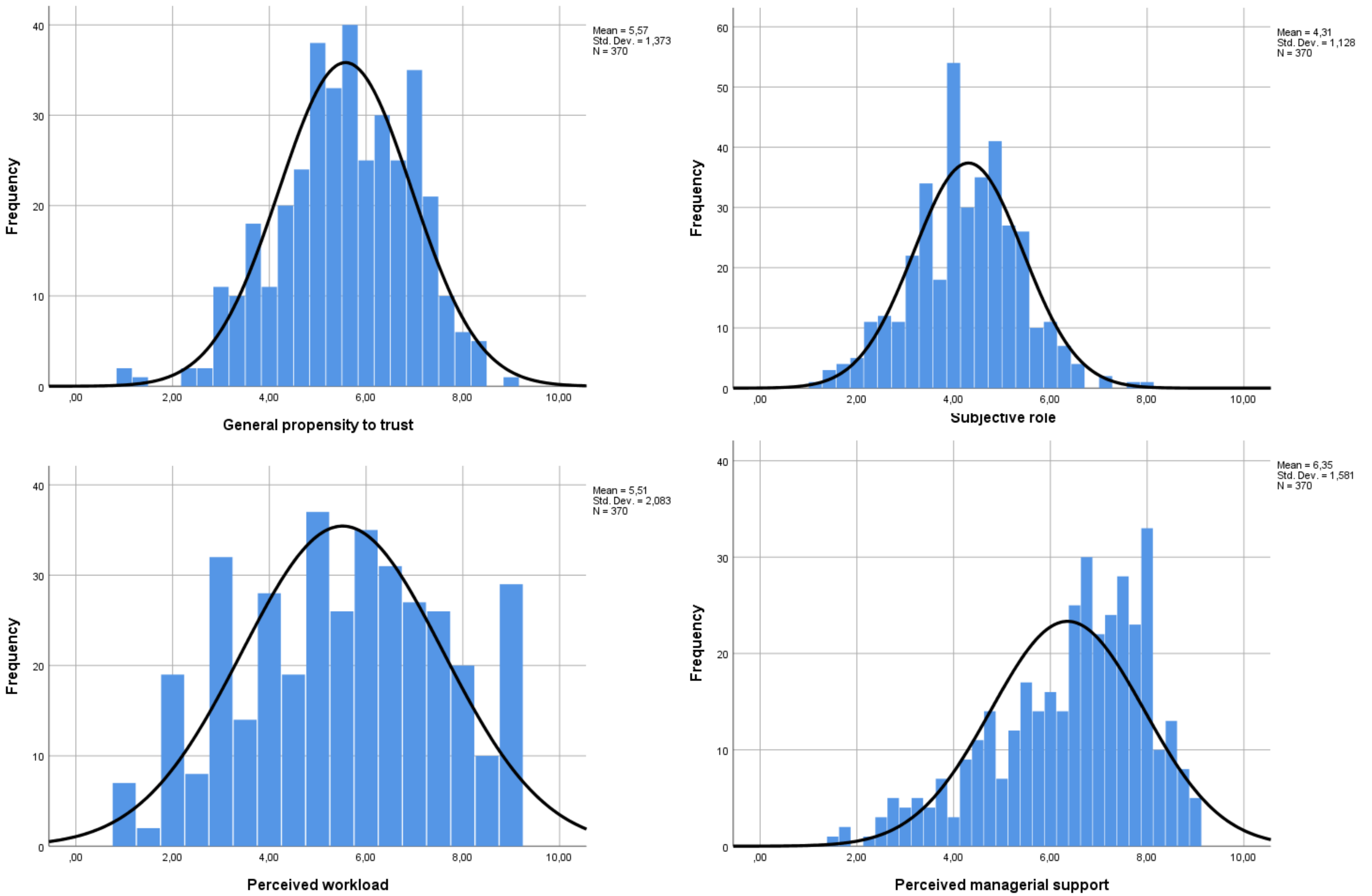
Table 7 summarizes the descriptive statistics for workloads, managerial support, subjective role perceptions, and general propensity to trust. On average, Belgian POs have a slight tendency to view their role as social work as opposed to policing (M = 4.30, SD = 1.13), and they display a moderate propensity to trust other people in general (M = 5.57, SD = 1.37). They also perceive moderate levels of workload (M = 5.51, SD = 2.08) and high levels of managerial support (M = 6.35, SD = 1.58).

Table 7 – Descriptive statistics of the independent variables

	Workload	Managerial support	Subjective role perceptions	General propensity to trust
N	370	370	370	370
Mean	5.513	6.355	4.305	5.573
Std. Deviation	2.083	1.581	1.128	1.373
Range	1 - 9	1 - 9	1 - 9	1 - 9
Skewness	-.130	-.746	.008	-.346
Z Skewness	-1.02	-5.87	.06	-2.72
Kurtosis	-.818	.017	.125	-.010
Z Kurtosis	-3.23	.07	.49	-.04

Skewness and kurtosis values close to zero signal normally distributed data (Field, 2009). Most of the Z scores for skewness and kurtosis fall outside the acceptable range of -2 to 2 (George & Mallery, 2010), which indicates some degree of univariate non-normal distribution in the data. However, the absolute values for skewness and kurtosis are still considered acceptable to conduct a large-sample SEM analysis (n > 300) because these values still fall under the accepted cut-off points of 2 (for skewness) and 7 (for kurtosis). Larger values would indicate excessive levels of non-normality for large sample sizes (Kim, 2013). Further details regarding data distribution are presented in the following figure. For each variable, figure 15 displays the frequencies and an expected normality curve that was computed using SPSS. Overall, the data roughly follow the expected normality curves.

Figure 15 – Frequency distributions for general propensity to trust, subjective role, workload perceptions, and perceived managerial support



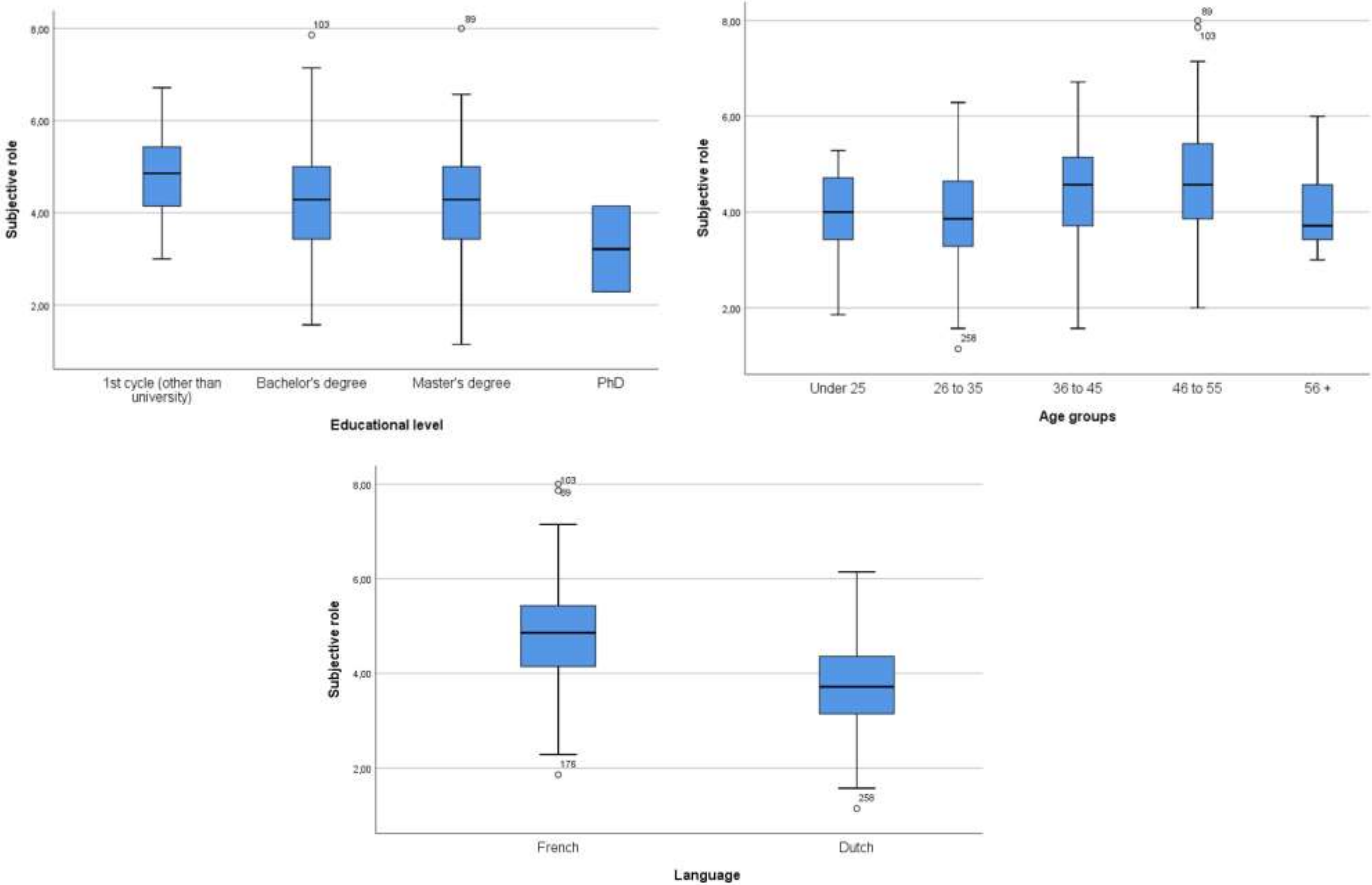
These histograms reveal additional elements about the frequency distribution of the data. First, some higher frequencies can be observed at the highest scores and low-to-medium scores for perceived workload. This suggests that a considerable number of respondents are particularly affected by or concerned about the size of their workloads. It is likely that these POs were manifesting some sort of disagreement by systematically choosing the highest values when scoring the workload items. In contrast, another group of POs seem to have relatively little concern about their workloads as they systematically chose the score “3” or “2” on the Likert scales. Second, some important distributions are observed in the higher-range values for perceived managerial support. This could simply indicate that a considerable number of POs do indeed hold very positive views about the support they receive from their managers. However, although anonymity was guaranteed to the respondents in the survey, this data concentration could also hint at the existence of a social desirability bias (King & Bruner, 2000; Chung & Monroe, 2003) whereby POs overstated the support they actually receive from their managers. Finally, many respondents scored all the subjective role perception items with the fourth value of the Likert scale. This could indicate either POs’ genuine affinity for social work or another form of social desirability bias whereby some POs prefer to project a softer image (social worker) instead of appearing indecisive or control-oriented (policing).

For each of the independent variables, I now briefly report some of the most salient differences that were observed between groups (gender, age, language, and educational level). In doing so, case summaries using controls as grouping variables were computed for each independent variable (appendix 6). I also created boxplots to assess the data distribution around median values of the different groups of the grouping variables. ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric tests were also performed to identify any statistically significant differences between the group scores. All the test results and reports are detailed in appendices 7 (Kruskal-Wallis tests) and 8 (ANOVA tests).

First, some slight differences in the means between the groups appear when using respondents’ language as the grouping variable for workloads. Overall, French-speaking POs ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 2.09$) seem to experience higher workload perceptions than their Flemish colleagues ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 2.09$). A Kruskal-Wallis test confirms that there is a statistically significant difference in workload perception scores according to respondents’ language (Chi square = 32.09, df. = 1, $p = .000$). French-speaking POs experience significantly higher workloads that their Flemish counterparts at $p < .05$.

Second, Belgian POs seem to hold quite different perceptions of their role according to their language, educational level, and age. French-speaking POs have a higher tendency to define their role toward offenders as policing and monitoring (M = 4.84, SD = .96) compared to their Flemish colleagues (M = 3.69, SD = .99). POs aged 26 to 35 (M = 3.89, SD = 1.03) tend to more closely associate their role with social work compared to their older colleagues who are aged 36 to 45 (M = 4.45, SD = 1.06) or 46 to 55 (M = 4.61, SD = 1.26). POs holding a non-academic 1st-cycle diploma (M = 4.83, SD = .96) more closely associate their role with policing compared to their other colleagues, especially PhD holders (M = 3.21, SD = 1.31). Three consecutive one-way ANOVA tests confirm that there are indeed statistically significant differences between group means with regard to language ($F_{(1,\ 368)}$ = 126.56, p = .000), educational level ($F_{(3,\ 366)}$ = 3.16, p = .025), and age ($F_{(4,\ 365)}$ = 6.23, p = .000) at the $p < .05$ level. Nonparametric tests also confirm that there is a statistically significant difference in role perception scores between Flemish and French-speaking POs (Chi square = 98.88, df. = 1, p = .000), age groups (Chi square = 23.47, df. = 4, p = .000) and educational levels (Chi square = 8.91, df. = 3, p = .03) at $p < .05$. The discrepancies between these groups are also apparent in the data distribution around the medians using boxplots (figure 16). The following boxplots also show that POs holding a non-academic 1st-cycle diploma and POs aged under 25 tend to agree more on their role toward offenders compared to their other colleagues.

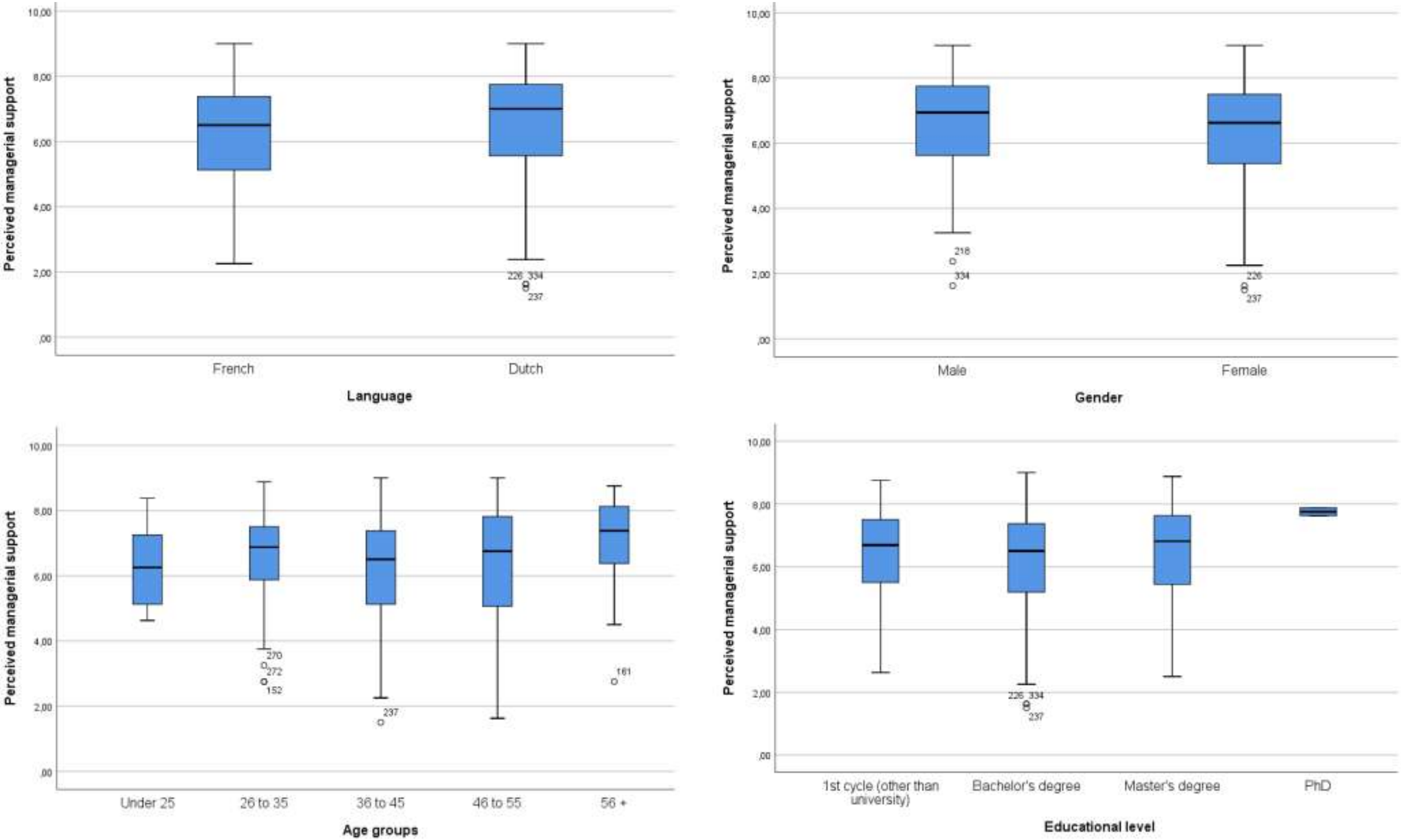
Figure 16 – Boxplots of subjective role by educational level, age, and language



Third, Belgian POs' general propensity to trust varies according to their gender and language. Overall, male POs (M = 6.09, SD = 6.17) have a higher propensity to trust people in their daily life than their female colleagues (M = 5.49, SD = 5.67). Flemish respondents also display a higher propensity to trust (M = 5.93, SD = 1.33) than their French-speaking colleagues (M = 5.26, SD =1.34). Two one-way ANOVA tests confirm that these differences are statistically significant for respondents' gender ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 8.75, p = .003) and language ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 23.33, p = .000) at p < .05. Further testing for age ($F_{(4, 365)}$ = 1.39, p = .238) and educational level ($F_{(3, 366)}$ = 1.34, p = .26) as grouping variables do not reveal statistically significant differences between group means.

Finally, using the controls as grouping variables for perceived managerial support does not bring to light any strong differences between group scores with the notable exception of respondents' language. Compared to French-speaking POs (M = 6.18, SD = 1.52), Dutch-speaking officers said they receive more support from their first-line managers (M = 6.55, SD = 1.63). An ANOVA test confirms that these differences are statistically significant for respondents' language ($F_{(1, 368)}$ = 4.96, p = .03). Further testing for age (Chi Square = 8.01, df. = 4, p = .09), educational level (Chi square = 3.81, df. = 3, p = .28) and gender (Chi square = .93, df. = 1, p = .34) do not allow us to reject the null hypothesis at p < .05. The boxplots for managerial support were then constructed using the controls as grouping variables. The figures reveal an uneven distribution of the data around the middle values of each of the levels of the control variables (figure 17). The distributions tend to be asymmetric with a right skew across all the different levels of the control variables. This data skewness was already noted in the discussion of the perceived managerial support histogram (figure 15). This means that the high frequencies observed in the high managerial support scores do not appear to be specifically associated with a particular group of POs.

Figure 17 – Boxplots for perceived managerial support



C – Dependent variable: importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments

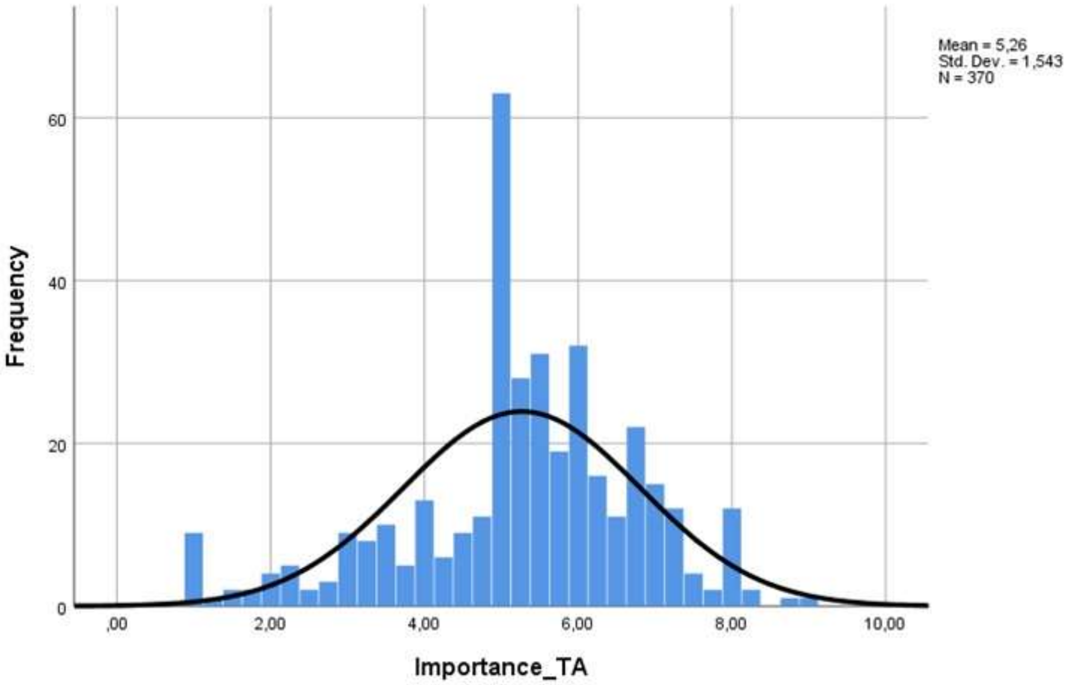
On average, Belgian POs attach a moderate amount of importance to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent use of discretion (M = 5.26, SD = 1.54). Table 8 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the dependent variable. Z scores for skewness and kurtosis do not fall within the acceptable range of -2 to 2, thus indicating some degree of non-normal univariate distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). However, absolute values for skewness and kurtosis are still below the cut-off points of 2 and 7 (Kim, 2013), which means that the dependent variable shows sufficient levels of univariate normality to conduct a large-sample SEM analysis.

Table 8 – Descriptive statistics of the dependent variables

		Importance attached to trustworthiness assessments
N	Valid	370
	Missing	0
Mean		5.264
Std. Deviation		1.543
Range		1 - 9
Skewness		-.621
Z skewness		-4.89
Kurtosis		.574
Z kurtosis		2.27

Figure 18 displays the frequency distribution of the dependent variable and the expected normality curves. Overall, the data approximately follow the expected normality curve, although a high frequency of the middle-value is noticeable. This denotes the presence of a central tendency bias. While there is a higher risk of confounding the main effects in the analysis (Malone et al., 2014), SEM fortunately has the advantage of estimating and accounting for systematic measurement errors (Tarka, 2018; Grewal et al., 2004). There are a few possible explanations for this bias. First, the survey did not force the respondents to make a choice because the Likert scale included a neutral midpoint (Nadler et al., 2015). Second, the items of interest are located at the very end of the questionnaire. It is possible that the participants had already lost some degree of investment by that point in the survey. Third, it is also possible that the wording of the items was not optimal, thus hindering POs' understanding of the items.

Figure 18 – Frequency distribution of the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments



Case summaries using controls as grouping variables were computed for the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments. These reports are available in appendix 6. Younger respondents aged under 25 (M = 4.98, SD = 1.49) or 26 to 35 (M = 5.20, SD = 1.47) seem to give slightly more importance to their trustworthiness assessments than their older colleagues aged 46 to 55 (M = 5.44, SD = 1.56) and over 56 (M = 6.15, SD = 1.37). Officers holding a short (non-academic) 1st-cycle diploma (M = 5.44, SD = 1.71) apparently attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments than their more qualified colleagues, such as those holding a PhD (M = 4.75, SD = .35) or a master's degree (M = 5.24, SD = 1.53). French-speaking officers (M = 5.42, SD = 1.41) also seem to attach more importance so their trustworthiness assessments than their Dutch-speaking colleagues (M = 5.08, SD = 1.67). However, investigating the statistical significance of these group differences using Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric tests does not result in the rejection of the null hypothesis for age (Chi square = 6.77, df. = 4, p = .15), gender (Chi square = 1.64, df. = 1, p = .20), language (Chi square = 2.14, df. = 1, p = .144), or educational level (Chi square = 1.70, df. = 3, p = .64) at the $p < .05$ level. In other words, the results do not indicate any significant group differences in the dependent variable for age, gender, language, or educational level.

D – Synthesis and brief discussion: one job, contrasting profiles

In the sample, the POs are typically aged 36 to 45 (43,5 %) and mainly hold a bachelor's degree (51,9 %). Most respondents identify as female (86 %), and a slight majority use French as their working language (53.5 %). Overall, these numbers are consistent with the French-speaking and Flemish Houses of Justice annual reports (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2019; Departement welzijn volksgezondheid & gezin, 2018). The respondents' gender and, more important, language were the most common sources of group differences in terms of the independent variables. Language-based discrepancies were expected to some degree but not to such an extent. These discrepancies come as a surprise because, at first glance, French-speaking and Dutch-speaking officers are embedded in almost identical institutions. They rely on the same work protocols, are subject to analogous work instructions, and even share a common past within an organization that was originally unified until 2015. It is sometimes difficult to determine to what extent the language-based discrepancies observed in this sample result from organizational differences between Flemish and French-speaking Houses of Justice or instead from the cultural differences between French and Dutch speakers in general.

First, I will synthesize and discuss the descriptive statistics for the control variables before addressing the independent variables.

1 – Control variables

Generally, the respondents' educational levels match the job requirements stated by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Flemish Region (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2019; Vlaamse Overheid, 2018). Both official job descriptions specify that future recruits should hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. The descriptive statistics do, however, reveal some clear differences in the respondents' educational levels depending on their gender and language. First, female officers are more overqualified than their male colleagues for the same position: half of female respondents hold a master's degree, while only one third of male respondents do. This result probably speaks to the theory of differential overqualification whereby female workers' higher overqualification rates are explained by extra barriers they encounter to career advancement (Frank, 1978). As highlighted in a 2014 International Labor Organization (ILO) report, female workers are generally more overqualified than male workers in Belgium (International Labor Organization, 2014). To date, however, there is limited evidence about gender-based differences in the public sector (Congregado et al., 2016). Second, the data show that Flemish POs have a higher educational level than their French-speaking colleagues. I suspect that this discrepancy simply echoes some regional differences in instruction levels in Belgium. The Belgian census data of 2011 indicate that, on average, the inhabitants of the Flemish region have a higher instruction level than those living in the French-speaking Wallonia region. These differences are corroborated by 2017 regional figures about the instruction level of young adults (30 to 34 years old) (Statbel, 2017; 2011).

Not only are male officers far less numerous than women in the present sample, but they also tend to be older than their female counterparts. Computing the age group frequencies by gender reveals that males are proportionally less represented than women in younger age groups. Two interconnected factors could explain the overrepresentation of female officers in Belgium and their younger age. The first is related to judicial assistants' educational background requirements, while the second concerns gender-based trends and preferences for specific educational paths in Belgium. Since their creation in 1999, the Belgian Houses of Justice have always favored the recruitment of social workers (SPF justice, 2009). Coincidentally, social work training is overwhelmingly obtained by women in Belgium. In the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, for instance, 80 % of the students pursuing a bachelor's degree in social sciences in 2017 (including social work) were female students. The proportion of female students has also continuously increased across all training fields over the past decades (Académie de recherche et d'enseignement supérieur, 2017). These elements probably partially explain why female POs are so predominant in Belgian probation services, including among the younger age groups.

Notably, women are proportionally even more numerous among Flemish POs (89 %) than among their French-speaking colleagues (83.3 %). On average, Dutch-speaking officers are also younger than their French-speaking colleagues. A possible explanation for this discrepancy lies in the historical genesis of the Flemish probation system. According to an exploratory interview conducted at the central administration of the Houses of Justice of the Flemish Region (*Justitiehuizen*), a large portion of judicial assistants were transferred to the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (*Maisons de justice*) after the services were split into two separate entities in 2015. Consequently, the Flemish Houses of Justice had to hire more new employees than their colleagues in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

2 – Independent variables

In general, Belgian POs reported relatively moderate workloads on the questionnaire. However, Dutch-speaking POs have significantly lower workloads than their French-speaking colleagues. These workload differences could be explained by a particularly sharp increase in case numbers in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. In the Flemish *Justititehuizen*, the number of new probation cases rose from 3902 in 2013 to 4426 in 2017 (a 13.4 % increase). During the same time, the number of new probation cases rose from 3021 to 5637 (an 86.6 % increase) in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (SPF justice, 2019).

The descriptive statistics also reveal that the respondents have a slight tendency to view their role toward offenders as social work as opposed to policing. However, younger POs more closely associate their role with social work than their older colleagues, who are comparatively more oriented toward the monitoring and policing of offenders. The selective recruitment practices engaged in by the Belgian Houses of Justice since 1999 could explain Belgian POs' preference for social work (SPF justice, 2009). Currently, the official job descriptions specified by the Flemish and French-speaking Houses of Justice still require a social work background for new recruits (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2019; Vlaamse Overheid, 2018). Other backgrounds are also accepted – such as psychologists, criminologists and specialized educators – but to a lesser extent. Older recruits' preference for policing and monitoring of offenders is perhaps more difficult to explain. Although these ideas are largely theoretical, it is possible that age differences in role perceptions result from progressive emotional exhaustion and disenchantment resulting from social work practice and associated (negative) experiences (e.g., Tzafrir et al., 2015; Lev-Wiesel, 2003). Similar observations were made by PA scholars, who demonstrated that public officials' compassion toward citizens tends to decrease over time (e.g., Kjeldsen & Jacobsen, 2013). Second, compared to Flemish POs, French-speaking officers are significantly less inclined to define their role toward offenders as social work. Although it is difficult to formulate a conclusive explanation for these language-based discrepancies, possible causes include cultural differences, professional training, or the younger age of Dutch-speaking officers.

On average, Belgian POs display a moderate propensity to trust other people in their daily life. This propensity significantly differs according to the respondents' gender and language.

On the one hand, the descriptive statistics show that male POs have a higher propensity to trust people than their female colleagues. Gender is often cited as a significant predictor of trust propensity in the literature. However, there is still little consensus on which gender has a higher propensity to trust others. Some studies claim that females have a higher propensity to trust than males (e.g., Shresta et al., 2013; Feingold, 1994), while other sources suggest the opposite (e.g., Zeffane, 2018; Buchan et al., 2008). The data seem to provide further evidence supporting the latter studies. On the other hand, the results indicate that Dutch-speaking respondents have significantly higher propensity to trust than their French-speaking colleagues. In the absence of a better explanation, I suspect that the difference in propensity to trust scores are linked to cultural factors. Indeed, some studies demonstrated that trust and propensity to trust can be predicted by shared cultural constructs (e.g., Shresta et al., 2013; Hofstede, 2001). Future research should perhaps examine whether such cultural constructs are perceived differently in Flanders and in Wallonia – and, if so, explore to what extent these cultural differences might affect frontline workers' trust of and propensity to trust citizens.

Belgian POs report generous support from their first-line managers. However, the results show that Dutch-speaking officers feel they receive more support from their first-line managers than their French-speaking colleagues feel they receive. This discrepancy is perhaps a side-effect of the rapid increase of case numbers observed in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Managing the growing number of cases is probably not an easy task for POs and their first-line managers. In that context, it is possible that some first-line managers are unable to properly mitigate the negative consequences of swelling caseloads in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.

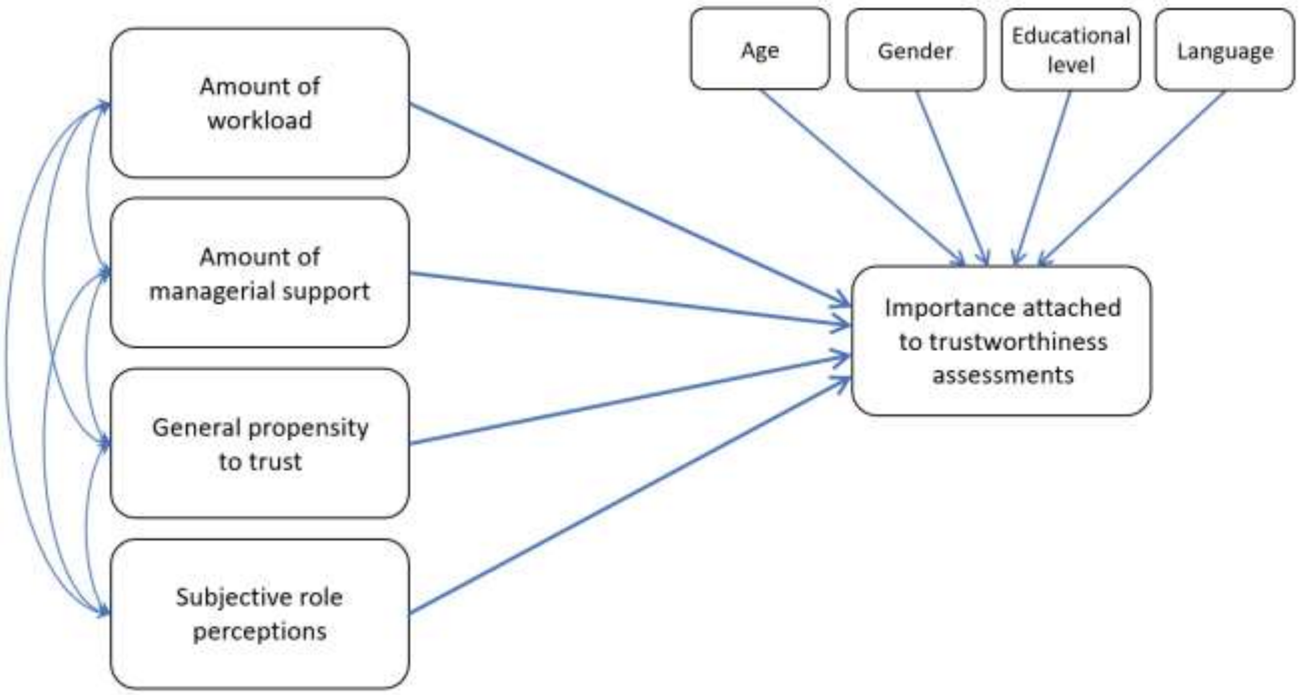
Section III – Conducting the SEM analysis

To examine the hypotheses, an SEM analysis was applied using the model-building and estimation functionality of STATA 16 statistical software. This method allows simultaneous analysis of all the variables and indicators included the model while testing all the hypotheses at once (Acock, 2013; Werner & Schermelleh-Engel, 2009). SEM also ensures high reliability of the results because it limits the risk of drawing biased conclusions resulting from measurement errors (Tarka, 2018; Grewal et al., 2004). A two-step SEM was applied (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First, a CFA was performed to confirm the factorial structure of the variables included in the analysis. At that stage, I also tested the fit of the factorial model with the data (Byrne, 2016). Next, the structural model was constructed and confronted to the hypotheses of the theoretical model. Again, I assessed the degree of model fit of the structural model before examining the relationships among the variables.

A – Confirmatory factor analysis

I assessed the factorial structure of the latent constructs using a CFA. The latent constructs were named as follows: *Importance_TA*, for the importance POs' attach to their trustworthiness assessments; *Workload,* for perceived workload; *Manag_sup*, for perceived managerial support; *Subj_role*, for subjective role perceptions (policing stance); and *Propensity_trust* for general propensity to trust. The following names were given to the control variables: *age*, for age groups; *gender*, for gender; *diplo,* for educational level; and *language*, for working language (i.e., whether the respondent works for the Flemish Region or the Wallonia-Brussels Federation). Figure 19 summarizes the conceptual model that will guide us through the CFA and SEM analyses.

Figure 19 – Conceptual model



The measurement model was constructed with all the control variables and observed variables loading to their respective latent constructs. I used a recommended cut-off point of .45 for fair factor loadings in the initial measurement model (Comrey & Lee, 1992). This resulted in the exclusion of the srole1 item. I also had to constrain the factor loadings of the workload construct since it only has two indicators (Bowen & Guo, 2011). A schematic representation of the measurement model, the fit statistics, and the correlations between controls and latent constructs for this measurement model are available in appendix 9. The following fit indices were used to assess the model fit: The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and P-value for model fit statistic (Acok, 2013).

The fit statistics are initially ambiguous. Some indices seemed to suggest good model fit with a CFI value of .89 and a RMSEA value of .063. However, the TLI value was .88, which was under the .95 threshold for good model fit (Awang, 2012; Hair et al., 2010; Schreiber et al., 2006). The p-value, which should preferably exceed .05, was also unsatisfactory at p = .000. In addition, testing for Mardia’s multivariate skewness and kurtosis revealed a significant deviation from multivariate normality (Byrne, 2016). As a result, the Sattora-Bentler estimator was used to determine model fit in the subsequent modified measurement model (Satorra & Bentler, 1994; 1990).

I then adjusted the model by fitting the relevant correlations between the residuals using the modification indices provided by the statistical software. Using the Sattora-Bentler estimator, the CFA reports indicate an overall good model fit for the new measurement model. The new TLI is satisfactory at .96, and both the RMSEA and CFI values still indicate good model fit at .036 (< .05) and .96 (> .90), respectively. The corrected P-value (p = .000) still provides limited evidence for good model fit. However, this last result must be taken with a grain of salt since the Chi-square test (CMIN) shows limited reliability with large sample sizes (n > 200) and is thus criticized as a criterion for model acceptance or rejection (Lance & Vandenberg, 2009; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). In the following table (table 9), I report all the standardized factor loadings associated with the latent constructs included in the study. All the correlations and fit statistics are also available in appendix 9.

Table 9 – Standardized factor loadings

Latent constructs	**Standardized factor loadings**
1. Importance attached to trustworthiness assessment (Importance_TA)	behav1_1 = .537; behav1_2 = .883; behav1_3 = .716; behav1_4 = .592
2. Workload (Workload)	otherworkload1_r = .884; otherworkload2_r = .857
3. Managerial support (Manag_sup)	manag1 = .842; manag2 = .860; manag3 = .840; manag4 = .475; manag5 = .820; manag6 = .581; manag7 = .806; manag8 = .717
4. Subjective role (Subj_role)	srole2 = .527; srole3 = 713; srole4 = .577; srole5 = .604; srole6 = .647; srole7 = .732
5. General propensity to trust (Propensity_trust)	propenstrst1 = .573; propenstrst2 = .671; propenstrst3 = .707

B – Descriptives and correlations

Table 10 reports the mean and standard deviations of the variables included in the CFA. The control variables confirm that the sample consists mostly of female respondents (M = 1.86), aged approximately 35 years (M = 2.96). Most hold a bachelor's degree (M = 5.31), and a slight majority of the respondents are French-speaking officers (M = 1.46). On average, the respondents attach a moderate amount of importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion with offenders (M = 5.26). The respondents tend to have a moderate propensity to trust other people (M = 5.57) and define their own role toward offenders as social work (M = 4.30). Finally, the respondents report moderate workloads (M = 5.51) and relatively high levels of managerial support (M = 6.35).

According to the correlation coefficients displayed in table 10, all the control variables are significantly correlated with each other with the exception of the respondents' gender and educational level. For instance, the respondents' language appears to be negatively correlated with age (Dutch-speaking POs tend to be younger than their French-speaking colleagues) and positively correlated with their educational level (Dutch-speaking POs tend to hold higher diplomas that their French-speaking colleagues). The respondents' age is also negatively correlated with their educational level (younger POs tend to hold higher diplomas) and their gender (male officers are on average older than female officers).

The results of the CFA also confirm that some of the control variables are significantly correlated with the independent variables included in the present model. On the one hand, gender is negatively correlated with respondents' propensity to trust ($p < .01$), suggesting that women have higher expectations about others' trustworthiness in the sample. The respondents' age, on the other hand, is positively correlated with their subjective role perceptions ($p < .01$). This means that the older POs are, the more they define their role toward offenders as policing. Perhaps more strikingly, the CFA results indicate that the respondents' language is significantly correlated with all of the independent variables. Dutch-speaking POs report less workload ($p < .001$) and more support from their first-line managers than their colleagues working for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation ($p < .01$). Flemish POs also have a higher propensity to trust and are more social work-oriented ($p < .001$). These results are consistent with the significant group differences that were observed in the previous section.

The dependent variable is positively correlated with the respondents' subjective role perceptions ($p < .01$). In other words, the more POs view their role toward offenders as social work, the more importance they give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for benevolent use of discretion. The dependent variable is negatively correlated with the respondents' language ($p < .01$) and positively correlated with their age ($p < .05$). With the exception of the respondents' subjective role perceptions ($p < .001$), no other significant correlation can be observed between the independent variables and the importance attached to trustworthiness assessments. However, some significant correlations can be noted between the independent variables. First, the respondents' subjective role perceptions and their propensity to trust are negatively correlated ($p < .000$). Respondents who tend to display a higher propensity to trust other people are also more likely to define their role as social work. Second, a positive correlation exists ($p < .01$) between the respondents' propensity to trust and the support received from first-line managers: officers who report more managerial support also tend to report a higher propensity to trust other people. Third, workloads are negatively correlated with managerial support at the $p < .000$ level, indicating that officers who experience large workloads also report limited support from their first-line managers. Fourth, workloads are negatively correlated with the respondents' general propensity to trust ($p < .05$). This suggests that respondents who have high workloads also tend to report a lower propensity to trust other people. Finally, workloads and subjective role perceptions are positively correlated ($p < .05$), indicating that control-oriented officers also tend to report higher workloads.

Table 10 – Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations

	Range	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Language (language)	1-2	1.46	.50	/								
2. Age (age)	1-5	2.95	.88	-.173***	/							
3. Educational level (diplo)	1-7	5.31	.63	.215***	-.261***	/						
4. Gender (gender)	1-2	1.86	.35	.081*	-.207***	.053	/					
5. Importance given to trustworthiness assessments (Importance_TA)	1-9	5.26	1.54	-.140**	.115*	-.056	-.047	/				
6. Workload (Workload)	1-9	5.51	2.08	-.310***	.026	-.064	.056	-.003	/			
7. Managerial support (Manag_sup)	1-9	6.35	1.58	.156**	-.019	.069	-.030	.063	-.295***	/		
8. Subjective role (Subj_role)	1-9	4.30	1.13	-.525***	.151**	-.082	-.059	.215***	.133*	-.110	/	
9. General propensity to trust (Propensity_trust)	1-9	5.57	1.37	.271***	.050	.077	-.187**	.126	-.148*	.175**	-.324***	/

Notes - Means and standard deviations for latent variables are based on the variables computed in the previous section (STATA only provides factor scores). *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.

C – Structural model

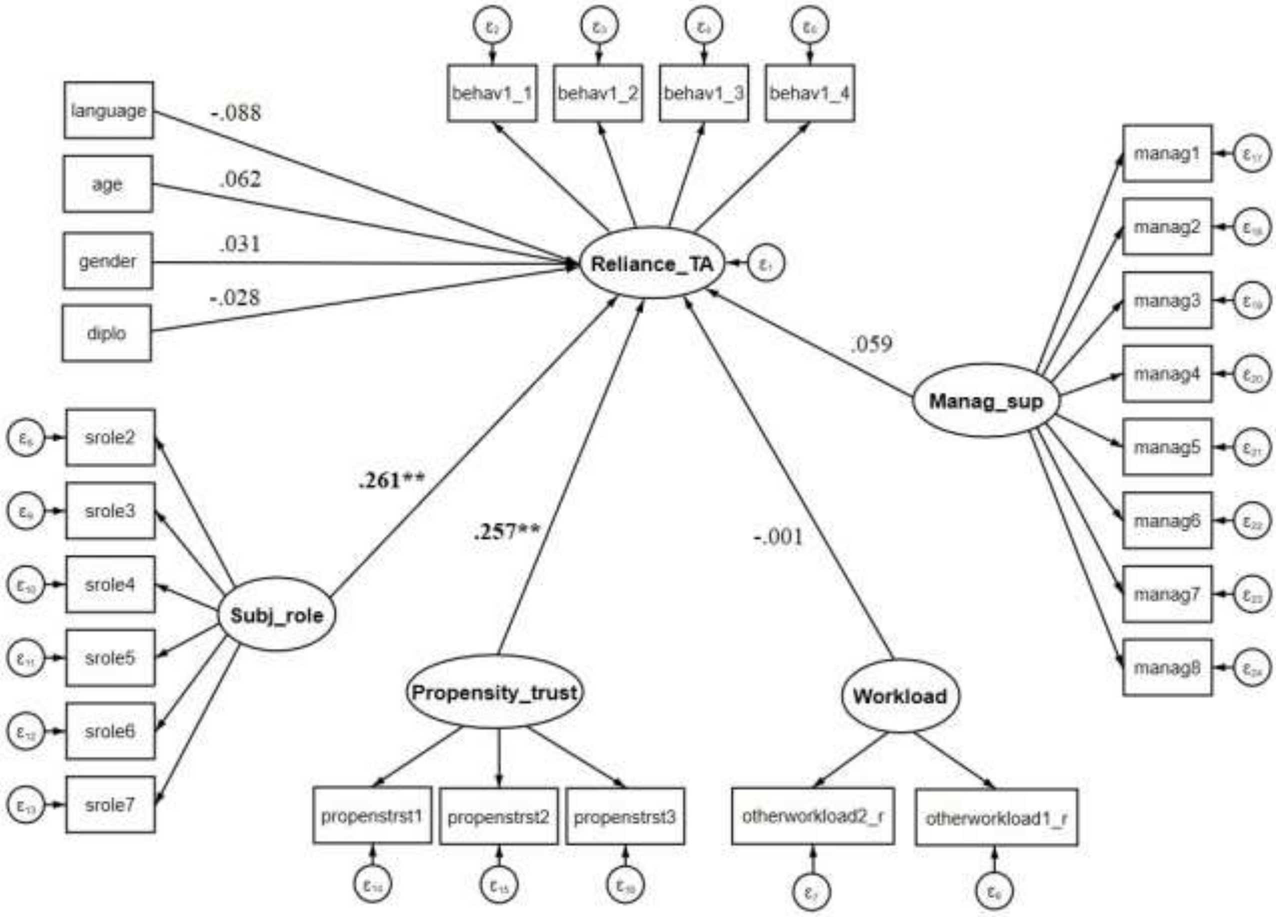
A structural model was constructed to examine the relationships between the latent variables. First and foremost, I assessed the degree of model fit. The fit statistics for the structural model yield a CFI value of .97, a RMSEA value of .034 and a TLI value of .96, all of which indicate good model fit (Awang, 2012; Hair et al., 2010; Schreiber et al., 2006). The p-value is still at .000 after applying the Sattora-Bentler correction. However, this test statistic is rarely relied upon for model acceptance or rejection when working with large sample sizes (Lance & Vandenberg, 2009; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). Hence, I conclude there is an adequate degree of model fit. The structural model and the standardized regression coefficients between the latent variables are depicted in figure 20 and table 11. A full report on the SEM is also available in appendix 10.

Table 11 – Determinants of the importance officers attach to their trustworthiness assessments

	Standardized coefficients	Standard error	Z-Score	P > | Z |
language	-.088	.067	-1.31	0.189
age	.062	.052	1.20	0.231
gender	.031	.059	0.53	0.598
diplo	-.028	.055	-0.51	0.610
Workload	-.001	.063	-0.02	0.984
Manag_sup	.059	.064	0.92	0.355
Subj_role	.261	.079	3.29	0.001**
Propensity_trust	.257	.096	2.68	0.007**

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Figure 20 – Structural model



Note. This figure reports standardized regression coefficients *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001. Correlations between independent variables were modeled but are not depicted.

The results indicate some significant relationships between the independent variables and the importance Belgian POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion with offenders. The standardized regression coefficients reveal a positive and significant relationship (*b* = .26, p < .01) between POs' role perceptions and the dependent variable. In other words, the more POs define their role as policing, the more they importance they attach to their assessments of offenders' characteristics when taking a benevolent approach with offenders. Conversely, when POs perceive themselves as social workers, they tend to be less reliant on trustworthiness assessments. Second, there is a significant positive relationship (*b* = .26, p < .01) between Belgian POs' general propensity to trust and the importance they give to their trustworthiness assessments: the more POs' general propensity to trust is important, the more importance they attach to their assessments of clients' trustworthiness when choosing a benevolent course of action. In contrast, when POs have a limited propensity to trust, they tend to give less importance to trustworthiness assessments of their clients.

The results do not indicate any significant relationships between the organizational variables and the dependent variable. First, the SEM analysis suggests that the workload experienced by officers is not a significant predictor of the dependent variable (b = -.001, p = .98). An increased workload does not lead to an increase in the importance that POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. In other words, when feeling pressured by large workloads, Belgian POs do not necessarily attach more importance to clients' characteristics (in terms of ability, benevolence, and integrity) when engaging in benevolent use of discretion. Second, the results of the SEM analysis do not point to managerial support as a significant predictor of the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments (b = .06, p = .35). Put differently, there is no relationship between the amount of support received from first-line managers and the degree of importance Belgian POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent use of discretion.

Finally, the results of the structural model indicate that control variables are not significantly related to the importance POs attribute to their trustworthiness assessments. This means that, in the present model, any variations in language, age, gender, and educational level do not directly affect the importance that POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. Although the control variables cannot be considered significant predictors of the dependent variable, I find some significant covariances between the controls and some of the latent exogeneous variables (appendix 10). As anticipated in the descriptive statistics, gender is found to be negatively correlated with POs' general propensity to trust ($p < .01$), showing again that female POs tend to have a lower propensity to trust than their male colleagues. The respondents' age is also positively correlated with role perceptions: the older POs are, the more control-oriented they are in defining their role regarding offenders ($p < .05$). The respondents' language is significantly correlated with all the latent exogenous constructs. Language is negatively correlated with workload ($p < .001$) and role perceptions ($p < .001$). It is also positively correlated with officers' propensity to trust ($p < .001$) and the amount of managerial support ($p < .01$). In summary, Dutch-speaking POs have a higher propensity to trust people in general and a higher tendency to define their role as social work compared to their French-speaking colleagues. They also report smaller workloads while receiving more support from their first-line managers. There are also significant correlations among some of the independent variables of the model. The SEM analysis reveals that workloads are positively correlated with respondents' subjective role perceptions ($p < .05$) but negatively with their propensity to trust ($p < .01$) and the managerial support they receive from their first-line managers ($p < .001$). Belgian POs' general propensity to trust and subjective role perceptions are negatively correlated ($p < .001$). A positive correlation also exists between managerial support and respondents' propensity to trust ($p < .01$).

Main findings and conclusion of the sixth chapter

The thematic analysis of interviews conducted with Belgian POs presented in the previous chapter revealed that they actively maintain a degree of benevolence in their interactions with offenders. This is surprising from a self-protection and self-interest standpoint: Belgian POs are not particularly compelled to favor benevolent courses of action in the work instructions resulting from the recent changes brought by the *directive verification*. Furthermore, time shortages, growing caseloads and fear of offender reoffense should logically discourage POs from acting benevolently toward offenders. Given this context, it is intriguing that officers would still openly and willingly take benevolent approaches with offenders. In this chapter, I address this puzzle by analyzing some of the processes taking place in POs' choice to engage in a benevolent use of discretion.

As frontline workers use assessments of their clients' trustworthiness (see: Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2016) to make discretionary choices (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005), I assume that POs' benevolent use of discretion most likely result from positive assessments of trustworthy offenders. However, little is known about the organizational and individual factors that might contribute to the importance frontline workers give to their trustworthiness assessments when favoring a benevolent use of discretion toward clients. In other words, assuming that an offender objectively presents the characteristics of a trustworthy individual, how do organizational and individual factors impact the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion? It is with this guiding thread that four main hypotheses have been explored.

To do so, data were collected from 370 French-speaking and Flemish POs via an online survey questionnaire. The analyses were performed using a CFA followed by the SEM analysis of the data. In this section, I will first address the results of analysis with regard to the hypotheses before synthesizing the main findings.

A – Mixed evidence supporting the hypotheses

The results of the SEM of the data demonstrate some significant relationships between the independent variables and the importance Belgian POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion. I now explain the main results and assess their relationship to the hypotheses I sought to explore in the present chapter.

> **H1**: POs who are exposed to large workloads tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action.

The results of the SEM analysis do not provide evidence in support of the first hypothesis. Contrary to expectations, no positive relationship is found between Belgian POs' workload perceptions and the amount of importance they give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action toward offenders. That is, larger workloads do not necessarily translate to an increase in the importance officers give to their trustworthiness assessments when favoring empathy, helpfulness or thoughtfulness with offenders. Building on some evidence (e.g., Vedung, 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), the initial argument was that when pressured by large workloads, frontline workers use their assessments to cherry-pick a limited number of clients to better allocate their efforts. I then argued that when pressured by workloads, public officials likely attempt to prioritize their efforts toward the most trustworthy clients, thus giving considerable attention and importance to their trustworthiness assessments in the process, especially when opting for benevolent use of discretion. Conversely, I argued that amid limited workloads, frontline workers probably care less about their trustworthiness assessments given that establishing priorities among clients is less imperative in these conditions. In the end, the results of the SEM analysis suggest that cherry-picking, or prioritizing, offenders is perhaps not based on assessments of clients' trustworthiness.

> **H2.** – POs who perceive more managerial support tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action.

The SEM results provide no support for the second hypothesis. Contrary to expectations, no positive relationship is found between perceived managerial support and the importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action toward offenders. That is, the analysis does not confirm that larger amounts of perceived support result in an increase in the importance officers give to their trustworthiness assessments. The initial argument was that some first-line managers endorse their subordinates' discretionary practices. In doing so, these managers provide frontline workers with the needed room to rely on their own professional skills and judgments to make decisions instead of rules and work instructions (e.g., Evans, 2016a; Evans, 2010). I thus argued that when feeling backed by their first-line managers, frontline workers have sufficient leeway to fully rely on and give importance to their own perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness to take a benevolent course of action with clients.

> **H3. –** POs who define their role toward offenders as policing tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action.

The results of the SEM analysis indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between POs' role preference and the dependent variable. Specifically, the analysis confirms the suspicion that officers who mostly define their role toward offenders as policing and monitoring attach more importance to their assessments of offenders. In other words, this means that control-oriented officers are generally unwilling to pursue an approach that could potentially hinder offenders' compliance with probationary conditions and increase the risk of reoffense. As revealed in the previous chapter, offender reoffense – especially when publicized – is a common concern among POs given the accountability at play. Opting for empathy, helpfulness or thoughtfulness with an offender is considered dangerous by these POs. This use of discretion requires a considerable amount of precaution and careful attention to offenders' characteristics to avoid any potential risks. Consequently, control-oriented POs are particularly concerned with trustworthiness assessments when opting for riskier uses of discretion with offenders. Conversely, POs who mostly define their role as social work and offender rehabilitation are less concerned with risk-avoidance than their control-oriented colleagues. These POs are more willing to accept the risks involved in loose offender control and reoffense because contributing to supervisees' rehabilitation and well-being through benevolent uses of discretion fits with their normative ideals. Consequently, rehabilitation-oriented POs attach little importance to trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion.

> **H4.** – POs who display a high general propensity to trust tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action.

The SEM analysis of the data shows a significant relationship between POs' propensity to trust and the importance they give to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action. Specifically, this relationship is significant and positive, which supports hypothesis H4. Propensity to trust is the "generalized expectation about the trustworthiness of others" (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 715). The results support the idea that the higher POs' propensity to trust others, the more importance they attach to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness. As strongly suggested in the literature (Rotter, 1971; 1967) but never fully confirmed, I argued that having higher expectations about the trustworthiness of others (high propensity to trust) tends to go along with more general attention to others' trustworthiness as well. In other words, individuals with high propensity to trust are more invested in observing the trustworthiness characteristics of others than those with more limited trust propensity. The results of the SEM analysis conducted in the previous section support this theoretical argument and further reinforce existing knowledge about propensity to trust in the literature. Not only does public officials' trust propensity positively influence trust and the perceptions of citizens' trustworthiness (e.g., Moyson et al., 2016; Lee & Yu, 2013; Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2012), it also positively affects the importance frontline workers give to their trustworthiness perceptions when making decisions about their clients.

The results of the structural model indicate that the control variables are not significantly related to the endogenous latent construct. That is, variations in age, language, gender, and educational level do not affect the importance POs attribute to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action. Some control variables are significantly correlated with the independent variables, but these correlations do not affect the direct effects observed in the structural model.

B – Predominance of individual factors

The present chapter originates from a surprise: according to the thematic analysis performed in the fifth chapter, Belgian POs still make efforts to act benevolently toward clients despite the rise of managerialism, growing caseloads and time shortages. In this chapter, I sought to uncover some of the processes involved in POs' benevolent use of discretion. Assuming that POs rely on assessments of their supervisees' trustworthiness to make discretionary choices, I looked at how some organizational and individual factors impact the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent use of discretion with offenders. This study brought together the literatures on SLB and trust. It contributes to the understanding of how decisions are made on the front lines by looking at the importance frontline workers attach to the trustworthiness of their clients when making decisions.

The results indicate that both POs' subjective role perceptions (policing stance) and general propensity to trust are positively and significantly related to the importance attached to trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action. To summarize the results differently, it is possible to picture different possible case scenarios depending on officers' individual characteristics.

For instance, an officer could describe his role regarding offenders as social work or rehabilitation while exhibiting low propensity to trust other people in general. Opting for a benevolent use of discretion fits with this individual's normative ideals and preferences. Favoring empathy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness to support an offender during the supervision process is considered an acceptable choice by this individual, regardless of the potential risks and the trustworthiness of the client. Furthermore, having lower trust propensity, he will appear generally less invested in and observant of the trustworthiness of offenders than POs with higher propensity to trust. In that scenario, the perceived trustworthiness of an offender does not much matter to the officer when he decides to make benevolent use of discretion.

Another possible case scenario is when a PO describes is his role as policing and monitoring and displays generally high expectations about others' trustworthiness (high propensity to trust). Choosing a possibly risky course of action, such as a benevolent use of discretion, involves considerable risk from this officer's point of view. Minimizing risk thus becomes a priority; therefore, this officer will actively assess offenders' trustworthiness and will most certainly take his assessments into consideration when opting for a benevolent course of action. Furthermore, this officer has a high propensity to trust other people, which makes him more invested and observant of the trustworthiness characteristics of other people (including offenders). In that case, it is likely that the characteristics of a trustworthy offender will matter greatly to this officer when he decides to make a benevolent use of discretion.

More broadly, the findings seem to support the influence of the investigated individual factors in predicting the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for benevolent use of discretion. The organizational conditions included in the present model (managerial support and the size of officers' workloads in their local agency) have not shown a relation to the dependent variable in this study.

Chapter 7 – Results, discussion, and implications

This last chapter summarizes and discusses the results of the qualitative and quantitative studies presented in the fifth and sixth chapters. In the first section, I present the main results with regard to the initial question of this research. I discuss the results as such, leaving the confrontation with the literature for the second section. There, I address the theoretical and empirical implications of this research before moving on to the practical implications.

Section I – Main results

How do POs interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? In this section, I offer the main results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses presented in the two previous chapters. I implicitly rely on the SLB literature and on the focus on trust to show how different PO profiles interact with specific offenders. Balancing the weight of organizational and individual factors, I also show that timing matters in interactions with offenders as the assessment of supervisees is made in successive steps.

A – Altruistic caseworkers and the two-step assessment of offenders

The present research aims to explore the nature and underlying mechanisms of POs' frontline practices in Belgian probation services. Drawing on the analytical framework offered by the SLB literature (e.g., Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and the conceptual insights brought by the literature on organizational trust (e.g., Schoorman et al., 2007; Nooteboom & Six, 2003; Mayer et al., 1995), I conducted two studies to answer this question from two different angles of approach. The two studies yielded different yet complementary insights regarding the initial question of this research.

The thematic analysis presented in chapter five revealed that POs are exposed to severe organizational constraints, such as time scarcity, soaring caseloads, increased paperwork, and staff shortages. These constraints limit officers' ability to properly manage their supervisees, and officers' consequently cope in ways that directly affect their interactions and the delivery of services to probationers. In particular, POs are constrained to assess offender profiles and concentrate their supervision efforts on those whom they consider in particular need of help and care. Although POs routinize their encounters and ration the overall provision of services, they still select and prioritize work with the cases that they consider the most complicated, urgent and challenging. In fact, most officers *move towards* (Tummers et al., 2015) a limited number of high-priority offender profiles. These profiles include individuals with complicated socioeconomic backgrounds, probationers who present drug and alcohol-related issues, or those who have difficulties accepting the supervision framework. In doing so, POs do not prioritize work with probationers who are the most reliable or the most likely to succeed. Rather, they act as altruistic caseworkers who try their best to *make a difference* to offenders' lives despite the growing caseloads, the soaring time constraints, and the managerialization of work contents. Officers are also more likely to implement benevolent frontline practices when working with these high-priority offender profiles. For instance, POs adjust their actions to these special probationers' benefits by investing more time and effort in the preparation of interviews and direct interactions. When needed, they also *move towards* offenders by relying on instrumental actions to defuse offenders' frustrations and ease their acceptance of supervision. Sometimes, they also break rules to better respond to offenders' special needs and unique circumstances. This is the case, for example, when officers skip compulsory home visits on the grounds that the visit may yield negative consequences for an offender's life environment and his relationship with his entourage.

However, officers do not just select offenders on the basis of their profiles to determine who will benefit from their benevolence. They also assess offenders' trustworthiness and rely on these assessments to make their discretionary choices. The SEM analysis presented in the sixth chapter showed that some POs tend to give more attention to their perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness in regard to being empathetic, helpful, and thoughtful during public service delivery. More precisely, these differences have not been shown to be related to the amount of managerial support or the quantity of workload to which officers are exposed in their local agency. Instead, they are related to their propensity to trust and the way they perceive their role towards offenders. First, the officers who define their role towards offenders as policing and monitoring tend to give more importance to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent use of discretion. For these officers, opting for benevolence would be considered hazardous because such a choice might hamper offender rehabilitation and lead to unwanted consequences. Consequently, they try to minimize risks by actively assessing and paying attention to offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent course of action. Conversely, POs who view themselves as social workers give significantly less importance to their trustworthiness assessments. These officers are more willing to accept the potential risks induced by a benevolent course of action because this use of discretion would fit with their normative ideals and preferences about probation work. Second, officers who display a higher propensity to trust tend to pay considerable importance to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent use of discretion. Overall, these officers seem to give additional attention and importance to the trustworthiness of their supervisees. They are more observant of the trustworthiness characteristics of offenders than those who have more limited propensity to trust.

Ultimately, the results of these two studies provide answers to the central question of this research: how do POs interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? In summary, I contend that (new) organizational constraints encourage POs to assess their supervisees' profiles and concentrate their supervision efforts on a limited number of high-priority offenders. Officers are willing to devise and implement benevolent practices when interacting with these probationers. Nevertheless, POs also prefer to deal with offenders who display some degree of competence and reliability. Hence, they rely on assessments of offenders' trustworthiness to identify and target those whom they will privilege with a benevolent use of discretion. However, the trustworthiness of an offender does not matter equally to all POs. The amount of importance that POs give to their assessment of offenders' trustworthiness varies according to their individual characteristics (policing stance and propensity to trust). For instance, contrary to control-oriented officers, offenders' trustworthiness does not appear to matter as much for officers who define their role towards offenders as social work. However, this could not be confirmed with regard to organizational conditions (workloads and managerial support).

Combining the results of both studies also suggests that the assessment of offenders occurs in two intermingled yet successive steps. Each step is associated with a specific set of organizational or individual conditions that affect the way POs assess and select offenders based on distinct sets of offender characteristics. This allows us to make sense of some of the apparent discrepancies between some of the results of the two studies. For instance, the qualitative analysis has pinpointed the key role of organizational conditions – such as workloads and their related dimensions – in explaining how and why POs assess and select a limited few offender profiles (first step). However, the SEM analysis has shown that these same conditions do not explain why the trustworthiness characteristics of an offender matter more for some officers than others (second step). Organizational conditions do, in fact, predominantly intervene in the first step of the assessment process.

There are several reasons that explain this two-step configuration. The first is related to the practical aspects of probation practice. When POs are assigned a new probation case, they are expected to take a quick look at the offender's file record (criminal record, police and court hearing reports) before proceeding to the first meeting. In doing so, they already have access to some information regarding the offender's profile, such as the type of offense, the probationary conditions, and some background information about the offender's life environment and socio-economic status. Unless the first meeting proves otherwise, POs are already able to identify and select some high-priority cases based on the available data. For instance, most officers would already consider road traffic violations to be low-priority cases at that point. The first meeting with offenders thus provides the opportunity to explore in finer detail the aspects of offenders' profiles that require further attention during supervision. If an offender is unwilling to comply with his addiction treatment or if he appears in a much worse socio-economic situation than anticipated, this would add further reasons to prioritize work with these urgent and challenging cases. Overall, these elements indicate that the identification of high-priority offender profiles tends to occur quite early in the supervision process and sometimes even before the first meeting with the offender. The second reason for this two-step process is related to relationship building and the way trust develops between individuals. POs can only start assessing probationers' trustworthiness from their first meeting onwards. Officers stabilize their impressions about clients only after their second or third meeting. This means that officers need to perceive repeated signs of proactivity, compliance, and goodwill to consider an offender trustworthy or not. This is consistent with how trust develops between a trustor and a trustee. Trust, or a trustor's willingness to accept vulnerability, is often rooted in prior outcomes and experiences with trustees (e.g., Mayer et al., 1995; Gabarro, 1978).

Figure 21 – The two-step assessment of offenders

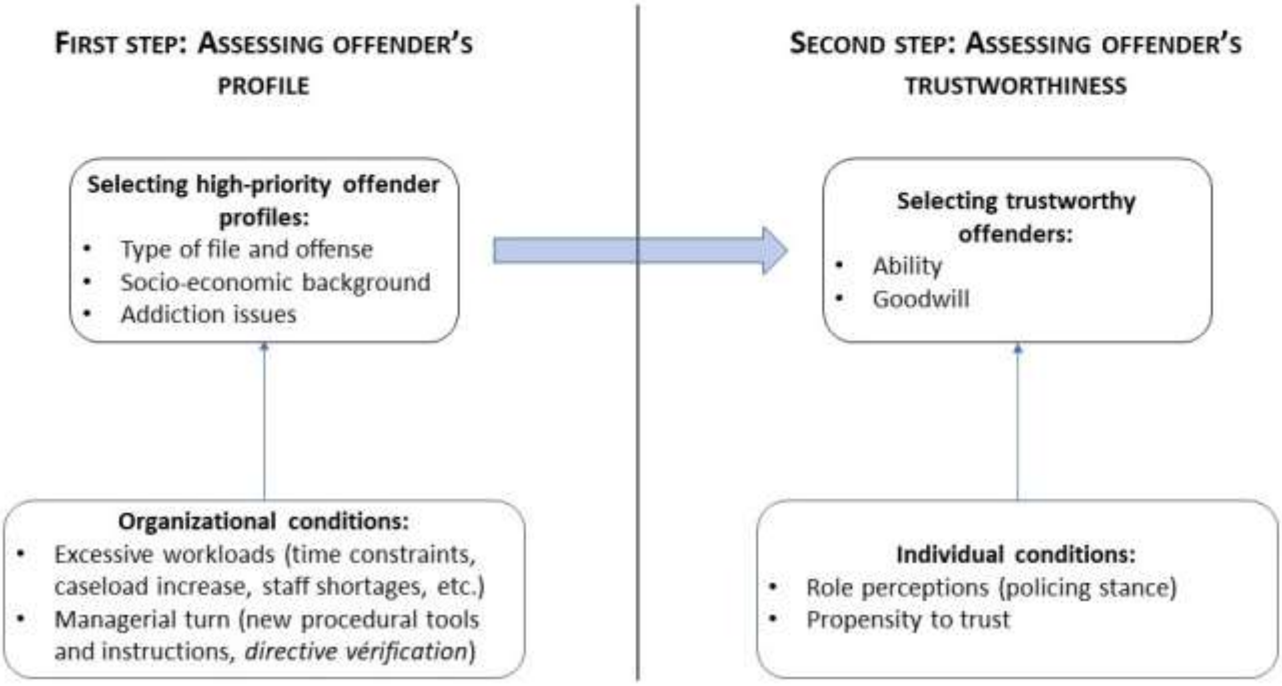


Figure 21 illustrates the two-step process that POs follow to assess and select *special* offenders that are considered both high-priority and trustworthy. During the first step, POs apply a generalized assessment of offenders' profiles. It is on this basis that officers select and then prioritize work with a limited number of challenging and urgent cases. These few high-priority offender profiles are selected on the basis of the type of file and offense, socio-economic background, and addiction status. This selection and prioritization process is triggered and amplified by the organizational conditions in which officers operate. The various dimensions associated with workloads (time constraints, staff shortages, etc.) and new managerial constraints encourage POs to find solutions to achieve a satisfactory and rewarding caseload management. In a second step (once high-priority offenders have been identified and prioritized), POs apply an assessment of offenders' trustworthiness characteristics. It is on these grounds that they cherry-pick and then privilege benevolent courses of action with trustworthy supervisees. Trustworthy offenders are selected on the basis of their apparent ability (their ability to understand and comply with rules and procedures, for instance) and goodwill (their willfulness and proactivity during supervision, for instance). However, not all POs cherry-pick these trustworthy offenders the same way. More precisely, offenders' trustworthiness does not appear to bear much importance for POs who have a low general propensity to trust and those who define their role towards offenders as social work.

B – Discussion of the results

The results will now be discussed with regard to three issues related to POs' interactions with offenders and the context in which this research was conducted. First, I address what POs' two-step assessment of offenders indicates about the identification of deserving individuals. Then, I introduce a classification of officer profiles that suggests expected ways of dealing with the probationers they consider to be trustworthy and not trustworthy. Finally, I address the consequences of managerialism on probation practice.

1 – Finding the deserving offender: balancing risks, social urgency, and trustworthiness

POs assess offenders in two successive steps. During the first step, POs evaluate offenders' profiles to select and prioritize a limited number of high-priority cases. In doing so, the officers tend to act as altruistic caseworkers who try their best to provide care and support despite the constraints to which they are exposed. In other words, instead of cherry-picking the easiest and most promising offender profiles, POs tend to chase the high hanging fruits. This profile selection is, however, more complex than it may appear. Evidence from the thematic analysis suggests that POs tend to select and prioritize work with two distinct subgroups of offenders. On the one hand, officers report concentrating their efforts on the most demanding and challenging cases from a social-work standpoint. This first subgroup of offenders is by far the most numerous and consists of *deprived probationers* who are in dire need of help and care. These are offenders who face complex familial situations, who have trouble making ends meet, or who struggle with addictions. On the other hand, POs concentrate their supervision efforts on *risky probationers*. This subgroup primarily includes offenders who were sentenced for emotionally charged and publicized offenses as well as those with alleged ties with terrorist organizations. To some extent, this subgroup also includes some unconventional cases, such as offenders who already served multiple probation sentences due to past reoffenses. Supervising risky probationers is particularly demanding and challenging for POs because it involves more risks for both the community and the officers themselves. As shown in the first study, any reoffense from an infamous offender would yield far more serious repercussions because of the potential implication of other actors from the public sphere, such as the politics and the media. Although officers prioritize work with both the most *deprived* and *risky* probationers, they still avoid taking unnecessary risks with those whose reoffense would draw unwanted attention from the public sphere (politics and the media) and managers.

While most POs have no choice but to select and prioritize work with these risky probationers, evidence also suggests that officers avoid taking inconsiderate risks during the supervision of these individuals. This indicates that although risky probationers might sometimes be assessed as trustworthy, POs are still fully aware that they present an objective danger to the community and their own safety. The fear of a publicized reoffense is particularly palpable among POs as they tend to consider themselves the very end of the chain of accountability. Not only are they formally accountable to their managers and other actors of the correctional sector, but they also feel accountable to the general public if something goes wrong. This discourages most POs from engaging in potentially hazardous behaviors, such as rule-breaking at the benefit of these probationers. To some extent, this speaks to some of the results of the SEM analysis: officers who define their role as policing tend to be more concerned than their social work-oriented colleagues about the trustworthiness of their supervisees. In other words, not all officers are equally cautious when supervising risky offenders. This also suggests that subjective role perceptions are a good proxy for the amount of risk officers perceive in engaging in a given course of action with offenders.

Ultimately, officers' two-step assessment process seems to be geared in a way that favors the implementation of benevolent courses of action with the most *deserving* probationers. In other words, POs are likely to make some compromises to help and support probationers who are both trustworthy and in dire need of support but who do not seem to present any particular risk of publicized reoffense. Officers also give high-priority treatment to risky probationers, but they are far less likely to provide any form of support that involves risk with these offenders.

2 – Assessing probationers' trustworthiness: different officer profiles

The results of the quantitative study point to the role of individual factors in explaining the amount of importance POs give to their trustworthiness assessments. More precisely, officers' policing stance (role perceptions) and propensity to trust both play a significant role during the second step of offender assessment. This leads to the distinction of four officer profiles. Table 12 presents each officer profile as a unique combination of variations in role perceptions and propensity to trust. Depending on each combination of traits, officers are more or less likely to give importance to their supervisees' trustworthiness. These different profiles also provide clues about officers' possible ways of dealing with trustworthy and less trustworthy probationers.

Table 12 – Officer profiles

		Role perceptions	
		Social work (care & support)	Policing (control & monitoring)
Propensity to trust	Low propensity to trust	Idealistic caseworker: ○ Low risk perceptions ○ Low attention to offenders' characteristics	Unselective enforcer: ○ High risk perceptions ○ Low attention to offenders' characteristics
	High propensity to trust	Cautious caseworker: ○ Low risk perceptions ○ High attention to offenders' characteristics	Pragmatic enforcer: ○ High risk perceptions ○ High attention to offenders' characteristics

First, *idealistic caseworkers* display low propensity to trust other people and simultaneously describe their role towards offenders as social work. These individuals see limited risk in pursuing any given course of action that fits with their normative preferences about care and support. They also exhibit limited overall concern about the trustworthiness of their supervisees due to their lower propensity to trust. Consequently, probationers' trustworthiness does not matter much to these officers in general. Idealistic caseworkers are particularly likely to privilege benevolent courses of action (including rule-breaking behaviors) regardless of the risks involved and the trustworthiness of their supervisees.

Second, *cautious caseworkers* also describe their role towards offenders as social work but display high propensity to trust other people. Similar to idealist caseworkers, these POs see little risk in engaging in a benevolent course of action with offenders. However, these officers generally show some concern about the trustworthiness of their supervisees due to their high propensity to trust. Consequently, probationers' trustworthiness generally matters to these officers. Cautious caseworkers exhibit a general tendency to promote benevolent courses of action with offenders, yet they are cautious when confronted with untrustworthy individuals.

Third, *pragmatic enforcers* display a high propensity to trust other people but describe their role towards offenders as monitoring and control. These officers perceive considerable risks in opting for a benevolent use of discretion with any probationer. To manage risks, they actively assess offenders' trustworthiness and give importance to their assessments when making hazardous choices, such as being indulgent when an offender confesses a minor rule violation. They are also highly observant and attentive to the trustworthiness of their supervisees due to their high propensity to trust. Consequently, probationers' trustworthiness generally matters to these officers, especially when opting for a benevolent course of action. Pragmatic enforcers are, however, reluctant to privilege empathy, helpfulness and thoughtfulness given the risks involved in this approach. They exhibit a general tendency to concentrate on offender monitoring, but they make some exceptions with supervisees whom they acknowledge as being particularly trustworthy.

Fourth, *unselective enforcers* display a low propensity to trust other people and simultaneously describe their role towards offenders as monitoring and control. Similar to pragmatic enforcers, these POs see considerable risk in engaging in a benevolent course of action with offenders. They must ensure that the offender is trustworthy enough to commit to this approach. However, these officers otherwise show limited concern about the trustworthiness of their supervisees in general due to their low propensity to trust. Consequently, probationers' trustworthiness does not matter much to these officers, except when making hazardous choices. Nevertheless, unselective enforcers are particularly unlikely to privilege a benevolent course of action with probationers given the risks that this involves. They thus exhibit a general tendency to monitor and control offenders regardless of their trustworthiness.

3 – Managerialism and frontline practices

The Belgian probation system currently sits at a crossroads. Until recently, and contrary to most other Western countries, Belgium has been relatively spared from reforms that accentuate actuarial and punitive strategies in the correctional sector (Beyens & Scheirs, 2010; Snacken, 2007). Over the past few years, however, traditional social work practices and values of probation have been put under growing pressure by what is described as a *managerial* and *punitive* turn (Bauwens & Roose, 2017). A series of computerized, procedural, and technical tools devised to better manage officers' work and offender monitoring have been progressively introduced since the mid-2000s (Jonkheere, 2013). This trend accelerated in the wake of the terrorist threat in Europe and a series of publicized events involving offenders who were under supervision at the time of reoffense.

In this context, Belgian POs are exposed to new constraints that affect the way they interact with and deliver services to probationers. The results of the fifth chapter shed some light upon the new constraints brought by managerialism and its effects on POs' interactions with and delivery of services to probationers. According to the thematic analysis, POs tend to associate managerialism with the emergence of new constraints that contribute to further growth in workloads and time shortages. For instance, officers often blame the 2016 *directive vérification* for further increasing time constraints. They claim that the directive complexifies offender supervision by adding new paperwork and compulsory procedural undertakings. These include the new obligation to perform home visits, supplementary contacts with police services, and the verification of the criminal record of an offender's close entourage. POs also criticize the lengthy data encoding process on the SIPAR database. Encoding each individual step of the supervision process (including phone calls) is a burdensome task for many POs, especially given the recurrent technical issues related to this tool. The data encoding process is often flawed because officers do not properly encode steps or even forget to encode them. Local managers also rely too heavily on computerized tools to manage officers' work. In this regard, POs especially refer to *resource planning*. This tool uses the SIPAR database to produce indicative workload figures that are used by managers to attribute new case files. Officers not only argue that resource planning underestimates actual workloads but also believe that managers tend to instrumentalize the figures it produces as an excuse to justify excessive case file attributions. Some POs thus believe that they are being continuously overloaded because managers attempt to keep up with the rising number of new probation cases.

POs struggle to keep up with work and conform to all the new requirements. It is mostly the procedural and technical nature of these new demands that puts them under further pressure because they feel overwhelmed by the number of small requirements that they must process during offender supervision. As a result, officers cope by rationing the activities they consider the most time consuming, such as counselling and care. POs reduce the time spent preparing interviews and reduce the overall length of interactions with most offenders. For instance, POs typically try to shorten the duration of interviews to increase the maximum number of offenders they meet during a day. Monitoring activities are generally maintained and sometimes routinized because they are less time consuming (checking on signs of compliance, collecting certificates, etc.) and provide more guarantees in the case of reoffense. The mass processing of clients is also handled with task simplification, such as the production of simpler reports for the probation board.

Overall, managerialism is associated with a general tendency to *move away* (Tummers et al., 2015) from offenders according to a logic of self-protection. Evidence from the first study indicates that officers try to find efficient ways to manage their caseloads while meeting new requirements and keeping risks at an acceptable level. In doing so, they avoid meaningful interactions with offenders and remain relatively uninvested in their supervision. This contributes to POs' common feeling that they are now privileging *quantity* at the expense of *quality* during public service delivery. Managerialism also affects POs' satisfaction with their own work experiences. POs tend to express their concerns about an excessive increase in managerial control over various aspects of their work. They believe that new tools and procedures tend to discourage professionalism and situational judgement (particularly among younger recruits). Consequently, officers feel deprived from their ability to self-manage and make choices about their clients.

Section II – Theoretical implications

In the first section, I presented the results derived from the fifth and sixth chapters. This second section now presents the theoretical implications of the research. I connect the results from the previous chapters with the existing literature. In particular, I draw implications from what this research suggests about the notions of state and citizen-agency, the rationality of street-level bureaucrats, frontline accountabilities, the notion of deservingness in SLB research, and the managerialization and digitalization of probation work.

A – Citizen-agency at the frontlines of probation

Despite rising workloads, time constraints, and the ongoing managerial shift in Belgian probations, POs are still willing and affording to use their discretion in benevolent ways during public service delivery. When adapting their practices to the benefit of their clients, officers are mostly driven by their own values and ideals. Overall, the present research stresses the importance of frontline workers' normative views and judgements about their clients in the processes that lead to the use of benevolence in frontline practices. These results concur with Maynard-Moody & Mushenos' (2003; 2000) argument that frontline workers make their decisions, at least partially, according to a citizen-agency logic (also see Harrits & Møller, 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012). When acting as citizen-agents, frontline workers make assessments and judgments regarding "the identities and moral character" of their citizen-clients and act in accordance with their abidance with social and cultural norms (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003, p. 9).

POs often act as citizen-agents, especially when moving *towards* supervisees (Tummers et al., 2015). This is the case, for instance, when POs break the rules to privilege relationship-building over the cold fact-checking imposed by work instructions or when POs decide to skip the implementation of home visits because of clients' specific needs and circumstances. Instead of relying on procedural tools and instructions that lack contextual usefulness, officers actively assess and judge clients' personal situation using their practical knowledge and their professional intuitions about *what works* in the given circumstances to make decisions that are better suited for supervisees. In doing so, they rely on pragmatic improvisation to provide what they consider the most adequate answer to the needs of their supervisees (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; 2003). Remarkably, the SEM analysis also stresses the importance of frontline workers' normative preferences in the assessment of offenders. The results show that the way frontline workers define their professional roles is key to deciphering how they assess their clients and their subsequent use of discretion. The fact that social-work oriented POs give significantly less importance to their trustworthiness assessments of probationers is a strong indication that POs function (at least partially) according to a citizen-agency logic. This further contributes to the idea that frontline workers make sense of their encounters with clients based on moral judgements rather than legal premises. Interestingly, the results also suggest that professional role preferences offer a viable way to study how normative judgements and personal preferences might affect frontline workers' judgments and decision-making at the frontlines. Existing criminological research has successfully linked POs' role preferences with specific behaviors or behavioral intentions during offender supervision (e.g., Viglione & Blasko, 2018; Steiner et al., 2011; Schwalbe & Maschi; 2009). The present research adds to these studies by showing that role preferences are also linked with distinct ways of including client assessments into decisions at the frontline.

However, despite highlighting the role of normative judgements and personal preferences in frontline workers' use of discretion, the present research provides limited information about the socialization processes (e.g., Moyson et al., 2018; Oberfield, 2014; Dubois, 2015) that lead to the adoption of shared beliefs and values among professionals**.** For instance, data were collected on POs' perceptions about their role towards offenders, yet little is known about how officers came to develop these views. To what extent do these formations frame officers' views about ideal probation practices? What about the role of peers in this socialization process? Although POs work alone on their case files, they share their personal experiences with colleagues and actively seek their advice when confronted with difficult experiences. This is especially the case when they cannot rely on managers to provide immediate support. Future research should thus examine the nature of this socialization process and study how it affects the compromises made by frontline workers between state and citizen-agency logics of frontline work.

Second, this research uncovered frontline workers' strong attachment to professionalism and their ability to make circumstantial decisions about their clients. Officers actively use their experience and practical knowledge to make choices that better fit their clients' needs, even if this involves breaking some rules in the process. The results also suggest that managerialism exacerbates POs' fear of being stripped of their professionalism and their ability to make situational judgements about their supervisees. Although these observations may be interpreted as an expression of citizen agency, they also hint at Harrits & Cecchini's (2019) argument in favor of a third form of *professional* agency at the frontline. The rise of new managerialism and managerial control (Brodkin, 2011) may provide a catalyst for the observation of this professional agency. Indeed, in this context, professional agency seems to increasingly compete with a logic of bureaucratic rule compliance (state agency). Future SLB research should thus examine Harrits & Cecchini's claim, particularly in street-level organizations where frontline workers' professional culture is put under pressure by managerialism.

B – Articulating self-interests and a selfless desire to help others

Frontline workers' practices are not only driven by self-interest and self-protection (Lipsky, 2010), they can also stem from a genuine willingness to *do good for others* (Perry, 1996). As shown in the fifth chapter, POs do not necessarily opt for the most efficient or comfortable solutions even when they are confronted with heavy workloads and time limitations. Instead of cherry-picking the simplest cases, officers tend to chase the high hanging fruits: they select and prioritize work with offenders who are in particular need of care and support, such as those who present the most challenging socioeconomic issues. In doing so, POs act as altruistic public officials who are willing to act in the best interest of those in need. This suggests that instead of relying solely on self-protective behaviors to cope with work constraints, POs also engage in *value rational*[34] actions in the pursuit of meaningful and *rewarding experiences* (see: Halliday et al., 2009; Nielsen, 2006). This is consistent with other studies that demonstrate that even when pressured by work constraints, frontline workers still opt for solutions that fit their perceptions of clients (e.g., Borrelli & Lindberg, 2018; Tummers, 2017). As such, these results propose a different perspective on frontline workers' use of coping and discretion that contrasts with Lipsky's assumption that street-level bureaucrats' actions are predominantly *instrumentally rational* and driven by self-preservation (see: Kjaerluff, 2018).

This observation does not mean that POs are never driven by self-interest and self-protection when interacting with supervisees. In many cases, POs also see some personal benefit in adapting their practices to their supervisees' best interests. For instance, POs not only display a willingness to do good for their supervisees when they refuse to follow work instructions during a first meeting or when they allow offenders to read official reports; they also try to facilitate their own work by reducing the risks of confrontation and noncompliance. This complex articulation between *value rational* and *instrumentally rational* action is also quite apparent when POs perceive limited client meaningfulness (Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Tummers, 2011) in the tools and procedures they are required to implement during public service delivery. POs' critique of the contextual usefulness and relevance of home visits provides a good illustration of this phenomenon. Those who skip home visits do not always perceive the benefits that this tool offers to their supervisees given their specific needs and circumstances. They prefer to rely on their practical knowledge and beliefs about what is best for offenders to provide what they consider to be the most adequate answer given their supervisees' personal situation. However, when skipping visits, most POs simultaneously consider the personal interests this decision entails, such as the time saved for other work-related activities or the benefits in terms of personal safety.

In other words, this research provides evidence that frontline work adaptations result from street-level bureaucrats' arbitration between their self-interest and a genuine, selfless desire to

[34] According to Max Weber's typology of ideal types of action, a "value rational" action is when the means and objectives are driven by values (ideals, ethics, beliefs) (Weber, 1978).

help the citizens with whom they interact (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; May & Winter, 2007). Additionally, the results support the assertion that public officials' willingness to follow work instructions and procedures is influenced by the degree to which they believe that these instructions will help citizens (client meaningfulness) (e.g., Tummers, 2011; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). This research adds to these studies by showing that frontline workers are more likely to be non-compliant with rules when they simultaneously perceive a personal interest in not following instructions and limited client meaningfulness in those instructions. Future studies should explore street-level bureaucrats' desire to help citizens by looking at why they consider some policy instruments to be meaningful or meaningless for clients. Furthermore, these studies should also examine how frontline workers articulate their own self-interests with their desire to help citizens when policies and instruments are not very meaningful for clients.

C – Multiple accountabilities

POs deliver public services in a work environment characterized by strong public accountabilities. Two main forms of accountability are particularly salient in the event of an offender reoffense. On the one hand, POs are accountable to their managers, the central administration, and other judicial actors (probation board, judges, etc.). In the case of reoffense, the probationer's file record is scrutinized by penal authorities and managers who examine whether the supervision was implemented in accordance with work instructions. Reoffenses are difficult to predict, and POs are never fully prepared for this eventuality. This is why officers are often anxious at the prospect of missing signs of potential reoffense and being held responsible for an offender's actions if something goes wrong. On the other hand, POs have also interiorized a form of accountability to the general public. Officers are particularly worried about the risks of public exposure in the event of a publicized reoffense. More precisely, they fear the reaction of politics and the media. POs believe that they become ideal scapegoats when these actors try to establish responsibilities due to public outcry. They consider themselves particularly vulnerable to these events because they are at the end of the chain of responsibility. These accountabilities exert an implicit yet constant pressure on POs. As a result, some officers continuously interrogate and adjust their practices to limit uncertainties, reduce the odds of being held accountable, and seek the protection of their managers. In doing so, POs cope by finding cost-effective ways to enhance their monitoring routines. This includes double-checking offenders' signs of compliance (cross-referencing data, checking the authenticity of certificates, etc.), reconvening some offenders to make sure that they comply with the supervision framework, and supplementary contacts with third-party actors such as the police.

This research provides insights into how street-level bureaucrats perceive accountabilities at the frontline and how they adjust their behaviors accordingly. Public accountability is a central subject of discussion in public administration (Bovens et al., 2014), and scholars have repeatedly acknowledged its relevance as an inevitable part of street-level bureaucrats' work experience (Thomann, 2015; Murphy & Skillen, 2015; Brodkin, 2008). While it has been established that street-level bureaucrats are subject to various forms of accountabilities (Hupe & Hill, 2007), few studies have examined the effect of these different accountabilities on coping. Most studies assume that frontline workers are subject to a form of public-administrative accountability and examine how street-level bureaucrats deal with resource limitations and institutional or organizational changes (e.g., Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2011; Tummers et al., 2009; Taylor & Kelly, 2006). However, this perspective minimizes the factors that lie beyond the boundaries of the administration. As demonstrated by POs' repeated allusions to the role of the media and politics, it seems that frontline workers internalize a strong sense of accountability to the general public. street-level bureaucrats are well aware of their public image and the way society expects them to behave (e.g., Collings & Murray, 1996). This can have far-reaching consequences for frontline practices because the influence exercised by the media, politics and public opinion does not stem from formal rules.

Theoretically speaking, these observations call for more research about how frontline workers perceive accountabilities at the frontline and how these affect their practices, especially in policy fields that receive strong attention from politics and the media. The main challenge of future studies is to understand the contexts and circumstances with which street-level bureaucrats cope in response to forms of accountability that transcend the perimeter of the institution. The present research shows that such forms of constraints seem to apply to the correctional sector. More specifically, I concur with calls for comparative designs in SLB research (see: Virtanen et al., 2016; Hupe & Buffat, 2014) because the way street-level bureaucrats deal with accountabilities may vary widely according to the policy sector in which they operate. In other policy sectors, such as education, frontline workers' autonomy is comparatively higher, and they "run relatively small risks of being discovered" when adopting coping strategies (Vedung, 2015, p. 18).

D – From client's trustworthiness to clients' deservingness

SLB scholars often assume that frontline workers make their decisions based on the key characteristics and *worth* of their clients (e.g., Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Leland, 2000). This research sought to build on this intuition by using the theoretical and conceptual insights offered by the literature on organizational trust (e.g., Schoorman et al., 2007; Nooteboom & Six, 2003; Mayer et al., 1995). To date, many studies have examined citizens' trust in public institutions and governments (e.g., Christensen & Lægreid, 2005; Van de Walle & Bouckaert, 2003). In contrast, this research adds to the literature by analyzing public officials' trust towards a specific category of citizens (Yang, 2005). More precisely, it provides some key understandings of the processes involved in the use of discretion at the frontline by examining the importance street-level bureaucrats give to their assessments of citizen-offenders' trustworthiness when making discretionary choices.

Some studies have highlighted the role of trust and perceptions of trustworthiness in street-level bureaucrats' decisions about citizens (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Yang, 2005). The present research adds to these studies by providing some indications regarding the factors that affect frontline workers' use of trustworthiness perceptions when making discretionary choices. The results of the sixth chapter have shown that some POs give more importance to their perceptions of offenders' trustworthiness when opting for a benevolent use of discretion. More precisely, those who define their role towards offenders as policing and monitoring (as opposed to social work) and those who display a higher propensity to trust tend to be more attentive to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness. These officers give extra importance to the trustworthiness of their supervisees either because benevolent courses of action are considered hazardous (control-oriented officers) or because they are generally more observant of the trustworthiness characteristics of other people. Ultimately, these results are consistent with other studies showing that the perceptions and interpretation of citizens' trustworthiness remain a subjective matter. Frontline workers assess citizens' trustworthiness, but the way they make sense of, interpret, and use these cues depends on their role identities or the dominant frames through which they decrypt these cues (Loyens et al., 2019; Van de Walle & Raaphorst, 2019; Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2018). Future research should take this analysis a step further in the context of the correctional sector. Rather than examining the conditions that affect the importance that POs give to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness, future research should empirically test how different PO profiles use trustworthiness cues to make their decisions regarding their supervisees. Furthermore, studies should explore to what extent POs' role perceptions are associated with specific definitions of what constitutes a *good* or a *bad* citizen in general.

However, the results of the fifth and sixth chapters point to some limitations regarding the use of trust and trustworthiness as adequate entries to the analysis of frontline workers' use of discretion during public service delivery. More precisely, trustworthiness is not the sole criterion used by frontline workers to assess clients and determine their eligibility for help and support. POs' two-step assessment of offenders suggests that frontline workers are more likely to use their discretion in benevolent ways with a limited number of deserving individuals. These special supervisees tend to be high-priority profiles in need of help and support (deprived probationers) who display some degree of ability and goodwill (trustworthy probationers) and who do not seem to present major risks for the officer and the community. The identification of such a group, composed of individuals who are more likely to benefit from officers' benevolent courses of action, echoes a number of SLB studies about the social construction of deserving clients (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Wilkins & Wenger; 2016; Kallio & Kouvo, 2015; Altreiter & Leibetseder, 2015). The results of the present research particularly speak to Jilke & Tummers's (2018) theoretical and empirical contribution about the three deservingness cues used by frontline workers to determine which clients they will help during public service delivery. According to the authors, some clients are perceived as more deserving than others because they have earned it (the "*hard-working client*"), because they fit the bureaucratic criteria of success (the "*successful client*"), or because they are in particular need of help ("*the needy client*") (Jilke & Tummers, 2018). These cues match the criteria used by POs to assess and identify the most deserving probationers. Indeed, in the present research, trustworthy probationers – characterized by high levels of goodwill and ability – would arguably correspond to the hard-working and successful clients identified by the authors. Deprived probationers would refer to the needy clients described above. The present research also furthers the authors' findings by adding a risk dimension to these three deservingness cues. The results show that POs include risky probationers when prioritizing cases but avoid taking unnecessary risks when working with them. Although this finding might be context specific, it is highly probable that risk perceptions are an important aspect of the social construction of the deserving client in other policy sectors, such as the police or the justice sector.

E – The managerial revision of the Belgian correctional system

It is often debated whether the managerialist trend in Belgian probation systems is characterized by a punitive turn (e.g., Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Beyens & Roosen, 2013). Similar discussions are held in other branches of the Belgian judicial system, such as youth justice (e.g., Christiaens & Nuytiens, 2009) and electronic monitoring (Beyens & Roosen, 2013), but scholars tend to be inconclusive about the existence of such a punitive turn.

The present research provides some nuance to the claims of a punitive turn in the Belgian correctional sector. Belgian POs do not necessarily disapprove of the addition of new control and verification procedures, often stressing that offender care and support would not be viable without some strong control mechanisms. Instead, POs deplore the additional workloads and time constraints brought by the new procedural tools and guidelines. Most POs are deeply attached to the notions of care and support, but time constraints hamper the proper implementation of the social aspects of supervision. Moreover, many POs are reluctant to call the recent changes a punitive turn. They argue that, historically, the Belgian probation system has always sought the right equilibrium between care and control in response to mediatized cases or topical issues (such as terrorism).

While it is true that the latest updates to POs' work instructions accentuated some of the monitoring aspects of offender supervision, the Belgian Houses of Justice still claim their allegiance to the rehabilitative goals of probation by emphasizing social work and professionalism (Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). For instance, both the *Justitiehuizen* of the Flemish Region and the *Maisons de Justice* of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation stress the importance of care, support, and rehabilitative principles in their latest annual reports (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2019; Departement welzijn volksgezondheid & gezin, 2018). Official job descriptions for French- and Dutch-speaking POs also stress the importance of a social-work educational and professional background among new recruits (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, 2019; Vlaamse Overheid, 2018). The 2016 *directive verification* itself was arguably not devised to challenge dominant conceptions of probation work. Despite its emphasis on verification procedures, the directive did not call into question the *social* aspects of supervision, but it arguably standardized and formalized some verification practices that were either already recommended or loosely used by some officers (Administration générale des Maisons de justice, 2016).

Overall, these elements seem to concur with Rothmayr-Allison's (2013) and Devresse's (2013) argument that the latest evolutions of the Belgian judicial system do not substantiate a radical change in the dominant perspectives and values of the system. Instead of a punitive turn, it would be more appropriate to talk about a *managerial revision* of the Belgian judicial system, whereby managerialism constitutes yet an additional constraint on practitioners' shoulders[35] (Allison, 2013). In other words, the transition from offender supervision to offender management (McIvor et al., 2010) mostly results from a *managerial revision* of the system instead of a paradigmatic shift from rehabilitation to punishment.

Although Belgian POs are still generally attached to social work values and to the rehabilitative goals of supervision, some indications suggest that their professional identity is being pulled towards managerialism and case management. This echoes de Larminat and Jonckhere's (2015) argument that the managerialization and computerization of probation work are fostering a reconfiguration of POs' professional identities in Belgium and in France (also see: de Larminat, 2012a; 2015; Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b). In the present study, most officers were not vehemently opposed to the adoption of new managerial tools and instruments as long as offender care and support can be adequately maintained. This perhaps marks a subtle emergence of a new transitional professional identity in between the social worker figure and the case manager figure.

More broadly speaking, the Houses of Justice have proven to be relevant labs for the investigation of the contemporary balance between social work and policing towards offenders. POs appear to be major actors in the way reforms are implemented

F – The digitalization of probation work

A growing pool of studies shows how managerial reforms interact with frontline workers' practices and affect the way services are delivered to citizens (e.g., Ellis, 2011; Hjörne et al., 2010). Managerialism, especially managerial control, tends to bring new constraints to which frontline workers adapt and cope (Brodkin, 2011; Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Wright, 2003). Nevertheless, a sizeable amount of the changes brought by the managerial revision of the Belgian probation system took the form of new computerized tools and instruments. Indeed, the findings stress the growing importance of new technologies in the management of frontline

[35] "Le managérialisme ne forme qu'une contrainte parmi d'autres, qui toutes, influencent le quotidien des professionnels" (Allison, 2013, pp. 287-288).

work. The SIPAR database and its integrated tools (including the resource planning) are clear illustrations of an ongoing technical and managerial shift towards the computerization of frontline work in the Belgian probation systems. This transition not only applies to frontline officers' management of offenders but also concerns local managers, who can now rely on some of these tools to better monitor and administer POs' work (via SIPAR and the resource planning, for instance). In April 2019, another tool was officially launched in the Belgian Houses of Justice. The new I+Belgium integrated platform is designed to facilitate the real-time communication of offender data to the various actors of the judicial and correctional sector, such as the Houses of Justice, prisons, police districts, investigating judges, and public prosecutors (Koen Geens, 2019).

The research results indicate that officers share mixed feelings regarding computerization. On the one hand, they acknowledge the real benefits that SIPAR and its integrated instruments offer to the active management of large caseloads. On the other hand, however, some POs believe that computerized tools hamper the use of professional judgement and the ability to make circumstantial decisions about offenders. Officers are irritated by the managerial control that these computerized tools impose over various aspects of their work. They feel constantly monitored and fear losing their professional autonomy. To some extent, this observation alludes to the perceived loss of autonomy and professional discretion that street-level bureaucrats may experience following managerial changes (Brodkin, 2011; Ellis, 2011; 2007; Evans & Harris, 2004). It also echoes the feelings of alienation experienced by frontline workers who are exposed to managerial practices that focus excessively on efficiency and results (Tummers, 2011; Tummers et al., 2009). In a context in which penal cultures are becoming increasingly penetrated by highly technical managerialist approaches, additional research will be needed to assess the effects of digitalization on the evolution of frontline practices for street-level justice. These results are also consistent with criminological studies that explored how POs' accept new technologies governing probation practice (e.g., Phillips, 2017; Jonckheere, 2013a; 2013b; Robinson & Svensson, 2013). More specifically, these findings resonate with Jonckheere's (2013a; 2013b) contributions on the adoption if SIPAR in the Belgian Houses of Justice. Overall, the results are also consistent with other criminological studies that stressed POs' fear of losing their professional autonomy and discretion due to the standardization and proceduralization of decision-making (e.g., Schaefer & Williamson, 2018; Persson & Svensson, 2012; 2011; Fizgibbon et al., 2010). In a context in which penal cultures are becoming increasingly penetrated by highly technical managerialist approaches, additional research will be needed to assess the effects of digitalization on the evolution of frontline practices for street-level justice.

Limited evidence was found in favor of Buffat's enablement thesis that the digitalization and standardization of public administration seem to shape rather than limit discretion (Buffat, 2003). It does not seem that POs opportunistically rely on computerized tools to justify decisions regarding their supervisees (*the computer told it*). However, new IT tools provide managers with remote information on frontline agents' activities and caseloads. By POs' account, local managers seem to instrumentalize the tools at their disposal to justify some of their decisions regarding the management of their subordinates. Future SLB research should empirically test Buffat's thesis by specifically examining the effects of digitalization on frontline work in the correctional sector.

Section III –Practical implications

In this last section, I build on the results of the present research to formulate some reflections for local managers (directors and associate directors), the central administrations, and judicial assistants. First, I reflect on what the differences in POs' profiles likely entail for the delivery of services to probationers and how the management might take these differences into consideration. Second, I discuss officers' need for transparency and the key role of managers in that regard.

A – Handling a variety of PO profiles

POs differ from one another in regard to the way they interpret and take into consideration the characteristics of their supervisees when making decisions. Such individual differences might affect the nature of interactions with probationers in unique ways. Depending on their propensity to trust others and their policing stance, POs pay varying degrees of importance to the assessment of their supervisees when making decisions. These discrepancies indicate that POs differ in regard to their preferred way of dealing with probationers during public service delivery. Four PO profiles have been identified based on these individual differences, and each of these profiles provides clues about distinct patterns of practice when supervising offenders**.**

First, *idealistic caseworkers* (social work oriented and with low propensity to trust) tend to give little importance to the trustworthiness of high-priority offenders. These officers deal in a benevolent way with most high-priority cases, including with individuals who are not objectively trustworthy. Second, *cautious caseworkers* (social work oriented and with high propensity to trust) give some importance to the trustworthiness of high-priority offenders. Although they probably handle most high-priority cases in a benevolent way, they still avoid taking unnecessary risks with risky offenders and those who are not sufficiently trustworthy. Third, *pragmatic enforcers* (control-oriented and with high propensity to trust) give high importance to the trustworthiness of high-priority offenders. Although they deal with most high-priority cases by focusing on monitoring and avoiding unnecessary risks, they still make compromises to support the most trustworthy individuals. Fourth, *unselective enforcers* (control-oriented and with low propensity to trust) give limited importance to the trustworthiness of high-priority offenders. They deal with most high-priority cases by monitoring and avoiding unnecessary risks during supervision, including with individuals who are objectively trustworthy.

Although further research is needed to empirically consolidate these different officer profiles (by linking them with specific supervision styles, for instance), this classification suggests several practical implications.

1 – Recruitment

Until now, Houses of Justice have typically favored PO profiles with a background in welfare and social work. However, candidates' personality traits and personal views regarding their role towards citizens are not necessarily assessed during the recruitment process. Depending on institutional priorities regarding the way offender supervision should be handled, the central administration might consider taking these factors into consideration for future recruitments. Indeed, opting for one of these profiles might not only have concrete effects on the way offender supervision is handled, but it might also affect how risks are managed at the frontline.

For instance, the management should be aware that some PO profiles are less concerned with the trustworthiness of their supervisees and tend to be less flexible about their dominant practices with offenders (social work or policing). These profiles might promote certain approaches to supervision without necessarily considering making circumstantial concessions to their dominant practices, which would arguably lead to the mishandling of certain groups of offenders. On the one hand, *idealistic caseworkers* might be at higher odds of mishandling cases that would require a more rigid and control-oriented approach of supervision to ensure compliance and rehabilitative success. Their tendency to disregard offenders' trustworthiness cues and to systematically favor benevolent approaches (even if this means not following some rules in the process) can also be detrimental to the community's and the officer's safety. This is particularly the case when confronted with individuals who present some mild risks of reoffense or who are willing to take advantage of officers' leniency. On the other hand, *unselective enforcers* might tend to mishandle the cases that would truly benefit from a benevolent use of discretion. Handling every probationer in ways that emphasize control and monitoring perhaps limits the risks of offender reoffense (and the risks of being held accountable). However, this approach lacks adaptation to the offender's history and characteristics. It does not sufficiently promote the rehabilitation of individuals who would genuinely benefit from POs' benevolent compromises.

The management of the Houses of Justice would probably find some benefit in assessing the profiles of future recruits. In particular, they should perhaps consider PO profiles that are more observant of supervisees' trustworthiness, such as *cautious caseworkers* and *pragmatic enforcers*. Both of these profiles' preferred ways of dealing with offenders are more balanced with regard to the circumstantial articulation of help and control practices. While *cautious caseworkers* exhibit a general tendency to promote benevolent courses of action, they are still cautious when confronted with offenders whom they do not consider sufficiently trustworthy. Similarly, *pragmatic enforcers* exhibit a general tendency to concentrate on monitoring but make exceptions with trustworthy supervisees. Such profiles might represent an adequate compromise in most situations. Hence, targeting these individuals might constitute a suitable strategy for the recruitment of future judicial assistants.

2 – Trainings

Some of the potential issues resulting from the limited flexibility of idealistic caseworkers and unselective enforcers could be addressed, or at least mitigated, via the training of officers. Two main categories of training are currently available to judicial assistants. First, POs obtain a basic and compulsory judicial formation when entering service in the Houses of Justice. Then, they gain access to continuous trainings that are regularly made available throughout the year. POs can apply to a wide range of specialized courses that allow them to develop specific competences, such as psychology, conflict management, and interviewing techniques. Officers can also temporarily join a specialized support group that will help them address some of the urgent issues that they encounter in their work. A PO might, for instance, apply to these support sessions to find solutions on how to deal with a manipulative offender or how to maintain distance from emotionally charged cases.

A short self-reflection program addressing the issue of unbalanced approaches to probation work could be included in these trainings. Such a training could be available to all POs who are starting their career or recommended to those who need to adjust their practices (on the basis of an evaluation, for instance). Officers would benefit from self-reflection on their own general propensity to trust others (and the ensuing expectations they develop about their supervisees' trustworthiness) as well as their personal stance regarding policing and social work during offender supervision. This would allow POs to open their eyes to their own practices of probation work and provide them with the opportunity to develop awareness of the issues associated with unbalanced approaches to supervision. Ultimately, such a self-reflection program would perhaps entice those who focus excessively on rehabilitation or control to find some balance in their practices and make room for more circumstantial use of discretion. As shown by several criminological studies, frontline staff's training and skill proficiency is critical in maintaining *program integrity* (McGuire, 1995) and improving the effectiveness of interventions (e.g., Bourgon & Gutierrez 2012; Skeem et al., 2007; Hollin, 1995). Overall, self-reflection programs could potentially help POs to address a greater variety of situations and offender profiles in a more balanced and effective manner.

If such an awareness program is implemented, the central administrations and training units of the Houses of Justice might also consider taking this opportunity to stress the necessity and added value of POs' circumstantial judgement and professionalism. POs need to feel reassured that managers have confidence in their ability to make the right judgements and decisions based on their perceptions of clients. Indeed, some profiles – such as unselective enforcers – might be reluctant towards the idea of giving up the extra sense of security provided by an inflexible policing approach. To avoid this issue, POs should be reassured that managers will support them as long as they are transparent regarding their initiatives towards offenders and that these practices involve calculated risk.

3 – Taking advantage of profile diversity

Instead of considering variations in POs' preferred ways of dealing with offenders as an issue that needs solving, a complementary approach is to use these differences as an opportunity to better address the supervision of different types of offenders. Due to their personal preferences, some POs seem to be better suited for the supervision of specific offender cases. Consequently, a possible answer could be to optimize case file attributions by selecting the cases that seem the most adapted to each officer's supervision style. For instance, unselective enforcers would be particularly suited for the supervision of more risky profiles and supervisees who need more rigorous and control-oriented interactions to conform with the supervision framework, such as offenders who have already served multiple probation sentences. Idealistic caseworkers are probably more adapted to the supervision of individuals who present minimal risks of reoffense but who are facing exceptional circumstances that need appropriate responses. From this perspective, pragmatic enforcers and cautious caseworkers should prove adequate to handle most types of cases. Optimizing case file attributions might ultimately enable a better fit between POs' preferred approaches to supervision and their supervisees.

Pairing the offender with the right officer would require operating some form of case screening prior to the attribution of case files. This screening could be implemented by first-line managers on the basis of a quick assessment of offenders' file records (judge's sentence and the nature of the offense).

In principle, such an optimization of case file attributions could have positive implications regarding the principle of *responsivity* (McGuire, 1995). Indeed, the criminological literature suggests that POs' interventions are more effective when they are adapted to the characteristics of probationers, such as their abilities, motivations, or personality traits (e.g., Bourgeon and Gutierrez, 2012; Bonta et al., 2010; McGuire, 1995). Hence, such a measure would not only reduce the possible mismatch between POs' profiles and their supervisees, but it would also help improving the effectiveness of POs' interventions in fostering desistance.

B – Officers’ need for transparency and the key role of managers

POs are directly impacted by soaring caseloads, chronic staff shortages and the managerial revision of the Belgian Houses of Justice. Managerialism has brought additional constraints to POs, such as supplementary paperwork and new procedural undertakings that are particularly time consuming. The new tools and instruments that accompany this managerial turn tend to be highly technical and procedural in nature. All these constraints have consequences for officers. To maintain acceptable caseload management, POs must find solutions such as reducing their interactions with offenders, limiting the implementation of time-consuming activities such as care and support, and prioritizing the most challenging and urgent cases. The increased managerial control (via tools such as SIPAR) also exacerbates officers’ feelings of losing hold of their professional discretion and autonomy. Suspicion towards management is also rising among officers due to managers’ growing reliance on and the alleged instrumentalization of computerized tools to manage officers’ workloads.

In this context, it is particularly important for POs to be able to express their concerns to their peers and their managers. Transparency and communication about work conditions is key, especially given that small mistakes during supervision can have severe and far-reaching consequences for the institution, the officer in charge, and public safety in general. Hence, both POs and management (including the central administration) would benefit from an improvement of the collective debate about how to address the many issues that disrupt the proper implementation of probation work.

The growing discontent of some officers towards their local managers should not be taken lightly by the central administrations of the Houses of Justice. In addition to paying attention to POs’ most pressing demands, management could take some additional steps to improve the relationships between local managers and their subordinates:

- Local managers could more openly express their concerns about POs’ work conditions. POs regret a growing disconnection with their managers who do not seem to relate with their work experiences at the frontline. Showing genuine concern for officers’ realities at the frontline should at least partially address this growing disconnection and improve communication with officers.
- Local managers could make sure to reassure POs that they will do their best to protect them in case of offender reoffense. In the advent of a reoffense, managers should ensure

not only that offender supervision was implemented in accordance with rules and procedures but also that the concerned officer does not suffer from unfair accusations and defamation from other actors from the public sphere. This should reduce the risks of routinized monitoring practices.

- A new intermediary job position may be needed between POs and their local managers to facilitate top-down and bottom-up communication. This new position would prove particularly useful in large Houses of Justice, where directors and assistant directors are unable to process all the individual demands of their subordinates. These new *team managers* would gather and list POs' demands and transmit them to the local directors. This new job position could also prove particularly useful in smaller institutions, where local managers are often unavailable. A similar concept is currently being implemented in Flemish Houses of Justice.

General conclusion

This research focused on the nature and causes of the interactions between probations officers (POs) and a particular category of citizens: offenders who serve a probation sentence. Probation is a condemnation imposed as an alternative to prison. During probation, an offender has to comply with the conditions imposed by a judge. Such conditions are contextualized: for instance, an offender can be imposed a psychological follow-up or an addiction treatment, depending on the circumstances. Non-compliance with probationary conditions may result in the revocation of probation and the execution of the main sentence (prison). POs supervise the offenders throughout the duration of the probation. They ensure that their supervisees are compliant with the probationary conditions and they help with their social reintegration. POs fill an important intermediary role between the probationers and the judicial authorities to which they send regular reports about the positive or negative evolution of the offender. The supervision is implemented by means of a series of tools and a set of detailed procedures which govern the place of meetings with probationers (office meetings or home visits), the content of the discussions, and the contacts with other key actors (the police and the probation board, for instance). Offender supervision is a complex job that not only requires a mastery of legal frameworks (which can rapidly evolve), but also strong technical skills (IT tools, a knowledge of procedures) and human qualities. The supervision of offenders can be particularly demanding from a social and emotional perspective due to the variety of profiles encountered at the frontline. Those sometimes involve complex familial and social circumstances, or emotionally draining offenses (such as child abuse or domestic violence).

Due to the very nature of their work, POs regularly make judgments and decisions during the supervision of offenders. POs do not implement supervision procedures as automatons. They interpret rules and guidelines, they adapt them and make the decisions they deem the most appropriate according to the circumstances. As such, POs' judgements and decisions regarding offenders should be understood in light of the multiple individual (personal preferences, personality traits) and organizational conditions at play (constraints within their environment). POs also tend to inform their decisions based on their assessments of supervisees' key characteristics and, most notably, their trustworthiness. Such choices can have concrete implications on the dynamics of offenders' supervision and on the efforts provided for their social reinsertion. For instance, a probation officer may act benevolently by not reporting to the authorities a minor offense that was confessed by the probationer during their last meeting.

Such a choice might contribute to the reintegration efforts of an offender who appears as good willed and reliable. Conversely, POs can choose a disinterested or even confrontational approach during their interactions with a supervisee. For instance, a PO may decide to do everything in his power to ensure the revocation of the probation of an unreliable probationer.

The results of the two empirical studies conducted in this research show that the choices made by POs during offender supervision result from two successive assessments of probationers. First, I contend that POs assess offender profiles to identify the most urgent and challenging profiles in their caseload. They do so in response to a series of organizational constraints, such as high workloads, time shortages and managerialization which disrupt their caseload management. Officers deal with these issues by focusing their efforts on a limited number of high-priority cases. In a second step, POs assess the trustworthiness of their supervisees in order to determine those who will potentially benefit from their benevolence. However, not all POs attach the same importance to the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness when they opt for such a use of discretion. At that stage, individual factors such as their propensity to trust other people and the way they perceive their role as POs seem to affect the importance they attach to their assessments. Finally, the results suggest that POs tend to orient their practices at the benefit of deserving individuals (i.e., high priority individuals that are trustworthy, but who present minimal risk). I also propose a categorization of officer profiles according to their personal characteristics and the way it affects their assessments of offenders.

In this conclusion, I briefly remind the research problem and question, as well as the approach that was used to address them. Then, I summarize the results before closing with a summary of the theoretical, methodological and practical implications of the research.

A – Research problem, question, and approach

The way frontline workers handle their interactions with citizens during public service delivery has always been a central point of attention in the SLB literature (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010). Street-level bureaucrats are not automatons. They interpret, adapt, and use their discretionary power to respond to citizens' individual needs (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000). SLB studies have repeatedly demonstrated the importance of frontline workers' assessments of citizens when making judgements and decisions at the frontline (e.g., Jilke & Tummers, 2018; Epp et al., 2014; Harrits & Møller, 2014). Frontline workers also operate in a high-pressure environment where resources can be scarce (Thomann, 2015; Brodkin, 2012).

They often deal with large workloads and caseloads, time shortages, or inadequate training while having to comply with rules and to address managers' demands. As a result, they implement coping mechanisms to alleviate constraints and to meet job requirements. Ultimately, the way schoolteachers (e.g., Baviskar, 2018), judges (e.g., Cowan & Hitchings, 2007), or police officers (e.g., Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) deliver public services to citizens does in fact reflect these multiple dilemmas (Lipky, 2010) faced by the frontline worker. In addition, frontline practices influence the delivery of public services to citizens and, ultimately, determine the nature of policy on the ground (Brodkin, 2012). Generally speaking, frontline workers' courses of action can be grouped in three categories inspired by Tummers et al.'s (2015) families of coping: benevolent courses of action whereby frontline workers make efforts and use resources to the advantage of citizens; uninvested courses of action whereby frontline workers avoid investing meaningful efforts into the delivery of services to the citizens; and confrontational courses of action whereby frontline workers deliberately oppose and confront citizens.

However, there are still some theoretical and empirical blind spots, in the study of frontline work. First, while most scholars agree that frontline workers inform their decisions and actions with assessments of their clients' characteristics (e.g., Rice, 2017; Epp et al., 2014; Scott, 1997) or worthiness (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003; 2000; Maynard-Moody & Leland, 2000), only a handful of these scholars rely on the notions of trust and trustworthiness (Schoorman et al., 2016; 2007; Mayer et al., 1995). Trust is defined as a willingness to take a risk "based upon the positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). Trust depends on trustors' assessment of trustees' trustworthiness, which is usually determined by their perceived ability, benevolence, and integrity (Schoorman et al., 2007; Mayer et al., 1995) – although some studies use goodwill instead of considering benevolence and integrity separately (e.g., Li, 2007; Levin & Cross, 2004; Das & Teng, 2001; Davensport et al., 1998). Overall, existing studies suggest that frontline workers rely on their assessments of clients' trustworthiness to make their decisions (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2018; Yang, 2005). However, little is known about the processes through which frontline workers perceive, interpret, and then rely on their perceptions of clients' trustworthiness. For instance, there is limited knowledge about how organizational and individual factors might affect the importance frontline workers attach to their assessments of clients' trustworthiness when they are making decisions.

Second, some policy sectors remain understudied in SLB research. So far, frontline work has been documented in employment and care (e.g., Dubois, 2015; Tummers & Bekkers, 2014; Elis, 2011; Keiser, 2010; Dias & Maynard-Moody, 2007), inspections (e.g., Van de Walle & Raaphorst, 2019; de Boer & Eshuis, 2018; Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; May & Wood, 2003) or in police services (e.g. Epp et al., 2014; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003), for instance. Yet, despite being acknowledged as prime examples of street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 2010), frontline officers working in the correctional sector have received relatively little attention from SLB scholars so far. As suggested by the literature review presented in the first and second chapters, most of the existing studies about probation originate from criminological research and do not specifically address officer-offender interactions from an SLB perspective. Furthermore, most of the existing studies have been conducted in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, while probation in other geographical areas is seems understudied. This is problematic since correctional approaches to frontline work vary, across countries, notably as a result of managerial and punitive reforms (Clear & Frost, 2014; Snacken, 2010; Beyens & Scheirs, 2010). Overall, there is a lack of SLB research about officer-offender interactions in probation services, especially in some geographical contexts.

How do probation officers interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? With this question, the objective of the research presented in this PhD dissertation has been to address the limitations identified above: not only has this research produced empirical knowledge about an understudied group of frontline workers, but it has also related two separate fields of public administration on SLB and on organizational trust. The research was implemented in the Houses of Justice of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and of the Flemish Region – the public agencies responsible for probation in Belgium. These agencies have been exposed to NPM reforms in the early 2000s' (Jonckheere, 2013; Ficet, 2012) and have been under growing pressure, over the last years, due to a rapid progression of the number of new probation cases (SPF Justice, 2019). The Houses of Justice offer a rare opportunity to explore offender-officer interactions in an original yet relatively critical context. The Belgian Houses of Justice are an *atypical* case (Flyvberg, 2006) that provides unique data about the effects of ongoing managerial and punitive changes on POs' interactions with probationers. The Belgian case sits relatively apart from other Western probation systems due to its late and arguably mild exposure to new forms of managerialism and punitive approaches (e.g., Beyens & Scheirs, 2010; Snacken, 2007). However, new computerized and procedural tools devised to manage officers' work and to systematize supervision practices have progressively been introduced, since the 2000s (Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Jonckheere, 2013). Little is known about how this transition is perceived and how it affects Belgian POs' frontline practices. The Belgian Houses of Justice are also a *critical* case (Flyvberg, 2006). Given the current knowledge, the pressures and constraints to which Belgian POs are exposed should most likely resemble those that are observed in other probation contexts[36]. Those include large caseloads, time constraints, role conflicts, and personal dilemmas regarding the implementation of some rules. This means that the results obtained from the analysis of the Belgian case most probably apply to many other probation contexts.

Two empirical studies were devised to bring answers to the research question. In the first study, I mobilized qualitative methods to explore how Belgian POs deal with constraints and how it affects their interactions with probationers. To do so, I took stock of the coping mechanisms described in the literature (Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010), i.e., the rationing of public goods and services (e.g., van Loon & Jakobsen, 2018; Baviskar & Winter, 2017; Lipsky, 2010; Ellis et al., 1999), cherry-picking and the prioritization of *special* clients (e.g., Tummers et al., 2015; Vedung, 2015; Lipsky, 2010; Smith & Donovan, 2003), the routinization of tasks and client processing (e.g., Lipsky, 2010; Thorén, 2008; Silbey, 1980), the use of instrumental actions (e.g., Tummers et al., 2015; Tummers & Rocco, 2015; Skinner et al., 2003), and rule-breaking behaviors (e.g., Tummers et al., 2012; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003). I also looked at the factors fostering coping. At the organizational level, I examined how workloads and time shortages (e.g., Baviskar, 2018; Hupe et al., 2016; Godfrey & Yoshikawa, 2012; Brodkin, 2011) and managerialism (Brodkin, 2011; Taylor & Kelly, 2006; Wright, 2003) affect POs' coping practices. At the individual level, I explored the effect of role conflicts (e.g., Tummers et al., 2012; 2009; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and the perceived meaningfulness of work instructions (e.g., Bekkers et al., 2013; Tummers, 2011). Four hypotheses were developed to account for POs' responses to organizational and individual constraints: if exposed to heavy workloads and time constraints, POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders (H1); POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders because of the current shift toward managerialism (H2); if POs experience conflict between their roles, they tend to break the rules during public service delivery (H3); if POs perceive work instructions as meaningless, they break the rules by not

[36] Especially in light of the results of the systematic literature review conducted in the second chapter

following these instructions (H4). These hypotheses were tested using a thematic analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of 29 semi-structured interviews conducted with French-speaking POs. Once POs' coping practices were determined, I relied on Tummers et al.'s (2015) typology of families of coping to explore how POs adjust their behaviors when interacting with offenders.

In the second study, I used quantitative methods to explore the importance that POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a given course of action towards their supervisees. I narrowed my attention onto POs' benevolence with probationers (i.e., the use of empathy, helpfulness, and thoughtfulness to support an offender during the supervision process). To what extent individual and organizational factors affect the importance that POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing benevolent courses of action with probationers? Taking stock of SLB research (e.g., Hupe et al., 2016; Lipsky, 2010; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2003) and research inspired by trust (e.g., Raaphorst & Groeneveld, 2018; Schoorman et al., 2007; Yang, 2005; Mayer et al., 1995), I looked at the effect of workloads (Baviskar, 2018; Winter, 2002) and of managerial support (Evans, 2016a; 2016b) at the organizational level. At the individual level, I focused on the effect of officers' role perception (Tummers et al., 2012) and their general propensity to trust (e.g., Yang, 2006). Four hypotheses were examined: POs who are exposed to large workloads tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action (H1); POs who perceive more managerial support tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action (H2); POs who define their role toward offenders as policing tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action (H3); POs who display a high general propensity to trust tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action (H4). In order to test these hypotheses, I implemented a two-step SEM analysis (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988) on a dataset of 370 responses collected via an online survey distributed to all POs working in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the Flemish Region, in Belgium. The importance POs attach to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness (when opting for a benevolent course of action) was measured by presenting respondents with a series of offender attributes that are typically associated with favorable trustworthiness perceptions. POs were asked to rate these attributes according to the extent to which they would prompt them to opt for a benevolent course of action with an offender.

B – Synthesis of the results

In this section, the main results of each empirical study are presented before moving on to the general results of the research with regard to the research question.

1 – Results of the first study: still benevolent under pressure

The first hypothesis of this study suggests that workloads and time constraints encourage POs to prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, to ration their services, and to routinize their encounters with offenders. This hypothesis is supported by the thematic analysis of the 29 semi-structured interviews. POs allocate more time and efforts to the supervision of a limited number of high-priority offenders. Priority is determined by the particularly difficult socio-economic situation of the offender, the type of offense, and its degree of mediatization. POs cherry-pick in the sense that they select and prioritize work with a limited number of special probationers. However, contrary to most portrayals of cherry-picking (e.g., Vedung, 2015), POs do not pick the most desirable client profiles nor the most likely to succeed from an administrative point of view. POs do not reason in terms of self-preservation and cost-effectiveness when selecting these special clients. Instead, they seem mostly motivated by a desire to provide care and support to those who seem the most in need. In other words, POs actually chase the high hanging fruits by prioritizing the most difficult and challenging cases in the pursuit of meaningful and rewarding experiences. To gain some time in caseload management, POs also ration their direct encounters with most offenders and limit the implementation of time-consuming tasks, mostly the social aspects of supervision. Officers also respond to time shortages by routinizing their supervision efforts with simplified reports and narrowing the supervision of offenders to the mere verification of compliance signs, for example.

The second hypothesis suggests that POs prioritize work with cherry-picked probationers, ration their services, and routinize their encounters with offenders because of the current shift toward managerialism. This hypothesis is strongly supported by the empirical evidence. Officers struggle to deal with the growing amount of paperwork and with the technical and procedural nature of new managerial requirements. New computerized tools and procedures devised to manage POs' work are associated with increased workloads and time constraints. As a result, they indirectly contribute to prioritization, rationing, and routinization.

The third hypothesis suggests that POs tend to break the rules when experiencing role conflicts. The empirical evidence supporting this hypothesis is limited. No evidence of rule breaking (and of coping, in general) resulting from role conflicts was found. In fact, POs do not appear particularly conflicted between the monitoring and the social aspects of their job. They are not necessarily opposed to additional control and verification procedures. However, their dissatisfaction mostly derives from the time shortages induced by these new requirements. Time constraints make it more difficult to work with offenders on their social reintegration. This is problematic for POs who are attached to their rehabilitative ideals and practices.

The fourth hypothesis suggests that POs do not follow work instructions (i.e., break the rules) if they perceive them as meaningless. This hypothesis is confirmed by the analysis, more specifically, when POs estimate that instructions yield limited benefits for the probationer. Some procedures, such as the obligation to broach the offense during the first meeting with an offender, are sometimes perceived as superfluous or counterproductive.

In addition to these results, the thematic analysis brings some unexpected findings to the fore. First, the analysis reveals that POs are under the pressure of two forms of accountability that are made particularly salient in case of a publicized offender reoffense: A vertical accountability to their managers and correctional authorities (1); and a more general accountability to the media, the politicians and the general public (2). POs are afraid of being blamed for offenders' actions due to their potential mistakes. As a result, some officers routinize monitoring practices such as systematically double-checking signs of offender compliance. Second, as far as workloads and time constraints are concerned, POs not only voiced their concerns about the growing number of cases, but also the rise in their complexity. They also pinpoint long-lasting staff shortages and the managerial choices regarding new probation case distributions. Third, Belgian POs are particularly affected by the managerialization of probation work. More specifically, they feel that managerial control and new computerized tools cast doubt on their professionalism and their ability to make situational judgements and decisions about probationers.

In a nutshell, the first study reveals that Belgian POs are subjected to organizational and individual constraints that favor the emergence of coping mechanisms. These constraints include large caseloads, time shortages, managerial reforms (new procedures and computerized tools), and a lack of perceived meaningfulness of some work instructions. As a result, officers try to find solutions to optimize the management of their caseloads while maintaining some degree of involvement with their supervisees. These adaptations affect the way POs interact with probationers. Interestingly, no evidence has been found of POs using intransigence, confrontation, or hostility toward probationers as an adaptation to individual and organizational constraints. However, some evidence of POs *moving away* (Tummers et al., 2015) from offenders, using rationing and routinizing practices, has been found. Such practices usually result from large workloads, time shortages, accountability, and managerialism. The analysis also shows multiple instances of POs adjusting their actions to the advantage of probationers. In those instances, officers *move towards* (Tummers et al., 2015) their supervisees by breaking some rules, implementing instrumental actions, and prioritizing work with the individuals who are in dire need for help and support. In other words, they do not cherry-pick and prioritize work with the most reliable probationers, or those likely to *succeed* – from a bureaucratic standpoint, at least (Lipsky, 2010). Instead, they chase the high hanging fruits. They prioritize the most challenging cases, thus demonstrating a form of selflessness and a deep commitment to *make a difference* in supervisees' lives. Such examples are particularly prevalent in the analysis and indicate that, despite a challenging work context, POs are still likely to privilege benevolence with probationers.

2 – Results of the second study: the predominance of individual factors

A CFA followed by an SEM analysis were implemented to determine the effect of individual and organizational factors on the importance POs attach to their assessments of probationers' trustworthiness when choosing a benevolent use of discretion. In the model, I controlled for the age, the gender, the educational level, and the language of the respondents. The results provide moderate yet significant support for the hypotheses of this study. According to the first hypothesis, POs exposed to larger workloads tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments. The results do not support this first hypothesis, which was built on the argument that, when confronted with large workloads, POs would probably carefully assess the trustworthiness of their supervisees to determine who will be prioritized. However, this appears to be an unproved assumption. In the general results (below), I will come back on an explanation as to why it is appears to be the case

According to the second hypothesis, POs who perceive more managerial support tend to attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments. Similarly, limited support for this hypothesis has been found. Apparently, managers' endorsement and support of POs professional skills and judgments does not affect the importance that officers give importance to their assessments of offenders' trustworthiness.

The results indicate a significant relationship between POs' subjective role perceptions and the importance they attach to their trustworthiness assessments. This supports the third hypothesis that POs who mostly define their role toward offenders as policing and monitoring significantly attach more importance to their assessments of offenders when choosing a benevolent course of action. Control-oriented officers appear unwilling to pursue a course of action that, in their opinion, would hinder offenders' compliance with probationary conditions and increase the risk of reoffense. Choosing a benevolent approach is considered risky and making this choice thus requires giving a considerable amount attention to offenders' trustworthiness to reduce uncertainties.

According to the fourth hypothesis, POs with a higher general propensity to trust give more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when opting for a benevolent course of action. In other words, evidence supports that POs with a higher propensity to trust others attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments.

Overall, the second study suggests that POs with higher general propensity to trust and those who define their role as policing and monitoring attach more importance to their trustworthiness assessments when choosing a benevolent course of action towards offenders. These findings confirm the predominance of individual factors on organizational determinants: nor managerial support nor workload did show any significant effect.

3 – General results of the research

How do POs interact with offenders during public service delivery, and why? The goal of this research has been to explore the nature and the underlying mechanisms of POs' frontline practices in Belgian probation services, using an analytical framework combining conceptual insights from SLB and trust research. Overall, the findings concur with other studies that demonstrated the relevance of trust and trustworthiness to understand how frontline workers make sense and use the characteristics of their citizen-clients to make their decisions (e.g., Van de Walle & Raaphorst, 2019; Raaphorst & Van de Walle, 2018; Yang, 2005).

This section reports the general results of the research. Combining the results of the first and second studies, I show that offender-officer interactions in probation services involves POs' assessment of supervisees, which is performed in two successive steps. The results also bring insights into POs' social construction of the good supervisee or, more precisely, the *deserving* supervisee. Based on the results of the second study, I also identify different PO profiles and discuss how these profiles might interact with specific offenders.

A two-step assessment of offenders

Organizational constraints encourage POs to assess their supervisees' profiles in order to concentrate their efforts on a reduced number of high-priority offenders. In particular, the first study shows that POs are exposed to high workloads, time limitations, growing caseloads, increased paperwork, and staff shortage. Those constraints reduce POs' ability to handle their caseload and manage supervision properly. Consequently, they cope in ways that affect the interactions and the delivery of public services to probationers. The empirical evidence suggests that *officers act as altruistic caseworkers by prioritizing work with the profiles that they consider the most urgent and challenging, but not necessarily with the most reliable ones* or the most likely to succeed, from a bureaucratic perspective. POs are also more likely to show benevolence with these high-priority profiles. This is for instance illustrated by the rule-breaking and instrumental actions deployed by POs at the benefit of some of these offenders. Yet, although officers are often willing to implement benevolent courses of action with high-priority profiles, they would rather do so with probationers who show some degree of trustworthiness. Hence, POs use their assessments of probationers' trustworthiness to identify and target those who will benefit from their most benevolent decisions and behaviors. However, I contend that offenders' trustworthiness does not equally matter to all officers when they choose a benevolent course of action. The second study demonstrated that *individual characteristics determine the importance POs attach to their trustworthiness assessments*. More specifically, subjective role perceptions and propensity to trust play a key role. On the one hand, control-oriented POs try to reduce risks by actively assessing and attaching importance to offenders' trustworthiness when making decisions. Quite the opposite, POs who are social work-oriented are more willing to accept the potential risks induced by a benevolent use of discretion. The use of benevolence fits with their normative ideals and preferences about probation work and they pay less attention to the trustworthiness of their supervisees. On the other hand, POs with higher propensity to trust are more invested and observant of the trustworthiness of other people in general. Consequently, they also tend to pay more attention to their supervisees' trustworthiness.

POs' assessment of offenders is sequential. In the first step, POs perform a general assessment of offenders' profiles. POs identify high-priority cases based on the complexity and urgency of their situation (socio-economic situation, addiction status, mental state) and the risks they seem to represent to for the community (type of offense, odds of reoffense, etc.). This way, POs select and prioritize a reduced number of probationers with whom they will redirect most of their efforts (including, but not limited to, benevolent practices). *This profile assessment and prioritization process is fostered by the organizational conditions in which POs operate*. As shown by the first study, case prioritization is mostly affected by organizational constraints. In the second step, POs assess offenders' trustworthiness. POs rely on these assessments to cherry-pick trustworthy supervisees who will benefit from benevolent courses of action. However, as demonstrated in the second study, *not all POs assess offenders the same way. POs who are control-oriented and who have a high propensity to trust tend to attach more importance to offenders' trustworthine*ss. In contrast, POs who are social work-oriented and who have a low propensity to trust do not give much importance to their assessment of offenders' trustworthiness. In this step, organizational conditions do not seem to matter anymore.

This sequential assessment of offenders fits with POs' typical timeline of operations. When assigned with new probation cases, POs must skim through offenders' file records (criminal, police, and court files) before meeting them for the first time. At that point, POs can already assess offender profiles. Hence, the identification of high-priority profiles can happen relatively early in the course of supervision. The reason why the assessment of offenders' trustworthiness is tackled in the second step results from the way trust usually develops between individuals. Trusts tends to be rooted in trustors' past experiences with trustees (Mayer et al., 1995; Gabarro, 1978): hence, POs have to perceive repeated signs of offenders' trustworthiness, during the meetings, before taking their assessments into consideration. *This two-step assessment process is likely applicable in the context of other probation systems and many other street-level organizations*. For instance, similar processes could be observed in social services or in employment agencies, where frontline work also revolves around the management of caseloads and the guidance of citizen-clients.

An assessment process geared in favor of deserving individuals

POs' benevolent courses of action are mostly oriented towards the probationers who are considered as deserving, i.e., individuals who are simultaneously in urgent need for help and care (*deprived probationers*), who are regarded as trustworthy (*trustworthy probationers*), but who do not seem to present any major risk for the community. This is a direct result of the two-step assessment implemented by officers. In the first step, POs identify and select the high-priority offenders to whom they will provide most of their supervision efforts (including care and support, but not only). These high-priority profiles comprise the most demanding and challenging individuals from a social-work viewpoint (*deprived probationers*) and those who were sentenced for publicized offenses and present important risks for the community (*risky probationers*). In the second step, officers assess probationers based on their trustworthiness cues (perceived ability and goodwill) to determine those who will benefit from benevolent uses of discretion. In that regard, they cherry-pick individuals who seem trustworthy and exclude those who present risks for the community. Although high-risk offenders are prioritized in the first assessment step, it is quite unlikely that POs will take any risks with these specific individuals in the second step. POs are all too well aware of the consequences of reoffense, especially it gets the attention of the public sphere. This dissuades most POs from making benevolent uses of discretion with high-risk offenders (such as breaking rules at their benefit).

Frontline probation officers and trustworthiness: a typology

Generally speaking, the results of the second study highlight the importance of POs' role perceptions and propensity to trust to explain the importance they give to their trustworthiness assessments when making decisions at the frontline. More specifically, *four officer profiles can be distinguished, based on combinations of their personal characteristics*. These four categories include: (1) *idealistic caseworkers*, who view themselves as social workers and have a low propensity to trust others; (2) *cautious caseworkers*, who also view themselves as social workers but display high propensity to trust others; (3) *pragmatic enforcers*, who view themselves as policing agents but who display high propensity to trust others; and (4) *unselective enforcers*, who also view themselves as policing agents but display low propensity to trust others. Each of these profiles is associated with distinct ways of dealing with probationers and addressing their trustworthiness. For instance, *idealistic caseworkers* tend to have limited concerns about the trustworthiness of their supervisees. Due to their normative preferences about care and support (strong attachment to social work), these officers privilege benevolent uses of discretion regardless of the trustworthiness of their supervisees. *Pragmatic enforcers* attach a considerable importance to the trustworthiness of their supervisees, especially when opting for benevolent uses of discretion. Due to their preferences for monitoring and control, these officers are generally reluctant to show benevolence (given the potential risks involved) but they still make some exceptions with the individuals that they consider particularly trustworthy.

C – Theoretical, methodological, and practical implications

The findings of this research allow to draw some implications. In this section, theoretical implications are presented before several methodological and practical ones.

Theoretical implications

Six main implications can be highlighted, at the theoretical level. First, the empirical studies emphasize that POs rely on a citizen-agency logic (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; 2003; 2000) when dealing with offenders. The research stresses the importance of officers' normative views and personal preferences in their use of discretion. POs often make sense of their interactions with offenders based on moral judgements rather than on legal premises. For instance, the first study suggests that POs sometimes bypass work instructions because they contradict their personal views about what is best for clients according to their specific needs and circumstances. This invites for more research about the processes through which POs adopt certain beliefs and preferences about probation practice. Future studies could explore, in particular, the socialization processes (e.g., Moyson et al., 2018; Dubois, 2015; Oberfield, 2014) leading to the emergence of shared beliefs and values among frontline workers in the correctional sector.

Second, this research challenges the Lipskyan assumption that frontline workers' use of coping and discretion are mostly driven by self-interest and self-preservation (Kjaerluff, 2018). The first step of offender assessment shows that POs display a genuine willingness to do good for others, even when they are exposed to large workloads, time shortages, and managerial constraints. They prioritize work with the most challenging and complicated profiles instead of looking for the most simple and comfortable solutions. That being said, in doing so, POs often try to make their actions coincide with personal interests too. In other words, I concur with evidence suggesting that frontline practices often result from an arbitration between self-interest and a genuine desire to help citizens (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2012; May & Winter, 2007).

Third, this research brings insights into frontline workers' perceptions of accountabilities and how it affects their practices. The first study shows that POs are exposed to multiple forms of accountabilities that become particularly salient in case of publicized reoffenses: besides the accountability to correctional authorities, POs have also internalized a general accountability towards the public sphere, including the politicians, the media and the general public. Although SLB scholars have repeatedly acknowledged the importance of accountabilities (e.g., Thomann, 2015; Murphy & Skillen, 2015; Brodkin, 2008; Hupe & Hill, 2007), little is known about how different forms of accountabilities simultaneously affect coping. Beyond the findings of this research, more studies about frontline workers' perceptions and adaptations to different forms of accountabilities are needed, especially in policy sectors that are closely watched by the public sphere.

Fourth, POs' two-step assessment of offenders seems to be favorable to deserving clients, with whom POs privilege discretionary benevolence. Deserving probationers are high-priority profiles in need for help (deprived probationers), who seem able and good-willed (trustworthy probationers), but who do not present major risks for the officer and the community (safe probationers). Interestingly, those defining traits are similar to Jilke and Tummers's (2018) description of deservingness cues used by frontline workers to assess citizen-clients and determine those who will receive help. This research arguably consolidates trustworthiness as a component of deservingness and adds to the SLB studies addressing the social construction of the deserving clients (e.g., Wilkins & Wenger, 2016; Kallio & Kouvo, 2015; Altreiter & Leibetseder, 2015).

Fifth, this research contributes to the debate on the punitive turn in the Belgian correctional sector (e.g., Bauwens & Roose, 2017; Beyens & Roosen, 2013). The findings cast doubt on a paradigmatic shift from rehabilitation to punishment in the dominant perspectives and values shared within the institution. Rather, evidence suggest that Belgian probation is experiencing a *managerial revision* (Rothmayr-Allison, 2013; Devresse, 2013) instead of a shift towards punitive approaches of correction.

Sixth, this research offers some insights on how managerial reforms are perceived by frontline workers and how they influence their practices with citizen-clients (e.g., Ellis, 2011; Hjörne et al., 2010). In Belgium, the managerial revision of the probation system accelerated the adoption of new computerized tools and instruments. Although POs acknowledge that there are some real benefits of these IT tools (e.g., improved task and case management), they also feel that these tools facilitate managerial control and limit their professional autonomy and discretion. This concurs with other research showing the consequences of managerial practices that focus on efficiency and results (Tummers, 2011; Ellis, 2011; Tummers et al., 2009).

Methodological implications

The methodological implications concern data collection and analysis. In terms of data collection, the articulation of qualitative and quantitative methods has proved quite successful. On the one hand, the semi-structured interviews with POs were conducted without any major drawbacks. I managed to capture a diverse sample of individuals who provided valuable data about the nature and causes of frontline practices in Belgian probation systems. On the other hand, these interviews also proved particularly helpful in the construction of the survey questionnaire. Fine-tuned wording and phrasing of the items probably contributed to the high response rate (60.7%). Overall, both methods proved quite adapted for data collection in this specific street-level organization. This observation should further encourage SLB studies using online surveys and semi-structured interviews as a way of collecting data among correctional workers at the frontline.

Future research should, however, pay attention to two important points. First, it seems that conducting semi-structured interviews prior to the implementation of an online survey does slightly improve response rates. Indeed, the semi-structured interviews were only implemented in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation: this could have slightly affected the response rate among French-speaking POs (70.6 %) in comparison to their Dutch-speaking colleagues (51%). It is possible that POs working for the Wallonia-Brussels Federation were better informed of my intention to perform a quantitative survey due to multiple reasons: colleagues chatting with each other, e-mail conversations, the interviews, etc. This could have played the role of a *pre-notification* for the survey, which is usually associated with higher response rates (Fan & Zan, 2010). Future studies should perhaps take this factor into consideration and make sure to implement the interviews among all the groups that will be latter surveyed, in order to improve response rates of the survey across groups. Second, respondents have their own preferences regarding the data collection strategies used by researchers. Indeed, there was a short overlap between the last semi-structured interviews and the start of the online survey. At that moment, the interviewees indicated their preference for qualitative techniques, such as interviewing. As such, it is unclear how respondents' preferences for specific methods influence response rates and the quality of the obtained data.

In terms of data analysis, both the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews and the structural modelling of the quantitative data proved successful for the study of frontline workers' interactions with citizen-clients. In particular, the thematic analysis did add to the research by opening the analysis to unforeseen themes and causal links. The SEM analysis was highly effective at modeling and analyzing the relationship among complex latent constructs, such as trustworthiness assessments and subjective role perceptions. However, both methods were not integrated in convergent or exploratory sequential mixed method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Future studies would add to the present research by integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in a more systematic manner.

Practical implications

The practical implications of this research are twofold. First, some PO profiles present a higher risk of mishandling probationers because they tend to favor unbalanced approaches of offender supervision. This should be a concern for managers because such PO profiles might be detrimental to offenders who would either benefit from officers' benevolence or a more control-oriented approach of supervision. This issue concerns *unselective enforcers*, who tend to systematically handle probationers in ways that emphasize control and monitoring, and *idealistic caseworkers*, who tend to deal with most offenders in a benevolent way (including those who are not objectively trustworthy). In comparison, other profiles, such as *cautious caseworkers* or *pragmatic enforcers*, contextualize their articulation of care and policing. Given these profiles' more flexible approach to supervision, they could be targeted in recruitment. On the one hand, managers can handle the discrepancies between officer profiles via the implementation of specialized trainings. A short self-reflection program addressing the issue of unbalanced approaches to supervision could, perhaps, help POs to open their eyes about their own supervision practices in this respect: for example, POs who excessively focus on social work or on control might balance their practices more effectively. On the other hand, the management might also consider taking advantage of this diversity of profiles. For instance, managers could optimize case distributions by pairing specific offenders with POs who present the right characteristics in terms of supervision style.

Second, this research stresses the need for transparency between POs and their managers. POs are affected by many sources of pressure in the Houses of Justice, such as growing workload, chronic staff shortages, lack of time, etc. Still, they are required to maintain an acceptable caseload management despite the increased control and monitoring of their decisions and practices. In this context, worsening work conditions can have far reaching consequences for POs, the institution, and public safety in general. In turn, it is thus crucial for first-line managers to be at disposal to listen to officers' problems and communicate on their decisions. Mutual understanding is crucial for both POs and the organizational management to find common solutions to the issues that affect the implementation of probation work.

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Note: [*] indicate studies that have been included in the systematic literature review.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Results of the literature review

	General information				Data			Discretion		Coping		Punitive correctional reforms		
N°	**Author, year**	**Institutional affiliation of the author**	**Field of the journal**	**Policy sector of the article**	**Origin of data**	**Type of article**	**Population**	**Officers' discretionary power**	**Departures from the ideal policy implementation**	**Prevalent coping mechanisms**	**Causes of coping**	**Officers' conflicting missions**	**Influence of new penology**	**Risks and needs assessment**
1	Ahlin et al., 2016	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Creaming	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
2	Baglivio et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Evaluation of tool's predictive validity
3	Ballucci, 2012	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & implementation of tools and instruments	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
4	Benson, 1985	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
5	Bonta et al., 2011	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

6	Bosker et al., 2013	Netherlands	Criminology	Probation	Nether-lands	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
7	Clear et al., 1992	USA	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Other
8	Cohen & Palmor, 1985	Israel	Criminology	Probation	Israel	Empirical	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
9	Corrado et al., 2010	Canada	Criminology	Probation	Canada	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
10	Denney & O'Beirne, 2003	UK	Public administration	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology
11	Digard, 2014	USA	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Creaming	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

12	Erwin, 1990	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
13	Flory et al., 2006	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
14	Fulton et al., 1997	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
15	Grant, 2015	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
16	Gross, 1966	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
17	Healy, 2012	Ireland	Public administration	Probation	Ireland	Empirical	Offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology
18	Kemshall, 1997	UK	Public administration	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Other	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	RNA : symptomatic of new penology

19	Kemshall, 2000	UK	Public administration	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Other	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
20	Kerbs et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
21	Lazzaretto-Green et al., 2011	Canada	Criminology	Prison	Canada	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
22	Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986	USA	Criminology	Both	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
23	Lindquist & Whitehead, 1986	USA	Criminology	Both	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
24	Martin et al., 1972	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
25	McIntyre et al., 1999	USA	Criminology	Prison	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

26	Miller et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Implementation of tools and instruments	Control of clients	Meet the objectives of supervision	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
27	Morash et al., 2016	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers & offenders	Mentioned	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Other
28	Nash, 2011	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal
29	Nielsen & Kolind, 2016	Denmark	Criminology	Prison	Denmark	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
30	Payne & DeMichele, 2010	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
31	Persson & Svensson, 2012	Sweden	Criminology	Probation	Sweden	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on social work & implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Mentioned	Mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool

32	Peterson-Badali & Koegl, 2002	Canada	Criminology	Prison	Canada	Empirical	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
33	Reisig & Mesko, 2009	USA	Criminology	Prison	Slovenia	Empirical	Offenders	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
34	Rosecrance, 1988	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Whistleblow-ing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
35	Schneider et al., 1996	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
36	Smith et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Offenders	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Routinizing	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
37	Sparrow & McIvor, 2013	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptu-al	Other	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned as a tool at officers' disposal

38	Steiner et al., 2012	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Control of clients	Lack of personal & organizational resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
39	Stewart & Smith, 1987	UK	Criminology	Probation	Great Britain	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Other	Creaming	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
40	Stout, 1973	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
41	Viglione et al., 2015	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Implementation of tools and instruments	Routinizing	Lack of personal resources	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Officers' implementation of the tool
42	Walsh, 1984	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Gender	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
43	Waters, 1988	UK	Criminology	Probation	Other	Conceptual	Officers	Mentioned	Emphasis on social work & differential treatment	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned
44	Whitehead & Lindquist, 1992	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Mentioned & use of SLB literature	Emphasis on rehabilitation and social work	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Mentioned	Not mentioned

45	Whitehead, 1987	USA	Criminology	Probation	USA	Empirical	Officers	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Other	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
46	Wolff et al., 2009	USA	Criminology	Prison	USA	Empirical	Offenders	Mentioned	Differential treatment	Control of clients	Organizational resources	Mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

Appendix 2 – Data collection methods in the reviewed articles

(n = 40)

Most frequent methods (n = 40)

Methods	Occurrences
Questionnaire survey	19 (6)
Interviews	18 (10)
Statistical analysis of administrative records	6 (4)
Observation	5 (5)
Randomized experiment	4 (2)
Focus groups	2 (2)
Longitudinal follow-up	2 (2)

Without () is the total number of studies that use this method for data collection (either as the main method or as part of a mix of various methods). In () is the number of studies that use this method as part of a mix of various methods.

Quantitative methods only (n = 20)

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Methods</th><th>Occurrences</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Single quantitative method</td><td>Questionnaire survey</td><td>13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Statistical analysis of administrative records</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Randomized experiment</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Mix of quantitative methods</td><td>Randomized experiment & longitudinal follow-up</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Statistical analysis of administrative records & questionnaire survey</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Questionnaire survey & randomized experiment</td><td>1</td></tr>
</table>

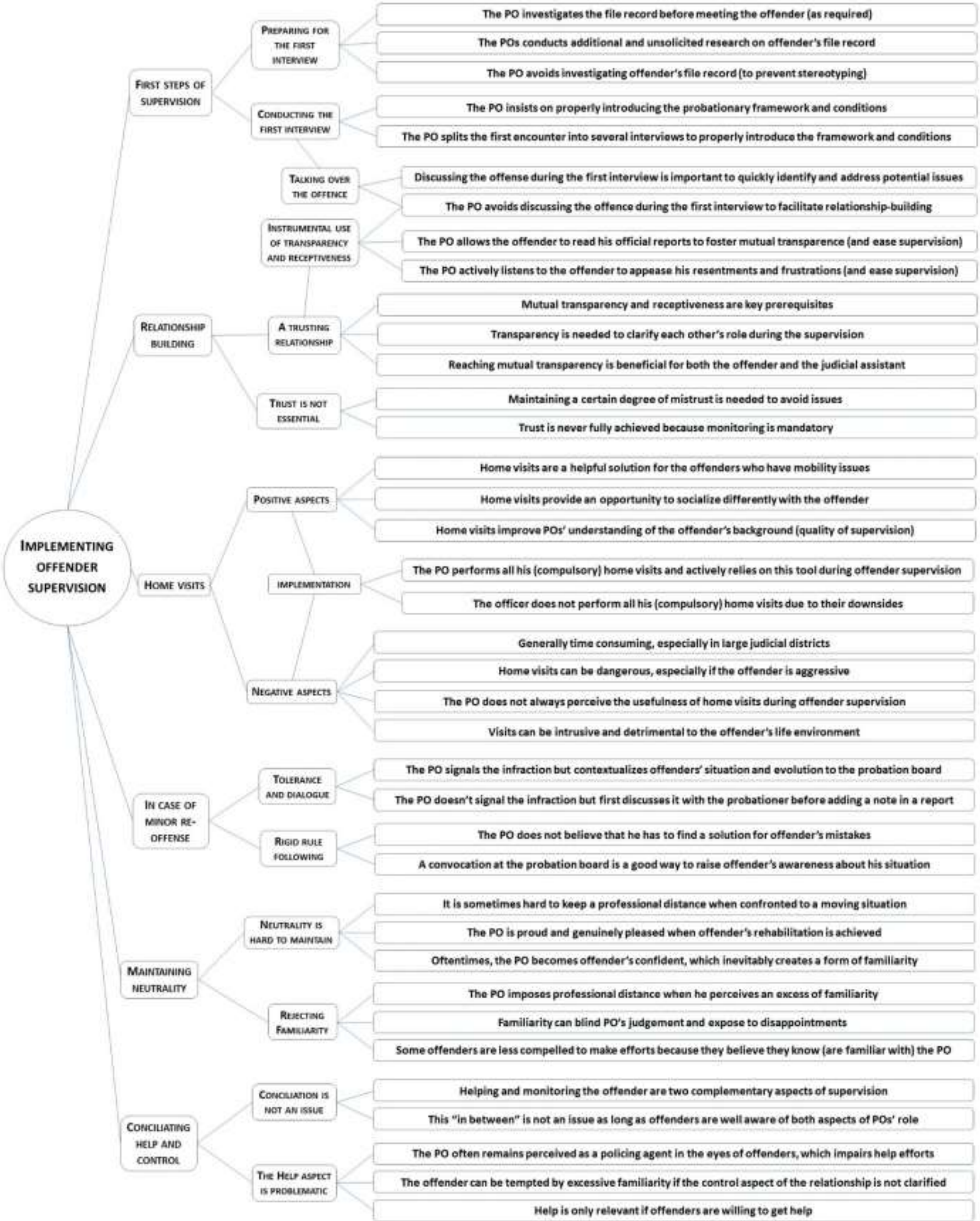
Qualitative methods only (n = 11)

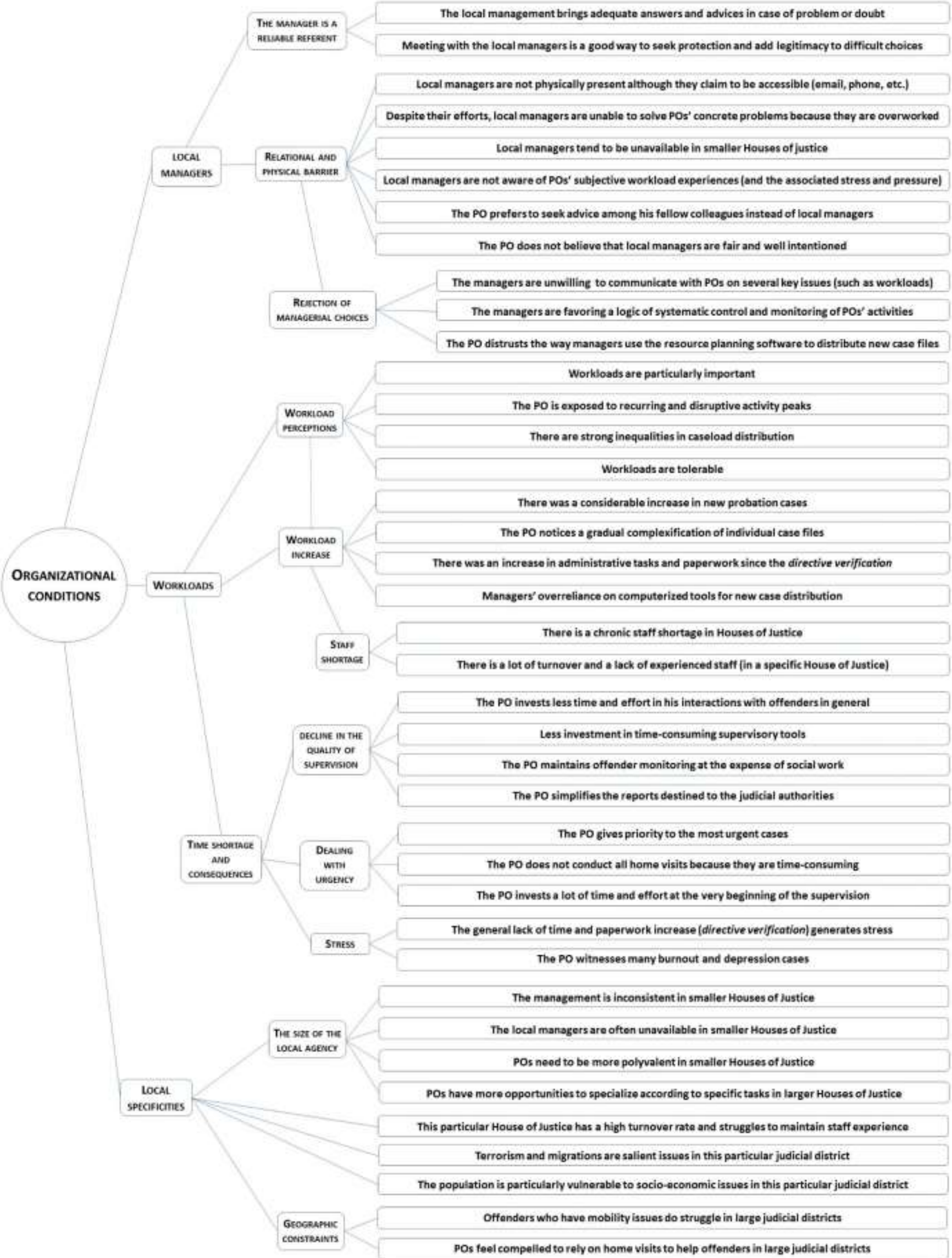
	Methods	Occurrences
Single qualitative method	Interviews	8
Mix of qualitative methods	Interviews and observation	3

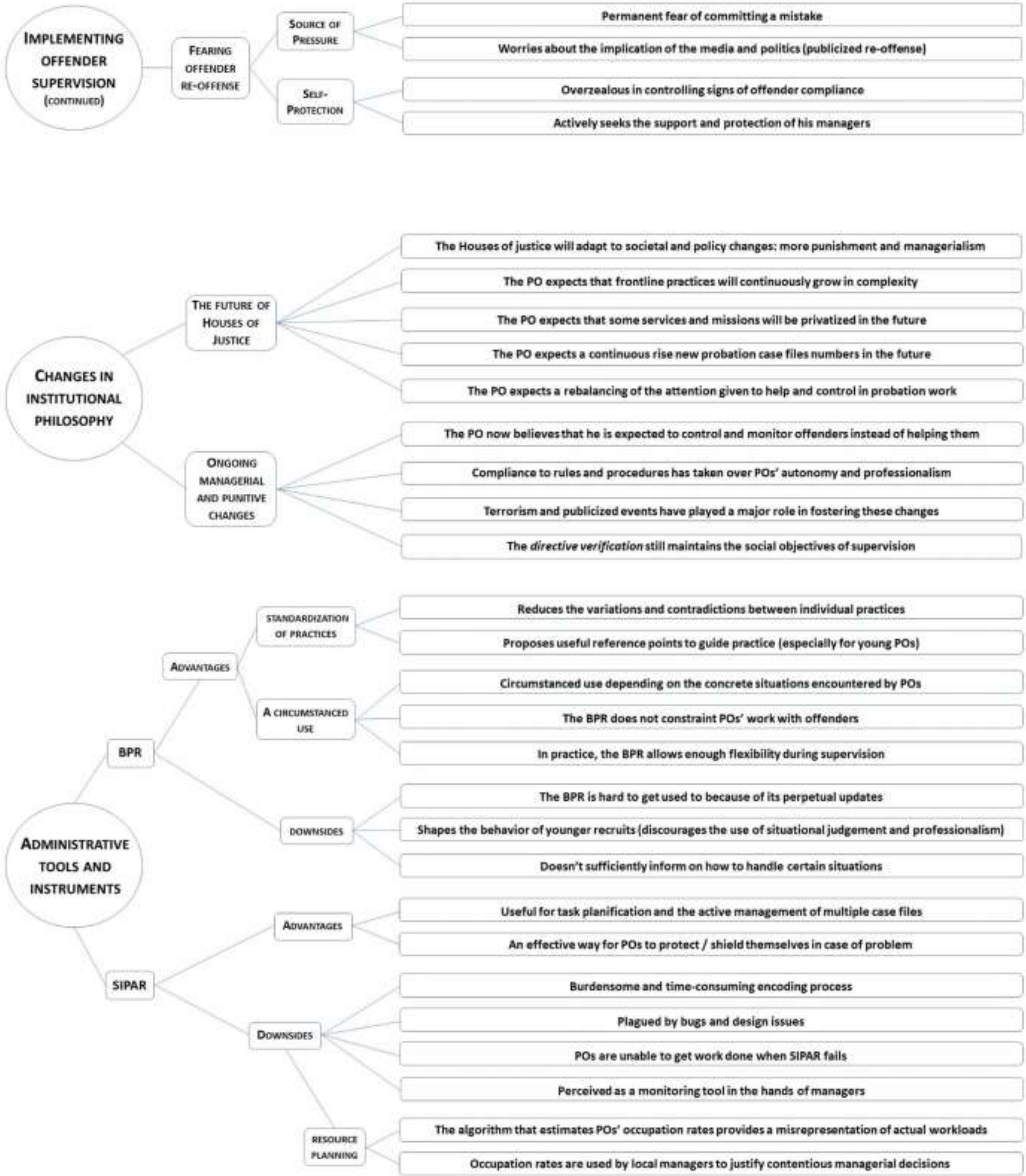
Mix of qualitative and quantitative methods (n = 9)

Methods	Occurrences
Statistical analysis of administrative records; interviews; focus groups	1
Statistical analysis of administrative records; interviews	3
Longitudinal follow-up; observation	1
Questionnaire survey; observation	1
Questionnaire survey; interviews	1
Questionnaire survey; interviews; focus groups	1
Questionnaire survey; statistical analysis of administrative records; interviews	1

Appendix 3 – Full thematic tree




ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS
LOCAL MANAGERS
THE MANAGER IS A RELIABLE REFERENT
The local management brings adequate answers and advices in case of problem or doubt
Meeting with the local managers is a good way to seek protection and add legitimacy to difficult choices
RELATIONAL AND PHYSICAL BARRIER
Local managers are not physically present although they claim to be accessible (email, phone, etc.)
Despite their efforts, local managers are unable to solve POs' concrete problems because they are overworked
Local managers tend to be unavailable in smaller Houses of justice
Local managers are not aware of POs' subjective workload experiences (and the associated stress and pressure)
The PO prefers to seek advice among his fellow colleagues instead of local managers
The PO does not believe that local managers are fair and well intentioned
REJECTION OF MANAGERIAL CHOICES
The managers are unwilling to communicate with POs on several key issues (such as workloads)
The managers are favoring a logic of systematic control and monitoring of POs' activities
The PO distrusts the way managers use the resource planning software to distribute new case files
WORKLOADS
WORKLOAD PERCEPTIONS
Workloads are particularly important
The PO is exposed to recurring and disruptive activity peaks
There are strong inequalities in caseload distribution
Workloads are tolerable
WORKLOAD INCREASE
There was a considerable increase in new probation cases
The PO notices a gradual complexification of individual case files
There was an increase in administrative tasks and paperwork since the *directive verification*
Managers' overreliance on computerized tools for new case distribution
STAFF SHORTAGE
There is a chronic staff shortage in Houses of Justice
There is a lot of turnover and a lack of experienced staff (in a specific House of Justice)
TIME SHORTAGE AND CONSEQUENCES
DECLINE IN THE QUALITY OF SUPERVISION
The PO invests less time and effort in his interactions with offenders in general
Less investment in time-consuming supervisory tools
The PO maintains offender monitoring at the expense of social work
The PO simplifies the reports destined to the judicial authorities
DEALING WITH URGENCY
The PO gives priority to the most urgent cases
The PO does not conduct all home visits because they are time-consuming
The PO invests a lot of time and effort at the very beginning of the supervision
STRESS
The general lack of time and paperwork increase (*directive verification*) generates stress
The PO witnesses many burnout and depression cases
LOCAL SPECIFICITIES
THE SIZE OF THE LOCAL AGENCY
The management is inconsistent in smaller Houses of Justice
The local managers are often unavailable in smaller Houses of Justice
POs need to be more polyvalent in smaller Houses of Justice
POs have more opportunities to specialize according to specific tasks in larger Houses of Justice
This particular House of Justice has a high turnover rate and struggles to maintain staff experience
Terrorism and migrations are salient issues in this particular judicial district
The population is particularly vulnerable to socio-economic issues in this particular judicial district
GEOGRAPHIC CONSTRAINTS
Offenders who have mobility issues do struggle in large judicial districts
POs feel compelled to rely on home visits to help offenders in large judicial districts



Implementing offender supervision (continued)
Fearing offender re-offense
Source of pressure
Permanent fear of committing a mistake
Worries about the implication of the media and politics (publicized re-offense)
Self-protection
Overzealous in controlling signs of offender compliance
Actively seeks the support and protection of his managers
Changes in institutional philosophy
The future of Houses of Justice
The Houses of justice will adapt to societal and policy changes: more punishment and managerialism
The PO expects that frontline practices will continuously grow in complexity
The PO expects that some services and missions will be privatized in the future
The PO expects a continuous rise new probation case files numbers in the future
The PO expects a rebalancing of the attention given to help and control in probation work
Ongoing managerial and punitive changes
The PO now believes that he is expected to control and monitor offenders instead of helping them
Compliance to rules and procedures has taken over POs' autonomy and professionalism
Terrorism and publicized events have played a major role in fostering these changes
The directive verification still maintains the social objectives of supervision
Administrative tools and instruments
BPR
Advantages
Standardization of practices
Reduces the variations and contradictions between individual practices
Proposes useful reference points to guide practice (especially for young POs)
A circumstanced use
Circumstanced use depending on the concrete situations encountered by POs
The BPR does not constraint POs' work with offenders
In practice, the BPR allows enough flexibility during supervision
Downsides
The BPR is hard to get used to because of its perpetual updates
Shapes the behavior of younger recruits (discourages the use of situational judgement and professionalism)
Doesn't sufficiently inform on how to handle certain situations
SIPAR
Advantages
Useful for task planification and the active management of multiple case files
An effective way for POs to protect / shield themselves in case of problem
Downsides
Burdensome and time-consuming encoding process
Plagued by bugs and design issues
POs are unable to get work done when SIPAR fails
Perceived as a monitoring tool in the hands of managers
Resource planning
The algorithm that estimates POs' occupation rates provides a misrepresentation of actual workloads
Occupation rates are used by local managers to justify contentious managerial decisions

OFFENDER PROFILES & SUPERVISION DYNAMICS
ASSESSING OFFENDERS
Offender's proactivity, punctuality, and understanding of rules
Socio-economic background: social and professional integration
Offender's attitude towards his sentence (denial, acceptation, etc.)
PREDICTIONS ARE UNRELIABLE
Does not rely on his first impressions to determine how an offender will fare during supervision
Develops some intuitions about how the offender will fare but can't safely rely on those
PREDICTIONS ARE RELIABLE
After the second or third interview, the PO can safely determine the offender will fare
After the first encounter, an experienced PO can determine how the offender will fare
"COMPLICATED" SUPERVISIONS
SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND
Drug and alcohol addictions increase the odds of reoffence and proof counterfeiting
Offenders with a vulnerable social, familial, and financial background require constant attention (breakdown risk)
Caution is sometimes required when supervising white-collar offenders (especially those who know the rules)
TYPE OF FILE AND NATURE OF THE OFFENSE
Offenders convicted of emotionally charged offenses (mentally demanding)
Offenders convicted for a publicized offense or terrorism (stressful and particularly demanding)
Taking charge of a colleague's case file is often problematic (the offender can be unwilling to re-adapt to the new PO)
The offenders who served multiple probation sentences due to reoffence are challenging to supervise
OFFENDER'S PERSONALITY
Manipulative personalities are hard to detect and counteract
The aggressive and mentally unstable offenders do pose a threat to personal safety
The offenders who have a propensity for self-victimization are challenging to supervise
"SMOOTH" SUPERVISIONS
OFFENDER'S COMPETENCE
Offender's proactivity is a predictor of a successful supervision
Offenders who have a good understanding of the probationary framework and conditions
Sincere and transparent offenders
Mature and responsible individuals (who care for their job, their family, etc.)
TYPE OF FILE AND NATURE OF THE OFFENSE
Sex offenders
When the offense appears as a genuine misstep in offenders' track record
Road traffic violations, in general

Appendix 4 – Invitation and follow-up emails

Invitation to participate in a questionnaire survey

Dear Ms./Mr. {LASTNAME},

The Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS) is supporting a study about the interactions between judicial assistants and offenders within the Houses of Justice in Belgium. This project is being conducted by Mathias Sabbe, PhD candidate in public administration at the Catholic University of Louvain (UCLouvain).

You are invited to take part in a 10 minutes survey whose objective is to learn about your work with the offenders and your working conditions. This research and survey have been approved by the Central Administration of the Houses of Justice. Rest assured that all your replies will be kept strictly confidential and will not be disseminated within the administration.

Click here to fill in the survey: {SURVEYURL}

Your participation in this survey is decisive. Although essential, judicial assistants' perceptions about their work and their interactions with offenders are still mostly unknown. Not only will you help the acquisition of scientific knowledge about probation work in Belgium, but in addition, you will contribute to the future development of your institution. Your contribution will also allow us to make progress in this project and we would be most grateful for it.

If you want to receive more information about this project, do not hesitate and contact us at: mathias.sabbe@uclouvain.be (or 0479/01.18.19)

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Cordially

Mathias Sabbe,
FNRS fellow at the UCLouvain
Nathalie Schiffino & Stéphane Moyson,
Professors at the UCLouvain

Reminder to participate in a survey

Dear Mr./Ms. {LASTNAME},

You have been recently invited to take part in a survey about interactions between Judicial Assistants and offenders within the Houses of Justice in Belgium.

We have noticed that you have not completed the form yet and we would like to remind you that it is still available for you to participate in.

If you wish to do so, please click on the link below, it will only take you around ten minutes.

Click here to fill in the survey: {SURVEYURL}

If you wish to obtain more information on this project, do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Cordially

Mathias Sabbe,
FNRS fellow at the UCLouvain
Nathalie Schiffino & Stéphane Moyson,
Professors at the UCLouvain

Mail: Confirmation of your participation in our survey

Dear Mr./Ms. {LASTNAME},

This email confirms that you have filled out the questionnaire about interactions between Judicial Assistants and offenders within the Houses of Justice in Belgium. Your answers have been duly registered. Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions regarding this email, please contact me at the following address: mathias.sabbe@uclouvain.be.

Thank you again for your contribution.

Cordially

Mathias Sabbe,
FNRS fellow at the UCLouvain
Nathalie Schiffino & Stéphane Moyson,
Professors at the UCLouvain

Mail: Confirmation of registration to the survey

Dear Mr./Ms. {LASTNAME},

You (or someone else using your email address) have registered in order to take part in an online survey called "{SURVEYNAME}".

To fill it in, please click on the following link: {SURVEYURL}

If you have questions regarding this survey or if you did not register to participate and you believe this email is a mistake, contact me at the following address: mathias.sabbe@uclouvain.be

Cordially

Mathias Sabbe,
FNRS fellow at the UCLouvain
Nathalie Schiffino & Stéphane Moyson,
Professors at the UCLouvain

Appendix 5 – Survey questions and items

Welcome!

Your participation to this survey will take about ten minutes. There are no wrong answers. All answers will be kept strictly confidential.

To start answering the questions, click on "next"

[age] What is your age? Please select the relevant age group:

- ◯ Less than 25
- ◯ Between 26 and 35
- ◯ Between 36 and 45
- ◯ Between 46 and 55
- ◯ More than 56

[gender] What is your gender?

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Other

[diplo] Please indicate your highest qualification:

- ◯ No diploma
- ◯ Primary school
- ◯ High school
- ◯ Tertiary education (short cycle, other than university)
- ◯ Bachelor's degree
- ◯ Master's degree
- ◯ PhD
- ◯ If other, please specify

General propensity to trust [propenstrst1-3]

How would you describe your daily interactions with people? To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1: Fully disagree
- 5: Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 9: Fully agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
In everyday life, family members usually can be relied upon to keep their promises	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In everyday life, most people are honest	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In everyday life, I always trust people, even those with whom I am not familiar.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Workload [otherworkload1-2]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1: Fully disagree
- 5: Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 9: Fully agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
During a typical workweek I have enough time to carry all the tasks that are expected from me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
During a typical workweek I do not feel the need to work overtime	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Perceived managerial support [manag1-8]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1: Fully disagree
- 5: Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 9: Fully agree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
My first-line manager typically puts great effort into making sure that I have every resource necessary to provide affective services to the offenders	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My first-line manager is genuinely open to my job-related ideas and suggestions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My first-line manager is genuinely open to the job-related ideas and suggestions of my coworkers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My coworkers, and I are regularly permitted to set our own agendas without interference and undue criticism from our first-line manager	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My first-line manager often acknowledges treatment staff who perform their jobs well	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My role in this probation service has been made very clear to me by my first-line manager(s)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My first-line manager gives me every indication that my task is a worthwhile goal in this probation service	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
With all the responsibilities and expectations faced on a daily basis by my first-line manager, this person does a good job extending probation officers the feedback they deserve	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Importance given to trustworthiness assessments [behav1_1-4]

You received a new probation case. You already carried the first interviews with the offender, and you are about to write your first report [*plan de guidance*] to the probation board.

To what extent each of the four offender characteristics presented below would induce you to act benevolently* during offenders' supervision?
* Using empathy, helpfulness, thoughtfulness, compromises, etc.

- 1: Does not induce me at all to be benevolent
- 5: Neutral
- 9: Does really induce me to be benevolent

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
His goodwill and proactivity	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
His fair understanding of the probationary framework and conditions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A good socio-professional integration	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The absence of addictions (to alcohol, drugs, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Policing stance: [srole1-7]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1: The socio-professional reintegration of offenders
- 9: The implementation of the guiding plan

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
when I work with offenders, my primary role as a judicial assistant is:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: Their socio-professional reintegration
- 9: Making sure that they comply with rules

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
when I work with offenders, my primary concern is:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: Social worker
- 9: Police officer

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Which best describes your role with offenders?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: advocate
- 9: supervisor

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
As a judicial assistant, my most appropriate role with offenders is as:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: to assist
- 9: to impose

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
The most essential part of my job with offenders is:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: the intervention
- 9: the execution of probationary conditions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
My primary function as a judicial assistant is:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- 1: Social work
- 9: Law enforcement

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
As a judicial assistant, my function most closely resembles:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Appendix 6 – Case summaries

A - Perceived workloads

Perceived workload

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	5.5135	5.5000	2.08260	4.337	1	9

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	5.2404	5.2500	2.32103	5.387	1	9
Female	318	5.5582	5.5000	2.04150	4.168	1	9
Total	370	5.5135	5.5000	2.08260	4.337	1	9

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	6.0657	6.5000	2.14529	4.602	1.00	9.00
Dutch	172	4.8779	5.0000	1.81600	3.298	1.00	9.00
Total	370	5.5135	5.5000	2.08260	4.337	1.00	9.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Under 25	13	5.2308	5.0000	2.50512	6.276	1	9
26 to 35	100	5.4700	5.5000	2.02612	4.105	1	9
36 to 45	161	5.5217	5.5000	2.08518	4.348	1	9
46 to 55	83	5.6566	6.0000	2.06588	4.268	1	9
56 +	13	5.1154	5.5000	2.38182	5.673	2	9
Total	370	5.5135	5.5000	2.08260	4.337	1	9

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cycle (other than university)	32	6.0625	6.0000	2.17667	4.738	1	9
Bachelor's degree	192	5.4870	5.5000	2.08613	4.352	1	9
Master's degree	144	5.4167	5.5000	2.06367	4.259	1	9
PhD	2	6.2500	6.2500	1.06066	1.125	5,5	7
Total	370	5.5135	5.5000	2.08260	4.337	1	9

B – Subjective role

Subjective role

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	4.3050	4.2857	1.12818	1.273	1.14	8

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	4.4423	4.2857	1.06389	1.132	1.57	6.71
Female	318	4.2826	4.2857	1.13837	1.296	1.14	8
Total	370	4.3050	4.2857	1.12818	1.273	1.14	8

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	4.8362	4.8571	0.96272	0.927	1.86	8.00
Dutch	172	3.6935	3.7143	0.98789	0.976	1.14	6.14
Total	370	4.3050	4.2857	1.12818	1.273	1.14	8.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Under 25	13	4.0000	4.0000	1.05463	1.112	1.86	5.29
26 to 35	100	3.8929	3.8571	1.03243	1.066	1.14	6.29
36 to 45	161	4.4490	4.5714	1.06184	1.128	1.57	6.71
46 to 55	83	4.6093	4.5714	1.26288	1.595	2	8
56 +	13	4.0549	3.7143	0.89317	0.798	3	6
Total	370	4.3050	4.2857	1.12818	1.273	1.14	8

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cycle (other than university)	32	4.8304	4.8571	0.95758	0.917	3	6.71
Bachelor's degree	192	4.2604	4.2857	1.15040	1.323	1.57	7.86
Master's degree	144	4.2629	4.2857	1.10588	1.223	1.14	8
PhD	2	3.2143	3.2143	1.31320	1.724	2.29	4.14
Total	370	4.3050	4.2857	1.12818	1.273	1.14	8

C – General propensity to trust

General propensity to trust

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	5.5730	5.6667	1.37303	1.885	1	9

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	6.0897	6.1667	1.30712	1.709	2.33	8.33
Female	318	5.4885	5.6667	1.36697	1.869	1	9
Total	370	5.5730	5.6667	1.37303	1.885	1	9

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	5.2609	5.3333	1.33706	1.788	1.00	8.33
Dutch	172	5.9322	6.0000	1.32891	1.766	2.33	9.00
Total	370	5.5730	5.6667	1.37303	1.885	1.00	9.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Under 25	13	5.8718	6.0000	1.25121	1.566	3.33	7.33
26 to 35	100	5.5867	5.6667	1.32330	1.751	2.67	8.33
36 to 45	161	5.4513	5.3333	1.40999	1.988	1	8.33
46 to 55	83	5.6345	5.6667	1.38087	1.907	1	9
56 +	13	6.2821	6.0000	1.24608	1.553	4	8.33
Total	370	5.5730	5.6667	1.37303	1.885	1	9

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cycle (other than university)	32	5.6042	5.0000	1.31285	1.724	3.33	9
Bachelor's degree	192	5.4566	5.6667	1.39490	1.946	1	8.33
Master's degree	144	5.7060	5.6667	1.35558	1.838	3	8.33
PhD	2	6.6667	6.6667	0.47140	0.222	6.33	7
Total	370	5.5730	5.6667	1.37303	1.885	1	9

D – Perceived managerial support

Perceived managerial support

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	6.3547	6.6250	1.58106	2.500	1.50	9

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	6.4976	6.9375	1.75550	3.082	1.63	9
Female	318	6.3314	6.6250	1.55245	2.410	1.5	9
Total	370	6.3547	6.6250	1.58106	2.500	1.5	9

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	6.1850	6.5000	1.51660	2.300	2.25	9.00
Dutch	172	6.5501	7.0000	1.63482	2.673	1.50	9.00
Total	370	6.3547	6.6250	1.58106	2.500	1.50	9.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
under 25	13	6.2500	6.2500	1.23954	1.536	4.63	8.38
26 to 35	100	6.6313	6.8750	1.25219	1.568	2.75	8.88
36 to 45	161	6.1335	6.5000	1.66531	2.773	1.50	9
46 to 55	83	6.3735	6.7500	1.74242	3.036	1.63	9
56 +	13	6.9519	7.3750	1.72568	2.978	2.75	8.75
Total	370	6.3547	6.6250	1.58106	2.500	1.50	9

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cycle (other than university)	32	6.2617	6.6875	1.67023	2.790	2.63	8.75
Bachelor's degree	192	6.2728	6.5000	1.62298	2.634	1.50	9
Master's degree	144	6.4653	6.8125	1.50889	2.277	2.50	8.88
PhD	2	7.7500	7.7500	0.17678	0.031	7.63	7.88
Total	370	6.3547	6.6250	1.58106	2.500	1.50	9

E – The importance given to trustworthiness assessments

Importance given to trustworthiness assessments

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	5.2642	5.2500	1.54329	2.382	1.00	9.00

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	5.4567	5.5000	1.76757	3.124	1.00	9.00
Female	318	5.2327	5.2500	1.50423	2.263	1.00	8.75
Total	370	5.2642	5.2500	1.54329	2.382	1.00	9.00

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	5.4217	5.5000	1.41361	1.998	1.00	9.00
Dutch	172	5.0828	5.2500	1.66602	2.776	1.00	8.25
Total	370	5.2642	5.2500	1.54329	2.382	1.00	9.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Under 25	13	4.9808	5.0000	1.49465	2.234	2.25	8.00
26 to 35	100	5.2000	5.2500	1.47196	2.167	1.00	8.25
36 to 45	161	5.1630	5.2500	1.58145	2.501	1.00	9.00
46 to 55	83	5.4428	5.5000	1.55652	2.423	1.00	8.75
56 +	13	6.1538	5.7500	1.37515	1.891	4.00	8.00
Total	370	5.2642	5.2500	1.54329	2.382	1.00	9.00

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cyle (other than university)	32	5.4453	5.5000	1.70594	2.910	1.00	9.00
Bachelor's degree	192	5.2552	5.2500	1.53706	2.363	1.00	8.75
Master's degree	144	5.2431	5.2500	1.53199	2.347	1.00	8.25
PhD	2	4.7500	4.7500	0.35355	0.125	4.50	5.00
Total	370	5.2642	5.2500	1.54329	2.382	1.00	9.00

F – Trust

Trust

N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
370	5.1239	5.1667	0.82897	0.687	1.67	8.00

Gender as grouping variable

Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Male	52	5.2340	5.1667	0.89312	0.798	3.67	8.00
Female	318	5.1059	5.0833	0.81809	0.669	1.67	7.67
Total	370	5.1239	5.1667	0.82897	0.687	1.67	8.00

Language as grouping variable

Language	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
French	198	5.0337	5.0000	0.89003	0.792	1.67	8.00
Dutch	172	5.2277	5.1667	0.74163	0.550	3.50	7.67
Total	370	5.1239	5.1667	0.82897	0.687	1.67	8.00

Age as grouping variable

Age group	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Under 25	13	5.0513	5.3333	0.83717	0.701	3.67	6.17
26 to 35	100	5.0500	5.0000	0.69449	0.482	3.50	7.33
36 to 45	161	5.1491	5.1667	0.90841	0.825	1.67	8.00
46 to 55	83	5.2209	5.1667	0.83460	0.697	2.33	7.67
56 +	13	4.8333	4.6667	0.68718	0.472	3.67	6.00
Total	370	5.1239	5.1667	0.82897	0.687	1.67	8.00

Educational level as grouping variable

Educational level	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
1st cycle (other than university)	32	4.8073	4.6667	0.59885	0.359	3.67	6.17
Bachelor's degree	192	5.1441	5.1667	0.85295	0.728	2.33	8.00
Master's degree	144	5.1609	5.1667	0.82746	0.685	1.67	7.67
PhD	2	5.5833	5.5833	1.29636	1.681	4.67	6.50
Total	370	5.1239	5.1667	0.82897	0.687	1.67	8.00

Appendix 7 – Non-parametric tests reports (Kruskal-Wallis)

A – Workload by language

```
NPAR TESTS
  /K-W=Workload BY language(1 2)
  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES
  /MISSING ANALYSIS.
```

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Workload	370	5.5135	2.08260	1.00	9.00
language	370	1.46	.499	1	2

Ranks

	language	N	Mean Rank
Workload	**French**	198	214.78
	Dutch	172	151.80
	Total	370	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Workload
Kruskal-Wallis H	32.091
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: language

B – Subjective role by language

```
NPAR TESTS
  /K-W=Subj_role BY language(1 2)
  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES
  /MISSING ANALYSIS.
```

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Subj_role	370	4.3050	1.12818	1.14	8.00
language	370	1.46	.499	1	2

Ranks

	language	N	Mean Rank
Subj_role	**French**	198	236.98
	Dutch	172	126.23
	Total	370	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Subj_role
Kruskal-Wallis H	98.876
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: language

B – Subjective role by educational level

```
NPAR TESTS
  /K-W=Subj_role BY DIPLO(4 7)
  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES
  /MISSING ANALYSIS.
```

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Subj_role	370	4.3050	1.12818	1.14	8.00
DIPLO	370	5.31	.633	4	7

Ranks

	DIPLO	N	Mean Rank
Subj_role	**1st cycle (other than university)**	32	234.98
	Bachelor's degree	192	181.15
	Master's degree	144	181.61
	PhD	2	91.75
	Total	370	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Subj_role
Kruskal-Wallis H	8.911
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.030

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: DIPLO

C – Subjective role perceptions by age

```
NPAR TESTS
  /K-W=Subj_role BY AGE(1 5)
  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES
  /MISSING ANALYSIS.
```

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Subj_role	370	4.3050	1.12818	1.14	8.00
Age group	370	2.95	.881	1	5

Ranks

	Subj_role	N	Mean Rank
Propenstrust	**Under 25**	13	161.65
	26 to 35	100	146.28
	36 to 45	161	201.92
	46 to 55	83	209.83
	56 +	13	152.35
	Total	370	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Propenstrust
Kruskal-Wallis H	23.475
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: AGE

D – Trust by language

```
NPAR TESTS
  /K-W=Trust BY language(1 2)
  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES
  /MISSING ANALYSIS.
```

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Trust	370	5.1239	.82897	1.67	8.00
language	370	1.46	.499	1	2

Ranks

	language	N	Mean Rank
Trust	**French**	198	174.36
	Dutch	172	198.33
	Total	370	

Test Statistics[a,b]

	Trust
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.648
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.031

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: language

Appendix 8 – One-way ANOVA test reports

A – Subjective role by educational level

```
ONEWAY Subj_role BY DIPLO
  /STATISTICS HOMOGENEITY
  /PLOT MEANS
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Subj_role	**Based on Mean**	.472	3	366	.702
	Based on Median	.478	3	366	.698
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.478	3	360.169	.698
	Based on trimmed mean	.471	3	366	.702

ANOVA

Subj_role

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.848	3	3.949	3.157	.025
Within Groups	457.810	366	1.251		
Total	469.658	369			

B – Subjective role by age

```
ONEWAY Subj_role BY AGE
  /STATISTICS HOMOGENEITY
  /PLOT MEANS
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Subj_role	**Based on Mean**	.968	4	365	.425
	Based on Median	1.052	4	365	.380
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.052	4	350.610	.380
	Based on trimmed mean	.967	4	365	.426

ANOVA

Subj_role

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	30.031	4	7.508	6.233	.000
Within Groups	439.627	365	1.204		
Total	469.658	369			

C – Subjective role by language

```
ONEWAY Subj_role BY LANGUE
  /STATISTICS HOMOGENEITY
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Subj_role	**Based on Mean**	.481	1	368	.488
	Based on Median	.490	1	368	.484
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.490	1	367.754	.484
	Based on trimmed mean	.467	1	368	.495

ANOVA

Subj_role

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	120.186	1	120.186	126.558	.000
Within Groups	349.472	368	.950		
Total	469.658	369			

D – General propensity to trust by gender

```
ONEWAY Propenstrust BY GENDER
  /STATISTICS HOMOGENEITY
  /PLOT MEANS
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Propenstrust	**Based on Mean**	.095	1	368	.758
	Based on Median	.069	1	368	.793
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.069	1	366.271	.793
	Based on trimmed mean	.091	1	368	.763

ANOVA

Propenstrust

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.157	1	16.157	8.751	.003
Within Groups	679.483	368	1.846		
Total	695.641	369			

E – General propensity to trust by language

```
ONEWAY Propenstrust BY LANGUE
  /STATISTICS DHOMOGENEITY
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Propenstrust	**Based on Mean**	.002	1	368	.963
	Based on Median	.013	1	368	.910
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.013	1	367.998	.910
	Based on trimmed mean	.006	1	368	.936

ANOVA

Propenstrust

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	41.470	1	41.470	23.329	.000
Within Groups	654.171	368	1.778		
Total	695.641	369			

F – Perceived managerial support by language

```
ONEWAY Managsup BY LANGUE
  /STATISTICS HOMOGENEITY
  /MISSING ANALYSIS
  /POSTHOC=TUKEY ALPHA(0.05).
```

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Managsup	**Based on Mean**	,066	1	368	,798
	Based on Median	,002	1	368	,967
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	,002	1	352,145	,967
	Based on trimmed mean	,015	1	368	,904

ANOVA

Managsup

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.274	1	12.274	4.963	.027
Within Groups	910.137	368	2.473		
Total	922.410	369			

Appendix 9 – CFA and measurement model reports

A – Measurement model

Correlation coefficients

```
Structural equation model                       Number of obs     =        370
Estimation method  = ml
Log likelihood     =  -16656.84

 ( 1)  [behav1_1]Importance_TA = 1
 ( 2)  [otherworkload1_r]Workload = 1
 ( 3)  [otherworkload2_r]Workload = 1
 ( 4)  [manag1]Manag_sup = 1
 ( 5)  [propenstrst1]Propensity_trust = 1
 ( 6)  [srole2]Subj_role = 1
```

Standardized	Coef.	OIM Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
cov(langue,diplo)	.215922	.0496342	4.35	0.000	.1186408	.3132032
cov(langue,gender)	.0956805	.0492503	1.94	0.052	-.0008482	.1922092
cov(langue,age)	-.1761238	.0503514	-3.50	0.000	-.2748107	-.0774369
cov(langue,Importance_TA)	-.0721105	.0585927	-1.23	0.218	-.1869501	.0427291
cov(langue,Workload)	-.3149332	.0506349	-6.22	0.000	-.4141758	-.2156907
cov(langue,Manag_sup)	.1603037	.0523358	3.06	0.002	.0577274	.26288
cov(langue,Propensity_trust)	.2434381	.0620737	3.92	0.000	.1217758	.3651003
cov(langue,Subj_role)	-.4538089	.0455319	-9.97	0.000	-.5430497	-.3645681
cov(diplo,gender)	.056195	.0517817	1.09	0.278	-.0452953	.1576854
cov(diplo,age)	-.2617222	.0484435	-5.40	0.000	-.3566697	-.1667747
cov(diplo,Importance_TA)	-.0310217	.056411	-0.55	0.582	-.1415853	.0795419
cov(diplo,Workload)	-.0672584	.0556812	-1.21	0.227	-.1763915	.0418746
cov(diplo,Manag_sup)	.0718259	.0532449	1.35	0.177	-.0325323	.1761841
cov(diplo,Propensity_trust)	.0665859	.0627288	1.06	0.288	-.0563603	.189532
cov(diplo,Subj_role)	-.0659126	.0554856	-1.19	0.235	-.1746624	.0428371
cov(gender,age)	-.2085356	.0497414	-4.19	0.000	-.306027	-.1110442
cov(gender,Importance_TA)	-.0646746	.0561148	-1.15	0.249	-.1746576	.0453084
cov(gender,Manag_sup)	-.0026909	.0519195	-0.05	0.959	-.1044513	.0990695
cov(gender,Propensity_trust)	-.1998122	.0607164	-3.29	0.001	-.3188142	-.0808101
cov(gender,Subj_role)	-.0514341	.0552615	-0.93	0.352	-.1597447	.0568765
cov(age,Importance_TA)	.1195269	.0557476	2.14	0.032	.0102637	.2287902
cov(age,Workload)	.0377131	.0549069	0.69	0.492	-.0699024	.1453285
cov(age,Manag_sup)	-.0370183	.0533999	-0.69	0.488	-.1416802	.0676437
cov(age,Propensity_trust)	.0570768	.0629615	0.91	0.365	-.0663255	.1804792
cov(age,Subj_role)	.1325369	.0547725	2.42	0.016	.0251847	.2398892
cov(Importance_TA,Workload)	-.0261244	.0607081	-0.43	0.667	-.14511	.0928611
cov(Importance_TA,Manag_sup)	.0520154	.0577376	0.90	0.368	-.0611481	.165179
cov(Importance_TA,Propensity_trust)	.1205938	.0681057	1.77	0.077	-.0128909	.2540785
cov(Importance_TA,Subj_role)	.1485486	.0601589	2.47	0.014	.0306393	.266458
cov(Workload,Manag_sup)	-.2755851	.0540298	-5.10	0.000	-.3814816	-.1696887
cov(Workload,Propensity_trust)	-.1309361	.0664983	-1.97	0.049	-.2612704	-.0006018
cov(Workload,Subj_role)	.120963	.0592003	2.04	0.041	.0049326	.2369934
cov(Manag_sup,Propensity_trust)	.182255	.0631291	2.89	0.004	.0585242	.3059858
cov(Manag_sup,Subj_role)	-.1341005	.0563973	-2.38	0.017	-.2446372	-.0235639
cov(Propensity_trust,Subj_role)	-.3067199	.0632535	-4.85	0.000	-.4306944	-.1827454

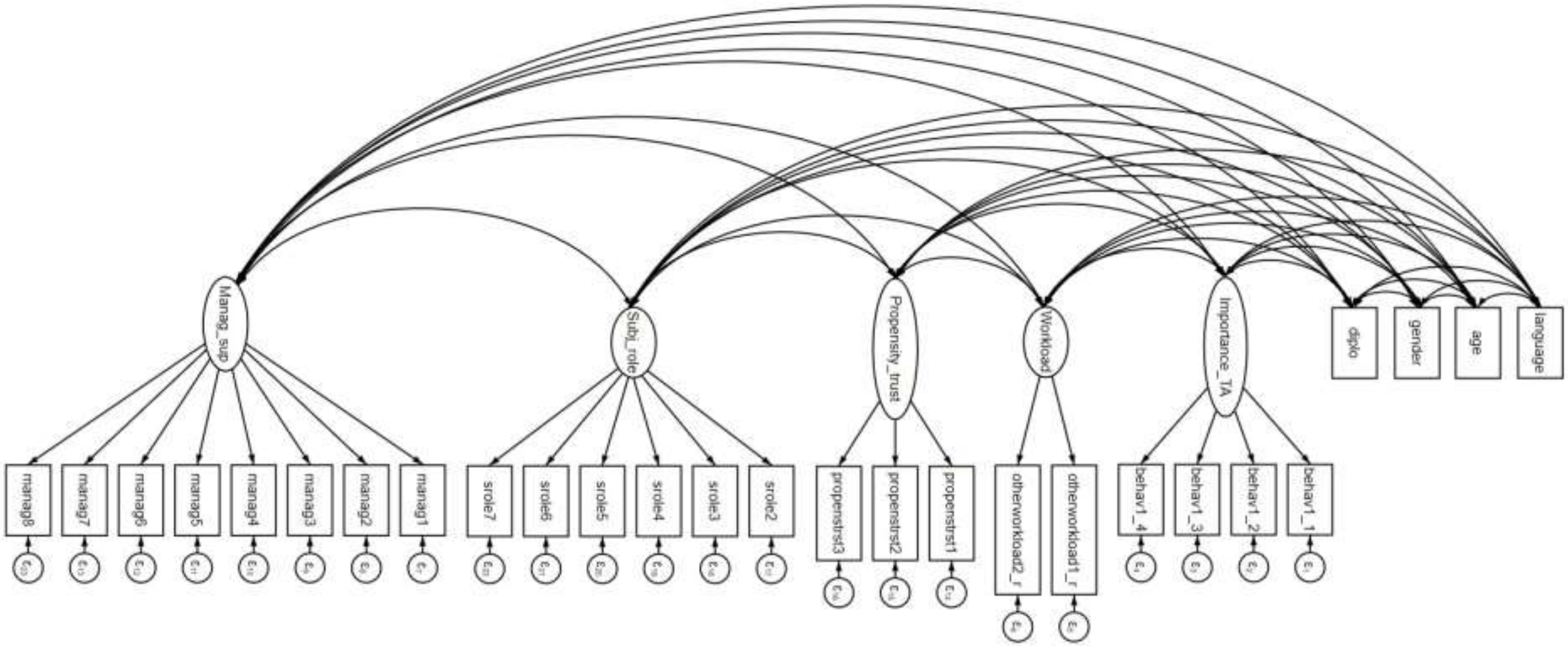
```
LR test of model vs. saturated: chi2(294) =    731.36, Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
```

Fit statistics

```
. estat gof, stats(all)
```

Fit statistic	Value	Description
Likelihood ratio		
chi2_ms(294)	731.363	model vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
chi2_bs(345)	4493.837	baseline vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
Population error		
RMSEA	0.063	Root mean squared error of approximation
90% CI, lower bound	0.058	
upper bound	0.069	
pclose	0.000	Probability RMSEA <= 0.05
Information criteria		
AIC	33535.679	Akaike's information criterion
BIC	33970.078	Bayesian information criterion
Baseline comparison		
CFI	0.895	Comparative fit index
TLI	0.876	Tucker-Lewis index
Size of residuals		
SRMR	0.052	Standardized root mean squared residual
CD	1.000	Coefficient of determination

B – Representation of the measurement model



C – CFA results

Correlation coefficients

```
Structural equation model                       Number of obs     =        370
Estimation method     = ml
Log pseudolikelihood = -16514.911

 ( 1)  [behav1_1]Importance_TA = 1
 ( 2)  [otherworkload1_r]Workload = 1
 ( 3)  [otherworkload2_r]Workload = 1
 ( 4)  [manag1]Manag_sup = 1
 ( 5)  [propenstrst1]Propensity_trust = 1
 ( 6)  [srole2]Subj_role = 1
```

Standardized	Coef.	Satorra-Bentler Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
cov(e.behav1_1,e.behav1_4)	-.2052874	.0442742	-4.64	0.000	-.2920632	-.1185116
cov(e.behav1_3,e.behav1_4)	.4242949	.062728	6.76	0.000	.3013503	.5472394
cov(e.manag2,e.manag3)	.5742435	.0653213	8.79	0.000	.446216	.7022709
cov(e.manag5,e.manag7)	.1600144	.063736	2.51	0.012	.0350942	.2849347
cov(e.manag6,e.manag7)	.2355552	.0560604	4.20	0.000	.1256788	.3454315
cov(e.propenstrst1,e.propenstrst3)	-.2119136	.1300128	-1.63	0.103	-.4667341	.0429069
cov(e.srole2,e.srole6)	.1500009	.0646741	2.32	0.020	.0232421	.2767598
cov(e.srole3,e.srole6)	-.1339716	.0634062	-2.11	0.035	-.2582455	-.0096977
cov(e.srole3,e.srole7)	.470204	.0619255	7.59	0.000	.3488323	.5915757
cov(e.srole4,e.srole5)	.3195113	.05946	5.37	0.000	.2029718	.4360508
cov(e.srole5,e.srole7)	.2267985	.0435174	5.21	0.000	.141506	.312091
cov(language,diplo)	.2151126	.0411606	5.23	0.000	.1344393	.2957858
cov(language,gender)	.0806547	.0409236	1.97	0.049	.0004459	.1608635
cov(language,age)	-.1731089	.0437924	-3.95	0.000	-.2589404	-.0872774
cov(language,Importance_TA)	-.1398385	.0514699	-2.72	0.007	-.2407176	-.0389594
cov(language,Workload)	-.3100937	.0436292	-7.11	0.000	-.3956054	-.224582
cov(language,Manag_sup)	.1561052	.0495905	3.15	0.002	.0589097	.2533007
cov(language,Propensity_trust)	.2715711	.0523743	5.19	0.000	.1689193	.3742228
cov(language,Subj_role)	-.5249716	.0376637	-13.94	0.000	-.5987911	-.4511521
cov(diplo,gender)	.0529707	.0452683	1.17	0.242	-.0357535	.141695
cov(diplo,age)	-.2610921	.043695	-5.98	0.000	-.3467327	-.1754515
cov(diplo,Importance_TA)	-.05629	.0546277	-1.03	0.303	-.1633584	.0507784
cov(diplo,Workload)	-.0641524	.0539116	-1.19	0.234	-.1698171	.0415124
cov(diplo,Manag_sup)	.0691883	.0509169	1.36	0.174	-.030607	.1689836
cov(diplo,Propensity_trust)	.0769669	.0565188	1.36	0.173	-.0338078	.1877416
cov(diplo,Subj_role)	-.0818446	.0569034	-1.44	0.150	-.1933733	.0296841
cov(gender,age)	-.2068005	.048721	-4.24	0.000	-.3022919	-.1113092
cov(gender,Importance_TA)	-.0471801	.0591083	-0.80	0.425	-.1630301	.06867
cov(gender,Workload)	.0556346	.0563421	0.99	0.323	-.0547939	.1660631
cov(gender,Manag_sup)	-.030044	.0546602	-0.55	0.583	-.1371761	.0770881
cov(gender,Propensity_trust)	-.1866847	.0551753	-3.38	0.001	-.2948263	-.0785432
cov(gender,Subj_role)	-.0595537	.0551958	-1.08	0.281	-.1677354	.048628
cov(age,Importance_TA)	.1151876	.0512505	2.25	0.025	.0147385	.2156368
cov(age,Workload)	.0261934	.0515012	0.51	0.611	-.0747471	.1271339
cov(age,Manag_sup)	-.0192086	.0490631	-0.39	0.695	-.1153705	.0769533
cov(age,Propensity_trust)	.0501316	.0550885	0.91	0.363	-.05784	.1581031
cov(age,Subj_role)	.1507941	.0580422	2.60	0.009	.0370334	.2645548
cov(Importance_TA,Workload)	-.0033775	.0598485	-0.06	0.955	-.1206783	.1139233
cov(Importance_TA,Manag_sup)	.0635076	.0616277	1.03	0.303	-.0572805	.1842958

cov(Importance_TA,Manag_sup)	.0635076	.0616277	1.03	0.303	-.0572805	.1842958
cov(Importance_TA,Propensity_trust)	.1259808	.0689075	1.83	0.068	-.0090754	.261037
cov(Importance_TA,Subj_role)	.2151181	.0597765	3.60	0.000	.0979584	.3322778
cov(Workload,Manag_sup)	-.2947415	.0545281	-5.41	0.000	-.4016147	-.1878684
cov(Workload,Propensity_trust)	-.1482933	.0627123	-2.36	0.018	-.2712071	-.0253795
cov(Workload,Subj_role)	.1332664	.0581677	2.29	0.022	.0192597	.247273
cov(Manag_sup,Propensity_trust)	.1750538	.061316	2.85	0.004	.0548767	.2952308
cov(Manag_sup,Subj_role)	-.1101257	.0572943	-1.92	0.055	-.2224205	.002169
cov(Propensity_trust,Subj_role)	-.3245329	.0626138	-5.18	0.000	-.4472537	-.2018121

LR test of model vs. saturated: chi2(282) = 447.51, Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Satorra-Bentler scaled test: chi2(282) = 413.21, Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings

Standardized	Coef.	Satorra-Bentler Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Measurement						
behav1_1						
Importance_TA	.5367063	.0523632	10.25	0.000	.4340764	.6393363
_cons	3.934897	.2191203	17.96	0.000	3.505429	4.364365
behav1_2						
Importance_TA	.883021	.034429	25.65	0.000	.8155413	.9505006
_cons	2.713839	.1296234	20.94	0.000	2.459782	2.967896
behav1_3						
Importance_TA	.715653	.0369021	19.39	0.000	.6433261	.7879799
_cons	2.299108	.0970215	23.70	0.000	2.10895	2.489267
behav1_4						
Importance_TA	.5919403	.0462449	12.80	0.000	.5013019	.6825788
_cons	2.024686	.0793072	25.53	0.000	1.869247	2.180125
otherworkload1_r						
Workload	.8840455	.0178234	49.60	0.000	.8491123	.9189787
_cons	2.524417	.0912511	27.66	0.000	2.345568	2.703266
otherworkload2_r						
Workload	.8572109	.0192962	44.42	0.000	.8193911	.8950307
_cons	2.435821	.0886841	27.47	0.000	2.262003	2.609638
manag1						
Manag_sup	.8417801	.0189645	44.39	0.000	.8046104	.8789499
_cons	2.991111	.132193	22.63	0.000	2.732018	3.250205
manag2						
Manag_sup	.8602183	.0198181	43.41	0.000	.8213756	.8990611
_cons	3.223362	.1573843	20.48	0.000	2.914894	3.531829
manag3						
Manag_sup	.8399775	.025065	33.51	0.000	.7908509	.889104
_cons	3.251732	.1455676	22.34	0.000	2.966424	3.537039
manag4						
Manag_sup	.4750342	.0460036	10.33	0.000	.3848689	.5651995
_cons	5.041147	.3357922	15.01	0.000	4.383006	5.699287

manag5						
Manag_sup	.820925	.0195612	41.97	0.000	.7825856	.8592643
_cons	2.881472	.1318159	21.86	0.000	2.623118	3.139826
manag6						
Manag_sup	.5809037	.0431841	13.45	0.000	.4962645	.6655428
_cons	3.689546	.2092019	17.64	0.000	3.279518	4.099574
manag7						
Manag_sup	.805721	.0236165	34.12	0.000	.7594335	.8520084
_cons	3.047444	.1443144	21.12	0.000	2.764593	3.330295
manag8						
Manag_sup	.7174808	.0281895	25.45	0.000	.6622305	.7727312
_cons	2.10839	.0797128	26.45	0.000	1.952156	2.264624
propenstrst1						
Propensity_trust	.5726856	.0670222	8.54	0.000	.4413246	.7040467
_cons	3.565066	.1480583	24.08	0.000	3.274877	3.855255
propenstrst2						
Propensity_trust	.6715433	.0597125	11.25	0.000	.5545089	.7885777
_cons	3.332819	.1465783	22.74	0.000	3.045531	3.620107
propenstrst3						
Propensity_trust	.7072621	.0657954	10.75	0.000	.5783055	.8362187
_cons	2.498229	.0993484	25.15	0.000	2.303509	2.692948
srole2						
Subj_role	.5268792	.0439415	11.99	0.000	.4407554	.613003
_cons	2.904353	.1081177	26.86	0.000	2.692446	3.11626
srole3						
Subj_role	.7128663	.0424038	16.81	0.000	.6297563	.7959762
_cons	2.199184	.0773025	28.45	0.000	2.047674	2.350694
srole4						
Subj_role	.577472	.0468933	12.31	0.000	.4855628	.6693813
_cons	2.761714	.1143611	24.15	0.000	2.53757	2.985858
srole5						
Subj_role	.6040522	.0483813	12.49	0.000	.5092266	.6988779
_cons	2.43777	.0907611	26.86	0.000	2.259881	2.615658
srole6						
Subj_role	.6466333	.0385956	16.75	0.000	.5709873	.7222792
_cons	2.8641	.1194119	23.99	0.000	2.630057	3.098143
srole7						
Subj_role	.7322848	.0372687	19.65	0.000	.6592394	.8053302
_cons	2.213392	.0815459	27.14	0.000	2.053565	2.373219

Fit statistics

```
. estat gof, stats(all)
```

Fit statistic	Value	Description
Likelihood ratio		
chi2_ms(282)	447.505	model vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
chi2_bs(345)	4493.837	baseline vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
Satorra-Bentler		
chi2sb_ms(282)	413.208	
p > chi2	0.000	
chi2sb_bs(345)	4135.510	
p > chi2	0.000	
Population error		
RMSEA	0.040	Root mean squared error of approximation
90% CI, lower bound	0.033	
upper bound	0.047	
pclose	0.993	Probability RMSEA <= 0.05
Satorra-Bentler		
RMSEA_SB	0.036	Root mean squared error of approximation
Information criteria		
AIC	33275.821	Akaike's information criterion
BIC	33757.182	Bayesian information criterion
Baseline comparison		
CFI	0.960	Comparative fit index
TLI	0.951	Tucker-Lewis index
Satorra-Bentler		
CFI_SB	0.965	Comparative fit index
TLI_SB	0.958	Tucker-Lewis index
Size of residuals		
SRMR	0.045	Standardized root mean squared residual
CD	1.000	Coefficient of determination

Appendix 10 – SEM reports

A – SEM results

Structural model – standardized regression coefficients

```
Structural equation model                       Number of obs     =        370
Estimation method     = ml
Log pseudolikelihood =  -16517.29

 ( 1)  [behav1_1]Reliance_TA = 1
 ( 2)  [otherworkload1_r]Workload = 1
 ( 3)  [otherworkload2_r]Workload = 1
 ( 4)  [srole2]Subj_role = 1
 ( 5)  [propenstrst1]Propensity_trust = 1
 ( 6)  [manag1]Manag_sup = 1
```

Standardized	Coef.	Satorra-Bentler Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Structural						
Reliance_TA						
age	.0620259	.0517868	1.20	0.231	-.0394743	.1635262
gender	.0309998	.0587465	0.53	0.598	-.0841413	.1461409
diplo	-.0281694	.0551951	-0.51	0.610	-.1363498	.0800109
language	-.0878836	.0668318	-1.31	0.189	-.2188715	.0431042
Workload	-.0012871	.0629852	-0.02	0.984	-.1247359	.1221616
Subj_role	.2609275	.0793517	3.29	0.001	.1054011	.4164539
Propensity_trust	.2566176	.0956843	2.68	0.007	.0690799	.4441553
Manag_sup	.0588955	.0637198	0.92	0.355	-.065993	.183784

```
LR test of model vs. saturated: chi2(291) =    452.26, Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Satorra-Bentler scaled test:    chi2(291) =    418.43, Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
```

Correlation coefficients

Standardized	Satorra-Bentler Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
cov(e.behav1_1,e.behav1_4)	-.2039091	.0441281	-4.62	0.000	-.2903985	-.1174197
cov(e.behav1_3,e.behav1_4)	.4264184	.0624701	6.83	0.000	.3039793	.5488574
cov(e.srole2,e.srole6)	.1551233	.0638893	2.43	0.015	.0299026	.280344
cov(e.srole3,e.srole6)	-.1400041	.0648604	-2.16	0.031	-.2671281	-.0128801
cov(e.srole3,e.srole7)	.4625347	.0635659	7.28	0.000	.3379479	.5871215
cov(e.srole4,e.srole5)	.3200342	.0590415	5.42	0.000	.2043149	.4357535
cov(e.srole5,e.srole7)	.2287147	.0434524	5.26	0.000	.1435496	.3138797
cov(e.propenstrst1,e.propenstrst3)	-.0841253	.1051554	-0.80	0.424	-.2902262	.1219755
cov(e.propenstrst2,e.propenstrst3)	.2657203	.0774282	3.43	0.001	.1139638	.4174768
cov(e.manag2,e.manag3)	.5741078	.0650957	8.82	0.000	.4465226	.701693
cov(e.manag5,e.manag7)	.15943	.0636432	2.51	0.012	.0346917	.2841683
cov(e.manag6,e.manag7)	.2356313	.0563383	4.18	0.000	.1252102	.3460524
cov(age,gender)	-.1983628	.0475969	-4.17	0.000	-.2916509	-.1050747
cov(age,diplo)	-.2564459	.0437084	-5.87	0.000	-.3421128	-.170779
cov(age,language)	-.1604985	.0402519	-3.99	0.000	-.2393908	-.0816062
cov(age,Subj_role)	.1258583	.0530048	2.37	0.018	.0219708	.2297459
cov(gender,diplo)	.0605498	.0448884	1.35	0.177	-.0274299	.1485295
cov(gender,language)	.0735746	.0398802	1.84	0.065	-.0045892	.1517384
cov(gender,Propensity_trust)	-.1744602	.0600378	-2.91	0.004	-.292132	-.0567883
cov(diplo,language)	.1645356	.0352797	4.66	0.000	.0953887	.2336826
cov(language,Workload)	-.3035906	.0430779	-7.05	0.000	-.3880217	-.2191595
cov(language,Subj_role)	-.5111149	.0378032	-13.52	0.000	-.5852078	-.4370221
cov(language,Propensity_trust)	.3400496	.0615894	5.52	0.000	.2193366	.4607627
cov(language,Manag_sup)	.1473243	.050474	2.92	0.004	.048397	.2462515
cov(Workload,Subj_role)	.1299121	.0570266	2.28	0.023	.0181421	.2416821
cov(Workload,Propensity_trust)	-.190486	.0683946	-2.79	0.005	-.3245369	-.056435
cov(Workload,Manag_sup)	-.2946325	.0541678	-5.44	0.000	-.4007995	-.1884655
cov(Subj_role,Propensity_trust)	-.3874517	.0697007	-5.56	0.000	-.5240626	-.2508409
cov(Subj_role,Manag_sup)	-.1101903	.0586595	-1.88	0.060	-.2251607	.0047801
cov(Propensity_trust,Manag_sup)	.1925934	.0675631	2.85	0.004	.0601721	.3250146

Fit statistics

```
. estat gof, stats(all)
```

Fit statistic	Value	Description
Likelihood ratio		
chi2_ms(291)	452.263	model vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
chi2_bs(345)	4493.837	baseline vs. saturated
p > chi2	0.000	
Satorra-Bentler		
chi2sb_ms(291)	418.435	
p > chi2	0.000	
chi2sb_bs(345)	4135.510	
p > chi2	0.000	
Population error		
RMSEA	0.039	Root mean squared error of approximation
90% CI, lower bound	0.032	
upper bound	0.046	
pclose	0.997	Probability RMSEA <= 0.05
Satorra-Bentler		
RMSEA_SB	0.034	Root mean squared error of approximation
Information criteria		
AIC	33262.579	Akaike's information criterion
BIC	33708.719	Bayesian information criterion
Baseline comparison		
CFI	0.961	Comparative fit index
TLI	0.954	Tucker-Lewis index
Satorra-Bentler		
CFI_SB	0.966	Comparative fit index
TLI_SB	0.960	Tucker-Lewis index
Size of residuals		
SRMR	0.047	Standardized root mean squared residual
CD	0.999	Coefficient of determination