

## **The causal effect of public sector identity on moral behavior: A comparative experimental study**

Initiative: Niedersächsisches Vorab (nur ausgewählte Ausschreibungen)

Ausschreibung: Forschungsk Kooperation Niedersachsen - Israel

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Laufzeit:

This project studies the causal effects of public sector identity on moral behavior, values and motivations among public sector affiliates. Drawing on the economic theory of identity, we presume that individuals possess multiple social identities, based on, for example, gender, ethnicity or profession - which is at the center of this study. Identities are associated with specific social norms prescribing permissible behaviors. In a given situation, behavior is shifted towards those norms that are associated with the more salient identity. The applicants developed a method for enhancing the salience of public sector identity of civil servants, which enable them to experimentally estimate the causal effect of public servants' professional identity on moral behavior. The research design distinguishes between individual moral behavior, and moral behavior in cooperative settings. Given that public servants operate in organizational settings of teams, the latter behavioral measure is particularly relevant and potentially carries important policy implications. The effects of public sector identity on moral behavior is tested in a series of online survey experiments and laboratory experiments with monetary incentives, in both Germany and Israel. The cross-cultural replication approach increases both the reliability and external validity of our results.

### **Projektbeteiligte**

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