



A Public Service Work Ethic

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University of Akron 7.19.2010



A Public Sector Work Ethic?

- Does a service orientation predict an interest in working with the government?
 - Should we measure or select based on PSWE?
 - Should we recruit and retain based on a PSWE? If so, How?
 - Is PSWE or PSM really intrinsic motivation?
 - Can we change the public sector work ethic?
 - Actionables?



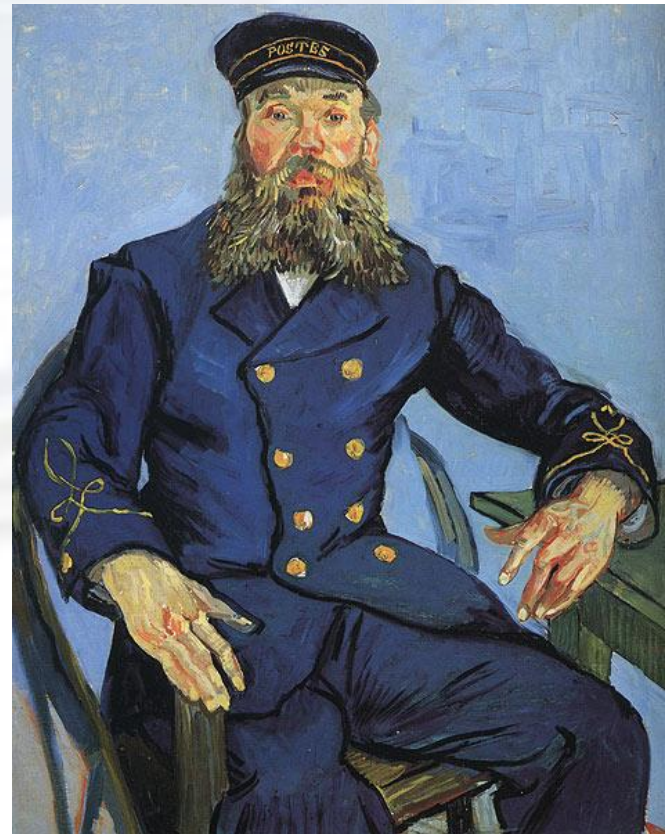
PSWE & PSM Defined

- *A desire to work in the public sector as a means of meeting the desire to serve others.*
- *Individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded uniquely in public organizations and institutions*
- *A stable, positive attitude toward or valuation of work in the public sector as a means of bettering society and helping others.*



PSM Defined

- Three distinct categories (Perry, 1996)
 - Rational
 - Normative
 - Affective





PSM

- Is an individual difference variable.
- Involves an attitude specifically toward public service work as a means of achieving career goals
- Involves a positive attitude or preference for work that includes serving the greater good, society, and helping and assisting others.
- Not clear whether multidimensional or unidimensional.



Proposed Dimensions of PSM

- Self-Sacrifice
 - I believe in putting duty before self.
- Commitment to Public Interest
 - I consider public service to be a civic duty.
- Compassion
 - Most social programs are too vital to do without.
- Patriotism
 - I feel fortunate that I am a United States citizen.



Program of Research

- Have embarked on program of research
- Present 2 studies here out of a series of studies
- Meta-analysis
 - Adam Hilliard
- Predicting Interest in a Web Site
 - Jackie Carpenter



PSM: Antecedents & Outcomes



Introduction

- Purpose of this study
 - Bring together 20 years of research on PSM antecedents and outcomes
 - Create a new theoretical Model





Introduction

- Preview of the Presentation
 - A brief overview of what meta-analysis is
 - Why PSM research needed a meta-analysis
 - How we did it
 - What we found
 - What we should do with this new knowledge
 - Both for research and applied settings





Brief Overview of Meta-Analysis

- “Analyzing analyses”
 - Meta-analysis pulls statistics from multiple studies to get one result
 - One Example - Job Satisfaction
 - A few benefits
 - We can generalize our results to more people
 - Minimizes error in each study
 - For you statisticians – Larger samples, higher statistical power



Why Meta-analyze PSM?

- PSM has been around for 20 years
- Predictors and Outcomes have been controversially disputed
 - Some researchers have gone so far as to say
 - “Unworthy of future practical consideration”
 - In light of a number of weak results
 - This field is in dire need of some closure



How'd We Do It?

- Identified 113 articles on PSM
 - Scoured 18 major business and psychology journals
 - Most Common:
 - Public Administration
 - Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (JPART)
 - James Perry gave us his comprehensive list of every conference presentation and unpublished work he was aware of
 - Including over 30 presentations from the first International Public Service Motivation Research Conference
 - When filtered to focus on only antecedents and outcomes
 - 36 usable studies



Sample

- Our meta-analysis obtained both laboratory and applied research
 - Total sample
 - 148,897 individuals
 - Sector
 - City, state, federal, student, and private sectors
 - Participants
 - United States, Denmark, Malta, France, Korea, The Netherlands, China, Switzerland, Great Britain, Australia, Belgium, Italy, and Austria.
 - Jobs
 - Managers, students, city planners, government politicians, social workers, lawyers, and HR officials.



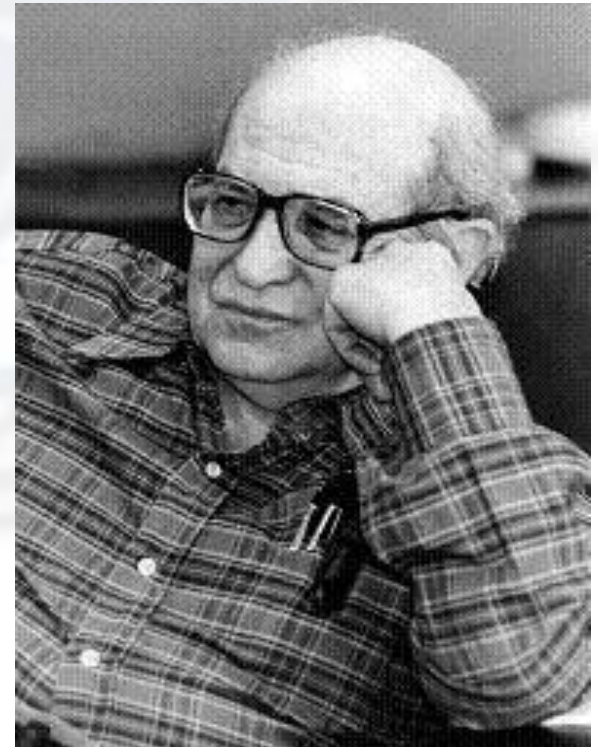
PSM's Antecedents

- 13 antecedent hypotheses based on hand searches of the 36 articles
 - In order to test a hypothesis, we needed a minimum of 4 studies
 - Despite appearing in at least one study with significant results, we had to drop the following antecedents
 - Manager transformational leadership
 - Incentive plans (Pay Per Performance)
 - Volatility of workplace (Downsizing)
 - Red Tape (Bogged down policies/Bureaucracy)
 - Race
 - Spirituality



PSM's Antecedents

- Meta-analysis doesn't use statistical significance it uses size estimates
- For correlations they are as follows:
 - .0-.1 = Not Related
 - .1-.3 = Weakly Related
 - .3-.5 = Moderate
 - .5 + = Strong





PSM's Antecedents

- Non-Existent
 - Gender
 - .00 Correlation
 - Political Ideology (Liberal vs. Conservative)
 - -.01 Correlation
 - Educational Level (Number of years of schooling)
 - -.05 Correlation
 - Org Tenure (Time working in the organization)
 - .07 Correlation



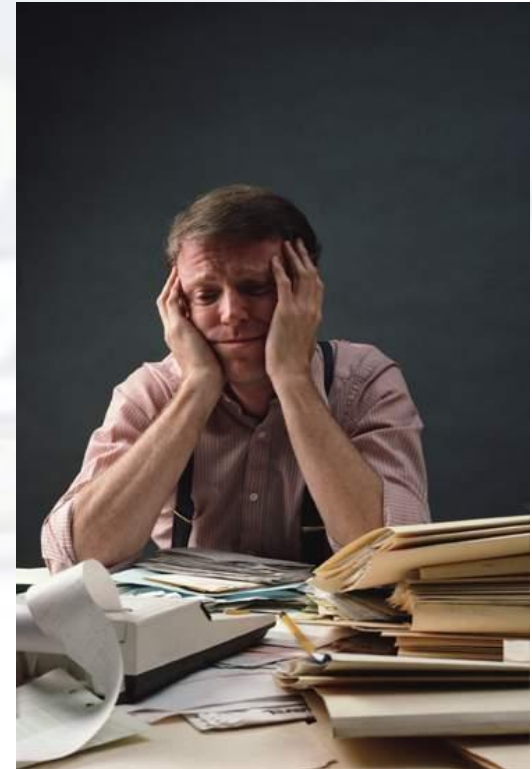
PSM's Antecedents

- Supported Hypotheses
 - Age
 - .10 Correlation
 - Vertical Authority (Number of supervisees)
 - .13 - weak
 - Income (Salary)
 - .18 - weak



PSM's Antecedents

- The Score: Naysayers = 1;
PSM Advocates = 0
 - So that wasn't very fruitful
 - Few ties, all weak
 - Interesting that authority and income are positively tied
 - PSM focuses on an intrinsic desire to help others
 - Completely counterintuitive for income to predict it





PSM's Outcomes

- 10 hypothesized outcomes
 - Similarly to antecedents, we were forced to drop the following outcomes (<4 data points)
 - Non-monetary preferences
 - Work-oriented motivation
 - Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs)
 - Ethical behavior
 - Support for organizational reform
 - Volunteer work



PSM's Outcomes

- Supported Outcomes
 - Performance (supervisor ratings and self reports)
 - .34 – getting better, medium effect
 - Job Satisfaction (Traditional meaning)
 - .30 - medium
 - Affective Commitment (Emotional attachment to job)
 - .49 – borderline strong
 - Selection into Public Service (made decision to work for government)
 - .17 – weak



How Can we Benefit From This?

- PSM as a Public Engagement Measure
 - Research has shown three primary components of engagement are commitment, as well as job satisfaction and extra role behaviors, or OCBs
 - Job Satisfaction = .30
 - Affective Commitment = .49
 - OCBs - Studies are finding high correlations although not enough in total to meta-analyze



How Can We Benefit From This?

- Cost cutting
 - We can't predict PSM so well, but...
 - Turnover is expensive, and greater individual performance means better financial performance for the org
 - A PSM scale (Perry, 1996) should be incorporated into a selection battery for public sector work
- Recruiting for Public Sector
 - Organizations can effectively consider their niche as a “public organization” as a recruitment tool in trying to attract new applicants
 - PSM individuals orient themselves towards public work



3 Primary Future Directions

1. Future attempts should be made to map PSM onto research in personality
2. Despite having an international sample, little to no mention of cross cultural differences were considered
3. Public versus private should be considered a continuum



Recruiting for PSM: Predicting Responses to Targeted Web-Based Recruitment

Jacqueline Carpenter

Research Questions

- Does PSM exist at a pre-entry level?
- Is PSM useful as an individual difference variable affecting organizational attraction?
- Is web-based recruiting useful for attracting applicants with motivation to work in the public sector?
- What about Non-Profits?

The Study

- Take Survey
 - Personality
 - Public Service Motivation
- View Websites
 - Public, Private, or Non-Profit
- Indicate Interest
 - Attraction
 - Fit

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- An environment that combines tradition with support.
- You will be working on projects with a proven approach that has worked for over 2 decades, based on the philosophy that consistency breeds commitment. We believe that working in an environment with clear guidelines is the key to success and progress.
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- Staying organized, being accurate, and timely task completion are emphasized.
- Chains of command and prescribed channels of communication are utilized. We believe this creates accountability and brings out the very best in our employees.
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Submitting

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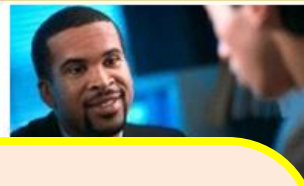
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Environment

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Public
Stability, Security, Detail Focused

Private
Competition, High Performance Expectations

Non-Profit
Mission Driven, Collaborative

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Why work at Octavian? Landing a job at Octavian is a social contribution. In order to be successful, we need employees for both part time and full time employment.

Above all, Octavian is known for its unique work environment.



"I work every day because you feel like you are part of the backbone in an economic environment that is often so unstable." - Arnold A. Davis, new hire.

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"Why work at Octavian?"

Public

"Make a social contribution..."

Private

"...exciting new projects"

Non-Profit

"...collaborating... shared dedication"

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Public
Consistency, Commitment

Private
Competition, Risk Taking

Non-Profit
Cooperation, Community

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What did participants perceive?

Public Sector

- Stability
- Social Responsibility
- Rule Orientation

Private Sector

- Achievement
- Take Opportunity
- Competitive
- Risk Taking

Non-Profit

- Good Reputation
- Collaboration
- Social Responsibility

Results

H1: PSM is related to Agreeableness ✓

PSM; Agreeableness

$r = .25, p < .05$

Results

H1: PSM is related to Agreeableness



H2: PSM → (Public Sector) Attraction



PSM; Public Sector Attraction

$r = .24, p = .05$

PSM; Non-Profit Attraction

$r = .30, p < .01$

Results

H1: PSM is related to Agreeableness ✓

H2: PSM → (Public Sector) Attraction ✓

H3: PSM, controlling for Agreeableness → Attraction **X**

PSM → Public Sector Attraction

$R^2\Delta = .05, F \Delta_{2, 67} = 3.42, ns.$

PSM → Public Sector Fit

$R^2\Delta = .12, F \Delta_{2, 67} = 9.29, p < .01$

Results

H1: PSM is related to Agreeableness ✓

H2: PSM → (Public Sector) Attraction ✓

H3: PSM, controlling for Agreeableness → Attraction ✗

H4: PSM → Perceived Fit → Attraction ✓

Public Sector

$$R^2 = .37, F_{2,67} = 18.88, p < .001$$

Non-Profit

$$R^2 = .57, F_{2,76} = 50.35, p < .001$$

Results

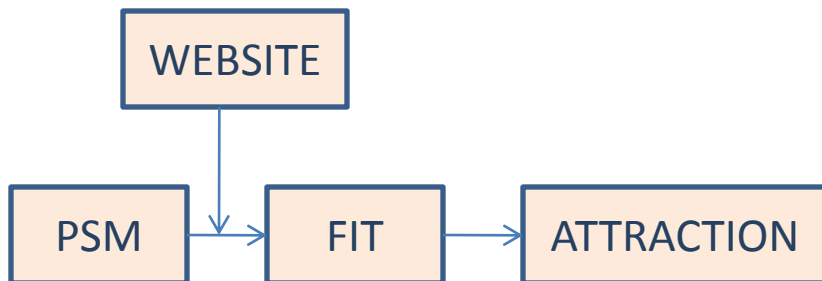
H1: PSM is related to Agreeableness ✓

H2: PSM → (Public Sector) Attraction ✓

H3: PSM, controlling for Agreeableness → Attraction ✗

H4: PSM → Perceived Fit → Attraction ✓

H5: Model will fit best for Public Sector ✗



Public Sector vs. Private Sector
PSM x Website, **ns**

Public Sector vs. Non-Profit
PSM x Website, **ns**

Overall...

- PSM predicts FIT and ATTRACTION to Public and Non-Profit Organizations
- BUT... the distinction between 3 types of organizations was weaker than anticipated...

WHY?

- Website manipulation?
- PSM isn't enough to attract applicants?
- Young applicants don't understand the Public Sector?
- PSM is a developmental phenomena?

Implications

PSM predicts FIT and ATTRACTION to Public Sector

- Target individuals with high PSM
- Appeal to values associated with PSM in recruiting efforts
- Measure PSM for selection
- Organization should provide service opportunities to fulfill expectations post-hire

Implications

Potentially weak perceptions and understandings of values associated with different types of organizations

- Public Sector Organizations should make their missions more accessible and apparent to younger members of workforce
- PSM may be a developmental phenomena, if so, precursors such as agreeableness are helpful for recruitment and selection

Future Research Directions

- What patterns of culture distinguish public from non-profit organizations?
- What specific mechanisms of appeal to PSM are best suited for web-based recruitment?





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Correlations with Interest in Working for Government

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Work for Govt.	2.87	0.89										
2. Sex	0.59	0.49	-.05									
3. Ethnicity	0.21	0.41	.14**	-.12**								
4. Liberalism	3.10	0.99	-.04	.14**	.01							
5. Volunteer Exp.	2.36	1.14	.04	-.02	-.03	-.07						
6. Govt as Service	2.88	0.81	.19**	-.03	.01	-.05	.01					
7. Religion Exp.	3.25	1.55	.02	-.09*	.06	-.38**	.27**	.00				
8. Events Overall	0.42	0.49	.04	-.09*	-.19**	-.40**	.03	.03	.23**			
9. Iraq	0.13	0.34	-.01	-.03	-.13	-.37**	.03	-.04	.10	NA		
10. 9/11	0.69	0.33	.05	-.11	-.24**	-.26**	.00	.04	.20**	NA	NA	
11. Trust	3.39	0.77	.30**	-.04	.01	-.30**	.06	.20**	.10**	.28**	.22**	.17**



Agreeableness

- PSM is highly correlated with agreeableness
- But, does offer additional prediction



Conclusions

- Can we measure a Public Service Work Ethic or Motivation?
 - Yes.
 - We can develop reliable and valid measures of multiple dimensions.



Conclusions

- Can we select based on PSM?
 - No.
 - Problem of faking. Similar to personality tests.
 - Probably better predictor of job satisfaction and retention than performance.



Is it Useful?

- Yes – for tracking PSM?
- Yes – possible guide to recruitment
- Yes – research tool
- Yes – as it could relate to engagement
- Yes – original goal – Volunteers
- Yes – Finding Actionables



Future Research

- How does it relate to:
- Organizational Variables
- Public Service Work
 - Emotional Labor
 - Work Intensification
 - Burnout
- Trust



The End

