

Occupational intention of Public Administration students

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Objective and scientific relevance

Augmenting existing behavioral approaches to occupational intention research we investigate the link between core personality traits, four types of extrinsic and intrinsic personal and work motivation, and the intention of students to work in civil service after graduation.

We make detailed observations of the self-reported job preferences of PA undergrads in two prestigious universities in Moscow. We also make in-depth observations of the expected utility underlying students' job preferences. And we make observation on personality types, or traits. We use these observations as a basis for a theory of occupational preference formation among future public servants.

By doing so our paper contributes to three strands in Administrative Science research, namely behavioral public administration (BPA) and Public service motivation (PSM) research, human resource management, and decision making theory.

Recent evidence from large scale surveys show that Russian individuals who are actually employees in public sector organizations self-report a higher level of public service motivation compared to their private sector counterparts (Bullock, Strich and Rainey 2015).

Recent theoretical and empirical research also draws a clear link between public service motivation and occupational intention. E.g. Liu et al. (2011) find that jobseekers with high levels of public service motivation exhibit preferences for public sector employment.

Hypotheses

We start from the assumed causality that the attitudes and motivations of PA undergraduates determine her job choice. In line with existing research we hypothesize that PA students with a high level of self-reported PSM have a higher intention to work in civil service after graduation. We further hypothesize that parents working in civil service are positively correlated with a student's preference for a job in civil service.

Data and methods

Our findings are based on a survey among nearly 300 Public Administration undergraduates in two prestigious universities in Moscow.

From our unique new dataset we report that a job in federal government / civil service is the top destination of PA undergrads in the Russian capital. Open an own business is ranked second at par with getting further higher education.

Results

We find that Moscow PA undergraduates self-report high levels of PSM and power motivation, and very high levels of achievement motivation. Furthermore we are able to identify nine motives for PA undergraduates in Russia to work in civil service after graduation.

Based on logistics regression estimation techniques we are able to demonstrate that parents are agents of job preference formation. Estimates show that parents' working background determines job preferences. Estimates also show that PSM is positively correlated with the

intention to work in civil service after graduation. Estimates provide no empirical support for hypotheses on power and achievement motivation.

The implications for organizational decision making theory, PA bachelor teaching programs and human resource management are discussed.