



# ***THE WATER COOLER***

***A Companion to Public Personnel Management***

## **From the Editor | Heather Getha-Taylor**

Dear members of the *PPM* community,

We recently celebrated Public Service Recognition Week. This annual event celebrates public servants and their investments in our communities. In keeping with this tradition, and in honor of your important work, I want to say ***thank you*** for all that you do to advance the study and practice of public human resource management. I celebrate you and all that you do in pursuit of ethical, equitable, and excellent public service.

On this note, we are delighted to celebrate excellent contributions to our journal. Please see details on this year's research and service award winners on page 3. I want to especially thank the members of the PPM Best Article Committee, who diligently reviewed all of the published work over the past year to select this year's winner. We also are pleased to announce the 2021 recipients of the Service Star Award, which recognizes those who have reviewed ten or more manuscripts for our journal. Congratulations and thank you all!

As we look ahead, I am pleased to announce a call for proposals for a special issue of PPM slated for publication next year. Please see page 5 for details. I hope that you will consider submitting a proposal or share this call with others who might be interested in helping us consider ways in which we can elevate human capital in theory and practice.

---

## From the Editor | Heather Getha-Taylor

In closing, the past year has been an especially difficult time for all of us as we juggled our existing and new responsibilities in novel ways. Many of us struggled with the isolation of the pandemic. We each experienced our own losses along the way. As we move toward a post-pandemic reality, I hope that we might use this opportunity to critically consider the future.

We now have an opportunity to rethink our processes and priorities. For example, the pandemic experience revealed the possibility for remote work and other flexible work arrangements as well as the critical element of employee health and safety. It also highlighted the continued disparities that exist in our communities that also impact our workforces and workplaces. Hopefully, our shared experience provides an opportunity to reshape the future in ways that recognize, and reinforce, the human element of public service work.

Best wishes from Kansas,



### In this issue

News & Updates .....	3
PPM Special Issue: Call for Proposals .....	5
A Water Cooler Conversation with James Perry .....	6
Erased: Ending Faculty Sexual Misconduct in Academia .....	9
<i>Sarah Young &amp; Kimberly Wiley</i>	
Recent Research .....	13

# News & Updates

## Best Article Award (2020)

Best Article Award recognizes exceptional scholarship published in the journal. Congratulations to **Hyang Won Kwon**, whose work, "Performance Appraisal Politics in the Public Sector: The Effects of Political Skill and Social Similarity on Performance Rating," was selected for the 2020 *Public Personnel Management* Best Article Award. The award-winning article appears in Volume 49, Issue 2. Many thanks to this year's selection committee, chaired by Willow Jacobson, Weijie Wang, and Jaclyn Piatak - recipient of the 2019 Best Article Award. Read the article here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026019859906>

## Scholarly Impact Award (2020)

The *Public Personnel Management* Scholarly Impact Award recognizes scholarship influencing the field in important ways. Congratulations to **James G. Caillier**, winner of the 2020 award, whose article, "Does Satisfaction with Family-Friendly Programs Reduce Turnover? A Panel Study Conducted in U.S. Federal Agencies," appeared in Volume 45, Issue 3. Read the article here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026016652424>

## Service Star Awards

The *Public Personnel Management* Service Star Award recognizes exceptional reviewer investments in the journal, each completing 10 or more reviews for *PPM*. Congratulations to the newest award winners, denoted in bold.

Rebecca Ayers  
Mark Bradbury  
James Caillier  
**Jesse Campbell**  
**Yoon Jik Cho**  
Sungjoo Choi

Doug Goodman  
Willow Jacobson  
**Soo-Young Lee**  
Bangcheng Liu  
Jared Llorens  
Sharon Mastracci

Gary Roberts  
**Meghna Sabharwal**  
Ed Stazyk  
Tae Kyu Wang  
**Weijie Wang**

## NAPA Inductees

Four *PPM* editorial board members were recently inducted into the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). Congratulations to **Gene Brewer, Eddie French, Jared Llorens, and Sharon Mastracci!**

# News & Updates, cont.

## ASPA's Section for Personnel Administration and Labor Relations (SPALR) Awards

### **Outstanding Practitioner: Phin Xaypangna**

Phin Xaypangna is the first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer in Ventura County, California and previously served as the Equity and Inclusion Manager of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. She has over 20 years of experience in diversity, equity and inclusion, organizational development, workforce/succession planning, leadership development, facilitation, and strategic planning. Phin is a native of Laos and received her B.A. in Political Science from Western Carolina University and a master's degree in Public Administration from UNC Charlotte.

### **Outstanding Scholar: Meghna Sabharwal**

Dr. Sabharwal is Professor and Department Head at The University of Texas at Dallas in the Public and Nonprofit Management program. Her research expertise lies in public human resource management, specifically related to workplace diversity, job satisfaction, performance, comparative human resource management, and high-skilled immigration.

### **Dissertation Award: Iseul Choi**

Dr. Choi was a student at the University at Albany, State University of New York. Her dissertation is entitled, *Contracting Out for Performance of Democratic-Constitutional Values and Procedural Tasks in Federal Agencies: Evidence from the Equal Employment Opportunity Discrimination Complaint Process*. Dr. Choi's Dissertation Chair was Dr. Ellen Rubin. Dr. Choi is an Assistant Professor in the School of Public Administration at the University of New Mexico.

### **Stephen E. Condrey Service to the Section Award: Christine Rush**

Dr. Rush serves as the Section Treasurer. She is an Associate Professor of Public Administration in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Mississippi State University.

### **Outstanding Book Award: James L. Perry**

James L. Perry, *Managing Organizations to Sustain Passion for Public Service*  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108915236> - **Check out our conversation with James Perry on page 6.**

## PPM Special Issue: Call for Papers

# Elevating Human Capital Management in Theory & Practice

In March 2021, a task force of the National Academy of Public Administration issued a report highlighting the essential nature of strategic human capital management in meeting the needs of a 21st century public workforce. A critical need, noted the report, is elevating human capital management. The IPMA-HR 2020 Task Force similarly noted that the public human resource management profession exists within a rapidly evolving world marked by a changing context for government work and a clear need for leadership. This call for papers emerges from these scholarly and practical foundations. It asks members of our community to help chart a course for the future to support the continued prioritization of human capital management in academic and applied settings. To this end, we invite manuscript proposals that offer conceptual, theoretical, or empirical responses to the theme of this call. We are interested in diverse perspectives, including scholarly and practitioner voices. Possible prompts include, but are not limited to, the following:

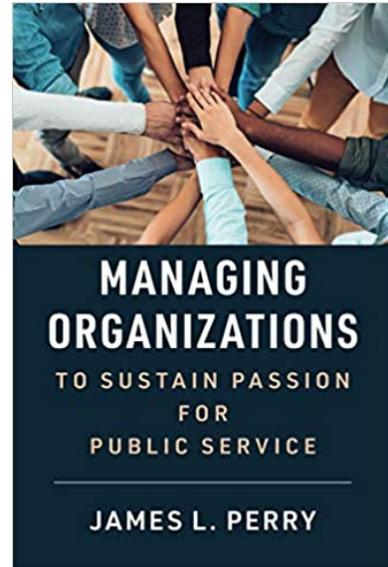
- How can we effectively cultivate human capital leaders at the federal, state, and/or local government levels?
- What are the greatest challenges impacting the cultivation of the next generation of public human capital leaders in academic and practical settings?
- What are the contemporary needs for teaching human resource management at the undergraduate and/or graduate levels?
- What are recommended best practices for universities, professional associations, and/or public agencies for prioritizing human capital management?
- What policy recommendations can be offered to elevate the practice of strategic human resource management or the cultivation of the public service human capital profession?
- What are some of the unanswered research questions that will help us advance human capital leadership development in academic and applied contexts?

This special issue is planned for publication in December 2022. If you wish to submit a proposal for consideration, please email a one-page Word or PDF document to the attention of Heather Getha-Taylor, Editor-in-Chief, at [ppm@ku.edu](mailto:ppm@ku.edu) **by June 7, 2021**. Authors should note "PPM Special Issue Proposal" in the subject line of the email message. Decisions will be issued by June 15, 2021. Invited manuscripts will be due by October 15, 2021, and will be subject to peer review. Please forward any questions to the above email address. We look forward to receiving your proposals!

# A Water Cooler Conversation

With James L. Perry

Recently, the editorial team at *Public Personnel Management* "sat down" for a conversation with James Perry, distinguished professor emeritus at the Paul H. O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Bloomington. He is the author of *Managing Organizations to Sustain Passion for Public Service*, recently recognized with the 2021 ASPA Section on Personnel Administration and Labor Relations Outstanding Book Award. Stay tuned for a future podcast featuring this conversation!



## Conversation Highlights

### ***On his motivation for the book***

The research [on public service motivation] had grown to such a volume in 2019 that Rob Christensen convened a conference in Aspen Grove, Utah. We brought together a group of people, practitioners from the Volker Alliance and the Partnership for Public Services, as well as academics from a variety of countries, and asked, "what can we say about the changing practice of public service?" I had started writing the book at that time, which really starts with this idea that we have reached a point where we needed to translate theory and research to practice.

### ***On what public service motivation (PSM) reveals about the Trump and Biden Administrations***

For the Trump administration – it is sort of a watershed for how not to do public service motivation. There's not an ounce in Donald Trump's body that speaks to the idea of public service motivation; he is the antithesis. And the Trump Administration, I think, took us backwards. Whole departments, like the Department of State, came apart. Certainly, his Schedule F [executive order] near the end of the administration was all about anti-science, anti-meritocracy. One of the points I make in chapter 5 of the book, is that the merit system is important for creating supportive work environments, that buffer civil servants from the politicians. That buffering is a critical component in creating environments in which public service motivation can flourish.

The Biden administration, I think, is sort of turning back the clock. The question is whether abandoning some of the bad ideas of the Trump administration is the same as embracing public service motivation – I don't believe it is. There's a lot in the book

that the Biden Administration can do to advance public service. Ultimately, public service should be front and center; it should be our bottom line. The Biden administration is off to a good start by undoing the bad that was created during the Trump administration, but that is a neutral statement, not necessarily a positive statement. There's a lot more that can be done across the administration, especially now that the National Academy [of Public Administration] has released its report suggesting that OPM ought to be a ship on its own bottom: independent and influential.

### ***On embedding PSM into graduate education***

I wrote a [guest editorial](#) for the Journal of Public Affairs Education at the invitation of Bruce MacDonald. In that, I talked about this newfound intellectual capital, research that is grounded in the public sector. And public service motivation and other related research, like on pro-social motivation and altruism, much better align with the values we espouse in the public sector and public service. It's that flowering of social and behavioral science that undergirds my book, and it's something we should be exposing to MPA and PhD students. It's a 180-degree turn from the new public management research that was with us for at least a generation.

In the book, I talk about many of the HR functions and how we can do them using the research: recruiting and selecting, designing work, shaping the environment for public service, socializing people, compensating people, and, finally, leading people. Our MPA programs, for instance, need to emphasize leadership philosophy and leadership theory that is better aligned with public service. And, I think, servant leadership and transformational leadership are values-based models that make a lot of sense for the way we need to lead people in the public sector and in public service. The book identifies a whole host of activities to change the way we manage people and develop policies in our organizations. And, we need to rethink what we deliver to our MPA students and our PhD students, as the future of a public service.

### ***On the future of civil service reform (or not)***

First, there's a lot in the book that doesn't require reform. There are things that managers can do, for instance, leveraging a leadership style that works, that is consistent with public service values and is also achievable in the context of public service. And, if I'm thinking transactionally [as a public manager], I may be barking up the wrong tree. Again, those are choices made by managers, choices made by organizations, choices made by individuals that are not necessarily in the realm of public law.

Now, there are some areas that are in the realm of public law that we need to reform in

---

the US civil service, as well as in other areas. I wrote a piece for [Government Executive](#), arguing that pay should be priority – number one area for reform, and it requires legal changes. We’ve been pursuing the Pay Comparability Act of 1990 for over 30 years. And, the Government Accountability Office recently came out with its new high-risk list: about half of those items involved pay and skill gaps related to pay. If we want to reduce the risks that we encounter when trying to implement public programs, that means we need to pay people, right? We keep coming back to it, and we never address it. We have difficulty coming to grips with what a position classification system should look like and how to change the outdated system that we use. One idea that I’ve pointed to and tweeted about is the professions model that Australia, the UK, and some other countries have pursued.

The other side of that, however, is hyper-partisanship. Unless Democrats and Republicans can come together, we will not solve these problems. We will not create the new public legal structure that we need to reform critical areas of the federal civil service. We need to find ways to have conversations about these important areas for reform, like pay. And, I don’t see that yet. Somebody has to step forward, somebody in Congress as well as somebody in the Biden Administration, to bring people together to resolve these issues.

### ***On where we go from here***

We have a positive momentum that is largely grounded in the research. There’s been a natural evolution in improving the quality and rigor of the research, improving its comprehensiveness that brings us to the brink of applying it. And, in the last chapter of the book, I make the argument that we ought to embrace systematic research and experiments on this subject matter. We can now ask, “what if we advertise jobs like this?” or “what if we intervene in the probationary period to assure the right people stay with our organization?” We’re doing that experimentally, and it will push us to applying the research. And, embedding it in practice will also depend on bringing our research findings to undergraduates, masters, and PhD students.

The one area that we still need to develop is, how do we get people to buy into the ideas? How do we get the politicians and other practitioners, people who are in leadership positions, to follow the research in the long run? We don’t like to be at these things forever. I won’t say a legacy, but when I’m looking back before I pass on, I’d like to be able to look back and say, “wow, this organization has really embraced these ideas.” And that we have governments where those ideas are making a difference for their citizens and for the public service. That would be a great state of affairs to look back on. And I hope that’s where we are ultimately heading.

---

# **Erased: Ending faculty sexual misconduct in academia**

## **An open letter from women of public affairs education**

*Note: This editorial is a shortened adaptation of the full article by Drs. Young & Wiley, which provides a much more in-depth conversation regarding an overview of the problem and the recommended solutions. For more: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2021.1877983>*

The #MeToo movement is descending upon the walls of the ivory tower. The day of reckoning has come for academia to end teaching staff sexual misconduct. As women of public and third sector education, we demand to be heard.

The issue of teaching staff perpetrating sexual misconduct is prevalent within academia, and more specifically, in graduate education programmes. In the United States, 24.2% of women and 15.6% of men report being sexually victimized as undergraduates on a college campus in just the last two months (Jouriles et al., 2020); and, one out of every ten female graduate students report being sexually harassed by a member of the teaching staff (Cantor et al., 2020). This problem is not just isolated to the U.S. The Australian Human Rights Commission's (2017) National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian universities found relatively similar numbers with 21% of students reporting being sexually harassed in a university setting, with about 7% being victimized by teaching staff (p. 48).

Public and third sector education programmes are not immune. According to the grassroots, U.S.-based Academic Sexual Misconduct Database, public and third sector education programmes had 20 publicly documented, substantiated cases of teaching staff sexual misconduct since 2016 (Libarkin, 2020). While that's only about 2% of all cases across all disciplines, that number is shocking given our field differentiates itself on the qualities of "publicness" (Bozeman, 1987) and our programmes are relatively smaller and newer than most.

Many associations and societies focused on promoting the practice and study of public and third sectors, for example the International City/County Manager Association and the Social Research Association, have ethical codes with explicit statements that require the highest personal and professional integrity. Yet, our education programmes are plagued by the same pass-the-harasser mentality as other disciplines. Many cases of teaching staff sexual misconduct receive no press, are not publicly documented, and thus are not

listed in the Academic Sexual Misconduct Database (Libarkin, 2020). There are many examples. Just ask your female colleagues.

Programmes designed to educate future public and third sector employees need to be even more concerned than most higher education programmes about erasing teaching staff sexual misconduct. In many countries these sectors tend to have higher than average female representation (Andrews & Ashworth, 2013), which equates to more female students studying public and third sector management. For example, in the U.S., sixty-three percent of the students in graduate public affairs programmes are female, more than almost any other educational field (NASPAA, 2019). Graduate students face a high “administrative burden” (Moynihan, et al., 2015) in that they are learners seeking access to an institution rife with cumbersome rules and practices while at the same time entering into unbalanced power dynamic relationships with advising professors (Young & Wiley, 2021). In many cases, they must bear these costs in order to achieve their goal to graduate. Given that sexual assaults often go unreported (Jouriles et al., 2020), students shouldering such administrative burden are even less likely to report sexual misconduct by teaching staff.

Further, the smallness and newness of public and third sector graduate education programmes may make

teaching staff sexual misconduct more prolific. The newness of the fields translates to fewer big-name scholars (as compared to hard science fields). The smallness of the fields means the titans are more recognisable. These factors combined may make a student fear retaliation even more, and negatively influence the likelihood they report misconduct.

Lastly, in many countries’ victims have few legal protections and means of recourse. For example, in the United Kingdom more than a third of universities used nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) or threats of expulsion as a means to gag students from going public (Croxford, 2020). In the U.S., recent policy changes to Title IX weakened protections for victims, which may unequally impact victims of sexual misconduct by teaching staff (Anderson, 2020). In India, universities have Internal Complaint Committees, which have the right to try to force conciliation between the victim and their attacker prior to an investigation even occurring (The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal), 2013, Act §1(1)(1)). If an investigation occurs there are very few requirements on what it must include (Sakhrani, 2017). The committee must provide recommendations to the university and complainants, but the university does not have to notify the victim about what, if any, outcomes were had. Finally, if the victim was unable to prove their

complaint and the committee comes up with an adverse finding against them, they can be penalised and punished (Sakhrani, 2017). Other universities across the world fail to have any real policy protections in place, leaving female students incredibly vulnerable to enduring sexual misconduct (Gray & Pin, 2017).

**How do we stop a cycle of sexual misconduct in public affairs education programmes?** As a field, we have acquiesced into complicity and complacency about misconduct instead of living by our tenets of accountability and transparency. How can we forge a new path? As policy scholars, we come back to policy solutions within the framework of the socioecological model.

**Individual level:** *Build upon mentoring relationships as a protective factor.* A relationship with a senior teaching staff member may help improve the chances that a student will disclose. Another strategy is to teach and practice effective bystander intervention approaches.

**Programme- or department level:** *Develop department culture and policies that actively prohibit and punish sexual misconduct.* Programmes can also develop meaningful check points and easy-access, anonymous disclosure methods to help identify issues. Then make sure everyone, especially the students, knows about them.

**University level:** *Strengthen university policies to improve reporting and sanctioning.* Background check incoming teaching staff specifically for sexual misconduct. Mandate reference requests disclose sexual misconduct findings for previous teaching staff. Close loopholes that allow teaching staff facing sanctions to retire early. Commit to stronger sanction practices; terminate when called for and due process has occurred. Universities must ensure teaching staff uphold their ethical responsibilities, instead of simply letting them walk away.

**Association level:** *Take a no tolerance stance.* All professional associations need a code of ethics; one that clearly states that sexual misconduct will result in both membership termination and cessation of all publication, conference, and award privileges. Accrediting associations should require schools to report findings of misconduct. Associations also need to be proactive about safeguarding graduate students by protecting them at events where they are most vulnerable.

**Government policy:** *Develop policies and procedures that break the cycle of misconduct.* The European Union is currently being petitioned to create the European Office and Ombudsmen for Academic and Research Matters to “supervise, provide information to victims of harassment through provision of resources, raise awareness of harassment and the ways it can be tackled, and provide training for

institutions about good practices". We strongly support this petition and urge other countries to do the same. Other legislation should also be considered, such as the U.S.'s State of New Jersey Statute § 18A:6-18, which creates easier avenues to terminate teaching staff for egregious morale violations. Policy should be enacted prohibiting the use of NDAs that take away the victim's future right to name their attacker. Other policies can be put in place to provide protection for victims, mandate sanctions, and develop national databases of teaching staff reports that have substantiated findings that HR can use for background checks.

**Societal level:** *Change the culture. Sexual misconduct is rooted in all facets of academia.* Most resources are dedicated towards eradicating sexual assaults committed by students. We must take responsibility for the role teaching staff play in this epidemic and collectively normalise the conversation about university sexual misconduct.

Sexism is systemically embedded in academia. Public and third sector education programmes must work together to break down the complicity and complacency that have pervaded the discipline since its inception. For too long, we relied upon an underground whisper network of individuals who work behind the scenes to protect our students (Ahmad, 2020). These women deserve credit and respect for carrying our

collective burden. Now we demand real solutions. We demand institutional collective action across all levels to eliminate the dangers of these sexual predators.

#### References

- Ahmad, A. (2020, September 9). How to detect and dodge a predatory professor. *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Anderson, G. (2020, May 7). *Education Department releases final Title IX regulations*.
- Andrews, R., & Ashworth, R. (2013). Determinants of representation: an empirical assessment of the UK civil service. *Policy and Politics*, 41(3), 429-448.
- Australian Human Rights Commission. (2017). *Change the course: National report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities*.
- Bozeman, B. (1987). *All Organizations are Public: Bridging Public and Private Organizational Theories*.
- Cantalupo, N. C., & Kidder, W. C. (2018). A systematic look at a serial problem: Sexual harassment of students by university faculty. *Utah Law Review*, 2018(3), 671-786.
- Cantor, D., Fisher, B., Chibnall, S., Townsend R., Lee, H., Bruce, C., & Thomas, G., (2020). *Report on the AAU campus climate survey on sexual assault and misconduct*. Westat. Report prepared for The Association of American Universities.
- Croxford, R. (2020, February 12). Sexual assault claims 'gagged' by UK universities. *BBC News*.
- Gray, M. & Pin, L. (2017). "I would like it if some of our tuition went to providing pepper spray for students": University branding, securitization, and campus sexual assault at a Canadian university. *The Annual Review of Interdisciplinary Justice Research*. 6(1), p. 86-110.
- Jouriles, E.N., Nguyen, J., Krauss, A., Stokes, S.L., & McDonald, R. (2020). Prevalence of sexual victimization among female and male college students: A methodological note with data. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.
- Libarkin, J. (2020). Academic Sexual Misconduct Database.
- Moynihan, D., Herd, P., & Harvey, H. (2015). Administrative burden: Learning, psychological, and compliance costs in citizen-state interactions. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 25(1), 43-69.
- NASPAA. (2019). 2019 NASPAA Annual Data Report.
- Sakhrani, M. (2017). Sexual harassment: The conundrum of law, due process, and justice. *EPW Engage*.
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (Act No. 14/2013)(India)
- Young, S. & Wiley, K. (2021). Erased: Why faculty sexual misconduct is prevalent and how we could prevent it. *Journal of Public Administration Education*.

## **Recent Research**

### **March 2021, Vol. 50(1)**

#### **Does Agency Type Matter for Female Federal Agents? Exploring the Offices of Inspectors General**

*Helen H. Yu*

Recent scholarship has examined the barriers women experience in well-known federal law enforcement agencies. However, there is scant research that examines a unique subgrouping of agents within the federal Offices of Inspectors General (OIGs). Drawing on survey data from 249 female agents, this study compares responses between female agents working in the OIGs and female agents working in all other federal law enforcement agencies to differentiate their experiences. Findings suggest that female agents in the OIGs experience less occupational barriers, namely, reduced number of relocations and incidences of sexual harassment, as well as higher agency adoption of family-friendly policies to promote work-life balance, resulting in women's higher representation at those agencies. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026019900522>

#### **Duplicitous Me: Communal Narcissists and Public Service Motivation,** *Anne K. Fennimore*

This article explores communal narcissism and a possible dark side of public service motivation (PSM) in the context of employment sector. Personality psychology insights are offered to further develop PSM theory and practice from multidisciplinary angles. PSM is thought to characterize a public service ethic with public and nonprofit sector employees possessing other-directed, and perhaps communal values, rather than the self-directed, agentic values characterizing private sector organizations. However, PSM's prosocial bias often discounts self-interested and mixed-motive interests. Unlike agentic narcissism, in which self-aggrandizement is more apparent to others, in communal narcissism, self-aggrandizement is hidden by a "saint-type bias" and self-proclaimed other-orientation. As a result, some communal narcissism traits appear to mimic dimensions of the PSM scale. The results of two studies reveal that communal narcissism positively associates with PSM. In addition, PSM positively relates to the nonprofit sector and mediates indirect, positive relationships between communal narcissism and the nonprofit sector. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020930768>

**Gender Representation, Professional Experiences, and Socialization:  
The Case of City Managers**

***Kathryn Webb Farley, Beth Rauhaus & Robert Eskridge***

Women govern differently and offer a distinct voice in the governing process yet remain significantly underrepresented among city managers and chief administrative officers. Despite decades of work to improve gender parity, women hold just 13% of chief local government positions according to the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA). One reason for this may be that women have different experiences and are socialized differently than men, as suggested by differing motivations, identities, and attitudes. Using a mixed-methods approach, we explore differences in the experiences and socialization of women and men that may contribute to the gender disparity in representation among city managers. Our study yields several significant findings that suggest women are mentored differently, develop different political attitudes over time, and develop confidence differently than their male counterparts. Contrary to prior research, we did not find significant differences in public service motivations by gender or year of service. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020903073>

**Too Stressed To Be Engaged? The Role of Basic Needs Satisfaction in  
Understanding Work Stress and Public Sector Engagement**

***Jessica Breugh***

This article explores employee engagement by linking stress, motivation, and employee engagement theory and testing this across 30 countries and eight public sector occupations. First, it is argued that work stress will be negatively related to engagement. Self-determination theory is then used as a basis for exploring the positive link between basic needs satisfaction (BNS) and engagement. It argued that BNS will moderate the relationship between stress and engagement due to the impact that BNS has on coping strategies. These claims are tested using the 2015 wave of the European Working Conditions Survey. Results show stress and engagement are negatively related, whereas BNS and engagement are positively related. Moderation analyses revealed that the detrimental relationship between stress and engagement is lessened for individuals who have strong interpersonal relations at work. This suggests that social relationships play an important role in managing stressful work environments. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020912516>

## **Oaths of Office in American States: Problems and Prospects**

***James S. Bowman & Jonathan P. West***

Upon assuming office, executive, legislative, and judicial officials swear an oath as evidence of dedication, commitment, and duty to the Constitution. As such, they play a quintessential role in upholding democratic values. Yet contrasted to codes of ethics, oaths get little recognition in the study of public administration. What attention they do receive focuses primarily on the presidential oath of office. This article examines a little-researched topic: governmental oaths in American states. The inquiry is useful because oaths can help safeguard the integrity of civic institutions. As a distinguishing feature of public service, oath-taking nonetheless may be seen as a routine formality without consequence. The article discusses this rite of passage, explores its past and current functions, reviews the literature, and analyzes state oaths. The work concludes with observations on the prospects of these testimonials in troubled times, times that require the restoration of honor, dignity, and virtue in government. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020913072>

## **The “Levels” Problem in Assessing Organizational Climate: Evidence From the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey**

***James R. Thompson & Michael D. Siciliano***

The Federal Employees Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) has gained prominence as the primary vehicle through which agencies assess the work-related attitudes of their employees. Within the discipline, the FEVS results have proven a fertile source of data on the job-related attitudes of public employees. However, concerns have been raised with the instrument and with how the FEVS data has been used by scholars. This article highlights a concern with the use of ambiguous terms which impede interpretation of the FEVS results. An investigation in partnership with officials from the regional office of a federal agency confirmed the divergent meanings respondents assign terms such as “my organization” and brought to the fore the extent to which, in large organizations, employee attitudes are distinctive to the units to which they belong at different hierarchical levels. The literature on organizational climate provides a useful framework within which the phenomenon can be understood and analyzed. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020917710>

## **Recent Research**

### **June 2021, Vol. 50(2)**

#### **The Emotional Proletariat in Public Service** *Sung Wook Choi & Mary Ellen Guy*

There is an emotional proletariat in public service. This class of worker is employed in lower ranking, lower paid jobs that are disproportionately performed by women. While this study focuses on the Korean context, findings also raise awareness to the U.S. context. An investigation of two distinctly different missions—national tax officials and police officers—reveals how the combination of gender and rank produces differential outcomes in regard to emotive demands. Women in lower grades suffer more emotional exhaustion and feel less pride in their jobs than women and men in higher ranks. The pattern provides evidence that emotional exhaustion is less about individual failure and more about predictable job characteristics. After describing findings, the conclusion speculates about generalizing to the American context.

Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020921421>

#### **A Critical Examination of Content Validity Evidence and Personality Testing for Employee Selection**

*David M. Fisher, Christopher R. Milane, Sarah Sullivan & Robert P. Tett*

Prominent standards/guidelines concerning test validation provide contradictory information about whether content-based evidence should be used as a means of validating personality test inferences for employee selection. This unresolved discrepancy is problematic considering the prevalence of personality testing, the importance of gathering sound validity evidence, and the deference given to these standards/guidelines in contemporary employee selection practice. As a consequence, test users and practitioners are likely to be reticent or uncertain about gathering content-based evidence for personality measures, which, in turn, may cause such evidence to be underutilized when personality testing is of interest. The current investigation critically examines whether (and how) content validity evidence should be used for measures of personality in relation to employee selection. The ensuing discussion, which is especially relevant in highly litigious contexts such as personnel selection in the public sector, sheds new light on test validation practices. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020935582>

## **The Impact of Workplace Aggression on Employee Satisfaction with Job Stress, Meaningfulness of Work, and Turnover Intentions**

*James Gerard Caillier*

Research concerning workplace aggression has become more prevalent over the past several decades. These studies have mainly focused on the antecedents and outcomes of workplace aggression in general or one specific type of workplace aggression. This article took a different approach. Specifically, it tests the impact of workplace aggression overall, as well as several types of workplace aggression, on the following work-related attitudes: satisfaction with job stress, turnover intentions, and meaningfulness of work. The moderating effect of satisfaction with job stress in the workplace aggression–turnover intention relationship and the workplace aggression–meaningfulness of work relationship were also investigated. Research findings demonstrated that workplace aggression decreased satisfaction with job stress and meaningfulness of work. Workplace aggression also increased turnover intentions. However, satisfaction with job stress did not interact with workplace aggression in either of the work-related attitudinal models (i.e., turnover intentions and meaningfulness of work). Furthermore, not all types of workplace aggression were found to affect work attitudes. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026019899976>

## **The Impact of Predisposed Traits and Organizational Factors on the U.S. Federal Employee Perception of Whistleblowing**

*Myungjung Kwon, So Hee Jeon & Yuan Ting*

Whistleblowers play a critical role in revealing organizational wrongdoing. Even after the passage of the 1989 Whistleblower Protection Act and the 2012 Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, numerous studies find that public employees are still reluctant to report wrongdoing due to various forms of retaliation. Drawing on insights from a framework of predisposition and environmental perspectives, this study examines which type of factors—predisposed characteristics or organizational/environmental factors—are more influential and consistent in increasing the favorable perception of public employees about whistleblowing. To test the model, this study uses multiple waves of data including the 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys to perform agency-level analyses. The findings suggest that organizational/environmental factors increase favorable federal employee perception of whistleblowing over time while predisposed characteristics show inconsistent influence. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020938828>

---

**Public Service Motivation and Employee Change-Supportive Intention:  
Utilizing the Theory of Planned Behavior**

***Hemin Ali Hassan, Xiaodong Zhang, Ahmad Bayiz Ahma & Bangcheng Liu***

Implementing change is considered as a difficult task for public organizations. Some individual dispositional factors have been suggested to influence recipient responses to change in public organizations. Past research has shown a link between public service motivation (PSM) and employee positive responses to organizational change. However, the psychological processes underlining this relationship are not specified. Building on the PSM theory and the theory of planned behavior (TPB), this study examines the role of psychological variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control) in mediating the relationship between PSM and change-supportive intention. A sample of 143 employees is collected from a public university in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq that was going through a change initiative. The results revealed that PSM predicts change-supportive intention, and the relationship between PSM and change-supportive intention is mediated by change-related attitude and subjective norm. The implications of the findings for theory and practice are discussed. Read more here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020934515>

**Do you have news or ideas to share with the  
*Public Personnel Management* editorial team?  
Send us an email at [ppm@ku.edu](mailto:ppm@ku.edu).**

