CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC MANAGERS’ RELIGIOSITY: IMPACTS ON WORK ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF CO-WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

Do public managers’ religious beliefs and behaviors affect their work and their work-related attitudes? There is almost no empirical work on the topic. Questionnaire data (n=765) drawn from the National Administrative Studies Project-III is used to test hypotheses about the impacts of U.S. public managers’ religiosity and political activity, on work attitudes. Multiple regression shows that religious public managers tend to have a stronger orientation toward job security. Public managers who are members of political organizations are somewhat less oriented to security and have more negative views about their organization and fellow employees. Controls introduced into the model do not change these findings.

1 The data is drawn from the National Administrative Studies Project-III
“Public Managers’ Religiosity: Impacts on Work Attitudes and Perceptions of Co-Workers”

Introduction

In the United States, religious values now seem more often in conflict with secular values. This social cleavage between more secular and the more religious citizens affects everything from outcomes of Presidential elections to immigration policies, and, especially, policies pertaining to sex, procreation, and human biology. Nor is the United States (U.S.) the only nation challenged by issues of religion. Religious controversy has recently thrust Denmark into the news. The United Kingdom’s (U.K.) relatively positive experience with multiculturalism has recently turned much more negative with UK citizens bombing buses and subways in the name of religious conviction. There have been reports of citizens emigrating from the Netherlands because of religious strife in that historical cradle of tolerance. Religion-based warfare or threats span the globe, affecting a great many nations, Afghanistan to Zambia.

Here we deal with a smaller, less dramatic issue of religion and the state, but one that is nonetheless important - the role of religion in the values, attitudes, and motivations of public managers. Drawing data from a questionnaire study of more than 700 public managers in the U.S. state governments of Illinois and Georgia, we seek to explain whether those who attend religious services differ from other public managers. Our overall assumption, of course, is that they do. But there is no logical necessity. Indeed, one study of private managers found that religiosity has little effect on work-related attitudes. (Chusmir & Koberg, 1988)

With respect to the public sector, one could easily surmise that public managers view themselves as “neutral competence” civil servants and do not bring their religious
beliefs and activities to bear on professional and managerial issues. Even if public managers’ religious view do affect work attitudes and behaviors, it is possible that these impacts cannot be determined from questionnaire items. A related possibility is that some religious public managers will differ from other public managers, but only at the extremes (i.e. the most faithful, the most observant or the most fundamental). Finally, it is possible that religion “makes a difference,” but not all religions.

Not much light has thus far been shed on the impacts of public managers’ religiosity. It is easy to understand why amongst public managers’ this is not a popular topic. There are strong social norms militating against questions pertaining to religion (Worden, 2005). Our approach to resolving that problem is a simple one: do as much as possible with as little as possible. Thus, our only indicator of religion is simply whether respondents routinely attend a church, synagogue, or mosque. However, we feel this is not a bad start. In the first place, it is not an intrusive approach. In the second place, if our study identifies any important effects in this quite conservative approach, the results should be especially noteworthy and should encourage future studies that include indicators of religious denomination, intensity of belief and other more nuanced variables. Our study is a minimalist test.

In addition to wishing to know the impacts of religious participation, we are also interested in determining how public managers’ participation in political organizations affects their work attitudes and behaviors. Our intuition at the beginning of this study was that “religious” public managers would likely be a different group from “political” public managers. However, this is an empirical issue. An alternative hypothesis is that it is external participation itself that is important and that the type of organization (e.g. political or religious) one participates in is of less consequence.
Religion in the U.S.

Before considering the religiosity of public managers we might ask about the religiosity of the U.S. general population. A study carried out by Kosmin and Keysar (2001) based on a representative national sample, found that 81% of the respondents identified with one or another religion. Among the self-described religious, 76.5% identified with a Christian faith. A more recent national study conducted by the Baylor University Institute for Studies of Religion (2006) developed data about religious attitudes from a representative U.S. national sample (n=1721). With an expanded concept of God (“God, a higher power, or a cosmic force”) the study found that 91.8% are believers. However, there is a significant and politically-relevant split between the 38% of respondents who have an authoritarian view of God (chiefly conservative Christians) and those respondents who have a more benevolent or distant view of God. Among all believers, 45% say that the U.S. federal government “should advocate Christian values.” However, 74.5% of those with a more authoritarian view of God endorse such government advocacy.

In sum, the U.S. is by most any standard a strongly religious nation. While there are many nations that are even more religious than the U.S., none of these are Western, industrially developed nations. Consider the recent results, presented in Table 1, from a cross-national survey of religious beliefs (ICM, 2004) of religious beliefs.

-Given the historical ties between the U.S. and the U.K., it is perhaps especially interesting to highlight results for these two nations. Of the ten countries featured in the ICM Survey the U.K. has the lowest scores on strength of religious identity. U.S. citizens have much stronger views about religion, surpassed only by countries such as India and-
Indonesia. It is perhaps worthy of note that the U.S. has the highest percentage (78%) of respondents who report studying religious texts. Particularly relevant to the current study, 54% of U.S. respondents report attending religious services regularly, more than twice the percentage of U.K. respondents.

Paul’s research compares U.S. citizens’ religious views and activities with those of citizens in the seventeen most prosperous nations (e.g. U.K., Sweden, Australia, Japan, France) (Paul, 2005). The U.S. leads all nations in the percentage responding that they “attend religious services at least several times each month,” that they “absolutely believe in God,” and that they “take the bible literally.” U.S. respondents have the lowest percentage of the seventeen nations’ respondents on the item “accept human evolution.”

Paul’s research focuses on the issue of whether religiosity affects development of social welfare and health institutions in the U.S., suggesting that religious fervor may suppress citizens’ support for universal high quality health care.

The apparent effects of religiosity on support for social services has led some (e.g. Gibelman & Gelman, 2002) to question whether public services should be delivered by religious based organizations. Fogel (2000) asserts that such problems could be addressed by a greater involvement of people in voluntary work and community activity arising from what he describes as “the fourth revolution”. Fogel sees this as partly arising from a greater degree of discretionary time and partly from longer life expectancies. However the religious aspect also is critical.

**Religion and Managerial Behavior: Theoretical Background**

The association between religious values and managerial (or organizational) behavior can be traced back to the seminal work of Max Weber. Weber posited “value
positions” – principles which have the validity of “categorical imperatives” As such they represent ultimate values (Weber, 1946).

In examining the “religiosity” of public managers it is apposite to review the nature of values as conceived by Weber and in particular to contrast what Weber describes as value rationality and instrumental rationality. Weber identifies six “value spheres” which are distinguished from each other by his analysis of the “ultimate value” associated with each (Oakes, 2003). The six spheres are: religion, the economy, politics, aesthetics, the erotic, and intellectualism. We focus upon religion and politics.

Religion Weber regards as linked by an ultimate value associated with a “selfless love for suffering humanity” – something he describes as “caritas”. By contrast the ultimate value of politics is described as “the impersonal pragmatics of reasons of state”. Oakes’ critique of Weber draws attention to the possibility of conflicts between the different value spheres (Oakes, 2003). Each sphere is seen in the Weberian analysis as guided by its own particular set of laws and logic. This leads to the question of how conflicts between value spheres are mediated and resolved – is there an implicit reference to some overarching ultimate value? These tensions between values spheres are resolved by Weber though reference to a state of “cultural innocence” where people are oblivious to the conflicts.

Weber distinguishes value rationality from instrumental rationality. He regards the element of calculation of “cost-benefit” as associated with the latter. Religiosity has a natural association with value rationality which does not consider alternatives but rather proceeds from a priori assumptions. Instrumental rationality has a more utilitarian flavor and is readily associated with a more political and calculative approach to actions (Satow, 1975).

The work of Weber has application to ours. Following Weber, we expect that managers who have strong religious values and identity will be influenced by these in
how they perceive their organizations and fellow workers. Behavior will be determined by reference to the value sphere and not based upon an instrumental calculative approach (see Gorsuch, 1988). Managers who do not possess such religious values will be drawn into the political sphere and likely to engage in more calculative behaviors based upon instrumental rationality (Elkin, 1985).

The empirical literature on public managers’ religious beliefs and the impacts of those beliefs is yet to be created. However, there are relevant studies in the more general organization and management literature and sociology of religion (for an overview see Warner, 1993).

**Hypotheses**

From our model and from the relatively modest number of relevant studies, we offer for test the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis: “Religious” public managers will not differ significantly from other public managers with respect to work attitudes and motives and with respect to perceptions of their organization and their co-workers.

Modified Null Hypothesis: Controlling for region, race, general civic engagement, and job status, “religious” public managers will not differ significantly from other public managers with respect to work attitudes and motives and with respect to perceptions of their organization and their co-workers.
H1: “Religious public managers,” all else equal (i.e. including controls) will tend to have significantly more positive attitudes about their co-workers and their organizations.

H2: “Religious public managers,” all else equal (i.e. including controls) will tend to have stronger motivations for security and for family values and weaker motivations for career advancement.

H3: “Religious public managers,” all else equal (i.e. including controls) will tend to have significantly stronger public service motivations.

H4: “Political public managers,” all else equal (i.e. including controls) will tend to exhibit effects exactly opposite of those obtained for “religious public managers.”

In general, our hypotheses reflect the idea that those who are religious have more optimistic attitudes and higher levels of trust. The hypotheses suggest that the religious have less jaded views about human relations, another convergence with the literature. In reviewing the empirical literature on attitudes toward others’ and, especially, forgiveness, McCullough and Worthington find consistent relationships between religiosity and propensity for empathy and forgiveness (McCullough & Worthington, 1999).

In a more recent study, Cohen and colleagues reported similar findings about religiosity and forgiveness. Somewhat in contrast, Barnett and colleagues presented findings suggesting that religious members of organizations have more unshakable ideas about moral precepts and are more likely (at least in a laboratory setting) to act as whistleblowers (Cohen et al, 2006; Barnett et al, 2004).

Perhaps even more relevant, the few existing studies (Dormann & Zapf, 2001; Witter et al, 1985 ) of the relationship of religiosity to job satisfaction have generally
determined that those who are religious report higher job satisfaction. However, none of the existing studies employed public sector samples. Chusmir and Koberg (1988) present evidence somewhat at odds with the above. They found no relationship between religious affiliation, intensity or denomination and several work related attitudes, including job satisfaction and commitment. However, they did find that organizational rank affected these work attitudes and that those of higher rank tended to be more religious.

Recently, the management literature has shown increasing attention to the concept of “workplace spirituality” (Dent et al., 2005; Garcia-Zamor, 2003; Lowery, 2005). One of the few empirical studies (Milliman et al., 2003) relating a spirituality variable to work-related attitudes and outcomes found consistently positive relationships between self-reported spirituality and both job satisfaction and commitment. The relationships between “workplace spirituality” and “religion-in-the-workplace” are not yet clear and await further empirical research and theory.

Finally, the terms “religion” and “family values’ have, perhaps, too often been associated, implying either a limited idea of “family values” or, worse, a religious monopoly on them. But we expect that in one sense of family values, religious public managers will score higher - namely, the extent to which family concerns compete with other work and career motivations. However, it is important to control in this hypothesis for having children at home inasmuch as religiosity, number of children, and attitudes about family may be confounded.

Our hypotheses about politically-oriented public managers flow in part from research and theory in the public service motivation field. First, we expect that the politically-oriented will differ greatly from those that are religious. We expect they will have somewhat more jaded views of their organizations and the colleagues, but, at the same time, we expect they will score higher on career and work motivation (see Dean et
This is in accord with the research literature, indicating that those who are politically active differ considerably in outlook and behavior from those who are not (Dalton, 2000).

Research work on public service motivation (PSM) is potentially related to religiosity and to our hypotheses above, especially, Hypothesis Three. Researchers, including Lewis and colleagues (Lewis, 1990; 1992; Lewis & Frank, 2002) and Crewson (1997) have sought to identify what factors might be associated with people joining, remaining, and progressing in public service employment. Generally, this work finds PSM related to political motivations and work behaviors (Perry, 1996; 2000; Perry & Wise, 1990). The issue of civic participation and public management has also received some attention. This is seen sometimes in the context of the public servants’ committing their “free” time to civic involvement (Brooks et al, 2001). Perry’s work (1997) has particular implications in regard to the concept of religion as an antecedent factor for public management behavior. Perry identified and explored a number of factors in PSM; one of these factors being religious socialization. Perry asserts that:

“Religious foundational beliefs are related directly to several facets of public service motivation, specifically commitment to the public interest/civic duty and compassion. People who profess the agetenic or individual world are anticipated to exhibit lower public service motivation than individuals who espouse a communal world view.” (Perry 1997:190)

Significantly for the hypotheses set out above, Perry also contends that

“public service motivation is likely to be affected by involvement in church activities….higher levels of involvement in church activities should be associated with higher public service motivation.” (Perry 1997:191)

Perry’s work, based on questionnaires (n=295), obtained some unexpected results in terms of relationship to public service motivation. The questionnaire item “closeness
to God” did show a significant correlation in the predicted direction. However, the “religious worldview” item did not. Perry described as an “unequivocal anomaly” his finding that church involvement was negatively rather than positively associated with public service motivation. Perry suggested that this may be because church involvement could be a proxy for several variables not measured. He also suggested that perhaps those with high church commitments may have less time for those of a civic nature. The implication is also that a “doctrinaire” approach to religion may in fact weigh against espousal of love and compassion for fellow humans. Perry concludes that the linkages between religious socialization and public service motivation might be more complex than the ones set out by his research hypotheses.

A Model of Public Managers’ Religiosity and Work Attitudes

Figure 1 presents the “Model of Public Managers’ Religiosity and Work Attitudes,” the model derived from both our intuition and the studies reviewed above. The model suggests that public managers’ religiosity has significant impacts on both their work attitudes and motivations and their views about their organization and their fellow employees. These effects are mediated by a number of factors, including a general tendency for civic engagement (of which religious activity may be a part), regional and cultural factors, position in the organization hierarchy and status (as indicated by number of employees supervised, and race.

--Figure 1 goes here--
Data and Variables

Data from this study are from the database of the latest (2005-2006) round of the National Administrative Studies Project. The current project is known as NASP-III. The NASP studies dates back to the mid-1980’s at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. Bozeman and colleagues designed the first NASP questionnaire, a mailed questionnaire sent to functionally matched samples of public and private organizations in New York State. The second administration of NASP-I, also at Syracuse University, focused especially on red tape and administrative procedures and was again sent to public and private managers in New York (for an overview of NASP-I data and procedures see Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998). More recently (2003-2004), a related NASP project (NASP-II) was undertaken by one of the original project associates, Sanjay Pandey, and was administered at Rutgers University (for an overview of NASP-II data and procedures see Pandey & Garnett (2006).

The current NASP is referred to as NASP-III. The current project is the most ambitious of the NASP projects in terms of sample size and, unlike previous projects it is not restricted to one or a few functional areas of government. The NASP-III database includes 787 public managers and 375 non-profit managers (only the public managers are included in the current study). The NASP-public sector data are from questionnaires sent to a random sample of public managers in two states, Georgia and Illinois. The 787 responses represent an adjusted (e.g. bad addresses, retirees) response rate of 42.5%. Additional details about the NASP procedures are available in the Appendix.

Independent Variables

Variable: Religious. The most important independent variable for our study is our single indicator of religiosity. In a section of the questionnaire we instructed respondents as follows:
One of the several items included on this list was: “Church, synagogue, mosque, or religious organization.” We refer to this variable as Religious. It is a binary variable, 1=membership in such an organization and 0=not a member. We are aware, of course, that this is an extremely limited measure of religiosity, having no ability to distinguish type of religion, denominations, intensity, or type and frequency of activity. However, as we note above, the measure errs on the side of conservatism. It is quite possible that the variable is insufficiently sensitive and, thus, will not result in a significant effect. It is less likely that its simplicity will lead to an overemphasis of effect (i.e. Type II error).

According to Kosmin and colleagues (2001), Georgians differ substantially from Illinois citizens with respect to the demography of religion. In 2001, 66% of Georgians identified with a specific non-Catholic, Christian denomination, with the largest group being Baptists (37% of all respondents). Only 8% of Georgians identified as Catholics, compared to 34% of Illinois citizens. Only 22% of Illinois citizens identified as non-Catholic Christians. In Georgia, 12% indicated “no religion,” compared to 15% in Illinois. For the U.S. sample, 19% responded “no religion,” suggesting that citizens of both states examined here more religious than the average for the U.S.

Our questionnaire item is not directly comparable to Kosmin and colleagues (2001) questions. However, by the minimal test of belonging to a church, mosque, or synagogue, Georgia and Illinois public managers are a religious group, perhaps even more so than the general U.S. population. For the NASP-III sample, 579 (73.6%) reported church membership, 208 (26.4%) did not. There are significant state effects, with nearly 79.5% of Georgia public managers classified as religious, compared to 66% of Illinois public managers (chi square significant p<.000).
**Variable: Political.** Another item from the same question, the membership of interest here is a “political club or political party committees.” Our respondents are much less likely to be a member of a political organization than a religious one. Only 87 (11.1%) of respondents are members of a political group. Again, there are important state effects. Of that 87, 59 are from Illinois.

**Control Variables**

**Variable: Total Civic.** This is a measure of all civic activities other than political and religious civic activities. It is simply the addition of all the responses to other membership categories.\(^\text{ii}\)

**Variable: Race.** It is possible to specify this variable in more than one way. However, given the dominance of two groups, African-Americans and Caucasians, we have found in previous studies that a binary variable suffices (0=White, 1=Non-white). The questionnaire item was open-ended and self-identifying (“What is your racial identification?”). The initial results were coded as follows: Caucasian (79.1%), African-American (13.4), Hispanic (2.1%), Biracial (1%), Asian or Asian Pacific Islander (2.2%), Native American (1%), and Other (1.3%).

**Variable: State.** This is simply the state government employing the respondent, (Illinois=0, Georgia=1).

**Variable: Job Status.** All respondents are in job classifications that signify they are managerial and either in the middle of organizational hierarchies or above. In this sense, the job status is relatively homogenous. Thus, to get some variance in the level of responsibility we define job status in terms of the number employees the respondent supervises in his or her current position.

**Variable: Married.** This is a dummy variable (1= married or domestic partner, 0=not married and no domestic partner).\(^\text{iii}\)
Variable: Children. An interval level variable, this variable is responses to the questionnaire item “How many (if any) dependent children do you have living in your home?”

Dependent Variables

Work Motivation Variables: Security and Advancement. The work motivation of respondents was measured in terms of a scales developed from a factor analysis of work motivation variables. The variables security motivation and advancement motivation were developed from the following questionnaire items, all of which use a four-point scale (4=Strongly Agree; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; 1=Strongly Disagree). In each case, the response to this directive:

“We are interested in the factors that motivated you to accept a job at your current organization. Please indicate the extent to which the factors below (some personal, some family, some professional) were important in making your decision to take a job at your current organization.”

The items used here include:

“Opportunity for advancement within the organization’s hierarchy”

“The organization’s pension or retirement plan”

“Job security”

“Desire for increased responsibility”

“Benefits (medical, insurance)”

“Few, if any, alternative job offers”
To construct indices for motivation, a maximum likelihood factor analysis was performed. The analysis specified an orthogonal solution and Varimax rotation, resulting in an optimized distribution of variance along resultant dimensions. A maximum likelihood approach was employed developing the factors. At one eigenvalue (i.e. the criterion that each extracted factor should explain as much variance as any single variable), two dimensions resulted. These two dimensions, taken together, represented 60.5% of the common variance in the initial correlation matrix. The factor loadings matrix is presented in Table 2.

- Table 2 goes here –

As is customary, we interpreted the factors in terms of their highest loadings, focusing specifically on those equal to or greater than +/- .50. From this analysis we named Factor One security and Factor Two advancement. Finally, we developed factors scores, relating the respondents to the loadings positions on the factor dimensions, and used these as independent variables.

**Perceptions of the Organization and Fellow Employees.** Perceptions of the respondent’s fellow employees and of the organization in general are measured (with one exception) using Likert scale items (4=Strongly Agree; 3=Agree Somewhat; 2=Disagree Somewhat; 1=Strongly Disagree). Again, factor analysis was used to develop a variable based on a multivariate index.

The following questionnaire items were selected as representing organization perceptions.

“I would rate the overall quality of work being done in my organization as very good.”

“I feel a sense of pride working for this organization.”
“This organization has high ethical standards.”

“Innovation is one of the most important values in this organization.”

“Because of the rules here, promotions are based mainly on performance.”

“Our clients seem quite satisfied with the performance of this organization.”

In addition to these 4-point scale items, respondents were asked to assess the level of their organization’s red tape and this variable, too, is included in the factor analysis. The red tape variable was in response to the following questionnaire item (the scale is also included below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Almost No Red Tape</th>
<th>Great Deal of Red Tape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0       1       2</td>
<td>3       4       5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6       7       8</td>
<td>9       10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If red tape is defined as "burdensome administrative rules and procedures that have negative effects on the organization’s effectiveness," how would you assess the level of red tape in your organization? (Please circle the appropriate response).

The following questionnaire items were selected as representing perceptions of the fellow employees. The items chiefly involve trust and risk-taking. Again, they are measured in terms of the same four-point Likert-type scale.

Employees in this organization are afraid to take risks.

Top management displays a high level of trust in this organization's employees.

Top management in this organization is afraid to take risks.

Table 3 shows the results for the maximum likelihood factor analysis of the above items. We refer to the resultant dimensions as organization perceptions factor. Since
we were not confident of the dimensional properties of the above variables, we employed them in the same factor analysis, expecting that the results would perhaps yield two dimensions, one regarding general views about the organization, the other about fellow employees. However, the factor structure was not what we had anticipated. Only one factor dimension was extracted (at the conventional one eigenvalue specification) and, as a result, no rotation was performed. In light of this result, we ran another factor analysis, this time using a principle components specification (more appropriate to a single factor solution) and calculated factor scores. The results are in Table 3.

-Table 3 goes here-

In the section below, we estimate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression equations for each of the two dependent variables with each of the two primary independent variables (religious and political).

**Results**

As a first step, we present the zero order correlations between our dependent variables, security and organization perception, and our focal independent variables, religious and political. Our expectation was that the introduction of control variables in the multiple regression analysis would substantially attenuate these results (but would not render them entirely spurious). We do not show the correlation between our two primary independent variables (the relationship is not statistically significant at p<.10). Table 4 presents the correlation results.
In each case, the correlation between the primary independent and primary dependent variable is significant and, interestingly, the religious and political variables have different signs. Just from the zero order correlations, it seems that those respondents are members of religious organizations have a stronger orientation to security motivations and a more positive view about the organization and its employees; results for those who are members of political organizations show the reverse pattern, a lesser orientation to security motivations and a less positive view about the organization and its employees.

Given the relatively small magnitude of the correlations, it seems plausible that the introduction of the controls would reduce the associations, perhaps substantially. For example, if family status, religion, and security all co-vary, it is possible that introduction of family status variables will diminish the apparent relationship between religious and security.

The initial regression model is presented in Table 5. These results are for the full model examining the relationship of religious and security factor dimension, with the controls specified above. (We estimated a model with the advancement factor as dependent variables, but the results were so similar, but with opposite signs, to the security variable that we do not report the results. However, these results are available from the authors).

These results show that the magnitude of the relationship between religious and security remains relatively small but is not diminished by the introduction of the control
variables. The beta for religious is .188 (p<.001), compared to the equivalent zero order correlation of .088. The fact that the fully specified model elevates the beta beyond the magnitude of the correlation coefficient suggests the possibility of spurious suppression (especially since the marital status and parental status variables are not significant in the equation). Among the controls, only total civic is significant at the .05 level or greater. It is important to note the impact of an interaction variable, the interaction of religion and state. The variable is approaching the conventional significance level of .05 and, moreover, its introduction has the effect of providing a modest increase in the beta for religious. The interaction suggests that religious and security are related for the whole population, but that the Georgia (coded “1”) sub-group has a stronger association than the Illinois subgroup. Whereas the predictive power of religious is elevated in the regression model (compared to the correlation model), the magnitude of political is sufficiently diminished (beta= -.036) that it is no longer statistically significant.

The regression results for religious and political for the dependent variable organization perception factor dimension are presented in Table 6.

-Table 6 goes here-

The results for the variable organization perception are subject to some important state effects. In an equation (not shown) identical to the one in Table 6, but without the variable interacting state and religious, religious respondents are somewhat more likely to have positive views about their organization and their colleagues (beta=.081, p<.049). However, the introduction of the interaction variable has the effect of sharply diminishing that relationship to the point that it is not statistically significant (p<.476). Persons who are members of political organizations are much more likely to
have unfavorable perceptions of their organization and their colleagues (beta= -.111, p<.006).

Unlike the previous model, many of the control variables are significant. Specifically, more favorable attitudes about the organization and colleagues tend to be associated with minority status, number of people supervised, and being a State of Georgia employee.

**Discussion**

The chief findings from our study are simple enough. First, public managers who are affiliated with a church or other religious organizations tend to have a somewhat stronger concern about security motivation. Second, public managers who are members of political organizations have less positive views about their organizations and their co-workers. These findings stand up when obvious controls are introduced into multiple regression models.

Regarding the finding that political public managers are less satisfied with their organizations it is important to note that they are dissatisfied only relative to other respondents. Being dissatisfied is not common among the public managers we study. For the public managers examined here, 85.4% report being satisfied with their jobs. For each of the individual items (trust, client satisfaction, ethical organization and so forth) a solid majority report a positive perception. Just to provide some perspective, the Conference Board (2003) reports that only 47.2% of American workers say they are satisfied with their jobs and, even among those earning more than $50,000, the job satisfaction rate is only 53.2%.

In our study dissatisfaction is quite unusual and disproportionately among the politically-affiliated. What does this mean? In the first place, it is not surprising that public managers in our sample are generally happy with their jobs, their co-workers and
their organization. After all, this is a sample of middle-level and above personnel, meaning that their pay and work challenge is in the upper quartile, at least, of U.S. citizens.

Why are the politically-affiliated less satisfied? We cannot from this data establish the cause of the relative dissatisfaction, but we can speculate from the empirical results. Possibly political activity is an expression of dissatisfaction with the organization or the status quo and, thus, it is the dissatisfaction that leads to external political activity. Possibly, political activity is related to theoretically important omitted variables such as ideological intensity or some other personal attribute. It is possible that those who are politically active have a “bigger world,” either psychologically or socially, and have better basis for comparing their organization to others. Possibly, people who have an affinity for political organizations are more likely to define the world, including their own organization, in terms of political conflict, bargaining and negotiation, entailing few absolutes. This may lead to a more nuanced view of the organization.

In considering the findings about religion, it is important to remember that there is not enormous variance. Most people in the sample are members of churches or other religious organizations. Only a little more than a quarter of respondents did not report membership in a church or religious organization. Most people in the sample are security-conscious. Even among those who are not members of religious organizations, security motivation remains important (just not quite at the level of their church-going colleagues).

While the findings about religion and security are modest, they are likely valid. Generally, the persons in this sample who report being a member of a religious organization are very much like the ones who report that they are not. They are nearly identical with respect to distributions on such demographic attributes as marriage, children, age, gender, citizenship, and work experience. In short, selection effects,
endogenous relationships, and omitted variables provide no obvious answer about the differences between the religious and those who are not. Quite likely there is simply a profound difference among public managers - the religious and the non-religious - on a wide range of attitudes.

One interesting finding is the one pertaining to minorities. It seems plausible that minority public managers might have more positive views about their organization if they also tend to view the public sector as an especially welcoming environment for minorities. Our survey results show that minority public managers do, indeed, have a more favorable view about the public sector as promoting minority opportunities and, as one might expect, receptivity to minorities is an important job motivation. In the case of number of people supervised, those in the upper echelons of the hierarchy (correlated with number supervised) are often more likely to have a positive view of the organization because to some extent they are validating their own performance and entitlement. What is not quite so evident (at least from our data) is why working in Georgia rather than in Illinois would have an effect on organizational perspectives. We found, during the course of our study, that pay and position freezes had been in place in Illinois during the time of the data gathering and in two preceding years. From open-ended responses we received, it was clear that this had engendered a great deal of bitterness. Quite possibly, this bitterness spilled over into generalized perceptions of working, including one’s own organization and one’s colleagues.

**Conclusions**

Let us close by noting the major limitations of our study and, related, possibilities for future research. First, it is beyond the purview of this study to determine the
relationship between our two major dependent variables and management performance. We do not know that people who have more favorable attitudes about their organization are better workers, nor can we surmise that those who are security-oriented have poorer performance. On both these accounts there is ample literature and the findings are inconclusive. Second, as we mentioned above, our predictor variables are extremely modest ones. Knowing that someone is a member of a church, synagogue, or mosque simply does not tell us enough about their religiosity. While it is certainly not easy to develop more extensive indicators for public managers’ religiosity, that is nonetheless a vital next step for sorting out these preliminary findings. Similarly and more easily accomplished, it will be useful to examine political behaviors of public managers, not just political memberships. There are several related studies that already do this. Finally, our study is limited by its method - mailed questionnaires. While we feel that a major contribution of our study is simply to develop large sample data about public managers’ religiosity, a yawning gap in the literature, it is nonetheless the case that this study’s objectives require a multi-method approach, especially the combining of aggregate data analyses of the sort we provide here with in-depth interviews. Many of the puzzles we have set for ourselves in this analysis can likely be elucidated with such a combination of methods.

Thus, our chief prescription for future research is a simple one: develop more and better data than we were able to employ here. This study was based on data originally developed for other purposes and, thus, included only the most minimal information on religion. The fact that even this minimal information about church membership helped predict differences among a set of demographically homogenous public managers should encourage researchers to develop richer data and deeper studies of the relation of public managers’ religious views and activities to their work lives.
References


Tables and Figures
Figure 1: Model of Public Managers’ Religiosity and Work Attitudes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Israel</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>S.Korea</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I have always believed in God”</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have studied religious texts”</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I pray regularly”</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I regularly attend an organized religious service”</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I would die for my God”</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Factor Loadings Matrix for “Security Motivation” and “Advancement Motivation”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>Factor Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Security Motivation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance in organizational hierarchy</td>
<td>.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension or retirement plan</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire increased responsibility</td>
<td>-.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits (medical, insurance)</td>
<td>.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few, if any, alternative job offers</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eigenvalue</strong></td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative variance</strong></td>
<td>39.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach alpha for all six variables = .67
Table 3: Factor Loadings Matrix for “Organization Perceptions”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Item</th>
<th>“Organizational Perceptions”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pride in organization</td>
<td>.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High ethics in organization</td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation important in organization</td>
<td>.727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High organizational red tape</td>
<td>-.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion performance-based</td>
<td>.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients satisfied with organization</td>
<td>.613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top management trusts employees</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees risk averse</td>
<td>-.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top management risk averse</td>
<td>-.590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eigenvalue**

4.17

**Cumulative variance**

45.3%

Cronbach alpha = .710
Table 4. Zero Order Correlation for Independent Variables with Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Security Factor</th>
<th>Organization Perception Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Pearson r .088(*)</td>
<td>.172(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. .015</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 765</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Pearson r -.074(*)</td>
<td>-.116(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. .041</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 765</td>
<td>751</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 5. OLS Regression Results for Independent Variables and Security Factor Dimension

Dependent variable: Security Factor Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>-.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>-.101</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Civic Activities</td>
<td>-.059</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>-.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or partner</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>-.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent children</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>-.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number employees supervised</td>
<td>7.372</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction: State-Religion</td>
<td>-.302</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>-.170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2=.030, \text{ Adj. } R^2=.016$
Table 6. OLS Regression Results for Independent Variables and Organization Perception Factor Dimension

Dependent variable: **Organization Perception Factor Dimension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-.561</td>
<td>-4.597</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>-.348</td>
<td>-2.748</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Civic Activities</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.589</td>
<td>.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>2.113</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or partner</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>1.080</td>
<td>.281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent children</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number employees supervised</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>3.798</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td>2.745</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction: State-Religion</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>1.264</td>
<td>.207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .160, \text{Adj. } R^2 = .148$
Appendix: The NASP-III Study Approach

Sampling was from the population of public managers in the states of Georgia and Illinois. The population of managers in Georgia was drawn from the Georgia Department of Audits (DoA) comprehensive list of state employees who were on state agency payrolls during the 2003/2004 fiscal year. We removed employees at technical colleges, commissions, authorities, the office of the governor, and institutions from the judicial or legislative branch. In addition we removed employees at institutions with less than 20 employees. The population included any job titles coded as "director" "coordinator" “officials or manager” and “professionals” under the pay grade of 017 and all individuals with a pay grade of 017 or higher. The resulting population included 6,164 Georgia managers.

The population of managers in Illinois was developed through a Freedom of Information Act request for a list of all state employees designated as either "senior public service administrators" or "public service administrators." This list included information on 5,461 state employees, including name, agency, and county.

Survey Administration
We selected a sample of 2000 managers (1000 from Illinois and 1000 from Georgia). The survey administration included a pre-contact letter, Wave I survey with letter, follow-up postcard mailing, Wave II mailing, follow-up contacts by phone call and email, and a final Wave III mailing. The survey was closed January 1, 2006.

Public Sector Returns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wave I</th>
<th>Wave II</th>
<th>Wave III</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First date received</td>
<td>July 20, 2005</td>
<td>Sept 14, 2005</td>
<td>Nov 18, 2005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last date received</td>
<td>Jan 19, 2006</td>
<td>Feb 20, 2006</td>
<td>Jan 31, 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Response Rates

Though we began with a sample of 2000 respondents our sample was reduced by respondents who were retired (16 cases) and no longer working for the agency (131 cases).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Illinois</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>229</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>346</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|            |        | 256     |
|            |        | 61      |
|            |        | 44      |
|            |        | 361     |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia N</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois N</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Retired</th>
<th>147</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reduced N</th>
<th>1853</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>939</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Responded</th>
<th>787</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>431</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
<th>42.47%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>GA RR</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>IL RR</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Endnotes

\(^i\) This article is a revision of the paper presented under the same title at the 2006 meeting of the International Public Management Network, St. Gallen, Switzerland which is scheduled to be published in the International Public Management Journal Vol.10:2. It is published here by kind permission of the Journal editor, Dr Steve Kelman.

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\(^ii\) These include: “Professional societies, trade or business association, or labour union,” “Service organizations such as Rotary or Lions,” “Youth support groups (e.g. Girl’s and Boy’s Club, Little League Parents Association),” “Neighbourhood or homeowners associations PTA, PTO, or school support groups,” “Groups sports team or club (e.g. softball team, bowling league),” and “Other.”

\(^iii\) It would have been useful to have been able to distinguish between “married” and “domestic partner.” However, these categories were taken together in the original questionnaire after a pre-test indicated essentially no domestic partners. Unless the sample is completely different from demographic results for the U.S., at least some of the respondents should have had domestic partners. We attributed this failure to identify domestic partners as a socially desirable response artifact and, thus, collapsed to two categories so as to have a ‘safe’ means of respondents indicating domestic partners.

\(^iv\) In most instances of possible spurious suppression a next step would involve introducing interaction effects into an otherwise identical question. This is not possible here because religion is a dummy variable and the interaction variable would be interval with real zeroes. Thus, the result for multiplying religion with number of children would be the same for those who are not religious and have no children as for those who are not religious and have ten children; in both cases the product would be zero.

\(^v\) This is according to a differences of means t-test, not reported here, but available upon request from the authors.