

Blue Collar Public Servants:

How Union Membership Influences Public Service Motivation

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Abstract:

Public service motivation scholars have begun to examine the social institutions responsible for inculcating PSM in public sector employees. Those institutions commonly examined are the family, religion, and the profession. Of those one of the most commonly examined social institutions is the profession. However, only a fraction of public sector employees belong to professions, formally defined. This research examines the labor union as a socializing force that communicates attitudes and beliefs to members. This research suggests that unionization leads public employees to display lower levels of the affective and normative dimensions of PSM, but higher levels of the rational dimension.

Introduction

The formal study of motivation has existed for over a century, and this research crystallized in public management scholarship with the conceptual development of public service motivation. Since that point public service motivation scholars have begun to examine the social institutions responsible for inculcating PSM in public sector employees. The renewed focus on social institutions emerged when Perry reformulated PSM theory to “bring society in to the motivation equation” (Perry, 2000). The drive to “bring society in to the motivation equation” was advanced with Perry and Vandenberg’s efforts to further develop a theory of motivation grounded in institutional explanations (Perry & Vandenberg, 2008). Perry and Vandenberg (2008) understand institutions to be “social structures infused with values and rules. These values and rules are embedded across societies in religion, families, and other social structures” (p. 58).

PSM theoreticians assert that several social institutions serve as socializing mechanisms for public service motivation (Perry, 1997). Pandey and Stazyk conduct a comprehensive review of the PSM literature and indicate that there are at least three social institutions that contribute to the socialization of PSM, each of which have clear relationships with PSM (Pandey & Stazyk, 2008). Those institutions commonly examined are the family, religion, and the profession.

One of the most commonly examined social institutions is the profession. Most studies have uncovered a positive relationship between professionalism and public service motivation (DeHart-Davis, Marlowe, & Pandey, 2006; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). In fact, there is a strong theoretical link between professionalism and public service motivation because in addition to the structural components of modern

professions there also exists a strong attitudinal component (Hall, 1968). One of the major attitudes professions communicate through education is a strong desire to serve the public interest (Benveniste, 1987; Hall, 1968; Moore, 1970; Wilensky, 1964). One major limitation to focusing solely on professions as social institutions is related to the fact that only a fraction of public sector employees belong to professions, formally defined (Pandey & Stazyk, 2008). Due to this observation it becomes useful to analyze other social institutions that serve as antecedents for public service motivation.

One social institution that has been heretofore neglected is the labor union. Since the middle twentieth century the public sector has become increasingly unionized, and as of the 1980s there were nearly three times as many public sector union members compared to private sector union members (Freeman, 1986, 1988). Labor unions serve as social institutions laden with values and rules that govern member behavior. As a social institution labor unions define the values of their members through a “logic of appropriateness” (March & Olsen, 1989).

At first blush it appears that the values associated with public sector labor unions directly contradict public service motivation. The scholarship on public sector unionization depicts labor unions as selfish organizations interested in controlling the political process and protecting worker interest at the expense of clients (Freeman, 1986; Moe, 2006, 2009). Furthermore, others suggest that, contrary to popular beliefs, labor unions are discriminatory organizations that negatively affect women and minority workers (Ricucci, 1987, 1988, 1990). These studies suggest that unionization socializes self-interested and discriminatory motives in members leading to staunch negative effects on public service motivation.

This paper explores the potentially negative effects of unionization on the motivations of members. This article draws from two sources of evidence. First, the paper examines theories relevant to the social psychology of labor unions to determine how unionization shapes individual perception. Second, the paper draws on statements gathered through interviews conducted in two cities in a Midwestern state. By combining the social psychological theory and qualitative data I devise hypotheses for predicting the relationship between union membership and PSM.

Labor Unions and PSM

Public Service Motivation Theory

Some scholars have regarded questions of employee motivation as one major organizing framework for public management research (Behn, 1995). Research on work motivation in public sector organization crystallized in the 1990s with the development of the public service motivation construct (Perry & Wise, 1990). Since then public service motivation and related concepts have been studied extensively in public administration and management literature. Studies associated with individual motivation range from examination of sources of work motivation for public and private sector workers (Wright, 2001) to the development of a public service ethic and public values (Bozeman, 2007; Brewer, Selden, & Facer II, 2000).

Perry and Wise initially defined public service motivation as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded uniquely in public service institutions and organizations” (Perry and Wise 1990, p. 368). This definition does not argue that PSM is unique to public sector employees, but rather that PSM is a psychological state that individuals feel the need to satisfy through public service oriented institutions. Perry and

Wise, however, acknowledge that there also exists a rational dimension to public service motivation. Following the work of Knoke and Wright-Isak they outline rational, affective, and norm-based categories associated with public service motivation (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982).

Later research indicated that PSM was a complex construct, that incorporated four dimensions (Perry, 1996). The four dimensions of public service motivation are attraction to policy making, which represents rational motives, commitment to public interest, which represents the norm-based category, and compassion, which represents the affective category. The fourth original dimension, self-sacrifice was retained due to its historical significance within the field of public administration (Perry, 1996).

Following the development of the PSM construct considerable scholarly effort was devoted to uncovering the social institutions that serve as antecedents for PSM (see Pandey and Stazyk, 2008 for a comprehensive review). Initially three social institutions were examined with respect to their effects on PSM. Those institutions were the family, religion, and the profession (Perry, 1997). In an effort to better understand the role of other social institutions in motivation theory Perry (2000) urged researchers to “bring society in to the motivation equation.” Grounding motivation theory in meta-level institutional explanations requires examination of “institutions as ways for structuring and valuing rule-governed behavior, public content as central elements of institutions, and the need for social mechanisms to transmit institutional content” (Perry and Vandenberg, 2008, p. 62). The recasting of public service motivation theory as a meta-level theory grounded in institutional explanations provides the rationale for examining other institutions that potentially serve as socializing mechanisms. The

following sections explore the effects of labor unions as socialization mechanisms on public service motivation.

Labor Unions and Rational Motives

The initial description of public service motivation theory argues that PSM is sometimes rooted in rational utility maximization (Perry & Wise, 1990). One of the major rational motives for civil servants is the draw to participate in the formulation of public policy. The theoretical link between the rational motives associated with PSM and unionization is quite strong. In his description of major differences between public and private sector labor unions Freeman (1986) asserts that “public sector unions, more so than private sector unions, can influence employer behavior through the political process” (p. 42). The degree to which public sector unions exert considerable influence over the political process is due, in large part, to their ability to elect legislators and executive heads.

Government organizations operate with delegated authority from decentralized from legislative bodies, which allows unions to exert a disproportionate degree of political authority in the public sector (Banfield, 1975). In fact, as Banfield notes, “Had the growth of government been accompanied by the centralization of control and certain other structural changes, the increase in corruption would doubtless have been less. But the structural changes that occurred were mainly in the "wrong" direction: executive control has been reduced by merit system practices, *recognition of public employee unions*, civil rights legislation, laws requiring "citizen participation," "sunshine" laws, and the like” (Banfield, 1975, p. 604 emphasis added).

The influence of unions on the political process serves as one major power base of administrators. In fact, unions influence the political process at all levels of government across a broad array of public organizations (Moe, 2006). In his study of political power of agents Moe (2006) finds that teachers through their unions exhibit extreme success in electing favored school board members and that high election turnout by bureaucrats is motivated primarily by occupational concerns. Furthermore, Moe finds that when unions secure contracts that place more restrictions on managerial control overall agency performance decreases (Moe, 2009).

Public sector union members often openly acknowledge the political authority of labor unions, and many suggest that they are openly attracted to the policy making process. In fact many ranking officials in labor unions describe how they use the political process to “hire” their organizational and political superiors. In fact, the vice president of a public employee union illustrated the union’s role in the political process. The vice president described the political functions of the union in this way,

“When one of the new council members had been elected, the union had meet and greet with him, we questioned candidates, would they support an ordinance that would make regulations transparent? One candidate was a CPA and said he’s looked at budget. He said he’s never seen anything like this. What am I getting from my coworkers? Do you really take us for fools?”

The attraction to the policy making function is not limited to blue and white collar public labor unions. Uniformed officers associated with public safety unions also describe using the political process to exercise substantial authority over organizational superiors. One

public safety union even used the political process to secure the removal of the current department head in favor of a ranking officer more tied to the community. One employee verified this by saying,

“Union bullies, the union president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer have been chasing [the organization head] for four or five years. They have spent thousands of dollars investing in getting rid of [the organization head] and nothing has happened.”

Although the union had failed to secure the removal of the department head at the time of the interview that agency is now conducting a search for a new department head.

One agency head verified that union movement used political processes to implement their favored policies. The individual indicated,

“There’s less influence here peddled with the city-manager form of government than there might be in strong mayor forms of government here or elsewhere. I know for a fact the Union here has had some very strong influence on not only mayors in the past but other Council people and still do. The difference is we now have a city manager who is charged with conducting affairs the administrative affairs of the city on a daily basis. *Nonetheless our union has a political action committee who is highly active.* They interviewed all the candidates running for city Council. The two questions they were asked, because some of them told me, some of the candidates, only the two questions they were asked, would you fire the [one specific department head], would you fire [a different department head]? That’s the involvement of the Union, and

that's what they're interested in controlling the administrator at the top with the mayor.”

However, the political influence exerted by the union is not viewed favorably by all employees. This is particularly the case with those who do not strongly associate with union membership. According to a blue collar worker who expressed disapproval for unions,

“I will say that being a government worker or a city worker you have to deal with the politics. That is probably the worst to have to deal with. That's probably a bad thing that you have to deal with is all the politics, and are we going to consolidate, are we not going to consolidate [with the county].

One clerical worker echoed disapproval for the policy making function of municipal government by saying,

“Well for one thing there's a city council, and they have to approve everything for us. I think that sometimes their agenda is more self-serving, and they're really looking for what might I get out of this, and I hate that.”

While discussing poor organizational rules the same worker indicated, “honestly my main problem is the union.”

Existing theory suggests that there is a positive relationship between the rational dimension of public service motivation and union membership. That generalization is corroborated by the sentiments of government employees throughout the organization,

and leads to the expectation that union members are more likely to participate in the political process. Therefore, I expect that

H₁: Union members will be more attracted to the policy making process than their non-union co-workers.

Labor Unions and Norm-Based Motives

The second category of motives associated with PSM is norm-based. This dimension incorporates an individual's predisposition to serve the public interest (Perry & Wise, 1990). The dimension of self-sacrifice was retained due to its historical importance in the public administration literature. Although the self-sacrifice dimension does not clearly map on to the norm-based motives of PSM it is considered here because of its close relationship with commitment to public interest. Labor unions are formed specifically to promote the selfish interests of workers, and some research suggests that the selfish motives of labor unions trump commitment to the public interest and self-sacrifice.

The professions are one major social institution that scholars suggest inculcate norms and values of public service into members through extensive training and education (Benveniste, 1987; Hall, 1968; Moore, 1970; Wilensky, 1964). However, in his study of California public schools Terry Moe illustrates that increased contract restrictiveness resulting from collective bargaining decreases the performance of that district (Moe, 2009). This means that schools are less effective at their primary mission, which is educating students, indicating that they are less committed to serve the public. This tension between unionization and professionalism is likely a respectively recent development. Freeman (1988) suggests that public sector labor unions, such as the

unions representing teachers and police, regarded collective bargaining as an “unprofessional” practice prior to the 1980s. Today, however, they staunchly advocate the types of bargaining used by other unions.

Wilensky (1964) asserts that there organizational threats to the service ideal associated with professionalism. One potential organizational threat to the service ideal may occur through labor unions. In fact, some scholars argue that “The widespread, one might say textbook, picture of U.S. unions today is of institutions adept at advancing their own interests at the public's expense” (Freeman & Medoff, 1986). If this picture is true for professionals the advancement of selfish interests at the expense of the public would be more pronounced in non-professional employees.

Although police officers, and other uniformed personnel, are less professionalized than other occupations they are often presumed to be deeply committed to serving the public interest. After all the mission of police departments is to “protect and *serve*.” Furthermore, the concept of protection indicates that uniformed personnel sacrifice their welfare for the benefit of the public. One union steward in the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), however, illustrated that the desire to serve the public often serves as a secondary motive by saying,

“It’s a pretty secure job. In addition to that, some people say they want to help people. I don’t mean to sound rude or wrong, but honestly it’s the second ... If it happens it happens, but I’m here to catch the bad guys. It’s the thrill of the hunt.”

In addition to union members others who are involved in labor relations recognize the detrimental effects of unionization on the service ideal. One manager observed

decreasing commitment to public service while reflecting on their role as labor negotiations coordinator by saying,

“From a workplace standpoint I guess doing these labor negotiations has reminded me too many people go into public service and focus mostly on the stability of job and paycheck, and are not really focused on the public service part of it. When you really talk about what’s important. Labor negotiations focus on what they’re going to get not what they’re going to give. On a personal level I didn’t go into public service to make money. If I wanted to make money I could have kept working for the law firm. But there are people I know who go into public service because they could not do any better somewhere else. That isn’t universal but we have more than we should have.”

In addition to managers some blue collar workers also indicate the diminished service ideal in union members. One horticulture department worker indicated the relationship between unionization and the work ethic of union members by saying,

“The union pukes that work around here are all about you can’t make me do this, they are some of the laziest people. I never push my views on people. Some of my feelings come from knowing government waste, period. I see it first hand, it makes it that much harder.”

Even though there appears to be a decreased desire to serve the public and a diminished commitment to self sacrifice it is important not to over generalize this observation to all union members.

One blue collar union steward displayed high degrees of commitment to the public interest and compassion by stating,

I like helping people, being a public servant, which all of us are. I take great satisfaction in delivering a quality service, such as when people turn their faucets on and get high- quality water. Public service when I first joined the city had a negative connotation to it, like being a slave or something. But it's no different from being a fireman or policeman, we are here to try and improve the quality of life that people take for granted every day, the streets we drive on, the faucets we turn on, the toilets we flush. Now I see the big picture very clearly. You are a small piece of the puzzle, but if that piece is taken out, the whole thing falls apart. I like being a productive member of society.

Unfortunately positive sentiments of union members such as these are outweighed by the negative sentiments that convey selfish motives. While considering the benefits of union membership one building inspector wondered what was in it for him. He indicated disapproval of the police and fire contracts by saying,

“I am a member of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. It's a nationally strong union. But our local has 12-15 people and not much clout. It does help, it has helped. ... Over the years we have fought to get pay raises. The city comes in with their first offer, which is minimal if anything, the city refuses to negotiate, except for police and fire. Police and fire get one or two year contracts with one

or two percent increases. That hurts. Our union with the last contract said,
OK, we'll do this with a me-too clause.”

The selfish motives communicated by labor unions contradict the motives of commitment to the public interest and self-sacrifice. Employee perspectives reveal that the norm-based motives associated with PSM are often displaced by union membership. Thus, I expect that

H₂: Union members will exhibit less commitment to the service ideal and be less willing to sacrifice for the greater good than their non-union counterparts.

Labor Unions and Affective Motives

Another major component of PSM theory is grounded in the affective motives of individuals, which is closely tied to the psychological state of compassion. As Perry and Wise (1990) indicate that the commitment of an individual toward a particular program “emanate from a general conviction about its social importance” (p. 369). Although the general public often presumes that labor unions are progressive organizations designed to protect underprivileged employees against powerful management interests theory suggests that labor unions are less compassionate than generally presumed. In fact, some scholarship suggests that unionization is inherently opposed to compassionate motives.

A substantial body of research on unions indicates that they can be discriminatory organizations that harbor negative views of individuals outside their ranks. In many instances unions have been reluctant to support programs such as Equal Opportunity Employment and Affirmative action (Ricucci, 1990). In fact, Ricucci (1990) illustrates that the courts and legislators recognized the propensity of unions to discriminate against

women and minorities. In the face of this overt discrimination law making bodies developed legal requirements designed to only to cease discriminatory practices but also to ensure adequate representation of all covered workers irrespective of racial or gender characteristics. This is referred to as the duty of fair representation.

Additionally, Riccucci (1988) indicates that there are three potential types of prejudices that contribute to union discrimination against certain individuals. First, unions often seek to control labor supply by constructing monopoly power over employment. Discrimination based on monopoly power is not directly tied to spite or feelings of superiority, but rather from the desire to control wages. Second, unions can discriminate based on personal prejudice. Under this circumstance union members seek a homogenous work place, which can be detrimental to minority and female employment. This form of discrimination may occur unintentionally, and could conceivably be rectified through intentional effort. Finally, unions can discriminate based on role prejudice (Riccucci, 1988). Under these circumstances union members view some individuals as unable to perform the duties of the position. Union role prejudice is more pronounced for women in areas such as the uniformed services where the assumption is that females cannot physically perform the duties associated with the occupation (Riccucci, 1987, 1988, 1990). Viewed this way it is reasonable to expect much lower degrees of compassionate motives for union members, particularly with respect to outsiders.

The importance of access to other union members was explained eloquently by one police officer while reflecting on his time at national union meetings. He indicated the benefits of union membership by saying,

“It’s the *brotherhood*, so to speak. I have gone to the National Conventions down in Louisville, 2 years ago for the FOP [Fraternal Order of Police]. And you got how many thousands of members down there at this National Conference, and you don’t know the *guy* but you know he’s an FOP member, so you have something in common. And you start your conversations that way. So it is just one of those unique Union’s so to speak, it’s a fraternal organization for Police. But you can only be a member if you are a cop. And so you don’t have to worry about any outsiders trying to come in, and it’s just nice to know you’re surrounded by fellow cops.”

For this member unionization was strongly tied to masculine imagery. Furthermore, these strong ties suggest severe difficulties arise for those who choose not to participate in union activities.

Inevitably some employees within public organizations choose not to participate in union activities. Those employees are often ostracized and berated by union members. One fire fighter described the willingness of unionized fire fighters to incorporate non-dues paying members in this way,

“The union will spend whatever it takes to ensure that you are duly represented by them against the city. If you are in with union, no one can touch you. [One female], she didn’t pay union dues, [one male], he didn’t pay union dues. People didn’t speak to them.”

In other instances some individuals attempt to gain access to union leadership roles, but are intentionally barred from the process. Female municipal employees often

describe difficulties associated with gaining access to, and entrance in, the ranks of the union. One female worker in water pollution control described the difficulties she encountered trying to break into a leadership role within the union by saying,

I guess [the president of the union] did make me secretary. I guess he did make me a secretary, because he did not want to make me a union steward, but that's a whole another story. ... I explained that to you that I'm the only woman in the field. There's a lot of older guys and that it is a touchy subject I'm not going to go there. He didn't want me to be a union steward. He tried to do everything he could to keep me from being a union steward. Which he's still working on so it's kind of a game we're playing back-and-forth. He makes me secretary so then he goes and gets a tape recorder and takes away my tape recorder and never gives it back.

Union leadership required this individual to perform impossible tasks to serve as a union leader. One requirement for her stewardship was completion of a union steward course. According to the employee no such course exists.

Other employees who express distaste for union members indicate more compassion for others. One horticulture worker commented on the value of union membership by saying,

“I do not belong to the Union. I am in a union but I do not belong to it. ... They do have to represent you but you don't have to be a member, and I didn't vote for it when they came in. I didn't vote for it. ... I didn't see a need for it as nice as the city treats us generally.”

The compassionate affect of this individual came through when he was asked why he continues to work for government. He responded by saying,

“There is still wanting the security of having a job. That’s part of a city job. Once you get established in them and everything it became more about working hard and doing something that everybody can enjoy. It’s not just about me. It’s about having a place for everybody to come enjoy. You get to see how many people actually come and enjoy it. That probably happened about two years after I started. I had to come into work on a Sunday to water something, but it was Mother's Day and you could not drive through the park. It was completely packed. There was only one lane of traffic and if you met somebody and you wanted through he had a backup. Everybody was having picnics and it was just completely the whole thing was just as crowded as can be. That's probably one of the turning points that changed. I do like to do things for people.”

The potential prejudicial elements of labor unions are directly contrary to public service motivation. Compassionate motives, in particular, suggest that people feel connected with one another, frequently consider the welfare of others, and see the interconnectedness of individuals within society (Perry, 1996). The prejudicial and discriminatory elements of unionization act in opposition to these elements. As such, I expect that

H₃: Union members will display less compassionate motives than those individuals who do not belong to labor unions.

Research Design and Methodology

The data used to explore the relationship between unionization and PSM is qualitative in nature, and the analysis is designed to uncover potential relationships between union identity and public service motivation in non-professional employees that warrants further empirical investigation. Qualitative research is particularly useful for generating new hypotheses associated with existing theory, as well as gaining a deeper understanding of a particular phenomenon (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). The quality of qualitative research depends upon four criteria. First, credibility or believability must be established from the perspective of the participant. Second, the data must be transferrable to other contexts. Third, the data must be dependable by accounting for the ever changing context in which research is conducted. Finally, the data must be able to be confirmed or corroborated by others (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). Each of these criteria was considered when collecting and coding the data.

Information obtained in the interviews was recorded through two different methods. First, the vast majority of the interviews were collected through audio recordings as researchers conducted the interviews. The audio recordings were then transcribed to maintain the accuracy of respondent statements. Second, for select interviews field notes were taken during the interviews. In situations where the respondent was not comfortable with audio recording researchers took field notes and later created interview transcripts from the notes. Interview transcripts were then coded and analyzed using Atlas.ti, a qualitative data software package that allows for coding and comparing respondent statements. Several potential codes, including union identification, attraction or aversion to politics, public service motivation (related to the

normative and affective dimensions), and job satisfaction, were created to code the data. Specific passages were coded in the interview transcripts that related to these specific topics.

The data for this project were collected during the summer of 2009, and come in the form of 60 semi-structured interviews conducted in two cities in a Midwestern state. Similar themes were uncovered in both organizations suggesting that the findings can be transferred to more than one organizational context. Although researchers operated from an interview protocol researchers also deviated from the protocol in some circumstances for a deeper understanding of particular events. Although the data was collected by several researchers each researcher coded all interviews for topics of interest. Transcripts and audio files were available to the researchers so data could be corroborated.

Interview respondents were selected randomly from employee lists provided by the government organizations. The data collection began by sending the randomly selected employees an e-mail stating that they had been invited to participate in a workplace study. Additionally reminder e-mails were sent to respondents before the interview date with a list of topics that would be discussed in the interviews. The random selection of employees provided a sample of employees representing a broad array of positions throughout the organization. However, due to their relative size with respect to the organization, and the inability of some to access e-mail, uniformed personnel (police and fire) were somewhat underrepresented in the interview process. Additionally not all employees throughout both organizations had access to e-mail. As such, there is a possibility that the findings related to underrepresented groups cannot be transferable to the broader population.

During the interviews respondents were encouraged to freely respond to a series of questions potentially associated with public service motivation and union identification. The questions associated with public service motivation included 1) what do you find most rewarding about your job, 2) what do you find least rewarding about your job, 3) what brought you to work for municipal government, and 4) why do you continue to work for municipal government. Some respondents were also asked questions about union membership. Questions associated with union membership included 1) what are union meetings like, 2) what are the major benefits of belonging to a labor union, and 3) what are the benefits of serving in a leadership role in your union. Although these questions were asked directly in many instances, in other instances respondents freely offered information associated to these questions without prompt. The perspectives of non-union members on union activities were also recorded.

It is important to note that the quotes from the respondents have been altered slightly in some instances. Names of individuals, departments, cities, and at times positions were removed to ensure the anonymity of the respondents. Due to the sensitive nature of many of the subjects discussed all identifying characteristics were removed for the purposes of this analysis.¹

Discussion

Public service motivation theory indicates that there are four unique dimensions of public service motivation, and those four dimensions represent rational, affective, and normative motives (Perry and Wise, 1990; Perry, 1996). A large part of the public

¹ For example the position of fire fighter was not altered because there are several, but the titles of specific department heads were removed. Any alterations in the direct comments of individuals appear in brackets. One characteristic that was maintained in many instances was the gender of the respondent. This allows for comparison of statements across gender to verify potentially discriminatory patterns.

service motivation research is devoted to determining the social institutions that instill public service motivation in individuals (see Pandey and Stazyk, 2008 for a comprehensive review). This analysis conceives of public sector labor unions as a socializing force that inculcates members with not only observable behaviors but also the beliefs and attitudes associated with PSM.

The qualitative data reported here in the form of stories indicates that union membership has a positive relationship with the rational dimension of PSM, but a negative relationship with the affective and normative dimensions of PSM. However, there is strong theoretical rationale to suggest that an individual's organizational role may trump the socializing effects of union membership (see Lee and Olshfski, 2002). To determine if this is the case future research clearly distinguish between public safety personnel and other non-professional employees. Due to the underrepresentation of uniformed personnel recorded here a comprehensive comparison to all uniformed personnel cannot be made here.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the attitudes and beliefs conveyed through union membership are likely not uniform across all union members. Instead some individuals are likely to more closely identify with public sector labor unions. Thus, future research would stress the importance of differentiating between union members who are merely covered by a labor contract, those who pay dues to the union, and those who serve in leadership roles within public sector labor unions.

Conclusion

One major stream of research in the PSM literature examines the profession as a social institution that inculcates publicly oriented motives in employees. This paper

attempts to address PSM levels in those individuals who do not belong to formally defined professions. Here the labor union is treated as a social institution that serves as a socializing force for public servants. The self-interested motive associated with labor unions contrast public service motivation and other altruistic motivations (Moe, 2006, 2009; Riccucci, 1987, 1988, 1990). This research suggests that unionization leads public employees to display lower levels of the affective and normative dimensions of PSM, but higher levels of the rational dimension.

Individual identity associated with public sector labor unions, however, likely varies considerably among employees. The concept of identity construction was not addressed here. One topic for future research would examine the variation in attitudes between those who possess stronger or weaker union identities. Another topic for future research would examine how organizational role absorbs variation in the relationship between union identity and PSM. For example there is strong theoretical rationale to expect that public safety personnel, due to the mission of their organizations, will be less likely to succumb to the self-interested motives of labor unions (Lee and Olshfski, 2002). The data here suggests the contrary, but future research should address the generalizability of that claim. As such, it is important to systematically examine how, if at all, do the motivations of public safety unions differ from other employee unions?

Overall this paper adds to the knowledge of PSM theory by exploring the labor union as a social institution that inculcates beliefs, norms, and values in members. Furthermore, by looking at employees throughout the organizational hierarchy this research begins to explore PSM with respect to the proportion of employees who do not formally belong to professions. One major purpose here was to begin development of

hypotheses to examine the relationship between unionization and public service motivation theory in non-professional public employees. This paper lays the framework for future analyses examining labor unions as socializing forces, and how those organizations relate to the publicly oriented motives of government employees.

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