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Still a Public Service Ethos?

Work values, experience, and job satisfaction among government workers

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Synopsis: Getting the right people in the job, energizing them to work effectively for the organization's overall goals, and rewarding them for good performance, has long been regarded as a vital part of any lasting reform of the civil service.

This study explores how far governments are succeeding in these regards and, in particular, whether public and private sector employees in many countries differ in their motivational values, employment experiences, and job satisfaction. *Part I* outlines the theoretical and conceptual framework for analyzing these issues. *Part II* briefly describes the sources of evidence and measures used in this study, drawing upon the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) surveys on work orientations conducted in 1997, facilitating comparison among over two-dozen nations with differing state structures and political cultures. *Part III* outlines the results and analysis. The conclusion summarizes the major findings and considers their implications for how to motivate the workforce most effectively to optimize public sector performance.

For the book **For the People: *Public Service in the 21st Century***

Jim Hacker, Minister for the Department of Administrative Affairs: *"Who else is in this department?"*

Sir Humphrey Appleby: *"Well briefly, Sir, I am the Permanent Under Secretary of State, known as the Permanent Secretary. Woolley here is your Principal Private Secretary, I too have a Principal Private Secretary and he is the Principal Private Secretary to the Permanent Secretary. Directly responsible to me are 10 Deputy Secretaries, 87 Under Secretaries and 219 Assistant Secretaries. Directly responsible to the Principal Private Secretary are plain Private Secretaries, and the Prime Minister will be appointing 2 Parliamentary Under Secretaries and you will be appointing your own Parliamentary Private Secretary."*

Jim Hacker: *"Do they all type?"*

Yes Minister 'Open government' 25 February 1980

In recent decades many countries have sought to strengthen the quality, efficiency, and responsiveness of government services. In the United States these initiatives have resurfaced periodically in different guises, rationales, and doctrines under successive administrations; during the mid-1970s the concern was the reduction of bureaucratic red tape and paperwork; during the 1980s, it was downsizing the state, expanding the non-profit voluntary sector, and importing business school techniques into the 'new public management' (Hood 1998); during the 1990s the theme became 'reinventing government' that 'works better and costs less' (Osborne and Gaebler 1992); and the latest manifestation post 9/11 is the proposed radical reorganization of agencies under the planned Department of Homeland Security. Concern about government performance in the United States is shared by many other Western governments that have perhaps gone even further down this road through the process of privatization, marketization, and the import of corporate management techniques, as well as through the growth of distributed governance and of creating 'joined-up' agencies in the core executive (see Kamarck this meeting; also Ferlie et al. 1996; Farnham and Horton 1996; Nye and Donahue 2000; Donahue and Nye 2001; Peters and Pierre 2001). Post-Communist and Latin American societies have often experienced radical 'shock-therapy' designed to shrink the state, while administrative reforms in many poorer African states have emphasized investment in the human-capital of public sector workers, including improving the skills, training, pay and conditions of government employees (see Grindle this meeting; also Kettl 2000; Farazmand 1991, 2002).

One fundamental issue arising from attempts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector organizations is how far governments can succeed in recruiting, retaining, and rewarding well-motivated workers who are committed to achieving the goals of the organization. Indeed Behn (1995: 319) identified this as one of the three 'big' questions that scholars of public management should be attempting to answer, specifically "how public managers can motivate public employees (and citizens too) to pursue important public purposes with intelligence and energy". Getting the right people in the job, energizing them to work effectively for the

organization's overall goals, and rewarding them for good performance, has long been regarded as a vital part of any lasting reform of the civil service, and arguably a far more effective long-term strategy, motivational theories suggest, than structural reorganizations or technocratic solutions (Kettl 1995). It remains difficult to prove that factors such as work motivation, job rewards and employee talent actually matters to organizational performance. It could be that employees form a contented and satisfied work force, enjoying exceptionally generous benefits and perks, and yet the organization fails to achieve its primary goals. Indeed in a 'lean-and-mean' model, some level of dissatisfaction among the workforce could be interpreted as a sign that they are working hard and may be boosting productivity. Alternatively the structure and function of the organization may facilitate efficient achievement of its aims, almost irrespective of patterns of recruitment, rather like the army boot-camp model stripping down recruits and rebuilding them. Nevertheless a common assumption in personnel management, social psychology and public administration is that recruiting and matching the right people to the right job, then using suitable carrots and sticks to motivate good job performance, facilitates efficient service delivery. Attempts to build an effective public sector seem unlikely to succeed if, as popular stereotypes suggest, government bureaucrats in many countries are attracted by a protected world of job-security, regular pay-checks and safe pensions rather than by dedication to the public good; if the civil service is full of cautious, rule-following, and risk-averse lazy 'pen-pushers' unwilling to challenge the predominant ethos rather than aggressive go-getting innovators found in the private sector; and if the old-fashioned, hierarchical, hide-bound organizational culture of the civil service rewards longevity ('buggins turn') and promotes go-with-the-flow career loyalists rather than creative leadership, out-standing job performance, diversity of perspectives, and imaginative problem-solving (Newstrom, Reif and Monczka 1976; Baldwin 1991). There is a perception, at least in the United States, that the employment in the civil service generates less satisfaction than working in the private sector, an issue which could cause problems in recruiting government employees of the right caliber and skills (Light 2001). For example, in June 2002 a Brookings Institution report analyzing a survey of the federal bureaucracy expressed concern about widespread disaffection among the workforce: "*Federal employees' perceptions of the quality of their work life has declined significantly over the past year. After September 11, the majority of federal employees report decreasing job satisfaction, lower morale among their co-workers, continued problems obtaining the necessary resources to perform their jobs well, and decreased trust in their organizations and the federal government generally.*" (Brookings 2002). Work motivation is commonly regarded as critical for organizational behavior (Cooper and Robertson 1986), as well as for social psychology (Rousseau 1997). Despite the importance of understanding patterns of recruitment, retention and rewards in government work, a comprehensive literature review by

Wright (2001) concluded that studies in public management had established few consistent results or clear-cut conclusions. Even less systematic work has sought to compare work orientations among civil servants in different cultures and states around the world.

This study therefore seeks to analyze whether distinctive work orientations are evident among government workers and, in particular, whether public and private sector employees in many countries differ from each other in their motivational values, employment experiences, and job satisfaction. *Part I* outlines the theoretical and conceptual framework for analyzing these issues. *Part II* briefly describes the sources of evidence and measures used in this study, drawing upon the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) surveys on work orientations conducted in 1997. This survey facilitates comparison of work orientations: (i) between private and public sector workers; (ii) among major world regions including post-industrial, post-Communist, and some developing nations; and, (iii) by occupational rank within each sector. Countries participating in the survey included over two-dozen nations with differing state structures and political cultures. *Part III* outlines the results and analysis. The conclusion summarizes the major findings and considers their implications for how to motivate the workforce most effectively to optimize public sector performance.

I: Theoretical Framework

The primary aim of studies of job satisfaction and work motivation has been the pragmatic one of learning how to energize employees to perform their duties and responsibilities within an organization. The goal has been to find out how to get things done and thereby get the organization to 'work better and cost less'. An extensive literature has examined the motivation of employees in different environments, drawing upon organizational studies, occupational and industrial psychology, the sociology of the workplace, economics, public administration, and management studies (for a recent literature review see Wright 2001). Motivational theories drawing upon these disciplines have generally recognized the importance of two antecedent variables that are purported to determine job satisfaction, as illustrated in Figure 1, namely: (i) the *motivational values* that people bring to the job, including their prior needs, expectations, and priorities, and (ii) their subsequent *experience of employment* in the organization. As in previous studies (Hopkins 1983; Emmert and Tahler 1992; Perry and Wise 1990; DeSantis and Durst 1996), *job satisfaction* is understood here as a relative concept reflecting the congruence between prior motivational values and subsequent employment experiences. In turn, job satisfaction is expected to influence a more general work motivation, although this is usually inferred theoretically rather than observed directly, and in turn a motivated workforce is expected to contribute positively towards the performance of organizational goals.

[Figure 1 about here]

Motivational values concern the basic priorities, needs and values that people are seeking to fulfill from their work. Opportunities in the labor force offer a range of different rewards, which can be classified analytically into three major types. *Materialistic benefits* include matters such as pay and work-related pension or other financial benefits, opportunities for career promotion, good working conditions, flexible hours, job autonomy, convenience of work-place location, and job security. *Social benefits* include occupational status and social prestige, any opportunities for work-related travel, the acquisition of new skills and qualifications, intellectual interests, and access to social networks and social capital. Lastly *idealistic rewards* are exemplified by the desire to help people, to contribute towards society, to make the world a better place, to exercise creative or artistic talents, or to promote particular life-styles, social ideals, or beliefs. Values represent basic orientations, whether concerning personal, social or political goals and priorities, which in turn influence attitudes and shape behavior. Socialization theory suggests that, like other basic values, motivational goals towards work are acquired through formative experiences in the family and home, school, and local community during childhood and adolescence. Studies of socialization processes have commonly found that even young children can articulate a fairly developed sense of what they want to do when they grew up, influenced by observing roles around them, and these goals evolve as they enter adulthood. Decisions to select one career pathway over another involve trade-offs, or ranked priorities, among competing goals, such as the importance given to pay or job security. Such value priorities have been found to shape patterns of recruitment and job choices, including the careers that graduates pursue upon first leaving college (Gabris and Simo 1995; Karl and Sutton 1998). The double arrow in the model suggests that motivational values shape the initial decision to enter particular jobs in the labor force, but that subsequent employment experiences may modify these initial priorities. The model assumes that motivational work values will help shape the initial decision to enter the public or private sectors, if each is commonly associated with certain distinctive rewards. Hence those seeking to serve the community and help people might be drawn to become teachers, nurses or social workers, while those attracted by job security and good pensions may decide to enter the civil service or local government, while managers in the private sector might give higher priority to material benefits such as generous salaries or company cars. Some evidence has been found to support these propositions, for example Karl and Sutton (1998) report that public sector employees lent greater emphasis to interesting work, while by comparison private sector workers gave higher priority to good wages. Yet others studies have found little consistent evidence that each sector was strongly associated with different values. Understanding motivational values is important when considering whether governments are offering the right package of benefits to

recruit and retain good-quality workers from the labor force (Crewson 1995; Crewson and Guyot 1997).

Employment experience represents the actual rewards and benefits that people believe that they receive from work, and these can also be expected to differ systematically between public and private sector organizations (Boyne 2002). In particular, financial rewards may be lower in the civil service than in equivalent managerial positions in the corporate world and evidence suggests that this disparity may have grown as pay and conditions for senior public sector officials have been deteriorating in many countries in recent years (Peters and Hood 1995; Schiavo-Campo 1998). Government agencies are not subject to the financial discipline of the marketplace, which makes it more difficult to relate job promotions and pay rises to simple monetary indicators of performance like sales and profitability, although at the same time this situation has traditionally offered civil servants greater job security and work-related pension benefits. On the negative side, work in the public sector can also be expected to offer managers less autonomy and independence. Government agencies are required to meet certain ethical and professional standards of public service -- especially those of democratic accountability, probity, transparency, equity, and responsiveness -- that do not limit decisions to the same degree in the corporate world. Because of these requirements, traditional Weberian public sector organizations have usually imposed greater procedural and bureaucratic constraints on the actions of their employees, for example in the allocation of government benefits according to standardized rules that limit opportunities for local officials to decide upon cases for discretionary payments. There are many reasons, therefore, to believe that public and private sector employees experience different benefits from work, but beyond the basic public-private dichotomy, the rewards of work can also be expected to be influenced by many other factors, including occupational status and rank, the function and size of the organization, the managerial culture and the organizational structure.

The difference between people's motivational values and their actual experience of the rewards and benefits from work contributes towards **job satisfaction**, understood as a relative concept. If initial expectations match the experienced benefits fairly closely then we would expect to find high job satisfaction. If, however, people pursue a certain job only to find that it fails to deliver the expected benefits, then they can either adapt their initial expectations to the actual conditions they experience, or they can become disillusioned and demoralized, in which case if there are other opportunities in the labor market they could decide to leave for greener pastures. Job satisfaction is related to broader conceptions of more complex phenomenon, such as life satisfaction, contentment, well-being, and the pursuit of happiness (Myers 1993). Job satisfaction

involves many components in social psychology, and the definition used here is a minimalist one which simplifies many complex issues. Nevertheless it does tap into a common way of understanding the rewards people derive from the workplace. It is often assumed that public sector workers often experience less satisfaction than those in equivalent positions in the private sector, for example if senior civil servants have lower pay, fewer perks, poorer working conditions, or more bureaucratic constraints than corporate managers, yet the evidence supporting these claims remains mixed (Hopkins 1983). Even if 'objective' conditions of working in the public and private sectors differ, this does not necessarily mean that these will generate differences in job satisfaction, because the essential point is the relative match between expectations and conditions.

II: Evidence

One problem with sorting out the often contradictory and inconclusive findings in the evidence is that many previous studies have used purposive or convenience samples within particular organizations and types of jobs, such as studies of health workers or local officials in employment or housing agencies. Moreover any studies limited only to public sector employees, such as the experience of senior managers in the federal bureaucracy, tell us little unless we can compare them with those working in equivalent positions in the private sector. Qualitative studies provide rich ethnographic insights into people's work experience but at the same time small numbers of interviews limit the ability to make reliable generalizations that hold across different sectors, types of organizations, and occupational strata. Surveys of the school-leaving or college populations can help us to understand the initial decision to pursue a particular career path, but these are also limited because unless longitudinal panel surveys are used studies cannot monitor the process of subsequent employment experiences and job satisfaction, still less how initial motivational values are modified by experience in the workforce. Surveys limited to one particular nation make it difficult to generalize across different types of culture and state structures, such as the substantial contrasts between the civil service at Westminster, Washington DC, Paris, and Stockholm.

For all these reasons, this study draws on surveys with samples that are representative of the general population, including the working and non-working public, in many countries. The 1997 ISSP survey covered a wide range of nations including Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany (West and East), Great Britain, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States. The comparative framework therefore includes many of the most affluent countries in the world, although with

sharply different traditions of public sector employment. Within postindustrial societies, Norway and Sweden exemplify smaller affluent welfare states, with extensive public services, while the size of the public sector has historically been smaller in Japan and the United States. The surveys also include a wide range of post-Communist states in Eastern and Central Europe, as well as Asian societies. Countries were classified into five major world regions sharing similar cultural backgrounds and political traditions, illustrated in Table 1. The ISSP survey provides a wide range of measures and we have selected the ones focused on general attitudes toward motivational values, employment experiences, and job satisfaction. The logistic regression models use standard social controls for factors that have commonly been found to influence both motivational values and employment experiences, including age, gender, education and subjective social class.

III: Analysis

Motivational values

The first issue concerns why people seek careers in public service and whether they are motivated by different priorities to those opting to work in private business and industry. To explore this we used one simple item in the survey that asked people, irrespective of their current work status and location, whether they would prefer to work for private business or for the civil service. The results in Table 2 show considerable variations in different nations, with preferences almost evenly divided across both sectors among the pooled sample. The proportion opting to work for the government was particularly strong in many post-Communist countries as well as in the two developing societies under comparison (Bangladesh and the Philippines). Interestingly, the Anglo-American countries had some of the lowest proportions wanting to work for government, and the Scandinavians were (perhaps surprisingly) low, while the Western European nations were in the middle of the distribution. In a simple cross-tabulation, responses to this item was fairly closely correlated with the actual experience of working in these sectors, the majority (55%) of those actually working for the government said that they would choose to work in the public sector, and the same proportion who were employed in the private sector said that they would prefer to work in business. The striking variation in the popularity of public sector employment across nations is open to a number of possible explanations. Governments in Anglo-American nations could have a more difficult time in attracting workers because of recent public sector reforms. The new public management under Reagan and Thatcher may have reduced the perks and sinecures associated with government employment in these nations, as well as demoralizing workers and reducing their status, which may have boosted organizational performance at the expense of making it harder to recruit new staff. Evidence presented later

suggests that people working in the public sector in Anglo-American countries do experience weaker job security and poorer career prospects than colleagues in equivalent jobs in other regions. Nevertheless similar new public management reforms have been introduced in many countries, not just those in Anglo-American societies, so this seems unlikely to provide a complete explanation of such marked discrepancies as the contrasts evident between New Zealand, the United States and Britain, on the one hand, and France, Spain and Bangladesh, on the other. The contrasts between East and West Germany provide an important indication of the root cause. An alternative and more plausible explanation suggests that the cross-national variations may be associated with long-standing structural patterns in the labor force in developing, post-Communist, and postindustrial economies, including the size of the employment pool in the service sector. Careers in the civil service may well be popular in agrarian and industrial economies with fewer well-paid white-collar jobs for middle-class managers and professionals. The structure of the labor force is probably combined with cultural differences in orientations towards markets and the state, helping to explain the residual contrasts between Western and post-Communist Europe (and East and West Germany). Public sector employment is likely to be more attractive in countries in Central and Eastern Europe with a culture that tends to be more leftwing and sympathetic towards government than in countries with long experience of market economies and private enterprise.

[Figure 2 about here]

The advantage of measuring *preferences* for working in the private or public sector for the initial analysis of motivational values (rather than the *actual* experience of working in the public or private sectors) is that this item measures prospective or future career paths. It therefore covers the recruitment pool, even among those who are not currently employed in the paid labor force, as well as those who would most like to work in each sector irrespective of their current employer. To analyze how motivational values related to the perceived pros and cons of government work, the model in Table 2 looked at how far a range of values helped to predict preference for working in the public or private sectors. People were asked to evaluate the importance they would give to each of the seven items in considering a job, including factors such as a high income, job security and good prospects for career advancement. The analysis allows us to examine the motivational values prioritized held by people wanting to work for government. The model broke down the results by world regions, both to increase the reliability of the analysis by maximizing the number of cases in each region and also to see whether perceptions of public service careers varied in different areas. The models first entered the standard social controls then the motivational values.

[Table 2 about here]

The results in Table 2 show that, as expected, certain important differences in motivational values distinguished those who preferred working in the public and private sectors. As expected, given the image of both sectors, the primary reasons associated with a preference for public service were a job that was useful to society, a pattern that was both strong and significant across all regions with the exception of Asia (including Japan, the Philippines and Bangladesh). In Scandinavia, Western Europe and post-Communist Europe, all nations with strong welfare states and many professionals employed in the public sectors, working for the government was also seen as a job associated with helping other people. The other primary advantage of public employment was perceived to be the material incentive of job security; over half the public expressed a strong priority for job security, and the people who valued this highly were most likely to prefer public sector work. By contrast people who preferred working for business gave greater priority to the value of autonomy and the ability to work independently. This pattern was strong and significant across all world regions, suggesting that the image of government work as more rule-bound and circumscribed while private business allows more entrepreneurial independence is one deeply embedded in public perceptions in many cultures. The other values that people could prioritize presented a more mixed pattern; although the private sector might be expected to be associated with more generous salaries, in fact neither public nor private work sector work was consistently associated in the public's mind with levels of salary, intrinsic interest, or opportunities for career advancement. There is some indication that in some regions those opting to work in the private sector were more attracted by the intrinsic interest or stimulus of these careers, as well as by perceived opportunities for advancement, but these patterns were not statistically significant across all regions. The reasons why there are regional differences evident in the motivational values associated with the private or public sector have to remain speculative at this stage, but they could be possibly explained by a number of hypotheses, including political cultures governing the role and status of the civil service, 'objective' working conditions for government employees such as levels of pay and pensions, employment opportunities in other sectors of the labor market, as well as the broader role of the state in these societies.

Employment experience

One way to explore this further is to compare whether employees in the public and private sectors felt that they actually experienced different benefits and rewards from their work. Accordingly respondents currently active in the labor force were divided by employment sector. The survey asked workers how far they agreed or disagreed that a series of statements applied

to their job, replicating the same items already used for analysis. Table 3 shows the analysis broken down by global region, again controlling in the models for the standard social background factors. The results suggest that the motivational values prioritized by people who wanted to work for the public or private sectors were closely reflected in the actual conditions reported by people who had experience of working in these sectors. There was a broad congruence between values and experience. Working for government was extremely strongly related to a sense of public service to others and of contributing towards society. Civil servants work was also regarded as highly secure in every region but the Anglo-American democracies, although it is unclear how far reforms to this sector during the late 1980s and early 1990s, including privatization and downsizing the state, had contributed towards greater job insecurity in these particular countries. On the financial rewards, public sector employees reported that they enjoyed high salaries in the Anglo-American nations but high salaries were negatively related to public sector employment elsewhere. By contrast, people working in the private sector were far more likely to report that their job allowed them independence and autonomy, a pattern found across every region of the world. The responses concerning an interesting job and one with opportunities for career advancement proved mixed. We can conclude that the qualities that people most wanted from work, and the actual qualities experienced from participation in the labor force, both showed some marked differences by sector, broadly reflecting the mission and ethos of working for government or private business.

Job satisfaction

What are the qualities that help generate satisfaction with work? If job satisfaction is understood as the difference between value priorities regarded as important by employees and those rewards actually experienced in practice we need to compare the difference between the two. Figure 3 shows the main contrasts by sector. The largest gaps for both the public and private sectors were in job security, income, interest, and promotion prospects: in all these areas experience fell well behind how far these were valued. But the gaps were fairly similar both for people working in government and for business. On other qualities of work, there was a closer match between expectations and experience, but the public sector prove especially satisfied in experiencing work that contributed towards society or helped other people, far more so than the private sector. These differences remained as significant in multivariate models with controls (not reported here). What this suggests is that all employees desired better financial rewards and conditions of work, such as great stimulus, and yet there is no reason from these results to believe that public sector workers were less satisfied with their position.

This was confirmed by further analysis where people were asked directly *“How satisfied are you in your job?”* using a 7-point scale ranging from ‘completely satisfied’ to ‘completely dissatisfied’. The mean result for public sector workers was 5.22 compared with 5.24 for private workers, an insignificant difference. In comparison there were greater contrasts by occupational rank, ranging from the lowest satisfaction among blue-collar manual workers in both sectors (mean 5.06) and far greater satisfaction among senior officials and managers in both sectors (5.50).

IV: Conclusions

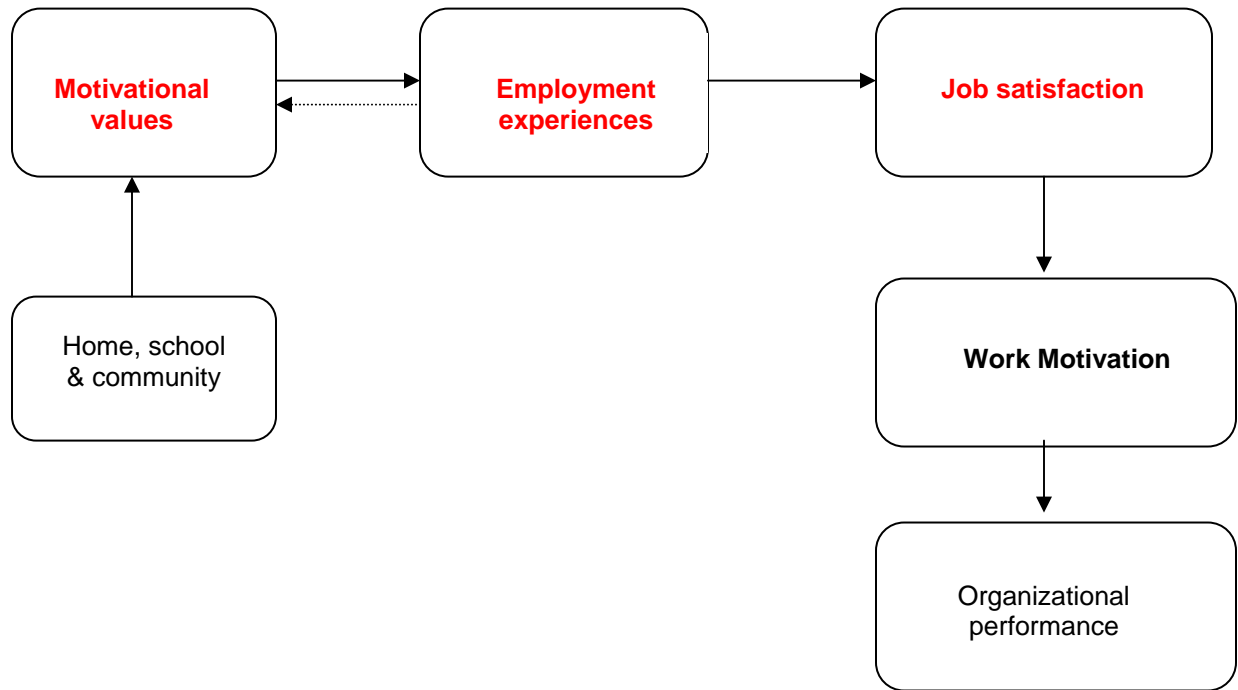
Although we would expect that employees would attach different rewards from work according to the sector in which they work, the empirical support for these differences has not always been demonstrated in previous studies. As Wright summarized the literature: *“In sum, the research on sector differences in employee motives should be viewed with some caution. Although some evidence has suggested that a relationship exists between employee motives and sector employment, these findings have not been entirely consistent and the causal direction remains uncertain.”* (Wright 2022: 566). Indeed it is true that when a wide variety of attitudes towards work were compared by sector, few significance differences were detected using the ISSP survey, for example when people were asked about the importance of work in their lives and how hard they worked, about the most appropriate criteria for promotion, about their perceptions of the labor market and how easy or difficult it would be to get another job, about how far they could use their past work experience or skills in their present job, and about relations between management and employees, as well as between colleagues. A comparison across all these dimensions suggested that there was more where public and private sector employees agreed than differed in their work orientations. The contrasts by occupational rank within each sector were far stronger than the contrasts across sectors¹.

Nevertheless there were some basic aspects where public and private sector workers disagreed, and these related less to work conditions per se than to the broad mission of the organization and therefore to some of the rewards within each. Private sector workers did experience greater freedom and autonomy in their job, which may plausibly be related to the lower level of constraints that they experience. Public sector organizations operate with many more constraints, due to the greater need for bureaucratic rules to insure democratic accountability, for transparent standards of public policymaking, and for equity in dealing with public service clients. As such public sector managers have less freedom than their business equivalents, but at the same time they have a stronger sense of fulfilling a useful role that contributes towards society as well as enjoying greater job security. The civil service has a

distinctive mission which is to serve the public and its employees seem to strongly reflect this ethos, and to feel that this work was rewarding, they were not simply motivated by some of the negative stereotypes that are sometimes associated with this sector. Lastly public sector employees were as satisfied with their job as those in private employment. If there is a widespread perception that perhaps the public sector in the United States has growing problems in recruiting employees, or at least employees of the right caliber and quality (Light 2001), then it is not apparent as a result of the comparative evidence presented in this study.

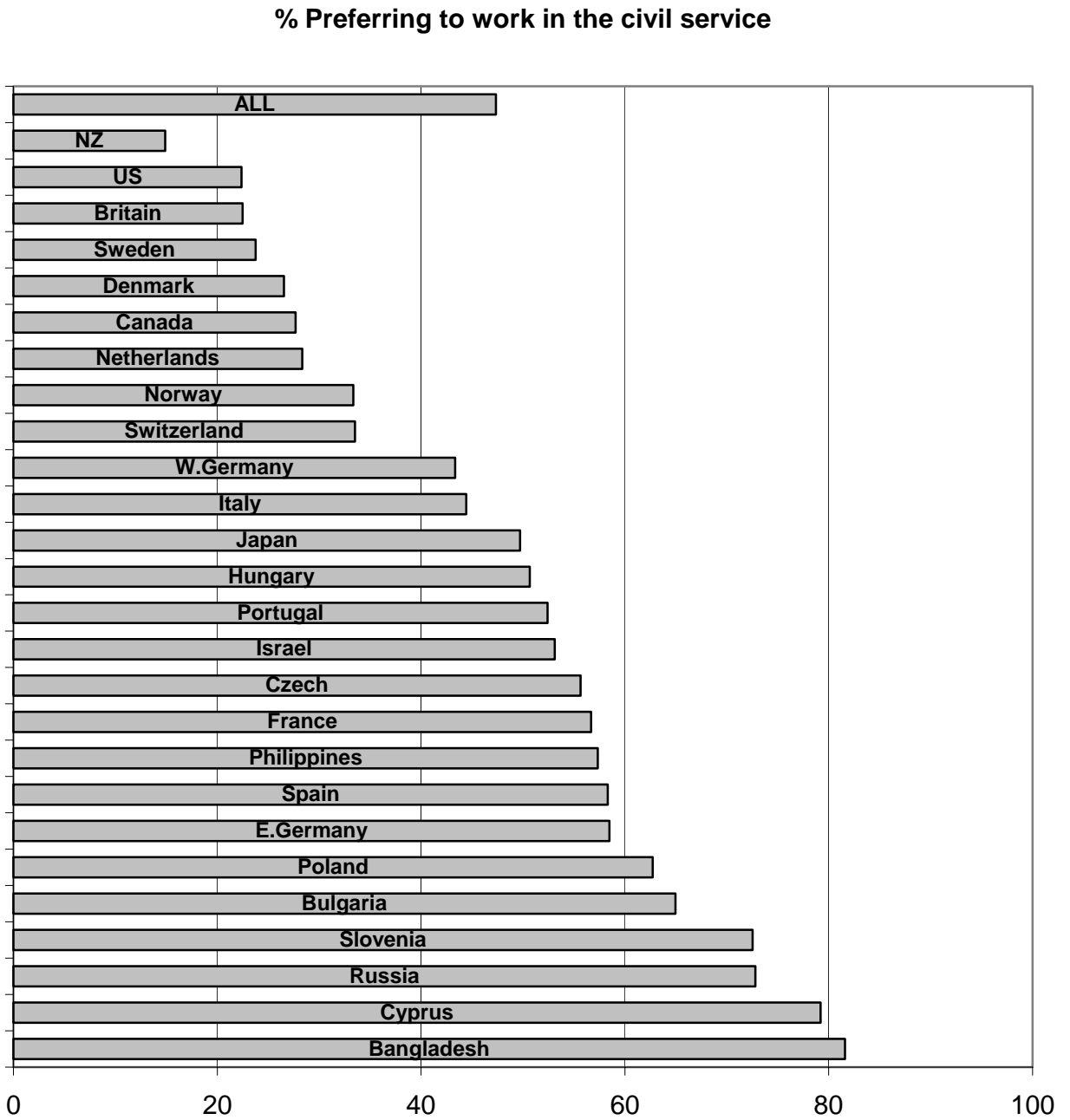
We cannot demonstrate that a well-satisfied workforce is a precondition for effective and efficient government performance. It could be that public sector workers are largely happy with their lot, feeling relatively well-paid and secure, and yet government departments may still fail to recruit the type of entrepreneurial go-getter or innovative manager that are best for achieving certain organizational goals. Certainly those who admire the private sector model could argue that the evidence presented here cannot address their criticisms of the government bureaucracy in failing to generate effective service delivery. Perhaps the government attracts too many risk-averse people who care too much about job security and less about innovation and challenging work. These concerns are addressed elsewhere in this book and would take us far beyond the confines of this limited study. Nevertheless the evidence in this chapter suggesting that public sector workers find their work fulfilling and rewarding should prove encouraging for civil service managers, for government, and indeed for the broader public who depend upon their services.

Figure 1: Model of Job Satisfaction



Note: Adapted from Wright (2001)

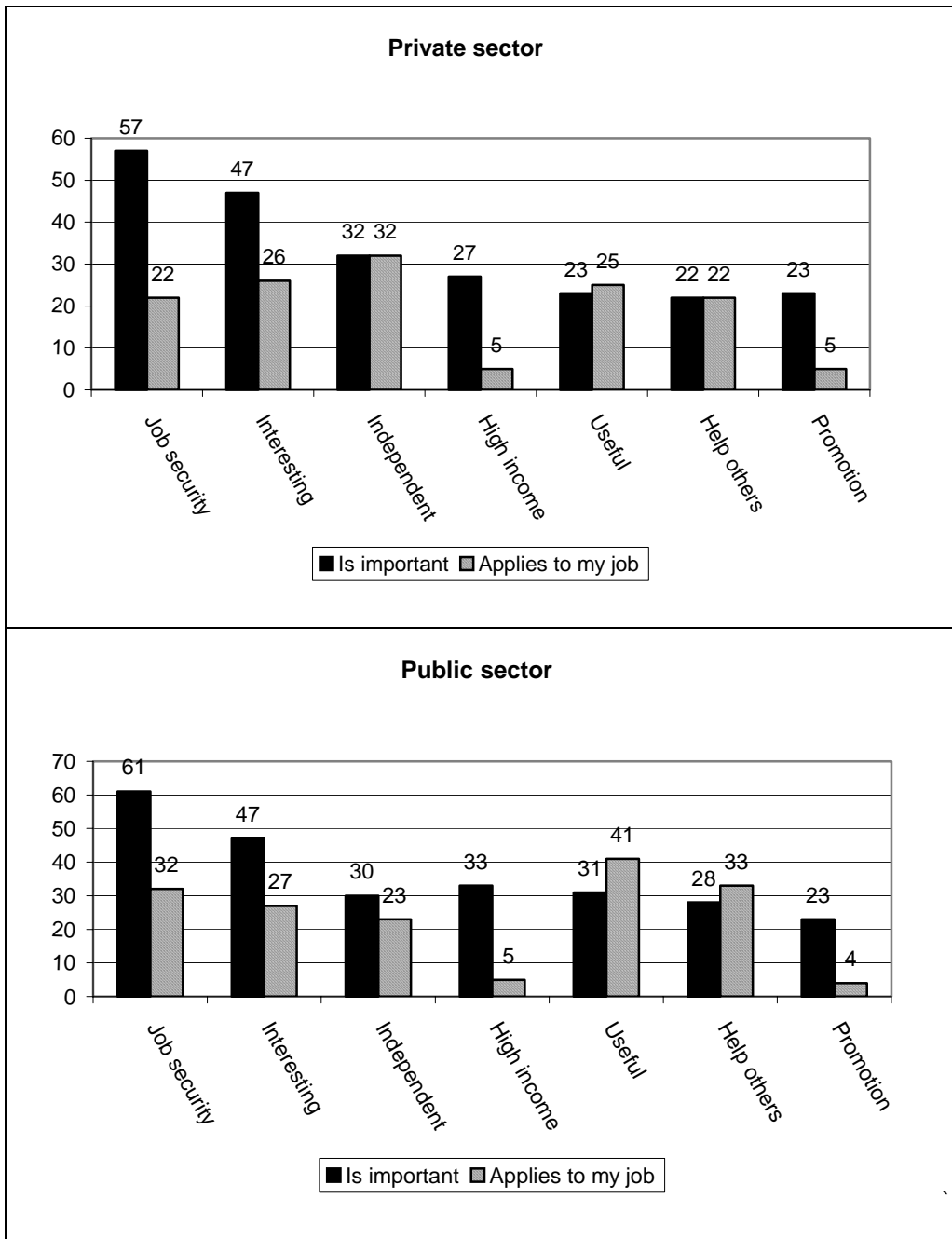
Figure 2: Preferences for working in the public sector



Q: "I would choose to work in a private business or the civil service"

Source: ISSP 1997

Figure 3: Contrasts between motivational values and employment experiences



Motivational values: Q: "How important do you personally think each of the following items is in a job?" (5-point scale from 'Very important' to 'Not important at all.')

Employment experiences: Q: "How much do you agree or disagree that these statements apply to your job?" (5-point scale from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree.')

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 'Work Orientations II' 1997

Table 1: Classification of regions and nations

Anglo-American	Scandinavian	Western Europe	Central and Eastern Europe	Asia
Britain	Denmark	West Germany	East Germany	Philippines
Canada	Norway	Italy	Hungary	Bangladesh
New Zealand	Sweden	Netherlands	Czech Republic	Japan
United States		Spain	Slovenia	
		France	Poland	
		Cyprus	Bulgaria	
		Portugal	Russia	
		Israel		
		Switzerland		
N.4462	N.4586	N.12915	N.8014	N.3200

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 'Work Orientations II' 1997

Table 2: Values predicting preference for working in the public sector

	Anglo- US	Scand.	W. Europe	C. & E. Europe	Asia
Social controls					
Age	.01 *	.01 ***	.01	.03 ***	-.01 **
Gender	.15 *	.94 ***	.39 ***	.42 ***	.10
Subjective class	-.04	-.07 *	-.03	-.08 ***	.01
Education	.03	.09 **	-.07 ***	-.09 ***	-.13 ***
Motivational values					
A useful job to society	.33 ***	.35 ***	.23 ***	.14 **	-.01
Job security	.25 ***	.36 ***	.33 ***	.24 ***	.37 ***
High income	.13 *	-.04	.25 ***	.07	-.30 ***
A job that helps other people	.06	.24 ***	.14 ***	.10 **	-.04
An interesting job	-.02	-.15	-.23 ***	.06	-.10
Good opportunities for advancement	-.02	-.10	.03	-.11 ***	-.07
A job that allows someone to work independently	-.25 ***	-.35 ***	-.29 ***	-.27 ***	-.12 *
Constant	-3.8	-4.2			
% Correct	78%	72%	50%	67%	70%
Nagelkerke R ²	.04	.17	.11	.13	.08
N.	3368	2571	8342	6201	2295

Note:

Motivational values: Q: "How important do you personally think each of the following items is in a job?" (5-point scale from 'Very important' to 'Not important at all.')

Dependent variable: "I would choose to work in a private business (0) or the civil service (1)."

The table represents unstandardized beta coefficients and their significance using logistic binary regression models. *** p.001 ** .01 * .05

Age (Years); Subjective class 6-point scale; Gender (1) Male, (2) Female; Educational qualifications 7-point scale.

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 'Work Orientations II' 1997

Table 3: The qualities associated with the experience of working in the public sector

	Anglo-US	Scand.	W. Europe	C. & E. Europe	Asia
Social controls					
Age	.01	.02 **	.01 ***	.02 ***	.02 *
Gender	.68 **	.98 ***	.32 ***	.50 ***	-.08
Subjective class	.06 *	-.08 *	.03	-.03	.15 *
Education	.14 **	.29 **	.26 ***	.24 ***	.39 ***
Employment experience					
A useful job to society	.50 **	.77 ***	.36 ***	.46 ***	.62 ***
Job security	-.01	.17 **	.53 ***	.07 *	.91 ***
High income	.20 **	-.33 ***	-.03	-.22 ***	-.45 ***
A job that helps other people	.25 ***	.34 ***	.09 *	.10 *	-.21
An interesting job	.05	-.10	-.02	-.10 *	-.24 *
Good opportunities for advancement	-.25 **	.05	-.07 *	.07	-.24 *
A job that allows someone to work independently	-.19 **	-.42 **	-.50 ***	-.46 ***	-.40 ***
Constant	-5.4	-5.9	-5.3	-2.4	-4.8
% Correct	71%	74%	79%	65%	80%
Nagelkerke R ²	.20	.34	.19	.17	.38
N.	1412	2101	5629	3370	992

Note:

Employment experiences: Q: "How much do you agree or disagree that these statements apply to your job?" (5-point scale from 'Strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.)

Dependent variable: Respondent works (1) for the government, for a publicly owned firm, for a cooperative, for a non-profit organization, or (0) respondent works for the private sector or is self-employed.

The table represents unstandardized beta coefficients and their significance using logistic binary regression models. *** p.001 ** .01 * .05

Age (Years); Subjective class 6-point scale; Gender (1) Male, (2) Female; Educational qualifications 7-point scale.

Source: International Social Survey Programme, 'Work Orientations II' 1997

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¹ It should be noted that further detailed evidence on all these points can be presented, broken down by sector, nation, and occupational rank, if of interest for the book, but the results were discounted for this initial draft because of length constraints. There are many other attitudes towards work orientation included in the ISSP survey not discussed here.