

Public Service Motivation – Individual Performance mediated by Organizational Commitment: The effect of Public Service Motivation on the Maldives Civil Service

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Abstract

Purpose: Public Service Motivation (PSM) has been mostly researched in the Western context, and limited studies have investigated it from an Asian perspective more precisely no prior research has been done from a very small island economy perspective where the public sector is less developed. Hence the purpose of this paper is to investigate the effect of PSM on job performance in a small island economy such as the Maldives.

Design Methodology/Approach: This research used quantitative research design and deployed cross-sectional research approach. Data was collected from all Civil Service offices through random sampling using an online questionnaire, and 341 usable responses were taken for further analysis. Structural Equation Modelling was used to test the hypothesis.

Findings: The results affirm some of the previous findings that public Service Motivation positively affects job performance, however, this result is based on the two dimensions which were Compassion and Self-Sacrifice. This research tested the mediation effect of PSM through organizational commitment on job performance, which was not significant in the context of Maldives Civil Servants. This research also tested the moderation effect of gender on the relationship between Job performance and PSM, which was not significant.

Originality/Value: There is limited research on the direct relationship between on PSM and Job Performance especially in the South Asian context, hence this study contributed to existing literature by confirming this relationship from an Asian country and developing country perspective. The findings of this study have practical implications from a human resource management perspective for the Civil Service of Maldives, especially the significance of employees' attitudes and values in shaping individual behaviour..

Keywords: Public Service Motivation, Task Performance, Adaptive Performance, Organizational Commitment

1. Introduction

Public sector accounts for 20% of employment in OECD countries, hence as argued by Ritz, Vandenabeele, and Vogel (2021) public sector plays a substantial role in the global economies. The individual contribution and service of public sector employees remains at the heart public performance engine; thus, it remains vital to understand how employee motivation and the person organization fit effects the service performance and other related individual outcomes. Therefore, Public Service Motivation remains to be an important area of research in public administrator study, to improve the

individual performance and overall performance of public sector, as most of the governments now are service oriented organizations, that are HR intensive.

In the Maldives, both the private sector and ordinary citizens seek service from public offices, mostly those under the Civil Service. However, whether the ethos of public service, which is being a true knight is reflected in the service provided, is questionable as a report published by Maldives Civil Service Commission indicates that the general public does not believe that they can receive an unbiased service (Shameem et al., 2018). This indicates that those working in the Maldives Civil Service lack the essence of altruism, which according to public administration researchers' is a pre-requisite to work in the public sector. Since the term Public Service Motivation (PSM) was coined by James L Perry and Wise (1990), in their paper "Motivational Bases of Public Service", PSM has received wider attention among public administration scholars (Palma, Crisci, & Mangia, 2020).

Public administration scholars perceived that individuals who join the public sector are those with PSM values (McCarthy, Wei, Homberg, & Tabvuma, 2019), and they are likely to perform better. Infact one of the most critical research areas, has been consciously searching for an answer to whether PSM enhances job performance (Miao, Eva, Newman, & Schwarz, 2019). Although PSM and job performance have been studied, researchers argue that this relationship still sparks debate, such as whether the effect of PSM on Job performance is direct or indirect, what type of individual performance is influenced by PSM, and finally how strong is the effect of PSM on job performance (Ritz et al., 2021). As inadequate research has been undertaken to explore the motivational base of those working in the Maldives Civil Service, especially how this influences their job performance, analyzing the relationship between Public Service Motivation and Job Performance of those working in the Maldives Civil Service, will create a new avenue in understanding the work-related issues of those who work in the Maldives Civil Service. Furthermore, this research will contribute to existing research undertaken by considering the relevance of PSM in the context of Maldives, by testing the strength of the relationship of PSM and job performance in a different context. Especially given that as reported by (Hameduddin & Engbers, 2021) research done on PSM in the context of South Asia remains to be underrepresented.

2. Literature Review

This part of the paper would investigate theoretical development of the conceptual framework, which is being used in this research. Hence briefly look into the development of Public Service Motivation Theory, conceptualization of job performance and organizational commitment, as these are the main variables used in this research.

Development of the concept of Public Service Motivation (PSM)

James L Perry and Wise (1990), theorized the concept of Public Service Motivation (PSM) and defined PSM as "an Individual Predisposition to respond to motivates grounded primarily or uniquely in the public institutions"(James L Perry & Wise, 1990). Since then, several researchers have modified this terminology, by keeping the original idea unchanged as such the need to provide a service to the public. For instance, Brewer and Selden (1998) state that PSM is "the motivational force that induces individuals to perform meaningful public service". Meanwhile, Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) define PSM as "general altruistic motivation to serve the interest of a community of people, a state, a nation or humankind" (Bellé, 2013). One of the most common definitions, in recent years, has been given by Vandenabeele (2007) where PSM is defined as "the belief, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and organizational interest, that concern the interest of a larger political entity and the motivates individuals to act accordingly" (van Loon, Kjeldsen, Andersen, Vandenabeele, & Leisink, 2018).

Public Service Motivation (PSM) is seen as a need-based, theory, where a person joins the public sector to fulfil a very specific need, which is; affective, normative and rational motive (Rayner, Reimers, & Chao, 2018). PSM is also taken as a multi-dimensional concept and the initial typology developed by Perry (Perry, 1996, p,5 as stated in Alcoba and Phinaitrup (2019) consisted of six dimensions such as "Attraction to Public Policy Making, Commitment to Public Interest, Civic Duty,

Social Justice, Self- Sacrifice and Compassion”. As explained by Alcoba and Phinaitrup (2019) these six dimensions have been refined into four dimensions, such as “ Attraction to Public Policy Making, Commitment to Public Interest, Self-Sacrifice and Compassion” which is more widely used and applied in Public Administration literature (Slabbinck & Van Witteloostuijn, 2020). Attraction to Public Policy Making means the desire to participate in public policy decisions, get involved in affairs which affect the common good, attraction towards the provision of public service and also show interest in public policy and politics to a certain degree, and this is linked to the rational motive of a person (Slabbinck & Van Witteloostuijn, 2020). Commitment to public interest means the need to provide service for the common good of society, and hence achieve social equity, and this is linked to the normative motive of a person (Slabbinck & Van Witteloostuijn, 2020). Compassion is showing empathy, understanding and being able to identify with the needs and wants of others in the society, hence seen as benevolence and kindness (Alcoba & Phinaitrup, 2019). Self-Sacrifice is seen as the willingness to give up material rewards, or what benefits a person to help others in the society, hence seen as a form of patriotism (Alcoba & Phinaitrup, 2019). Both compassion and Self- Sacrifice is linked to the affective motive of the person (Slabbinck & Van Witteloostuijn, 2020).

Theory of Job Performance

The focus of Human resources is mostly on trying to improve employees' job performance, either through providing a monetary incentive or by understanding what affects employees' work motivation. One of the most well-known models of job performance is given by Borman and Motowidlo which differentiates between task and contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; C.Borman, R.Ilggen, & J.Klimoski, 2003). Motowidlo (2003) as stated In Obuobisa-Darko (2020) defines job performance as “ the total expected value to organization of the discrete behavioral episodes that an individual carries out over a standard period of time”.

Job performance is mainly taken as having several dimensions, where some see it as task and contextual as the most important dimensions of job performance (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). Job performance includes many dimensions such as adaptive performance, creative performance, counterproductive work behaviour and so on (Pavithra & Deepak, 2021). In this research job, performance is taken to include task, in-role behaviour, and adaptive performance. Task performance is related to the main function undertaken, and it's about meeting the job requirement and is defined as “ The proficiency with which one performs his/her assigned job that is formally recognized as part of their jobs” (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993) as stated in (Obuobisa-Darko, 2020). Adaptive performance is seen as “the ability of employees to understand and adapt to the changes that happen in the organization and the surrounding environment” (Pavithra & Deepak, 2021).

Public Service Motivation and Job performance

A decade ago with the discovery of the concept of Public Service Motivation (PSM), it has become one of the prominent theories of work motivation of public sector employees (Corduneanu, Dudau, & Kominis, 2020; Ritz et al., 2021). With the development of PSM, which is solely focusing on the need of the public sector, researchers have highlighted the need to strengthen PSM characteristics to improve job performance, and other positive work-related behaviour of public sector employees (Sharin, 2020). In the domain of PSM, job performance has remained to be a significant area of research producing mixed results, hence creating debate among PSM scholars on whether there is a direct association between PSM and Job performance. While some studies have confirmed the direct association between PSM and Job performance (Bellé, 2013; Naff & Crum, 1999; Palma, Hinna, & Mangia, 2017; Pratama & Hidayah, 2019; van Loon et al., 2018) other studies show that there is no positive association with PSM and Job performance (Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Bright, 2007; Leisink & Steijn, 2009; Palma et al., 2020).The direct effect of PSM on job performance is linked to self-determination theory while indirect effect of PSM on job performance is linked to institutional theory and person-environment fit theory.

Organizational commitment and its mediation effect on Job performance

Organizational commitment is seen as an important aspect of human resource management over the past 70 years or so, due to its effect on micro-level outcomes such as job performance, absenteeism, turnover, prosocial behaviour and so on (Klein, Brinsfield, & Cooper, 2020). Organizational Commitment is also seen as an important mediator in motivating and influencing work-related behaviour (Klein et al., 2020). Hence public service motivation is likely to improve organizational commitment, which would then increase the job performance. Therefore, it is assumed that the effect of Public Service Motivation (PSM) on Job Performance is mediated through Organizational Commitment. Organizational Commitment could be seen as Psychological connection and involvement with the organization (Kundi, Aboramadan, Elhamalawi, & Shahid, 2020). This creates willingness and desire to participate in the organization and creates devotion and loyalty towards the organization.

Organizational Commitment is a multi-dimensional construct, which includes affective, normative and continuance commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Klein et al., 2020; Suzuki & Hur, 2019). Among these three affective commitment is seen as the best predictor of employees' micro-level behaviour in an organization (Suzuki & Hur, 2019), hence in this research organizational commitment is taken as affective commitment in this research, to analyze how it mediates the relationship between job performance and Public Service Motivation.

3. Conceptual Framework

The diagram below depicts the conceptual framework used in this research. Public Service Motivation is usually measured by four dimensions, Attraction to Public Policy, Commitment to Public Interest, Compassion and Self-Sacrifice. However, in this research, only two dimensions are used to measure PSM. This is because, in the context of Maldives Civil Service, two dimensions were valid, after Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

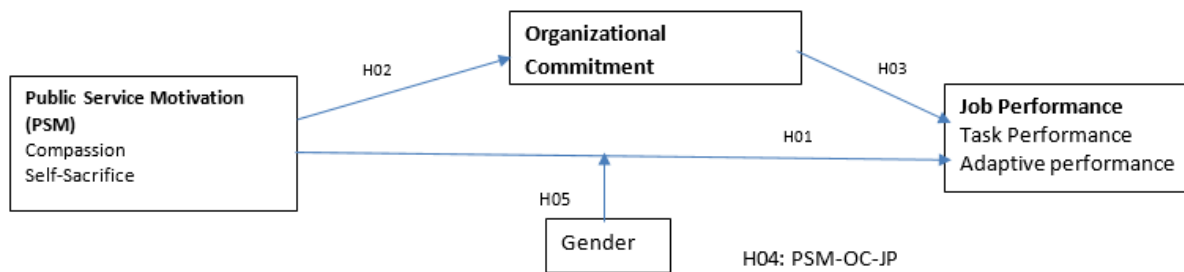


Diagram 1. Conceptual Framework

Compassion and Self Sacrifice were taken to fit with the data; hence these two dimensions would be used in this research.

4. Methods and Data Collection

Quantitative method was deployed to analyse the data, hence structural equation modelling using to test the hypothesis. The following elaborates on the hypothesis tested and the way measures were developed, sampling and data analysis methods.

Research Hypothesis

Previous research has demonstrated the effect of Public Service Motivation on Job performance, however as explained earlier, the evidence seems less compelling due to mixed findings. While job performance was mainly taken as a single construct, this research uses adaptive performance and task performance, in explaining job performance, hence analyzing the effect of Public Service Motivation on Job Performance through adaptive and task performance, while considering

Organizational commitment as a mediating factor. Hence the following hypothesis would be tested in this research.

H1: Public Service Motivation Positively effects Job Performance

Hypothesis 1 would test the positive direct effect of Public Service Motivation on Job performance, in the context of Maldives Civil Service. The effect of PSM on Job Performance has been mostly studied in the context of developed countries, which has a developed public sector (Gupta, Dash, Kakkar, & Yadav, 2020) and as PSM lacks a global reach (Hameduddin & Engbers, 2021) it's vital to understand whether PSM affects job performance similarly in a small island economy, where the public sector is still very far behind in becoming a modern public sector. Therefore, this research would contribute to the existing literature by filling the research gap in analyzing the effect of Public Service Motivation on Job performance, among public sector workers in a small island economy and in a South Asian context. It would further strengthen the argument of the effect of PSM on self-reported individual performance.

H2: Public Service Motivation Positively effects of Organizational Commitment

The next hypothesis of this study test how PSM would effect organizational commitment. In the seminal work done by James L Perry and Wise (1990) has stated that PSM is likely to increase organizational commitment and hence improve job performance. Hence this hypothesis test the positive effect PSM on organizational commitment.

H3: Organizational Commitment positively effects job performance

The third hypothesis test whether organizational commitment improves job performance. As researchers have indicated having organizational commitment the psychological connection and involvement with the organization is likely to enhance job performance, this hypothesis test effect of organizational commitment on job performance.

H4: Organizational Commitment Mediates the relationship between job performance and Public Service Motivation.

The effect of PSM could be direct or indirect. The indirect effect is explained by institutional theory. Hence this hypothesis test whether PSM and job performance relationship could increase through organizational commitment. As James L Perry and Wise (1990) argues that PSM would enhance organizational commitment and this would enhance job performance, this hypothesis test the indirect effect of PSM on job performance through organizational commitment

H5: The Positive effect of Public Service Motivation on Job Performance is Significantly different for males and females

The final hypothesis of this research test how gender moderates the relationship between PSM and job performance. This is an important area to test, as Maldives Civil Service is dominated by female representation. Hence this hypothesis test whether the positive direct effect of PSM on job performance is different for males and female, and whether this relationship is stronger for particular group.

Measures

Public Service Motivation (PSM) was measured by using the scale developed by Perry (1996) (Stefurak, Morgan, & Johnson, 2020), which consists of 24 items. PSM is measured as a multi-dimensional concept and it has 4 main constructs, which are Attraction to Public Policy, Self-Sacrifice, Compassion and Commitment to Public Interest. All the items of PSM were measured using a Likert Scale of five from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Job Performance construct was measured by two dimensions, which are Task and Adaptive performance. These two measures were taken by the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWQP) 1.0 developed by Koopmans, Hildebrandt, Buuren, Beek, and Vet (2013). Task Performance contains five items and Adaptive Performance consist of 9 items using a Likert scale of five from never to always. For Organizational Commitment, Affective commitment is used, as this is more relevant in the context of the Public Sector. Organizational Commitment is measured using six-item scale

developed by, Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) (as stated in (Potipiroon & Ford, 2017), on a Likert scale of five from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

5. Methods

This research is focused on those who work in the Civil Service of the Maldives, which includes 24,516 employees as per the statistics available from the Maldives Civil Service in the year 2020. There are 662 Civil Service offices, across the Maldives which fall under different government ministries and offices. Among these 9,512 employees work in Male' the capital and 13,705 work in the outer Atolls. As this study is focused on administrative and managerial jobs, some professional categories, such as teachers and doctors have been excluded. Hence although hospitals and schools fall under civil service, all schools and hospitals are excluded, hence this gives a study population of 9,968 (Commission, 2020). The required sample size is 370, based on the table created by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) and Cohen (1969) as stated in Sekaran and Bougie (2020).

To capture this sample, an online questionnaire was administered to all 9,968 civil servants through the Civil Service Commission, which is the main agency which performs the overall human resource functions of the government. An Email was sent to Civil Service Commission along with a letter, requesting to approach the different government offices under the commission, along with the questionnaire link. The commission then sends a formal request to all Permanent Secretaries, of the relevant line ministries which fall under the executive branch of the government. The Permanent secretaries shared the questionnaire link to the employees that fall under a particular ministry. The questionnaire was created on google form with a cover letter stating the purpose and stating that it's voluntary for respondents to participate. Civil Service Commission administered the online survey, and a reminder was sent three times from the commission to all the government offices. The total response received was 405, which is 69.9% based on the 579 which were the number of people with questionnaire was shared with. The total number of respondents on which the data was analyzed was 341, after removing outliers and extreme values.

6. Results and Analysis

The following part discusses the results and analysis of the responses received. First demographic analysis was undertaken using SPSS, followed by Exploratory Factor Analysis, and then the application of Structural Equation Modelling to test the hypothesis.

Demographic Analysis

The total responses taken for analysis were 341. As could be observed 55.4% of the respondents are females, and this is quite reflective as female dominates the Maldives Civil Service. Maldives Civil Service in general has a young population, as this is also seen in the age category as 41.3% fall to 25 to 35 years of age, while 14.1% fall to 18 to 24 years of age. Most of those who work in Civil Service have a diploma or a higher level of qualification, and many have worked for 1 to 4 years. Apart from this, they were asked whether they have worked in the private sector before and whether they believe they have sufficient knowledge and skills to undertake the work. 61% of the 341 respondents said they have never worked in the private sector before, and 92.4% admitted that they have the skills and knowledge to undertake the work.

Table 1 *Demographic Analysis*

| Gender | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|
| Male | 152 | 44.6 |
| Female | 189 | 55.4 |
| Age | Frequency | Percent |
| 18 to 24 years | 48 | 14.1 |
| 25 to 35 years | 141 | 41.3 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 36 to 46 years | 94 | 27.6 |
| 46 to 55 years | 54 | 15.8 |
| 56 and above | 4 | 1.2 |
| Education | Frequency | Percent |
| Completed Grade 10 | 6 | 1.8 |
| O level | 23 | 6.7 |
| A level | 23 | 6.7 |
| Diploma | 104 | 30.5 |
| Degree | 80 | 23.5 |
| Masters | 91 | 26.7 |
| Postgraduate Level Certificate | 11 | 3.2 |
| PHD | 3 | .9 |
| Experience | Frequency | Percent |
| less than 1 year | 14 | 4.1 |
| 1 to 4 years | 89 | 26.1 |
| 5 to 9 years | 70 | 20.5 |
| 10 to 14 years | 57 | 16.7 |
| 15 to 19 years | 41 | 12.0 |
| 20 to 29 years | 49 | 14.4 |
| 30 and above | 21 | 6.2 |

7. Descriptive of the Study

Data were checked for outliers using SPSS and any significant outlier was removed. Following this data was checked for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. The descriptive of the study item wise provided in the appendix.

For most of the items of Public Service Motivation (PSM), which have four dimensions are having a mean of 4, while Attraction to Public Policy, mean is between 3 and 4. For Organizational commitment, the mean is between 3 and 4, where most of the items it's close to 4, except for the first statement "I would like to spend the rest of the career with my organization" where it is closer to 3, which indicates participants were neutral or they disagreed. For job performance, which has two dimensions for all the items mean was 4, except for the statement "I was able to carry out my work with minimum time and effort", which had a mean very close to 4, indicating that some were neutral to this statement while some agreed. The table below provides a descriptive summary of the variables.

Table 2 Descriptive Summary of the Variables

| Variables | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|
| Public Service Motivation | 341 | 2.44 | 5.00 | 4.0369 | .45319 |
| Attraction to Public Policy | 341 | 2.17 | 5.00 | 3.8226 | .57640 |
| Commitment to Public Interest | 341 | 2.50 | 5.00 | 4.0591 | .53718 |
| Compassion | 341 | 2.38 | 5.00 | 4.1389 | .55314 |
| Self-Sacrifice | 341 | 1.43 | 5.00 | 4.0850 | .70320 |
| Job Performance | 341 | 2.57 | 5.00 | 4.1868 | .55289 |
| Task Performance | 341 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.1062 | .64689 |
| Adaptive Performance | 341 | 2.89 | 5.00 | 4.2317 | .57092 |
| Organizational Commitment | 341 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.5870 | 1.08973 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 341 | | | | |

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA was performed on all the dimensions of Public Service Motivation together to check for how many factors were retained. In this process number of items in each dimension was dropped to due low factor loadings, and cross loadings. EFA was undertaken by using the Principal Component analysis method, and Varimax rotation method used. The final factor structure that emerged led to retaining only two dimensions which are Compassion and Self-Sacrifice. These two factors accounted for 66.239% of the variance explained and the Initial Eigen Values for the two factors were greater than 1, hence meeting the threshold for running EFA (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at less than 0.05, and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.833 and hence could be interpreted as meritorious as per Hair et al. (2010). All the items had a factor loading of 0.7 and above hence indicating practical significance for further analysis (Hair et al., 2010). Hence Public Service Motivation in the context of Maldives Civil Service is explained by two dimensions which are Compassion and Self-Sacrifice.

EFA for Job Performance revealed that Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant at less than 0.05, and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.993, and two factors accounted for 60.75% of the variance explained. While initial eigenvalues for two factors were greater than 1, and for all items factors' loadings were 0.5 and above. Hence all the thresholds were met as per Hair et al. (2010) in extracting factors for this variable. Task and Adaptive performance dimensions attained reliability of more than 0.7 and above, hence two factors were retained for the final measurement model. Similarly, EFA analysis for Organizational Commitment also showed factor adequacy in meeting the threshold of EFA. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant, and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 9.08. The total variance explained by the factor was 75.03% and the eigenvalue for the factor was greater than 1. All factor loadings were more than 0.5. Cronbach Alpha value was more than 0.7.

Measurement Model Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was undertaken for all the three variables used in this study, to assess construct validity and reliability before undertaking a full measurement model analysis. The first check for the measurement model was to check for unidimensionality, which was seen through factor loadings which were more than 0.6. Hair et al. (2010) suggest factor loadings to be more than 0.5 to meet this criterion. It is recommended that for an already established model factor loadings to be 0.6 and above and r^2 0.4 and above (Awang, 2015).

As observed, there are no items having factor loading of less than 0.6 and the r^2 values are more than 0.4. The fit indices that were used to check for model fit are RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) recommended by Browne and Cudeck (1992), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) given by Bentler and Bonett (1980), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) given by Bentler (1990) and Chi-square/Degrees of Freedom given by Marsh and Hocevar (1985). The table below depicts factor loadings, reliability analysis and fit indices for the measurement model.

Table 3 *Confirmatory Factor and Reliability Analysis*

| Constructs | Standardized Factor Loading | t-value |
|--|----------------------------------|---------|
| Compassion | (C.R.=0.75); $\alpha = 0.748$ | |
| I always think about the welfare of people when I do my work, even if I did not know the person personally (COM_5) | 0.77 | ** |
| I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another (COM_6) | 0.68 | 10.417 |
| I even show compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves (COM_7) | 0.67 | 10.313 |

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--------|
| Self-Sacrifice | (C.R.=0.819) $\alpha= 0.821$ | |
| Doing what is good is more important to me than doing well financially in life (SS_3) | 0.647 | 11.177 |
| Serving citizens would give me a good feeling even if I did not get a good salary (SS_5) | 0.71 | 12.264 |
| I feel people should give back to society more than they get from it (SS_6) | 0.78 | 13.347 |
| I am willing and prepared to sacrifice to do what is good for the society (SS_7) | 0.77 | ** |
| Task Performance | (C.R.=0.83); $\alpha= 0.821$ | |
| I was able to plan my work so I was able to finish within the given deadline (TP_1) | 0.66 | ** |
| I kept in mind the work results I needed to achieve my targets while doing the task assigned (TP_2) | 0.78 | 14.52 |
| I was able to distinguish main issues from side issues and hence tackle the important ones first (TP_3) | 0.74 | 11.188 |
| I was able to carry out my work with minimum time and effort (TP_4) | 0.66 | 10.338 |
| I planned my work optimally before actually attempting my task (TP_5) | 0.69 | 10.6 |
| Adaptive Performance | (C.R.=0.912); $\alpha= 0.917$ | |
| I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date (AP_1) | 0.712 | ** |
| I worked at keeping my job skills up-to-date (AP_2) | 0.654 | 15.906 |
| I have demonstrated flexibility (AP_3) | 0.768 | 13.526 |
| I recovered fast, after difficult situations or setbacks at work (AP_4) | 0.821 | 14.436 |
| I was able to cope well with difficult situations and setbacks at work (AP_5) | 0.792 | 13.937 |
| I came up with creative solutions to new problems (AP_6) | 0.721 | 12.662 |
| I was able to cope well with uncertain and unpredictable situations at work (AP_7) | 0.777 | 13.657 |
| I easily adjusted to changes in my work (AP_8) | 0.664 | 11.703 |
| I consider myself a team player (AP_9) | 0.657 | 11.591 |
| Organizational Commitment | (C.R.=0.929); $\alpha= 0.917$ | |
| I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with my organization (OC_1) | 0.673 | 14.952 |
| I feel as if my organization's problems are my own (OC_2) | 0.696 | 15.762 |
| I feel like part of the family in my organization (OC_3) | 0.885 | 24.994 |
| I feel emotionally attached to my organization (OC_4) | 0.904 | 26.297 |
| My organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me (OC_5) | 0.915 | ** |
| I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (OC_6) | 0.887 | 28.397 |
| Model Fit Statistics ($X^2 = 585.277$, $df= 312$; CFI= 0.950, TLI= 0.944, RMSEA=0.051) | | |
| **= Items constrained for identification purposes | | |
| C.R. = Composite Reliability, α =Cronbach Alpha | | |

TLI and CFI, the measure of incremental fit are more than the threshold of 0.90 (Bentler, 1990;

Bentler & Bonett, 1980), while RMSEA measure of absolute fit is less than 0.08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1992), and Chi-square/Degrees of freedom is less than 5 (Marsh & Hocevar, 1985) indicating parsimony in the model. Reliability was assessed through Composite Reliability and Cronbach alpha, where the minimum threshold desired for both is 0.7 and above (Hair et al., 2010) which is observed for all the constructs as given in the above table. Although alpha value for job performance and organizational commitment is higher than 0.90, as per Ursachi, Horodnic, and Zait (2015) as its less than 0.95, we can conclude there are no redundant items.

Following the assessment of the model for construct validity and reliability, the next assessment was convergent validity and discriminant validity. This was assessed variable-wise as given in the following table.

Table 4 *Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity*

| Convergent Validity | | | | Discriminant Validity | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Cronbach's Alpha | CR | AVE | PSM | JP | OC |
| PSM | 0.815 | 0.825 | 0.403 | 0.635 | | |
| JP | 0.926 | 0.888 | 0.523 | 0.619 | 0.723 | |
| OC | 0.931 | 0.93 | 0.683 | 0.478 | 0.146 | 0.832 |

Note(s): CR= Composite Reliability.
 AVE= Average Variance Extracted;
 PSM = Public Service Motivation; JP= Job Performance;
 OC= Organizational Commitment

Convergent validity was assessed through Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) as recommended by Hair et al. (2010). CR value and Cronbach alpha values are more than 0.7 for Public Service Motivation, Job Performance and Organizational Commitment. The Average Variance extracted needs to be more than 0.5 to determine convergent validity as recommended by Hair et al. (2010). For all the variables AVE is more than 0.5, except for Public Service Motivation, however as convergent validity can be established through CR and Cronbach Alpha, an AVE value of 0.4 and above is acceptable, given that CR is more than 0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010), hence for PSM convergent validity is established. To measure discriminant validity the square root of AVE is compared against the correlation between the variables, hence the square root of AVE should be greater than the correlations of the variables (Awang, 2015; Hair et al., 2010). The square root of AVE is given in the bold diagonal values while the correlation for each variable is given in the off-diagonal value. In this regard discriminant validity is established.

Structural Equation Modelling and Hypothesis testing

Once the measurement model confirmed the model, for the data, structural equation modelling was done, to test the hypothesis. The Fitness indexes confirmed the SEM Model. The diagram below shows the SEM model, which was used for hypothesis testing.

The fitness index RMSEA was 0.051, less than 0.08, hence absolute fit was achieved, CFI was 0.950, more than 0.90, which shows incremental fit, and Chisq/df was 1.876 which was less than 5, therefore parsimonious fit achieved (Hair et al., 2010). This indicates construct validity.

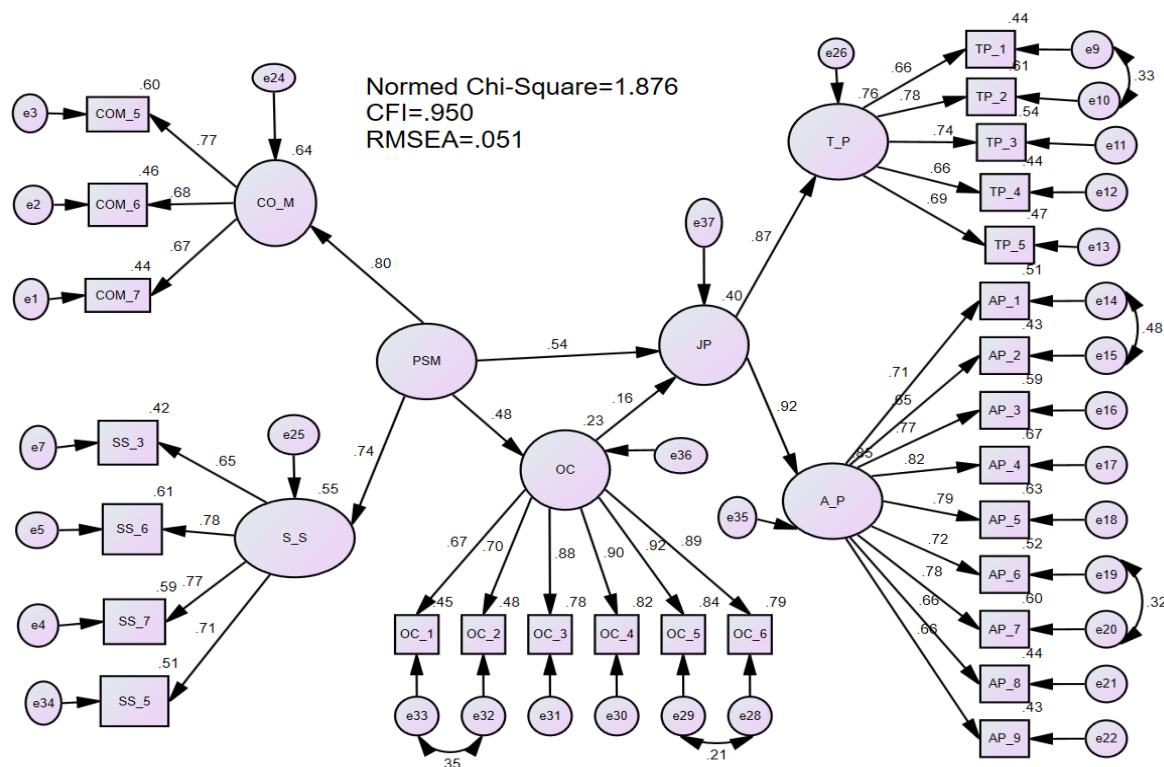


Diagram 2 Structural Equation Model

Hypothesis Testing

To proceed with hypothesis testing regression weights for path estimates were checked, and the following table depicts the regression weights for the path estimates.

Table 5 Regression Weights for the path estimates

| Construct | Path | Construct | Estimate | S.E | C.R | P-value | Results |
|---------------------------|------|---------------------------|----------|-------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Job Performance | <--- | Public Service Motivation | 0.544 | 0.111 | 5.046 | *** | Significant |
| Organizational Commitment | <--- | Public Service Motivation | 0.478 | 0.214 | 5.618 | *** | Significant |
| Job Performance | <--- | Organizational Commitment | 0.157 | 0.029 | 2.213 | 0.027 | Significant |

Note: ***, indicate a highly significant at < 0.001.

The first hypothesis H01; Public Service Motivation positively effects job performance, is significant and supported, with a t-value >1.96 and a P value less than 0.001. Every 1 standard deviation increase in PSM would lead to an increase in job performance by 0.544 units. The second hypothesis H02 Public service motivation positively effects organizational commitment is significant, with a t value of 5.618, and a P-value less than 0.001. Hence H02 is also supported, and every 1 standard deviation increase in PSM is likely to increase organizational commitment by 0.478 units. The third hypothesis H03, that organizational commitment positively effect job performance is also significant, with a t value of 2.213, and a p-value less than 0.05. Hence H3 is supported, and with every 1 unit increase in organizational commitment, job performance is likely to increase by 0.157 units.

Mediation Analysis

The fourth hypothesis of the study is the mediation effect of Public Service Motivation (PSM) on job performance through Organizational Commitment. The table below depicts the result of the mediation analysis.

H4: Organizational Commitment mediates the relationship between Public Service Motivation and Job Performance

Table 6 Mediation Test Results

| Relationships | Direct Effect | Indirect Effect | Confidence Interval | | P value | Conclusion |
|--|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------|---------|--------------|
| | | | Low | High | | |
| Public Service Motivation --> Affective Commitment---> Job Performance | 0.561 (0.001) | 0.079 | -0.005 | 0.250 | 0.06 | No Mediation |

To check for mediation of PSM on job performance through organizational commitment the indirect effect was obtained through bias-corrected bootstrapping (Sample size taken to be 5000) and a confidence level of 95% was used. As given in the above table, the indirect effect, which is 0.079, is less than the direct effect which is 0.561. Hence this indicates that there is no mediation effect of PSM through organizational commitment. On the other hand, the P-value is more than 0.05, and confidence intervals of upper bound and lower bound cross over zero, hence the fourth hypothesis that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between PSM, and Job performance is not supported. Further the effect size of the mediation effect was tested by the effect size of the individual path and the effect size of mediated effect. As such following results were obtained.

Table 7 Effect Size Table

| | Effect Size | Conclusion |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Effect size on Public Service Motivation (PSM) (X) on Job Performance (Y) | 0.35 | Large range |
| The effect size of Organizational Commitment (M) on controlling for Public Service Motivation (r^2_{XMY}) | 0.40-0.35 | |
| r^2_{MY} | 0.05 | Effect size is small range |
| The mediated effect size of the mediator (Organizational Commitment) on the relationship between Public Service Motivation and Job Performance | $r^2_{MY}-(r^2_{XMY}-r^2_{XY})$ | |
| | 0.18- (0.40-0.35) | |
| | 0.13 | Effect size in medium range |

The effect size table indicates that mediation effect is hardly present, although the effect size falls to medium range by a very small margin. The mediator effect on job performance is also in the small range. However, the effect size of public service motivation on Job performance, is 0.35, which is in large range, therefore indicates that PSM to be having a direct effect on job performance in the context of Maldives Civil Service rather than an indirect effect.

The final hypothesis of this study checked how gender moderates the relationship between Public Service Motivation and Job Performance, whether the positive effect of job performance was different for males and females. The result of the moderation effect of gender on the positive effect of public service motivation on job performance is presented below.

Table 8 Moderation Test Results

| Hypothesized Relationship | Male | Female | Group Difference |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Standardized Estimates (t-values) | Standardized Estimates (t-values) | $\Delta \chi^2 / 1df$ |
| H5: Public Service Motivation--->Job Performance | 0.461 (2.811) | 0.543 (3.607) | 1.365 n.s. |

Model Fit Across the Groups: $\chi^2 = 1025.461$, $df = 624$, $p < .001$, CFI = .928, IFI = .929, RMSEA = .044 Note: * = $p < .001$; n.s. = not significant

The test results indicates that there is no significant difference across groups in terms of the effect of public service motivation on job performance, as the chi-square test result indicates that it is not significant, with p value more than 0.05, and the chi-square test result is 1.365, which is less than 3.84. Hence there is no significant difference across males and females in terms of the effect of Public Service Motivation on job performance.

8. Discussion of Results and Implications

The core of Public Service Motivation renders around altruism and prosocial values, which is reflected by the two dimensions of PSM which is Self-Sacrifice and Compassion (James L. Perry, 1997; Stefurak et al., 2020). The other two dimensions show the interest in public service and public institutions. Recent researchers have argued back and forth regarding the measurement of Public Service Motivation (PSM) dimensions, and some of them, seem to have a lack of fit with other dimensions. As such Kim, 2009 as stated in Stefurak et al. (2020) argues that Attraction to Public Policy is a poor fit with other dimensions and Compassion for having a lack of reliability. In this research, Attraction to Public Policy and Commitment to Public Interest which is the rational and the normative aspect of the PSM dimension were dropped due to lack of reliability and poor fit. However, the core of PSM which is reflected in Self-Sacrifice, along with Compassion was considered to reflect the concept of PSM in the context of Maldives. Therefore, according to the analysis, PSM is measured by these dimensions, and this has a positive effect on job performance.

The contribution from the research comes in three ways. First, it affirms existing research which argues for the positive, direct association between PSM and Job Performance (Bayram & Zoubi, 2020; Bright, 2007; Miao et al., 2019; Naff & Crum, 1999; van Loon et al., 2018). As such, PSM is still perceived to be important for the public service provider. This research strengthens this argument, as the effect size of PSM on job performance is considered be large, hence this shows the significance of PSM in the context of Maldives. On the other hand, the research findings indicated that indirect effect was not significant, especially given that it was expected that PSM will enhance organizational commitment, and this would improve job performance. Overall, there was also no direct relationship between organizational commitment and job performance in the context of Maldives Civil Service.

Next, PSM has been widely studied in the western context (Gupta et al., 2020; Miao et al., 2019), and to a certain extent in the context of Asian countries such as Indonesia, South Korea and China, but the notion of Altruism is relatively novice from a South Asian perspective and a small island economy context. Therefore, this brings the evidence to show that PSM matters in the Bureaucratic structure which is very different from the modern established public sector. Hence with some compelling evidence, it is not wrong to argue that being a Knight, patriotism of benevolence is still essential when you wish to provide public service even in the context of Maldives. This calls the policy makers to consider the importance of values in public service provision in the Maldives Civil Service. PSM is seen to be enhanced when individuals identify with organization values, and PSM could be enhanced by value congruence as argued by Vandenabeele, Ritz, and Neumann (2018).

As commitment to public interest and Attraction to public policy did not fit with the data, it implies that Maldives Civil Service is unable to create an environment which values the provision of public service and formulate a good public policy which appeals to those working in the organization. It also implies the lack of involvement in public policymaking, hence rational motive not being met. In general, the demographic profile reveals, a higher number of young people with degrees and master's level certificates, and it needs to be questioned why their interest is not aligned with the interest of the public offices they are working for. This also shows the need to hire employees not just based on merit (Asim, 2018), but also based on value, especially individuals who are benevolent and ready to engage in public policy-making. This research also tested the moderation effect of gender on the relationship between PSM and Job Performance, which indicates that there is no significant difference across males and females, in terms of how PSM influences job performance. This was a significant finding as in the Maldives Civil Service females dominated the public service provision.

Finally, the contribution of this research comes in the way Public Service Motivation (PSM) has been researched recently, arguing the need to have a global construct, or perhaps using a shorter version of PSM dimensions based on a single construct. For instance, Wright, Pandey, and Moynihan (2012) state that PSM could be measured by 5 items developed by Wright, Christensen and Pandey, 2008 as a global measure of PSM which captures the three dimensions of PSM which is the commitment to the public interest, compassion and self-sacrifice. These five items have been used in some recent research such by Chen, Hsieh, and Chen (2019). Some other researchers also use the PSM measure developed by Kim et al, 2013 as stated (Susanto, 2020) which consist of 16 items and modification to some dimensions of PSM, such as Attraction to Public Policy to be Attraction to Public Service, and commitment to the public interest to be a commitment to public values. Hence it is plausible to determine, that the original measure of PSM scale could be modified to reflect a more reflective measure in the current context.

9. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study tested the effect of Public Service Motivation on Job performance in the context of Maldives Civil Service. There are some limitations to this study. As such using a self-reported job performance measure, creates challenges, although this has been used in other studies, and to avoid bias, it is recommended that future studies adopt supervisor rating scales. The scale used in the study could be improved, and as such would recommend using one-dimensional scale to measure public service motivation. This study used simple random sampling, for future research it is recommended to use stratified random sampling to test whether effect of PSM on job performance is different across managerial groups in the public sector. Given these limitations, it should be noted that the findings of this research increase our understanding of how effective Public Service Motivation (PSM) is in the context of Public Sector employees, especially how it influences job performance.

10. Conclusion and Recommendation

The Maldives Civil Service represents the core of the public sector, and over the years many programs were undertaken to reform Maldives Civil Service. The results of the study demonstrate in general whether those who claim to be a public servant are indeed those who poses the key traits of a public sector employee. It also shows that altruism affects job performance. One may question the need to have altruism, although this is debatable, what other desire should a public sector employee have, when the salary is not the determining factor to serve in the Maldives Civil Service. The private sector and, the general public depend and relies heavily on the services provided by the Maldives Civil Service.

This research recommends that Maldives Civil Service focuses and hiring people with Public Service Motivation (PSM) traits, and to enhances PSM traits through organizational identification as argued by Miao et al. (2019). This also means value congruence (Vandenabeele et al., 2018) and creating person-organization fit (Jin, McDonaldIII, Park, & Yu, 2019; Kim, 2012), and providing the opportunity to create societal impact (van Loon et al., 2018). The effect of PSM could also be enhanced

through provision of training on Public Service values, hence recommended that such trainings be provided on continuous basis to improve the ethos of public service values. Lack of Attraction to public policy and commitment to public interest indicates, not being able to identify with the organizational mission, and not being able to participate in meaningful public service. Hence recommends creating an opportunity to show the significance of public service to those engage in the service provision. As argued by (Vandenabeele & Schott, 2020) PSM is not a silver bullet solve all issues related to public management, however as PSM remains to be one of the strongest theories in public administration, recruiting civil servants with higher level of PSM attributes, and improving PSM values through public sector reform programs, such as creating an organizational identity is perhaps what is lacking in creating an efficient Civil Service in the Maldives.

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