

Serving the Country or Serving Thyself: The Quest for Prosocial Motives of Russian MPA Students

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Abstract

U.S. and European scholars have established the association between work in government and public service motivation (PSM). Yet, few studies measure PSM among master of public administration (MPA) students and link it to their intention to work in government. For the first time in Russia, the study tests the association between culturally determined measures of prosocial motives of Russian MPA students and their intention to work for government upon graduation. Three theoretical frameworks help structuring this research: public administration, political trust, and volunteering. The data in this study confirm that Russian MPA students with prosocial motives tend to choose work in government. We explain this phenomenon by deriving the prosocial motive theoretical perspective from the larger concept of PSM and from the theory of political trust. In addition, the study finds that formal and informal volunteering is not related to choosing work in government. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords

education/teaching personnel administration, international public personnel administration, public service motivation, antecedents of government employment, Russian MPA students motives, MPA program choice, trust in government, students prosocial attitudes

Introduction

This study determines the effects of prosocial motives of Russian master of public administration (MPA) students on their decision to work for the government upon

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graduation. Until now, no theory-based quantitative or qualitative research on the topic has been published. This study poses and responds to the following questions: Why do Russian MPA students enroll in MPA university programs, do MPA students trust public institutions, do MPA students volunteer formally or informally, what are the remuneration expectations of MPA students upon graduation, and finally, do the MPA students intend to work in government agencies upon graduation? The data in this study suggest that Russian MPA students with prosocial motives tend to choose work in government. We explain this phenomenon by deriving the prosocial motive theoretical perspective from the larger concept of public service motivation (PSM) and from the theory of political trust. The PSM theory provides reference and support for the selection of specific motivational categories, although we do not use the original PSM scale in the Russian context.

In the United States, prosocial motives and behaviors are conceptualized as PSM (Knoke & Wright-Isak, 1982; Perry & Wise, 1990; Rainey, 1982). The concepts of PSM were tested, discussed and expanded in consecutive studies (Brewer & Selden, 1998; Perry, 1996, 1997, 2010; Perry & Hondeghem, 2008; Perry, Hondeghem, & Wise, 2010; etc.). Furthermore, the PSM concepts have been tested for relevance by international researchers (Kim, 2009; Kim et al., 2013; Kim & Kim 2016; Lee & Choi, 2016; Liu et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2011; van Der Wal, 2015; Vandenabeele, 2008). The PSM theory maintains that the motivation of public employees is different from that of private employees because of the different nature of these two institutions (Perry et al., 2010). Some international studies determined that in different cultural contexts, the PSM measures were not as straightforward as they seemed to be in the United States and other Western cultures (Kim & Kim, 2016; Kim et al., 2013; Liu & Perry, 2016; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). Moynihan and Pandey (2007) argued, “. . . PSM may be formed by sociohistorical factors before employees enter the organization . . .” (p. 42). This statement highlights the cultural and historical context of public administration and illuminates our study of MPA students’ prosocial motivation effects.

The goal of our study is to determine predictors for government employment upon graduation from the MPA program in Russia. Following the PSM philosophy, we hypothesize that Russian students with high public benefit motivation are more likely to choose government work over private sector employment. In the course of survey building and testing, we determined that several PSM measures do not squarely apply in the Russian context. Therefore, we do not use the PSM scales in our study, but we organize our study with regard to two PSM motivation categories, rational and affective. Our study accounts for specific Russian circumstances, namely, the transition from socialism into capitalism. The transitional phase suggests that old moral imperatives and values crumble while new ones are still forming. This creates a level of uncertainty about what is right and what is wrong among the young. For that reason, our survey measures are different from PSM, yet the spirit of public motivation is incorporated in culture-sensitive questions.

Few studies in the world of public administration investigate the association between prosocial motives and employment intentions of MPA students. Our study

confirms the presence of prosocial motives and their effects on employment decisions of Russian MPA students. Research results are useful for universities and external constituencies. The study informs MPA program directors on the enrollment motivation of future students and suggests further curriculum development. The study results help university career advisers learn about students' motivation and improve career planning and counseling. A government employment office receives information to develop better selection criteria. Potentially, it will help new students make informed decisions about the university programs.

Background

The study of MPA students' prosocial motivation and the relationship to the public office employment is the first in Russia. Degree in the field of public administration is new to Russian universities. Four prominent Russian universities have established public administration (PA) programs in 1993. MPA-specific education standards were formulated in 1995. These standards established the generalist management approach to PA curriculum to attract more students to a new discipline. As a result, the curriculum includes many general education and management courses that determine the broad application of knowledge to suit both government and business jobs. The effect of broadening the PA curriculum was that some students entered the program to study management rather than PA. Modern students often do not stay loyal to the diploma specialization. The protean career model holds that individuals who enjoy learning on the job might choose a different career option than the area in which they feel competent (Tschirhart, Reed, Freeman, & Anker, 2008).

In 2000, Russian universities started joining the Bologna Declaration, and only in 2010-2011, new standards fixed the two-tier education system, bachelor's and master's degrees. Only then, the specialty "Public Administration" has become recognized as an independent discipline (Barabashev & Kastrel, 2013). Currently, government recruiters in Russia require a graduate diploma and do not require the MPA degree for public office employment. The MPA programs at Russian universities have a negligible number of in-service students. Currently, MPA graduates are employed in public agencies and private companies.

Russian students enroll in MPA programs after completing BA programs with no work experience. Only recently, researchers in Russia started debating the educational content of PA programs and students' inclination to work for government (Barabashev & Maslennikova, 2010; Myasoedov, 2011). In Russia, it is paramount to improve recruitment to government offices by attracting publicly spirited young people with relevant education, prosocial motives, and high ethical standards. Our empirical quantitative research of Russian students' prosocial motives and employment choices contributes to understanding MPA students' choices and intentions.

Russian MPA programs admit graduate students with no information on their social and psychological suitability to the program or their motivation to serve the public. In this study, we refer to motivation as a process that guides individual choices of students among different educational and employment opportunities (Vroom, 1964).

Internationally, research on MPA program choice and MPA students' employment intentions is also limited, but steadily growing. Recently, international researchers found limitations for the application of PSM measures in culturally diverse countries (Barsoum, 2016; S. Kim & Kim, 2016; S. Kim et al., 2013; Lee & Choi, 2016; Liu & Perry, 2016), but the idea to study the effects of prosocial motives on public employment persists internationally.

In former socialist countries, the question of prosocial motivation of future public servants is highly relevant. The "shock therapy" of economic reforms (Boycko, Shleifer, Vishny, Fischer, & Sachs, 1993) affected many aspects of Russian life: politics, economics, culture, social life, and individual and collective psychology. Superfast political and economic reforms in these countries in the early 1990s have nullified old ethical norms and have not established new moral standards (Rivkin-Fish, 2001). The naïve view of capitalism as a self-regulated moral system was detrimental to public mores in Russia. In early transition period, many young Russians denounced socialist norms and values. Instead, they uncritically adopted the Adam Smith's maxims about the primacy of personal enrichment (Hanley, 2009) and made them life-guiding principles. In the meanwhile, mass media and liberal ideologists bashed public service and self-sacrifice ideas as communist legacy.

Our literature search on MPA students' PSM turned in several articles from European, American, Korean, Chinese, and Egyptian authors. These articles tackle students' motivation to enroll in MPA programs, volunteering and public service values, and the antecedents of the intention to work in government upon graduation in the United States, the Netherlands, France, China, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Egypt. In the literature review, we discuss the relevance of American PSM concepts to international and Russian modern cultural contexts.

Western social theories do not explain the transitional psychology of Russian people and underestimate the dramatic effects of social and economic transition on peoples' mores. "The shock of this transition has had a major negative impact on the wealth, health and wellbeing of former soviet citizens and resulted in a fundamental demoralization" (Sapsford & Abbott, 2006, p. 61). Rivkin-Fish (2001), an American scholar, who qualitatively studied the impact of "shock therapy" on physical and moral health of Russians for 16 years, writes, "... a moral crisis is widely lamented, described as the rapid breakdown of clear social norms and values, inversions of long-standing standards for public and private behavior" (p. 29). In Russia, the effects of transition are not theorized and poorly researched. Modern social science scholars started offering bits of theories, which take the shape of a mosaic with many parts missing, especially the parts concerning the attitude of young people to the state, the public good, and their role in society. In this article, we aspire to add another theoretical bit by determining whether MPA programs in Russia attract publicly spirited youth.

Although Western countries have not experienced as dramatic transition as Russia had had in 1991-2000, there were frequent attempts to cure the perceived and real government problems in the United States and Western Europe. Government reforms in the West, inspired by the reinventing government and the New Public Management (NPM)

ideas, and Employment-At-Will (EAW) procedures have had far-reaching consequences for public employees and affected their value system and work motivation (Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Battaglio, 2010; Bozeman, 2007; Brudney & Condrey, 1993; Drechsler, 2005; Hood, 1995; Junjan, 2016; Moon, 2000; Weibel, Rost, & Osterloh, 2010). Research shows that service motivation of government employees was shaken by the pay-for-performance and EAW reforms and, in some instances, performance declined (Battaglio, 2010; Belle & Cantarelli, 2015; Campbell, Reeves, Kontopantelis, Sibbald, & Roland, 2009; Kellough & Nigro, 2002). Lewis and Frank (2002) determined that during the period from 1989 to 1998, the desire for government jobs significantly declined in the United States. Similarly, these reforms might have had an impact on MPA students' motivation to work in government. Yet, we found no research on this particular association.

Russian public administration has been in a state of permanent reformation since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. In Russia, the stated goals of several public administration reforms from 2000 to 2010 were to make public servants independent from political influence, to reduce the number of government functions and the size of the workforce in public offices, and to establish a competitive recruitment and pay-for-performance system (Barabashev & Maslennikova, 2010; Barabashev, 2013; Dementiev & Lukianova, 2006; Klichsh, 2007; Klimenko & Klichsh, 2012). Russian scholars criticized the results of administrative reforms as underfunded (Obolonsky, 2011), conceptually lacking, and procedurally inadequate (Obolonsky & Barabashev, 2014; Zaitseva, 2003). Poorly administered reformation damaged the prestige of government jobs and deteriorated the quality of public service. Russian and foreign PA experts warned that the marketization of government service and incentives could potentially erode institutional public service ethics (Huskey, 2004; Obolonsky, 2015). Unexpectedly, university admission offices experienced growing enrollment to the MPA programs in Russian universities, while the prestige of the profession declined (Mitroshenkov, 2004).

In modern Russia, the public service and moral duty debate is absent from leaders' public statements, mass media, and university curriculum. The definition of public good changed most drastically. Young people believe that personal wealth is the ultimate goal because, theoretically, it drives economic development. Researchers call modern post-Soviet education a "moral maze" (Kliucharev & Muckle, 2005, p. 469). Our brief analysis of the sampled universities curricula showed that in 2015, the MPA programs in Russia did not offer ethics courses to MPA students. Therefore, it is important to determine the motives that bring students to MPA programs and move them to choose careers in government. The study of education and employment intentions of Russian students are important to advance our understanding of MPA students' motives and compare them with students in Eastern Europe, South East Asia, and the countries in Western tradition. Russia and East European countries from the former socialist block have experienced similar government reforms at the time of the disintegration of the socialist bloc in 1980-2000. To our knowledge, no research on the MPA students' motives to serve the public is published in these countries. The

understanding of the MPA students' employment motivation helps to infer whether the synergy exists between the public service motives and the job preference of a new generation of potential public employees. The understanding of MPA students' motivation will help recruiting publicly spirited students and design MPA curriculum to advance public service attitudes in Russia.

The article consists of the introduction and background, which discuss the rationale for studying the MPA students' motivation to work in government, and explains the history of public administration education in Russia; in the "Literature Review" section, we analyze theoretical approaches for explaining public service attraction to MPA students. The next section gives details of research design and methods for data collection and analysis; the following section provides the results of data analysis. The last section discusses the implication of results and presents conclusions.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Building

The Meaning of PSM and Russian Culture

The theoretical framework derived from three bodies of literature directs this study: public administration, political trust, and volunteering. To refine the framework, we analyze American, international, and Russian literature to explain cultural specifics of public service attitudes. In the literature, we focus on how the determinants of education trajectory, trust in government institutions, and voluntary involvement affect the employment choices of MPA students.

In public administration studies, PSM is one of the most elaborate and tested theories. The proposition by Perry et al. (2010) holds that "the greater an individual's PSM, the more likely the individual will seek membership in a public service organization" (p. 683). This proposition triggered our scholarly curiosity about prosocial motives and employment intentions of Russian MPA students. Currently, most PSM studies examine public service motives among working government employees (Brewer & Selden, 1998; Kim, 2009, 2013; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Liu & Perry, 2016; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Pande & Jain, 2014; Perry 1996, 1997; Perry et al., 2010; Perry & Wise, 1990; Perry et al., 2008; Rainey, 1982). Knoke and Wright-Isak (1982) suggested three types of motives: rational, norm-based, and affective. Perry and Wise (1990) developed eight PSM measures to fit rational, normative, and affective categories. Rational motives describe individual utility maximization actions. Norm-based motives involve common norm conformity actions. Affective motives stimulate behavior grounded in emotional responses to various social contexts (Perry & Wise, 1990). Although, the PSM predominantly measures public service attitudes among in-service public administrators, in this study, we suggest how the prosocial attitudes of MPA Russian students are embedded in the PSM concepts and categories.

Several studies warned about the applicability of the PSM measures in culturally diverse countries (Barsoum, 2016; S. Kim & Kim, 2016; S. H. Kim et al., 2013; Vandenaabeele & Van de Walle, 2008). S. H. Kim et al. (2013) tested the applicability of PSM in 12 countries and concluded,

... our results suggest that the exact meaning and scaling of PSM dimensions are likely to differ across cultures and languages. These study results raise serious concerns regarding the ability to develop a single universal scale of PSM, or making direct comparisons of PSM across countries. (p. 81)

The “ecological fallacy” concerns and the international scholars’ warnings stimulated us to pilot test Perry’s (1996) measurement scale and conduct the follow-up discussion with a small group of English-speaking Russian students. The pilot survey of six selected MPA students in Moscow demonstrated that some of Perry’s (1996) measurements were misunderstood. For example, responding to the questions concerning self-sacrifice for the public good, Russian students remarked that the times of Soviet Russia were over, which suggested that they viewed self-sacrifice behavior as “communist.” Also, the meaning of the term “community” was unclear to the students as a culturally biased term, and the question regarding the “loyalty to superior” confused them. In general, students felt that PSM measures were somewhat “artificial,” “old-fashion,” and overly “emotional.” The pilot study results suggested that Perry’s PSM measurement scales might be ill-fitting in Russian cultural context. We decided to use Russian context-related measures.

Some aspects of Russian public office distinguish it from other countries. First, Russian administrative culture is non-participatory and is prohibitive of the advocacy by lower echelon public servants.

Second, normative definitions of social equity are not clearly articulated by public authorities in modern Russia, which poses a challenge for young people to develop a moral standing for “advocacy” (Kliucharev & Muckle, 2005; Zweynert, 2007). To measure the normative category, we must presuppose the existence of clear and universally accepted ethical norms with regard to public service. This does not seem feasible today, when Russia is still in the stage of building the rules and the norms for a new capitalist society. After socialism, Russia entered a “wild market” with no legal restraints. Abuses followed and compromised the ideal of a “competitive free market” (Upchurch & Marinković, 2011). Russian businesspersons had to choose between being honest and being rich. In the absence of clear societal norms, we believe that we cannot measure the “normative” motives. We assume that Perry’s “normative” motivation category is irrelevant in the Russian transitional context.

Third, the PSM measurement scales were found partly irrelevant by international researchers. The study in South Korea, Japan, the United States, and the Netherlands (S. Kim & Kim, 2016) suggested that Perry’s (1996, 2010) PSM scales in South Korea and Japan evoked socially desirable answers. International PSM researchers experienced difficulties in translating the original PSM measures to match local perceptions. The Van der Wal (2015) study of MPA students’ motives in Singapore determined that the use of Western theoretical constructs was problematic in explaining motivational and organizational dynamics in non-Western contexts. Liu, Tang, and Zhu (2008) also tested and revised the PSM Scale for the Chinese context. Recently, Liu and Perry (2016) have revised the original 40-scale measure of PSM to an 18-scale measure to

fit the Chinese cultural context. Following the example of Liu (2008) and Liu and Perry (2016), we develop culturally relevant measures to test rational and affective motivational categories of PSM in Russia. Barsoum's (2016) study in Egypt found that young people in this country showed a strong preference for public sector employment because of extrinsic or "rational" public sector motivation such as job security, social insurance, pensions, and family tradition. Barsoum separated PSM from public sector motivation. Following this approach, we assume the presence of rational motives alongside intrinsic motives in Russian students.

Until graduation, Russian students do not have the opportunity to engage in public service delivery and policymaking. As a result, their attraction to policy planning and implementation is often uncertain and their motivation for public service is theoretical. Perry's definition of the term "rational" implies an altruistic preference for the public serving employment. By contrast, we use the traditional meaning for the term that implies one's self-interest. Russian sociologists Roshina and Drugov (2002) surveyed a representative sample of 1,520 high school graduates in major cities of four Russian regions to determine that the majority of school graduates wanted jobs that guaranteed high income and fast careers. These findings lead us to assume the predominance of a rational motive of self-interest among young Russians.

Perry and Wise (1990) describe the affective category as "patriotism of benevolence" grounded in love of people and trust in political leaders, as suggested by Frederickson and Hart (1985). This definition adds new dimension to our study. We expect that those young people who express patriotic feelings, trust in government, and desire to help people demonstrate the affective or emotional response to the current political situation of Russia. Therefore, we use "rational" and "affective" categories as the embedding PSM concepts to formulate the context-related measures for our survey. We define "rational" category as self-interest. The "affective" category we conceptualize as patriotic feelings, and trust in government and the president.

Following the discussion above, our study asks whether Russian MPA students aspire to serve the country and to build better life for everyone as opposed to serving their self-interest. To answer, we survey Russian MPA students at four universities. The questions we ask in the survey are inspired by the PSM definition by Perry and Wise (1990), which holds that there is ". . . an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations" (p. 368). We anticipate that in Russia, we will find both types of young people with self-serving and other-serving motives. The quest remains, whether the other-serving motives lead to the choice of government work.

The Reasons for MPA Program Choice and the Intention to Work for Government

Several studies in the United States and other countries examine PSM among the university students (Campanini & Facchini, 2013; Christensen, Stritch, Kellough, & Brewer, 2015; Clerkin & Cogburn, 2012; Gabris & Davis, 2009; Lee & Choi, 2016;

Piatak, 2016; Redman-Simmons, 2008; Van der Wal, 2015; Van der Wal & Oosterbaan, 2013; Vandenaabeele, 2008). Vandenaabeele (2008) finds that MPA students in Belgium express high level of PSM and preference for public sector employment. Clerkin and Coggburn (2012) determine that the PSM influence on the employment sector choice is moderated by gender. Piatak (2016) finds that MPA students high on PSM are more likely to choose work in government, but are less likely to volunteer. Five of the above studies have connected prosocial motives to the choice of the MPA program. Most studies of students' prosocial choices are recent as the publication dates imply. To our knowledge, there are no studies in English or in Russian on MPA students' public service attitudes in either Eastern Europe or Russia.

The above studies discuss public service motives of students in the United States, Europe, and in Southeast Asia. Comparative study by Van der Wal and Oosterbaan (2013) determines that in the Netherlands, MPA students demonstrate PSM and government jobs preference, whereas the MBA students demonstrate economic motivation such as preference for high remuneration and prestige. These findings suggest either self-selection enrollment effects or the impact of educational programs. In Russia, a significant number of MPA students place public interest behind personal, which reflects individualistic rational reasoning. We expect finding that MPA students with self-promotion goals choose universities and educational programs for prestige and express no intention to work for government.

The studies mentioned above helped us develop questions for the survey to measure students' rational and prosocial motives for choosing MPA programs. The goal of these questions is to determine why the respondents choose MPA educational programs. Furthermore, we will analyze the association between the reasons for MPA program enrollment and the desire to work for government upon graduation.

The Role of Volunteering

Several authors argue that volunteer work reveals prosocial motives that characterize government employees (Brewer & Selden, 1998; Coursey, Perry, Brudney, & Littlepage, 2008; Grant, 2008; Houston, 2006; Vandenaabeele, 2008). Although the integrated theory of volunteering does not exist (Hustinx, Cnaan, & Handy, 2010), Wilson (2000) suggests that the study of volunteerism and of social activism has much in common. We assume that PSM measures are related to volunteerism described as socially active behavior.

The studies by Redman-Simmons (2008), Campanini and Facchini (2013), Christensen et al. (2015), and Piatak (2016) test the students' PSM through participation in volunteering. Two studies find the association between volunteering and students' desire to work in government (Campanini & Facchini, 2013; Redman-Simmons, 2008). The work by Piatak does not confirm the associations between the intention to work for government and volunteering. The study by Christensen et al. (2015) determines that university students demonstrate PSM by selecting service-learning courses and volunteering outside the university. Research by Campanini and Facchini (2013)

determines volunteering as the antecedent of the choice of social work studies in Italy. The diverging results of two studies (Campanini & Facchini, 2013; Piatak, 2016) have challenged us to test the relationship between volunteering and intention to work in government in Russian study. In the West, volunteering with nonprofit organizations is a regular activity for the adults and the young (Flanagan et al., 1999). In Russia, the NGOs are new types of professional organizations. Currently, Russians do not accept and support the NGOs that promote foreign values and receive foreign grants (Henderson, 2002; Sundstrom, 2005). Yet, young people and students volunteer for certain types of NGOs and political organizations more often than older people. Although the students' volunteering is often non-consistent and short-term, traditional informal helping behaviors form early in this group. Russian young people engage in informal help to people in close proximity, which is common for all age groups in Russia. We include in the survey the questions on formal and informal volunteering of Russian MPA students to test the association with the future work intentions. We expect that students engaged in formal and informal volunteering are more likely to choose working in government.

The Role of Demographics, Family, and Religion

Researchers argue for the powerful effects of family socialization. The studies by Lewis and Frank (2002), Van Hooft (2004), De Graaf and van der Wal (2008), Redman-Simmons (2008), Liu et al. (2011), and Campanini and Facchini (2013) find that demographics, religion, parental employment, and family socialization in general influence the choice of profession in Europe and East Asia. In addition, Liu et al. (2011) argue that in East Asia, MPA students' career choices depend on social environment and personal relationships. Perry (1997) notes the influence of family welfare, parents' profession, religion, and age as important predictor variables in early studies of PSM in the United States. Infeld, Adams, Qi, and Rosnah (2010) determine that Chinese MPA students exhibit more materialistic extrinsic motivations than American and Malay MPA students do. The United States and Malaysia are the countries where religion is an important medium to instill service values in young minds. By contrast, the majority of Russian youth is not deeply religious. Researchers find that only 11% of Russian students-respondents were "actively practicing" believers (Grishaeva & Cherkasova, 2013, p. 12). Following the above findings, we include in the survey the questions about gender and age, education achievements, religious affiliation, trust in church, parents' education and professions, and family income as control variables.

The Role of Political Trust

Blind (2007) discusses the theories of political trust that describe trust in the system, political institutions, and political leaders. Trust in the system and political institutions is determined by the citizens' satisfaction with the government performance, whereas

“. . . the individual trust involves a person-oriented perspective whereby citizens become trustful or distrustful of government . . . because they develop trust or distrust to a political leader” (Blind, 2007; Citrin, 1974, p. 974). Levi and Stoker (2000) argue that trust in the president might be domain-specific, which means that one trusts the president on international affairs, but expresses no trust on internal policies. In Russia, the issue of trust is permanently debated in mass media in connection with government international policy, corruption scandals, and the president’s “war on corruption” campaign (Krastev & Inozemtsev, 2013; *The Moscow Times*, 2016).

The study by Rothstein and Stolle (2008) suggests that well-functioning social institutions create generalized trust among people. After the “capitalist revolution” in 1991, for 10 years, Russian people lived in a country with very dysfunctional government institutions and an unpredictable president. In 1996, public trust in president Eltsin stood at only 14.1%, and in 1999, fell to a mere 3.2%. The situation started changing when Putin became the president of Russia. In 2002, with only 2 years in office, trust in the president rose to 57.2% and in 2006 to 62.1% (Furman & Kaariainen, 2003). When the current president came to power, government services started improving and continued to do so through his second term in the office. In 2015, a Russian opinion poll by Wserossisky Centre Issledovaniya Obshestvennogo Mneniya (WCIOM; 2015) recorded extremely high level of trust in a Russian president (92%) and in the Russian government (68%) among respondents in the 18 to 24 age group. Accordingly, we hypothesize that students with a high level of trust in the incumbent president and government feel higher confidence in government institutions and are more likely to work for the government. This hypothesis is informed by the study of Zhu and Akhtar (2014), which have tested the association between the transformational leadership and helping behavior of subordinates, mediated by the affective trust. They found that the effect of transformational leadership on followers’ helping behavior toward coworkers via affective trust was limited to followers with high prosocial motivation. Zhu and Akhtar confirmed that the affective trust mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and helping behavior. The helping others behavior qualifies as PSM in the field of PA. We believe that MPA students with affective trust in the president will choose working for government to actualize their desire to help others.

By contrast, the international NGOs and international governmental institutions in Russia did not win trust from the majority of citizens. These organizations are viewed as anti-government forces that promote non-traditional values. Trust in these institutions leads to mistrust in government. We expect that the students who trust local and global NGOs are not likely to trust government and express the intention to work for government.

The Role of Expected Public Office Remuneration

Perry and Wise (1990) argue that people with high PSM often prefer employment with lower salaries and higher public service potential. This argument is supported by the

studies of Redman-Simmons (2008), Vandenabeele (2008), and Van der Wal and Oosterbaan (2013), which confirm the students' preference for public service. We test this proposition by asking respondents about the acceptable remuneration level upon graduation and connecting the answers to the choice of employment. We expect to find that students with lower remuneration expectations are more likely to choose government employment.

International literature on PSM and prosocial motives helped to build the working hypotheses to test in Russian studies. We include in the survey questions concerning the choice of the university major, political trust, the incidence of formal and informal volunteering, after-graduation remuneration expectations, and the intention to work in government or other professions. In addition, we included in the survey the questions to control for the influence of demographic, socio-economic, and family-related variables. We asked questions about gender, age, year at the university, religiosity, employment status, parents' education, parents' employment (private or public sector), and family income. The resulting eight hypotheses are listed below:

Hypothesis 1: The minor part of Russian MPA students express the intention to work in government.

Hypothesis 2: MPA students who express desire to help the people and help the country are more likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 3: MPA students, who choose the MPA program for prestige of university and department and enroll for available scholarships, are less likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 4: MPA students who express trust in the president and government are more likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 5: MPA students who express trust in NGOs and international governmental organizations are less likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 6: MPA students with formal volunteering experience are more likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 7: MPA students with informal volunteer experience are more likely to choose government employment.

Hypothesis 8: MPA students who underplay the value of money (expected salaries) are more likely to choose government employment.

Method

The goal of this study is to disclose the reasons for MPA program enrollment and to determine the antecedents of the after-graduation employment intentions of MPA students from Russian universities. The population of our study constitutes all MPA students in Russian universities. The sample consists of MPA students at four large Russian universities with accredited MPA programs in three large cities: Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Tyumen. The MPA programs from two old and large universities

in St. Petersburg and in Nizhniy Novgorod declined to participate. Luckily, the smaller university with an accredited MPA program in St. Petersburg agreed to participate.

We selected large cities with a variety of employment opportunities in private and public sectors to avoid employment bias of smaller cities, where the government is often a primary employer. Our selection method ensured that the choice of MPA program and public sector employment is not predetermined by available jobs. The selection of three large cities is also justified by geography and available educational opportunities: All three cities are geographically and culturally diverse and offer a wide variety of educational opportunities—large state and private universities and smaller professional colleges. The selected universities have well established and recognized MPA programs. The three cities attract a diverse population of students from Russian regions. Moscow, with a population of 11.5 million (worldpopulation.com), is the financial and administrative center of Russia, which attracts the largest body of students and provides rich opportunities for socialization with people from different regions and cultures, and offers more employment opportunities. Otherwise, Moscow is no different from other university cities in the sample in terms of variety of educational opportunities, which is important for this study. We study educational and employment choices of public administration students in the context of unrestricted educational and employment opportunities.

In 2015, we contacted the selected universities with MPA programs and collaborated with the administration and the faculty to survey the first- and second-year MPA students. To the students, we provided the assurance of personal protection: voluntary participation and anonymity. We received completed questionnaires from all four universities with the following survey completion rate: The university in St. Petersburg, which had the smallest MPA program among selected universities, submitted 28 completed questionnaires (57% response rate). Tyumen State University sent by mail 48 questionnaires with a response rate of 76%. In Moscow, we surveyed MPA students at two large universities. One Moscow university, having the largest body of students in the MPA program, produced 85 completed surveys with an overall response rate of 75%. Another large Moscow university submitted 42 completed questionnaires, which constituted a 68% response rate. For this study, we aggregated all responses into one data set to analyze the general trends of students' motivation in MPA departments. We defined the intention to work in government after graduation as a dependent variable (DV). The answers to this question were conceptualized as binary responses, which we measured as “no” = 0 and “yes” = 1. Furthermore, following the literature review, we conceptualized independent variables (IVs) as MPA enrollment motivation, trust in government and international organizations, voluntary experience, and the remuneration expectations. The independent variables were operationalized as nominal, ordinal, and scale variables. Table 1 presents the measures of dependent and independent variables.

Table 1. Description of the DV and IV for the Study.

| DV and IV variables | Descriptions of DV and IV variables |
|--|---|
| DV—IntentGW—binary variable, no (0), yes (1) | DV—IntentGW—Intention to get government employment upon graduation |
| Gr. 1 - IV ₁₋₁₁ —motives for enrollment in MPA program. Scale from 1 (<i>absolutely incorrect</i>) to 5 (<i>absolutely correct</i>) | Interest in PA (X ₁), Available scholarships (X ₂), Prestige of MPA dept. (X ₃), Prestige of the university (X ₄), Career in government (X ₅), Help the country (X ₆), Help the people (X ₇), Parents' advice (X ₈), Friend's advice (X ₉), Future remuneration (X ₁₀), Bachelor degree in PA (X ₁₁), Easy admission (X ₁₂) |
| Gr.2 - IV ₁₃₋₂₄ —trust in government and other institutions. Scale from 1 (<i>completely mistrust</i>) to 5 (<i>fully trust</i>) | President (X ₁₃), Government (X ₁₄), Duma (parliament), (X ₁₅), Police (X ₁₆), Army (X ₁₇), Municipal government (X ₁₈), Regional government (X ₁₉), Customs Union (X ₂₀), NGOs (X ₂₁), International government organizations (UNO; X ₂₃), Church (X ₂₄) |
| Gr. 3 - IV ₂₅₋₂₉ —formal vs. informal volunteering, binary <i>no</i> = 0, <i>yes</i> = 1 | NGO volunteering (X ₂₅), Helping friends (X ₂₆), Helping colleagues (X ₂₇), Helping neighbors (X ₂₈), Helping strangers (X ₂₉) |
| IV—acceptable entry-level salary. Nominal variable. | 1 = <i>accept low entry-level salary</i> , 2 = <i>accept lower than business entry-level salary</i> , 3 = <i>accept comparable with business sector entry-level salary</i> , 4 = <i>accept only high entry-level salary</i> |

Note. DV = dependent variable; IV = independent variable; PA = public administration; MPA = master of public administration; UNO = United Nations Organization.

Data Analysis

We screened out incomplete and spoiled questionnaires. From 206 questionnaires, we excluded one as intentionally spoiled by a humorous respondent, and two others were excluded as incomplete with more than 50% of responses missing. To substitute the missing values, we used SPSS random numbers imputation procedure. Altogether, we used 203 completed questionnaires for the analyses. We analyzed the data with the SPSS 22 and SPSS Amos 24 statistical packages. Table 2 presents descriptive characteristics of the respondents.

Table 2. The Characteristics of Respondents, Frequency Distribution (in Percent; *N* = 203).

| | % |
|--------------|-----|
| Demographics | |
| Male | 46 |
| Female | 54 |
| Total | 100 |

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

| | % |
|--|------|
| Religiosity | |
| Yes | 46.3 |
| No | 42.9 |
| Missed | 10.8 |
| Educational achievements | |
| Satisfactory | 6.4 |
| Good | 64.3 |
| Excellent | 26.3 |
| Missed | 3 |
| Parents education | |
| Father | |
| Higher | 70.4 |
| Secondary | 21.6 |
| Missed | 8.0 |
| Mother | |
| Higher | 81.3 |
| Secondary | 16.7 |
| Missed | 2.0 |
| Parents employment | |
| Father | |
| Private sector | 63 |
| Public sector | 37 |
| Mother | |
| Private sector | 46 |
| Public sector | 54 |
| Family income | |
| Poor | 1.0 |
| Lower class | 5.4 |
| Middle class | 30.0 |
| Upper middle class | 41.9 |
| Rich | 19.2 |
| Missed | 2.5 |
| Respondent's intention to work in government | |
| Yes | 56.2 |
| No | 40.4 |
| Missed | 3.4 |

Table 2 describes the sample in terms of gender, religiosity, educational achievements, family background, and intentions to work in government. The table shows that the majority of respondents are females (54%), who characterize themselves as good students

(64.6%); about half of them are religious, with more than half having fathers working in the private sector (63%), whereas mothers dominate in the public sector (54%). The respondents are predominantly from an upper middle class background (61.1%), with the majority intending to work in government (56.2%). Furthermore, we discuss the results of factor analyses for all IVs besides the *Salary Expectations*—a nominal variable, and logistic regressions for the DV-*IntentGW*, and four groups of variables from Table 1.

We test the Hypothesis 1 that only a minor part of MPA students would express the intention to work in government. We define the term “minor part” as 40% of the sample. The number 40% comes from the internal survey performed biannually by the MPA management office at one of the sampled Moscow universities. The binomial test of no difference for expected 40% was insignificant with the $\rho = .324$. The “yes” answers to the question about employment intentions in government exceeded our expectations. In fact, the survey results proved our expectation wrong by providing 56.2% “yes” and 40.4% “no” responses (see Table 1) to the question about the intention to work in government upon graduation. The analysis did not support H1 concerning the minor part of MPA students body to express the intention to work for government.

Two out of three groups of independent variables Gr.1 and Gr.2 (see Table 1) have more than 10 variables. To reduce the number of variables without losing their predictive effects and to eliminate the problem of multicollinearity, we conducted exploratory factor analyses (EFAs) for both groups. The EFA for Gr.3 variables produced only one factor and was excluded from further structural modeling analysis as unidimensional.

We ran confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for two groups to confirm the models specification with the SPSS Amos 24. Two CFA graphic results are presented below to visualize the relationships between the latent factors and the indicators.

Figure 1 shows that the CFA produced a three-factor model with eight indicators for the Gr.1—the MPA enrollment intentions. The first factor we called Prestige; the second factor, Help; and the third factor, Interest in PA.

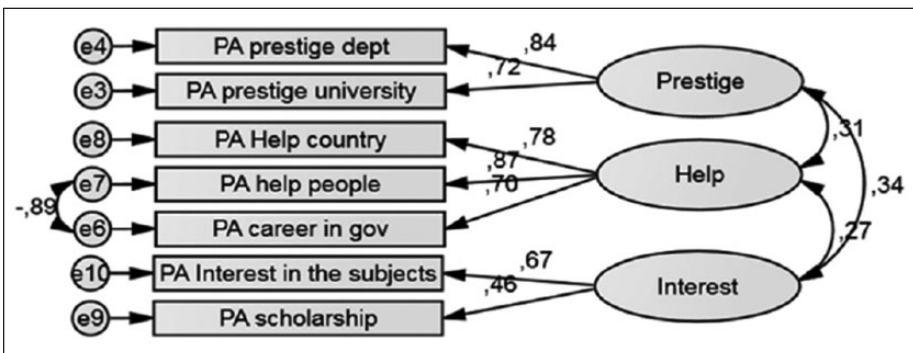


Figure 1. The CFA results of MPA students enrollment intention.
 Note. CFA = confirmatory factor analysis; MPA = master of public administration; PA = public administration.

Figure 1 shows that the CFA produced three factors with eight indicators—“Prestige,” “Help,” and mixed “Interest in PA” and “PA scholarship.” We removed four variables from the analysis because they had low factor loadings. Unexpectedly, the CFA factor “Help” included the variable “Career in government,” which is seemingly unrelated to helping attitudes. The attempts to exclude this variable significantly reduced the model fit indices. We decided to keep the variable in the model and explore the literature for a logical explanation. The third factor results were also unexpected. Two variables in this factor measure seemingly different phenomena. To choose MPA program for “available scholarship” and for the “interest in PA subjects” seem unrelated. However, the CFA found statistical relationship between two variables. We will explain this seemingly misfit choice in the “Discussion” section.

The analysis of estimated variance produced composite reliability (CR) = 0.886, and the average variance extracted (AVE) = 0.534. The estimated variance suggests high level of construct reliability and acceptable above the average convergent validity of the construct. The model fit indices are the number of parameters (NPAR) = 15, the minimum discrepancy (CMIN) = 29.735, the degree of freedom (DF) = 13, $\rho = .005$, and CMIN/DF = 2.287 (below 5); Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = .958 and comparative fit index (CFI) = .950 (both close to 1); and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .079 (below .08). The model fit indices suggest good model specification (Hsu, 2010).

Figure 2 shows the second CFA model with two factors “Government Trust” and “NonGovernment trust.” CFA produced two factors, which combined variables describing trust in government and nongovernment institutions. The first factor integrated variables describing trust in government institutions, and the second factor combined trust in NGOs and international governmental organizations.

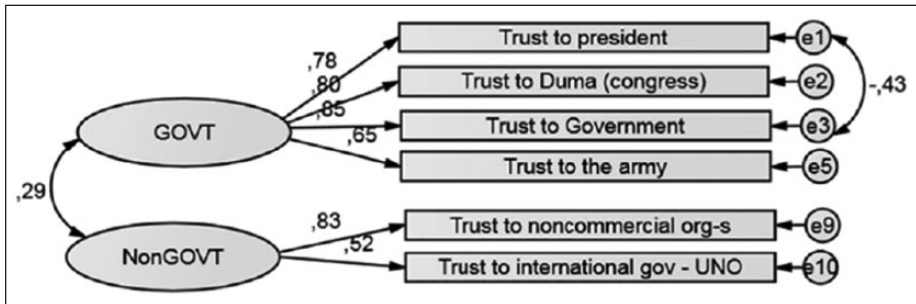


Figure 2. The CFA results of the effects of trust.
 Note. UNO = United Nations Organization; CFA = confirmatory factor analysis.

Figure 2 shows that the CFA produced two factors with six indicators for Gr.2—Trust to government and two indicators for NGOs/International institutions. We removed five trust variables from the analysis because they had low factor loadings. The first factor we called “Govt” and the second factor “NonGOVT.” The analysis of estimated variance produced CR = .881 and AVE = .560. The model estimated

variance suggests high level of construct reliability and acceptable above the average convergent validity of the construct. The model fit indices are NPAR = 16, CMIN = 17.053, DF-12, $\rho = .148$, CMIN/DF = 1.421 (below 5); TLI = .977 and CFI = .989 (both close to 1); and RMSEA = .046 (below 0.8). The model fit indices suggest good model specification (Hsu, 2010).

Because the fit indices are acceptable for both models, we rerun the EFA with reduced number of variables for both models to calculate the factor scores for further analysis. Driven by the CFA results, we removed from the model the indicators with low factor loadings (>0.4). We reran EFAs with the reduced number of variables, which also reduced the AVE but improved the model fit. We used the factor scores as interval IVs for performing two logistic regressions. The choice of logistic regressions for analysis is predicated by the binomial nature of dependent variable (DV-*IntentGW*), which takes only two values 0 = “no” and 1 = “yes” as answers to the questions about employment intentions. Logistic regression estimates the maximum likelihood of an event. In our study, the event is conceptualized as the probability of an MPA student intention to choose government employment upon graduation.

We test four hypotheses (H2 through H5) for the probability of positive and negative outcomes in the DV-*IntentGW*. Four logistic regressions share one dependent variable DV- *IntentGW*—the intention to work for government, and four groups of predictor variables (see Table 1). The factor scores from the EFA–CFA–EFA transformations combine the values of four groups of variables: Gr.1—*motives to choose MPA programs*; Gr.2—*Trust in government, nongovernmental, and international organizations*; Gr.3—*Participation in formal and informal voluntary activities*; and Gr.4—*Entry-level salary expectations*. Below, we discuss the results of four logistic regressions.

The Results of Four Logistic Regressions

- A. The first regression tests the influence of prosocial and selfish or rational motives on the intention to work in government among MPA students. We hypothesized that publicly motivated students would plan to work in government, given the public nature of the institution. Results of logistic regression are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Prosocial Attitudes and Government Employment.

| | B | SE | Wald | df | Sig. | Exp (B) | 95% CI for EXP (B) | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------|--------|----|----------------|--------------|--------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| F1-Publ. Service | .559 | .154 | 13.237 | 1 | .000*** | 1.748 | 1.294 | 2.363 |
| F2-Prestige | .025 | .148 | 0.030 | 1 | .863 | 1.026 | 0.768 | 1.371 |
| F3-Mix scholarship/interest | .022 | .149 | 0.021 | 1 | .885 | 1.022 | 0.763 | 1.369 |
| Constant | .356 | .149 | 5.733 | 1 | .017 | 1.428 | | |

Note. CI = confidence interval.
 *** $\rho < .005$.

The first logistic regression is performed to ascertain the effects of public service orientation, the importance of university and department prestige, and the interest to PA and available scholarship on the likelihood of choosing government work by the MPA students. The logistic regression model is statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 18.052$, $\rho = .000$. The model correctly classified 61.2% of the cases. The results of the regression show that *Public service* factor is the only significant predictor of intended government employment. The factor F1 has positive and statistically significant association with the DV-*IntentGW* ($\rho = .000$). Two other factors—F2 and F3—are statistically insignificant. An increase of the public service measure by one unit leads to the increase in the likelihood of choosing work in government—*IntentGW*—by a factor of 1.748 (about 75%). The analysis supports *Hypotheses 2* and *3*, which suggests that publicly motivated students would choose work in government with higher probability, whereas the students driven by instrumental motives such as university and department prestige and the available scholarships and interest in PA would be less likely to choose work in government.

- B. The second regression tests the influence of trust in several institutions on motives on the intention to work in government among MPA students. We hypothesized that the MPA students with expressed trust in governmental institutions were more likely to express desire to work in government. Table 4 provides the results of the logistic regression.

Table 4. Logistic Regression With the Trust Factors.

| | B | SE | Wald | Df | Sig. | Exp (B) | 95% CI for EXP (B) | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------|-------|----|---------------|--------------|--------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| F1_trust in president and gov | .376 | .150 | 6.310 | 1 | .012** | 1.456 | 1.086 | 1.953 |
| F2_trust in NGOs and Intl gov | -.115 | .148 | 0.608 | 1 | .436 | 0.891 | 0.668 | 1.190 |
| Constant | .346 | .146 | 5.617 | 1 | .018 | 1.413 | | |

Note. CI = confidence interval.

** $\rho < .05$.

We performed the second logistic regression to ascertain the effects of trust in government and trust in nongovernmental/international organizations on the likelihood that students choose government employment upon graduation. The logistic regression model is statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 7.661$, $\rho = .042$. It correctly classifies 62.6% of the cases. Of the two predictor variables, one is statistically significant—F-1 *trust in the President and government*. The results of the regression show that F1 is the only significant predictor of intended government employment. The factor F1 has positive and statistically significant association with the DV-*IntentGW* ($\rho = 0.012$). An increase of the *trust in government* measure by one unit leads to the increase in the likelihood of choosing work in

government—*IntentGW*—by a factor of 1.456 times (about 46%) upon graduation. The results also indicate no statistically significant association between the *trust in nongovernmental and international organizations* and the *DV-intentGW*. Logistic regression results support *Hypotheses 4 and 5*, which state that trust in government is associated with the choice of government employment by MPA graduates, and trust in nongovernmental and international institutions is not associated with the choice of government employment.

- C. The third logistic regression tested the effects of formal and informal volunteering on the choice of government employment by MPA students. This logistic regression was run with five binary “formal” and “informal” independent variables (see Table 1) because the concept turned out to be unidimensional. Logistic regression was not statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 8.268$ at $p = .142$. The results did not confirm the associations between Gr. 3 IVs—*formal and informal volunteering* and the *IntentGW*. *Hypotheses 6 and 7* on the association of formal and informal volunteering with the intention to work for government were not confirmed.
- D. The fourth logistic regression tested the effects of expected public office remuneration on the choice of government employment by the respondents. The results of the regression are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Logistic Regression With the Expected Salary Variable.

| | B | SE | Wald | df | Sig. | EXP (B) | 95% CI for EXP (B) | |
|-----------------|--------------|------|-------|----|----------------|--------------|--------------------|-------|
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Expected salary | -.372 | .171 | 4.717 | 1 | 0.030** | 0.689 | .492 | .964 |
| Constant | 1.267 | .464 | 7.470 | 1 | .006 | 3.551 | | |

Note. CI = confidence interval.

** $p < .05$.

The logistic regression is performed to ascertain the effect of public office salary expectations by MPA students on the likelihood of choosing employment in government upon graduation. The logistic regression is statistically significant, $\chi^2 = 4.878$, $p = .027$. The model correctly classifies 57.4% of the cases. The analysis in Table 5 indicates a negative association between the *DV-IntentGW* and the ordinal variable *Expected Salary* ($B = -.372$). Table 5 also demonstrates the value of odds ratio (Exp B) at .689, which is less than 1.000. The *beta* (B) indicates a negative relationship between the IV (*Expected Salary*) and the *DV-IntentGW*; both indicators of the effects of salary expectations (B and Exp(B) are significant at the level of $p < 0.03$). The *DV-IntentGW* odds ratio decreases for an increase in one unit of the *Expected Salary* ($B = -.372$). We invert the odds ratio for the variable *Expected Salary* ($1/.689 = 1.45$) and observe that with decreasing value of *Expected Salary* by one unit, the likelihood of *IntentGW* increases by a factor

1.45 (or 45%). This means that when the expected salary decreases by one unit (from 4 to 1), the probability to choose government jobs increases by 45%. We conclude that the logistic regression results support *Hypothesis 8*, which states that those MPA students who underplay the value of money (*Expected Salary*) are more likely to select government employment.

- E. Following the literature findings, we tested the association between the demographic and socio-economic control variables with the *DV-IntentGW*. We performed logistic regression for the *DV-IntentGW* and each of the demographic and socio-economic variables. Unexpectedly, none of the regressions was statistically significant. We concluded that in a given sample, neither *gender*, *age*, *religiosity*, *parents' profession*, and *education*, nor *the family income* was associated with the *DV-IntentGW*. We conclude that in Russia, demographic and socio-economic variables do not associate with the intention to work in government upon graduation from MPA programs.

Discussion

This study is the first in Russia to examine the choice of the education trajectory and employment intentions of MPA students. In modern Russia, social change is often unpredictable because imported ideologies and economic development formula do not integrate transitional and national culture effects. The ideology of neoliberal economics without the countervailing philosophy and solid social norms is dangerous for young minds, disoriented by the promise of fast enrichment and prosperity. At the beginning of this study, we had gloomy expectations for finding prosocial motives among the majority of MPA students. Our expectations were influenced by the MPA management office estimations and sociological discouraging reports. The MPA department surveys from 2013 and 2014 suggested that only 30% to 40% of MPA students intended to work for government. Sociological reports predicted mostly materialistic and selfish motives among Russian youth. Our study of MPA students' motives at four universities raised optimism regarding the MPA students' public service attitudes.

The study revealed that the intention to work for government correlates with trust in government and the president, which suggests growing patriotism and desire to protect the country interests at home and in the international arena. International media accusations of government corruption, political freedoms control, and aggressive external politics do not cancel young people's patriotic feelings. We explain higher trust in formal authorities by the "rally around the flag" (Chatagnier, 2012) of the younger citizens under the conditions of aggravated international situation for Russia. We assume that the economic sanctions against Russia and military threat emanating from the tension with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), (Allin, 2014; Mearsheimer, 2014; Müller, 2009) caused higher level of patriotism and choice of government employment among MPA students in Russia. The incumbent president managed to raise the hopes of citizens for a stable and powerful state after 10 years of humiliation and disorientation. He managed to strengthen government institutions and

raised hopes for the return of welfare state. We theorize that the improved government and patriotic reputation of the president raise prosocial attitudes and the desire to work for the Russian government. This theory needs further testing. We found only one study on the effects of transformational leadership on trust and helping other behavior (Zhu & Akhtar 2014) in the context of organizational studies.

In terms of theory development, our study contributes to a better understanding of the effects of political trust on the prosocial motives and the desire to work in government. This finding suggests that political and sociocultural aspects might influence the prosocial behavior in transitional countries. It also suggests an alternative relationship between the people and government.

We explain the absence of the association among the demographics and socio-economic characteristics of respondents and their choice of government employment by the generational gap developed in the course of reforms in 1991-2010. The post-Soviet transition has had a devastating effect on the national economy. A great number of people lost jobs (Flemming & Micklewright, 2000). The parents of current students had to acquire new skills compatible with the developing “wild” market. In the 1990s, engineers became sales representatives, and doctors worked as taxi drivers to support families. Current generational disconnect is the side effect of the ongoing reformation of society and economy. Today, the children’s educational choices are influenced by market forces rather than family traditions.

Formal and informal volunteering is supported by altruistic attitudes. The absence of the association between formal and informal volunteering and the intention to work in government is an unresolved puzzle. We explain the lack of association by the difference of Russian and Western historical tradition. In Soviet Russia, the government crowded out most social assistance functions that Western NGOs perform. People learned to rely on government and family and friends for assistance. Informal volunteering is viewed as a private matter, rather than the public service. Until now, people in Russia are not convinced that the NGO sector is an adequate substitute for universal government service. Yet, we believe that students are better informed about NGOs activities than the older generation. This study frequency analysis showed that 77 out of 203 respondents, more than 30%, have had voluntary experience at NGOs in Russia. We view this lack of association as temporary and likely to change in the future.

Conclusion

Our study supported five out of eight hypotheses and determined that in Russia, students with motivation to help the country and the people, and the desire to make a career in government express the intention to work in government upon graduation from MPA programs. The MPA students with higher trust in the government, the Duma (parliament), and the president choose working for government upon graduation. The students with the expectation of lower public office remuneration choose working for the government. These findings suggest that Russian MPA students possess prosocial motives and choose the government as their employer even with the lower than the private sector pay. Unexpectedly, involvement in volunteering and informal helping to

people was determined to be unrelated to the choice of government employment. Another unusual finding is the absence of association between the *DV-IntentGW* and the demographic and socio-economic variables.

Two statistical results are theoretically challenging. First, after performing CFA, we observed a factor combining seemingly orthogonal variables: *helping the people* was grouped with the *career in government*, which does not qualify as a public value, and the *interest in PA subjects* was grouped with the *available scholarships*. To explain these groupings, we suggest two heuristics to test in future studies, first, to test the mediating effect of the “career in government” variable and the “helping behavior” variable. It is possible that students with proven prosocial motives perceive government career as instrumental to achieve public service agenda. Second, the CFA factor combined two seemingly unrelated variables, “interest in PA subjects” and “available scholarships.” We assume that this correlation may be explained by psychological reasons, the desire to embellish purely utilitarian MPA enrollment reason “receive scholarship” by mixing it with “interest in PA subjects.” Moreover, results show that this factor was not associated with the choice of government employment.

For the first time, we establish the connection between variables *trust in the president* and *trust in the government* and the desire to *work in the government*. Most political and organizational studies consider trust as an independent or dependent variable in performance, cooperation, and leadership studies. However, in PSM studies, trust is a rare factor. The study of the role of trust in various PA contexts might reveal different models of trust formation and influence. Trust in government might be a hygiene factor for the development of PSM. The relationship between trust in the president and a desire to work in the government seems to be contextually determined.

This study has achieved its stated goals and produced new knowledge useful to various stakeholders. For academic researchers of PSM and prosocial behavior, the study of Russian students’ motivation broadens the theoretical horizons by including the effects of economic transition and the Russian cultural context. The theories of public administration and political trust turned out to be relevant for testing the prosocial motivation of MPA students. The results of the study are useful for designing the MPA curriculum. To have the majority of MPA students share public service attitudes, the MPA curriculum should incorporate substantial training in ethics and explicit public service reasoning. MPA programs can also streamline selective MPA admission and targeted job orientation by focusing on public values. The findings are useful to government recruitment agencies and human resource managers, who can test for prosocial motives of future government employees.

The limitations of this study are mostly methodological. We collected the data in university study halls, where we, and other professors, administered the surveys. Although we assured the students of anonymity and voluntary participation, the perceived “desirability” of certain choices might have influenced the answers of some students. The sample of selected universities may also be a factor in the choice of responses to the questions about future employment. The selected universities are among the best in the country, which means that they are more competitive and attract better students from richer families with broader social connections (61% of sampled students are from families in “the upper middle” and “the rich” income brackets). Yet,

we found no statistically significant relationship between family income and the intention to work for the government in our sample. However, had the question been worded differently, an association might have been found. The possibility exists that students with stronger family social capital aspire to make faster careers in government and, therefore, are more motivated to choose employment in government.

The challenge of MPA programs in Russia and elsewhere is to prepare students to be excellent public servants. MPA educators at universities have a unique responsibility to select and train future public service-spirited administrators. The quote of a prominent American scholar of public administration reinforces the idea: "As in our culture, in the past, and in a good many other civilizations, the nature and quality of the public service depend principally upon systems of education" (Mosher, 1982, p. 240).

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