

Determinants of Public Service Career Choice in Developing Countries*

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Abstract: This study examines factors influencing public service career choice in developing countries through case studies and a survey. Based on the results of these case studies and survey, I conclude that job security, public service motivation, social recognition and status, and the opportunity for career development are important determinants in why individuals in developing countries choose a public service career. Bureaucratic power and family-related factors also play a role and reflect the high power distance and collectivist culture of developing countries.

Keywords: public service career choice, developing countries, case studies, job security

INTRODUCTION

Scholars in public management have found that public officials choose public service over private sector careers for a variety of reasons. Such reasons include a high degree of public service motivation (PSM), a high level of job security, pay, patriotism, altruism, and prosocial behavior, availability of job opportunities, opportunities for advancement, and desirable working environments (Perry & Porter, 1982; Rainey, 1982; Wittmer, 1991; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Jurkiewicz, 2000; Perry, 1997; Carpenter, Doverspike, & Miguel, 2012; Vandenabeele, 2008; Van de Walle, Steijn, & Gilke,

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2015; Ko, 2012). Understanding these motivating factors is vital if public managers are to improve employees' work motivation and performance, predict employees' future work morale, provide employee-friendly policies, and reduce turnover rates in the public sector (Chen & Bozeman, 2013). Indeed, as Jessica Word and Sung Min Park (2015) have pointed out, many organizational researchers and practitioners have by now underscored that understanding what motivates an individual's job choice is crucial in human resource management and for organizational success.

Most studies, however, are based on the experience and context of the United States and other Western developed countries (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007; Houston, 2011; Van de Walle et al, 2015). As Robert Behn (1995) emphasizes, "Answering the motivation question for California does not guarantee that you have answered it for Colorado, Connecticut, or Cameroon, or Cambodia" (p. 322). Even though few studies have explored motivational factors in developing and Asian countries, many of them use a deductive approach to test or confirm theories previously developed (Kim, 2006; Lee & Choi, 2016; Liu, Hui, Hu, Yang, & Yu, 2011).

But the motives of individuals in developing countries in choosing a public service career might be different from those of their counterparts in developed countries, depending on political, economic, social, and cultural environments that may differ from those of their counterparts in developed nations. Many career decision making theorists agree that career decision making is influenced by various environmental factors, such job opportunities, training opportunities, state of technological development, family resources, state of the educational system, and neighborhood and community influences (Krumboltz, Mitchell, & Jones, 1976) as well as individual factors—personalities, individual needs, motives, values, and talents (Chen, 2003; Rousseau & Venter, 2009). Environmental factors, which are usually beyond individual's control, interact with personal factors in an individual's choice of career. An individual's decision is affected by circumstances such as "parental and family influences, interpersonal relationship, cultural value, social and economic environments, political atmosphere, and natural changes" (Chen, 2003, p. 210). Moreover, as Nadya Fouad and Angela Byars-Winston (2005) note, "cultural context makes a difference in the way people make decisions and choose their work," and what work means to a given individual be different depending on that individual's historical, sociocultural, and political experience (p. 223). Accordingly, people in developing countries, where social, economic, and political conditions are different from those in developed countries, may have selected a public service career for different reasons than their colleagues in developed countries. In particular, differences in the recruitment system, government type, administrative tradition, colonization history, government effectiveness, corruption level, and social culture might affect an individual's decision to pur-

sue a public service career.

The current study is an exploratory one that uses an inductive approach in the form of case studies and a survey focusing on descriptive statistics to examine factors that motivate individuals developing countries to select public service careers. First, I report on the responses of five public officials from Bangladesh, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia to questions I asked during interviews I conducted with them regarding their decision to pursue a public service career and how they became a public official. Second, I conducted a short survey of public officials in developing countries from which I calculated descriptive statistics on the determinants of public service career choice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Choice Theories

In general, career choice is a complicated process, and an individual tends to take a long time to decide what occupation to take up (Sauer mann, 2005). Starting in childhood, people begin to think about what their future job might be in light of their dreams, interests, abilities, personality, needs, family background, how difficult it might be to get the kind of job they dream about, the reputation of the profession they are interested in, and economic and political situations. There are many career choice and development theories in psychology and sociology that consider the factors that go into a career decision (Brown, 2002). For example, John Holland (1973) suggests that most people fall into one of six personality categories—realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional—that “each type is the product of characteristic interaction among the variety of cultural personal forces, including peers, biological heredity, parents, social class, culture, and the physical environment” (Holland 1973, p. 2, as cited in Haki-Levental et al., 2008, pp. 6-7), and that that each personality type fits with particular vocations and work environments. According to Donald Super’s theory, “Vocational preferences and competencies, the situations in which people live and work, and hence their self-concepts change with time,” and these changes influence their career choice and development (Salomone, 1996, p. 173).

Social learning theory explains “how educational and occupational preferences and skills are acquired and how selections of courses, occupations, and field of work are made.” According to the theory, “the interactions of genetic factors, environmental conditions, learning experiences, cognitive and emotional responses, and

performance skills” influence an individual’s career decision (Krumboltz et al., 1976, p. 71).

Social cognitive career theory emphasizes “cognitive-person variables (e.g., self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals)” and explores “how these variables interact with other aspects of the person and his or her environment (e.g., gender, ethnicity, social supports, and barriers)” to influence career development process (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000, p. 36). Environmental factors can be divided into two broad categories: an immediate context and a larger societal context. The immediate context refers, for example, to the financial condition of the family or the person, role models, and advice from family or friends. The larger societal context—macroeconomic conditions, political stability, government policies, or social and cultural bias, for example—might not directly influence a person’s career choice, and people can perceive the impact of their environment in different ways. But both personal and societal contexts can support or hinder an individual’s ability to enter the vocation he or she is interested in (Lent et al., 2000, p. 45).

Even though each theory emphasizes different individual factors such as personalities, abilities, interests, learning experience, or self-efficacy, all of them also stress that these factors interact with environmental factors in career decision making. Career choice can thus be seen as the result of interaction between individual and environmental factors.

Role of Individual Factors in Public Service Career Choice

The factors that encourage individuals to choose a career in the public sector have been well examined (Park & Word, 2012). Most studies focus more on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as individual factors rather than environmental factors. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated “seek enjoyment, interest, satisfaction of curiosity, self-expression, or personal challenge in the work” (Amabile, 1993, p. 188), and intrinsic motivation in public service career is usually related to altruism, a sense of social responsibility, prosocial behavior, a desire to contribute to society, and public service motivation (Park & Word, 2012). Among intrinsic motivational factors, PSM has been at the forefront (e.g., Perry and Wise, 1990; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Taylor, 2005; Piatak, 2016; Vandenabeele, 2008; Steijn, 2008; Vandenabeele et al., 2015; Wright, Hassan, and Christensen, 2017) over the past several decades in public management literature, and few have questioned the primacy ascribed to it (Bozeman & Su, 2015). James Perry and Lois Wise (1990) introduced the idea, arguing that PSM is “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations” (1990, p. 368). According to them,

individuals with more PSM are more likely to choose work in the public sector, and there have been many studies undertaken to prove the proposition. For example, Gregory Lewis and Sue Frank (2002), Jeannette Taylor (2005), Jaclyn Piatak (2006), Wouter Vandenberghe (2008), Bram Steijn (2008), Ko (2012), Vandenberghe and colleagues (2015), Bradley Wright, Shahidul Hassan, and Robert Christensen (2017), and Xavier Ballart and Guillem Rico (2018) all have found a positive relationship between PSM and public career choice.

PSM, however, might not always be important in an individual's decision to enter into a public service career. Geon Lee and Do Lim Choi (2013) have found that for South Koreans, public service motivation and prosocial behavior are not related to the choice to pursue a public sector career and that job security is the most important factor. Christensen and Wright (2011) also find that PSM cannot predict the likelihood of an individual's accepting either a public or private sector position (p. 734). Gerald Gabris and Gloria Simo (1995) propose that "public sector motivation does exist, but like certain subatomic particles, it is virtually impossible to isolate and visualize" (p. 49). They suggest that the way to recruit competent and devoted individuals to the public sector is not by relying on PSM but by making public jobs more challenging, monetarily attractive, secure, and autonomous.

Extrinsic factors therefore might be more important than intrinsic ones in making public service careers more attractive. Extrinsically motivated individuals "engage in the work in order to obtain some goal that is apart from the work itself" (Amabile, 1993, p. 188). Extrinsic factors that might motivate an individual to seek out a career in public service include desirable salary, rewards, pension opportunities, job security, the possibility of career advancement, desirable working conditions and work-life balance policies, and the desire for the social status that would come with such job (Word & Park, 2015; Amabile, 1993; Herzberg, 1968). Other researchers have also found that job security (Ballart & Rico, 2018), the compensation level of public service jobs (Lewis & Frank, 2002; Vandenberghe, 2008; Ko, 2012), the nature of the public sector work environment (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007), and the flexibility to manage work-family conflict that public sector jobs offer (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007; Vandenberghe, 2008) are essential reasons an individual might choose a public service career.

Job security and compensation are crucial extrinsic factors that many scholars have studied. Public officials in many countries enjoy high job security and work until their retirement age, a prospect that makes a public service career attractive to job seekers (Baldwin, 1990; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Vandenberghe, 2008; Ballart & Rico, 2018). Even in the United States, people for whom job security is essential prefer working for the government (Lewis & Frank, 2002). Regarding compensation,

Lewis and Frank (2002) point out that many scholars in public administration suggest that financial rewards and incentives are less important for people who choose public service careers and that nonfinancial benefits are more attractive for them. However, there are a growing number of studies that have found that many public officials still value financial rewards and incentives (Christensen & Wright, 2011; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Vandenabeele, 2008, Van de Walle et al., 2015).

A number of demographic features including gender (Breitsohl & Ruhle, 2016; Ng & Gossett, 2013; Bright, 2016), age (Lewis & Frank, 2002), race (Bright, 2005), minority status (Bright, 2016), and ethnicity (Doverspike, Qin, Magee, Snell, & Vaiana, 2011) affect whether individuals choose a public service career. According to a couple of studies, women are more likely than men to choose a public service career; however, the results are not consistent (Breitsohl & Ruhle, 2016; Bright, 2016). Members of minority groups and older Americans prefer working for the government (Bright, 2016; Lewis & Frank, 2002).

Lastly, an individual's degree of government trust (Doverspike et al., 2011), the nature of their political beliefs, and positive attitudes toward civil service (Lewis & Frank, 2002) have been shown to be associated with an individual's choosing a public service career.

Role of Environmental Factors in Public Service Career Choice

Environmental factors also affect the career decision making process. Indeed, environmental factors can be more determinative than individual factors because individuals cannot control the environment. The decision to pursue a public service career is influenced by both immediate and larger social environmental factors (Lent et al., 2000). Immediate environmental factors such as parental expectations (Chen, Chen, & Xu, 2018), having parents who volunteer, and having a father who works in the public sector have been shown to incline individuals toward public service careers (Stritch & Christensen, 2016). Larger environmental factors such political and social stability, economic situations, cultural norms, public management reform, cultural differences, and structural patterns in the labor force not only play a role in the choice to pursue public service but may possibly explain differences in the level of popularity of public sector employment across nations (Norris, 2003). Polfeldt (2009, 18th para.) observes that after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, many young people in the USA became more interested in the public sector because of their excitement about his administration's policies, their "renewed appreciation for public service," and their "disappointment with private-sector leaders." And as Ballart and Rico (2018) mention, altruistic individuals might make a choice to work

in the public sector in the aftermath of a huge economic crisis out of a desire to help people. In their analysis of Work Orientation III survey (2005), Van de Walle and colleagues (2015) find that people who live in countries with a low GDP are more willing to working for the government, while the unemployment rate is not associated with choosing public sector employment.

Understanding the various reasons individuals choose public sector jobs could help human resource management organizations attract young and talented people to the public sector. However, most studies are based on the USA or Western developed countries, more focused on individual factors, and put less emphasis on the interaction between individual and environmental factors. Moreover, many studies relating to work motivation in the public sector rely on public service motivation theory and on a survey research method. This study, by contrast, examines other motivational factors in developing countries using two approaches: 1) multiple case studies, the subjects of whom explain why they wanted to be and how they became public officials, that take into account both individual and environmental factors and 2) descriptive statistics on the determinants of public service career choice.

CASE STUDIES

The following case studies rely on an inductive approach that seeks “to promote a greater understanding of the meanings that humans attach to events or phenomenon” (Ricucci, 2010, p. 45) in order to explore and understand what motivates individuals in developing countries to select public service careers. A case study is defined as “the detailed examination of a single example of a class of phenomena” (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1984, p. 34, cited in Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 220). Using a case study method is appropriate when researchers want to examine and deeply understand a real-life phenomenon that connects with context (Yin, 2009). Moreover, a case study method is useful for exploring a research topic (Abercrombie et al., 1984: cited in Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 220). I take up two main research questions, how a given individual came to be a public official and why he or she wanted to be a civil servant. Because not much attention has been devoted to the question of what motivates individuals in developing countries to choose to enter public service, the case study method is an appropriate one to seek answers to it.

The unit of analysis I used is individual public officials from the Philippines, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia, five low- to middle-income countries in

South and Southeastern Asia.¹ Democratization, government effectiveness, and corruption levels are similar in all five, and they share the cultural characteristics of being high power distance societies and countries that place a low premium on individualism. However, they do not all have the same type of government or the same religion, nor were they all colonized by the same country. The Philippines and Indonesia have the same type of government, Cambodia and Vietnam were both colonized by France, and Islam is the dominant religion in Bangladesh and Indonesia, but beyond that, each country is different. They are also different with respect to recruitment practices. The Philippine government recruits public officials based more on skill and merit than the other countries, and political and personal connections are less important there than they are in other countries. Political and personal connections in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Vietnam are essential to becoming a public sector employee. Table 1 presents more details of the contextual background of each country.

I used a nonprobability sampling method to choose the civil servants from these countries for the case studies. The five public officials were students who studied public management in a master's program in Japan. There were about 70 students in the program, and most of them were public officials from developing countries in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Africa. Among them, there were three students from the Philippines, one from Bangladesh, four from Vietnam, three from Cambodia, and six from Indonesia that I was able to contact. I selected interviewees who worked for a central government agency, except the one in Vietnam, and in general public administrative departments so that I might find "typical" and "similar" cases (Seawright & Gerring, 2008) and asked them to participate in my study.² All of them accepted. This interviewee selection process poses the threat of selection bias, "one of the most common critiques of case study methods" (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 22). But since this study aims to identify determinants of public service career decision making by way of rich explanations of particular cases (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007), and the population of this study, public officials in developing countries, is too vast to use a random sampling method, selection bias might be inevitable. Because of this unrepresentativeness of cases, the results are not necessarily generalizable.

1. World Bank Country and Lending Group, <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>, May 21, 2018.

2. I chose a public official in Danang City government, Vietnam, because there was no public official who worked in a central government agency that was available for the interview.

Table 1. Contextual Background of Five Countries

| | The Philippines | Bangladesh | Vietnam | Cambodia | Indonesia |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Location | Southeastern Asia | Southern Asia | Southeast Asia | Southeastern Asia | Southeastern Asia |
| Government Type | presidential republic | parliamentary republic | communist state | parliamentary constitutional monarchy | presidential republic |
| Date of Independence | July 4, 1946 (from the US) | December 16, 1971 (from West Pakistan) (before 1947 it was part of British India) | September 2, 1945 (from France) | November 9, 1953 (from France) | August 17, 1945 (from the Netherlands) |
| Democratization Level | | | | | |
| Political Rights | 3 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| Civil Liberties | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Freedom Status | partly free | partly free | not free | not free | partly free |
| Government Effectiveness | -0.01 | -0.69 | 0.01 | -0.69 | 0.10 |
| Corruption Perception Index | 35 | 26 | 33 | 21 | 37 |
| Recruitment | | | | | |
| Skill and Merit Based | 5.33 | 3.63 | 2.50 | 3.75 | 4.29 |
| Political Connections | 3.92 | 5.19 | 6.17 | 6 | 4.18 |
| Personal Connections | 3.83 | 4.81 | 5.83 | 6.25 | 4.41 |
| Formal Examination | 5.92 | 5.75 | 5.67 | 4.5 | 6.24 |
| Dominant Religion | Catholicism (82.9%) | Islam (89.1%) | None (81.8%) | Buddhism (96.9%) | Islam (87.2%) |
| Cultural Differences | | | | | |
| Power Distance (104-11) | 94 | 80 | 70 | NA | 78 |
| Individualism (91-6) | 32 | 20 | 20 | NA | 14 |
| Uncertainty Avoidance (112-8) | 44 | 60 | 30 | NA | 48 |
| Long-Term Orientation (118 – 0) | 19 | 40 | 80 | NA | NA |
| GDP per Capita (PPP) (2016 Estimated) | \$7,900 | \$4,000 | \$6,500 | \$3,800 | \$11,900 |
| Unemployment Rate (2016 Estimated) | 5.5% | 4.1% | 2.3% | 0.2% | 5.6% |

Note: Location, government type, date of independence, dominant religion, GDP per capita, and unemployment rate are from *The World Factbook* (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html>). Democratization level data are from Freedom House 2017. Government effectiveness level is from Worldwide Governance Indicator (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/#reports>); the data ranges from -2.5 to +2.5. The Corruption Perception Index is from Transparency International (https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016); the highest score is 100, and the closer the number is to 100, the less corrupt the country is. Recruitment information is from QoG Expert Survey 2015; the scores are

average scores of respondents to the following four statements measured on a Likert scale, where 1=hardly ever and 7=almost always: when public sector employees are recruited, the skills and merits of the applicants determine who gets the job; when public sector employees are recruited, the political connections of the applicants determine who gets the job; when public sector employees are recruited, the personnel connections of the applicants (for example, family or friends) determine who gets the job; and public sector employees are hired via a formal examination system (https://www.qogdata.pol.gu.se/data/qog_exp_15.pdf; <https://qog.pol.gu.se/data/datadownloads/qogexpertsurveydata>). Cultural differences are from Hofstede & Hofstede 2005; a higher score indicates that the characteristics of the dimension are more evident, and the numbers in parentheses are the highest and lowest score in the original study.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face from February to March 2016 with semi-structured questionnaires. Appendixes 1 and 2 provide interview dates and a list of the main questions I asked. To clarify the contents of the interviews and ask for further information, I had other meetings and exchanged emails with interviewees as needed. The followings are details about why these public officials decided to select public service and how they became public officials.

Case 1: Juan from the Philippines

Juan, a 29-year-old man, from the Philippines, had worked in the Policy Development and Planning Bureau of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for seven years from August 2007 to September 2014 as a social welfare officer position.³ His primary job responsibilities were policy development, welfare standards setting, research, data gathering, assessment of programs, and development of laws to protect children in conflict. He entered with a grade 3 position and is still a grade 3. If he wants a promotion, he needs to apply for a vacancy in grade 4.

How He Got the Position and Why He Choose a Public Sector Career

After he had received a bachelor's degree in social welfare from the University of the Philippines in April 2007, he began preparing to take a social work license exam. He applied to several organizations for a job, including international nonprofit organizations, the DSWD, and a government hospital. He could not, however, get any position without a license. During this time, he did not have any preference for a public service job or firm intention to seek a job in the government sector.

In the Philippines, there are two ways to become a public official. First, a person can take the Career Service Examination, a paper and pencil test, which is held once

3. The interview was conducted on February 11, 2016. Social Welfare officers have five grades: grade 1-3, grade 4 (assistant of division chief), and grade 5 (division chief).

a year and administered by the Civil Service Commission. Once a person passes the examination, he or she is qualified to apply for open job in agencies. Each agency hires its employees using its own hiring system, which includes specialized exams and interview processes. Second, a person who has a professional license, such as the social work license that Juan was trying to secure, can apply for an open position directly without taking the Career Service Examination. Additionally, if the individual receives the highest score on the license examinations, he or she might be personally invited by agencies to apply for open positions.

In June 2007, Juan passed the social work license examination with the highest marks, after which the DSWD offered him the position of social welfare officer, grade 3, in the Policy Development and Planning Bureau, a contract-based position, not permanent. Juan also got another job offer from the nonprofit organization where he had worked for six months doing a practicum to finish his bachelor's degree. He finally decided to join the DSWD rather than the non-profit. There were two crucial reasons why he chose the DSWD. First, he thought the DSWD job would expose him to more areas of social work. The DSWD has various divisions and bureaus relating to social work, and he thought he might be able to move to each bureau and division, learn about different aspects of social welfare, and develop his career. The possibility of career development was the main reason he picked the DSWD job. Even though his salary would also be higher at DSWD than at the nonprofit organization, the salary was not the reason he decided to work for the DSWD.

Second, the integrity of the DSWD and the fact that it was not as subject to corruption as other government agencies in the Philippines pushed Juan toward accepting the DSWD job. According to international corruption measures, such as Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicator, corruption is a severe problem in the Philippines government (Quah, 2013). In 2007, the corruption perception index score of the Philippines was 2.5 out of 10, and it ranked 131 out of 179 countries (Transparency International, 2007). For Juan, the bad reputation of civil servants was one reason he was hesitant to become a public official. The DSWD, however, had the best reputation for integrity, and it was usually rated the "least corrupt" government agency according to a national survey conducted by Ulat ng Bayan national survey, an organization that emphasizes the importance civil organizations taking responsibility in overseeing program implementation and in increasing their transparency.⁴

4. See <http://www.gov.ph/2011/04/01/dswd-is-the-‘least-corrupt’-government-agency-pulse-asia/>.

Why Social Work?

Why Juan chose to be a social worker could be relevant to why he also ended up choosing a public service career. His family's religious life was what made him want to be a social worker. His family members are devout Catholics. When he was young, he went to church every weekend and served as an altar boy. He joined various outreach programs in the church as well. These experiences nurtured in him a desire to care for and help other people. When he helps people, he feels fulfilled. On top of working at the DSWD, he also volunteered at a nonprofit organization as a facilitator and trainer, helping students from low-income families and also occasionally taught a course on community service at De LaSalle College in Manila, focusing on connecting students and poor communities. His religious life played a critical role in his choice to be a social worker.

Case 2: Kamal from Bangladesh

Kamal is a 35-year-old man who worked in the Ministry of Public Administration in Bangladesh for seven years from 2008 to 2014.⁵ He was a grade 6 senior assistant secretary and a field officer of the district administration office.⁶ When Kamal became a public official, he was in the grade 9 position, the highest position an individual can be hired into as a result of taking examinations administered by the Public Service Commission. He was a cadre official.⁷ Cadre officials, also called class 1 officers, are "key decision-makers and roughly 8% of all civil servants" (Jahan, 2006, p. 9). He started his career as assistant commissioner in a district administration office as all new cadre officers usually do. The commissioner typically has two primary responsibilities as an executive administrative officer and an executive magistrate. As an executive administrative officer, he mainly deals with legal matters and revenue issues, while his important duty as an executive magistrate is to serve as a mobile court judge who has the authority sentence individuals with imprisonment up to two years or fines in the place where the crime happened.

Kamal's job in the Ministry of Public Administration was not his first one. He had

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5. The interview was conducted on February 18, 2016.
 6. In Bangladesh, public official's grades range from 1 to 20. A secretary of ministry position is the highest in grade 1.
 7. "Cadres distinguish particular occupational groups to which a civil servant might belong, either at the time of recruitment or subsequently through lateral mobility. Cadres constitute a relatively small but distinctly elite subset of the civil service" (Mukherjee, Gokcekus, Manning, & Landell-Mills, 2001, p. 11).

previously worked as a negotiation officer in the biggest telecommunication company in his country from 2005-2008 under a three-year contract. There were not many job openings in either the public or private sectors at the time he was initially looking for a job. When he graduated from college, getting a job was the most important priority for him because he needed to support his family. He could not afford to go through the lengthy recruitment process for public officials. The public official exam was held only once a year, and the yearly exam was sometimes canceled if there were no job vacancies. This meant that he might need to wait one or two years or even more than that to get a position in government.

Because his major was economics and his university was one of the tops in his nation, it was not very difficult to get a position in the private company. Because the internet and cell phone industries were booming, he received a high salary, and the work environment was very decent. He, however, decided to move into the public sector.

Why a Public Service Career Was Important for Him

In Bangladesh, a public service career is prestigious and stable. Public officials are highly respected and socially recognized, a consequence of Bangladesh's British colonial heritage (Jahan, 2006). According to Hamza Alavi (1972), the bureaucracy in the colonial period implemented the colonial order. Out of this bureaucracy that the colonial powers established came an elite and organized power group that separated itself from the rest of society. Even after Bangladesh received independence, the bureaucracy remained a substantial power group (Jahan, 2006, pp. 8-9).

If a person becomes a public official, then not only does that person's social status increase but also that of his or her family. Relying on the civil servant network, a public official and members of his or her family may enjoy immunity from minor misdemeanors and receive government services more quickly than other people. For example, even if a public official has a job in a less powerful agency, he or she could use the network to get a family member who commits a misdemeanor, such as drunken driving, released or to get a passport in few days. Once a person becomes a public official, then, the public official and his or her full family are more or less guaranteed a prestigious and secure life in Bangladesh. For Kamal, this social respect and security were compelling reasons to move into the public sector.

Although there was no public official in his father's family, there was an uncle on his mother's side who was a highly ranked public official in the Department of Public Administration. From when Kamal was young, he witnessed the mighty power of such a highly ranked public official. For example, whenever he visited his uncle's

house, a chauffeur came to the bus stop where he got off, and there were policemen to guard him.

In his second year of working for the private company, he began preparing for the grade 8 civil servant exam. In Bangladesh, there are three kinds of public official exams: a cadre examination, called the Bangladesh Civil Service exam (BCS), a class 1 noncadre examination, and a class 2 noncadre examination. There are 27 different cadre exams; Kamal took the BCS examination for the administration cadre. The BCS examination has three stages: a preliminary test, a written examination; and a viva voce interview.⁸ He passed all the tests and started working at the Department of Public Administration, the most powerful agency, which has both administrative and judicial power. Even though the pay is lower than what he received while working at the private company and he is so busy that he does not have time to spend with his family, he does not want to move back to the private sector because he is satisfied with the social recognition, family security, and power of the position.

Case 3: Thu from Vietnam

Thu is a 27-year-old woman who works for the Danang City government in Vietnam.⁹ Before that, she worked in the Department of Home Affairs for four years, from 2011 to 2015. During the four years, she worked in four divisions, including the Division of Staff Size, Division of Youth, Division of Local Government Workers, and Division of Civil Service and Public Employees. The path she took to become a civil servant was different from that of other public officials in her department.

How She Became a Public Official and Why

When she was 16 years old, Thu went to a specialized high school, a gifted school, which was free and managed by the Danang City government near Quang Nam province, where she lived. Her gift was literature. During high school, she decided to apply for a scholarship program run by the Danang City government for her university. The city government provides competitive scholarship to high school students who want to become public officials after they get their bachelor's degree in Vietnam or overseas.¹⁰ By this means, the government seeks to attract talented people

8. Bangladesh Public Service Commission, exam system, <http://www.bpsc.gov.bd/platform/node/61.bpsc2012.pml>.

9. The interview was conducted on March 24, 2016.

10. See Danang Center for Promotion of Human Resource Development, <http://www.cphud.danang.gov.vn/detail?articleId=17141>.

to the public sector. If the individual who receives the scholarship graduates from the university, she or he is contractually required to work for the city government for at least five years.

Even though her interest was in literature, she decided to apply to the program and become a public official. There were five reasons for this decision. First and most important was her family's financial situation. She has two younger sisters, and the first younger sister is one year younger than she is. Thu thought her parents could not cover two daughters' university tuition in the same years, so if she received a scholarship, it would alleviate her parents' financial burden.

Second, she thought that if she got the government scholarship and performed well at the university, she would not have to worry about unemployment status after her graduation. She did not have access to a network through which she might secure a job, and she was worried about her financial situation after graduation.

The third reason was her parents. Both of her parents were public officials. Both of them worked for a provincial government. Even though they were not wealthy, their life was stable and peaceful. She respected the lifestyle of her parents.

Fourth, in a similar vein, she thought a public service career would provide her with stability and security. Even though she could not receive a high salary, it would be enough for her to live on, and she could work until age 55.¹¹

The last reason was the contribution to society she could make by becoming a public servant. From the time she was a teenager, Thu wanted to contribute to the province where she was born and raised, and also wanted to give back to Danang City, which had provided her scholarship for high school.

Her academic grades and a literature competition award earned her the college scholarship as well, and she entered the University of Culture in Hanoi. She majored in cultural management and law and graduated with distinction. After she graduated from the university, she started working as an entry-level public official at the Department of Home Affairs in Danang City under a five-year contract. After the first year, she took and passed an examination to secure tenure. Even though her concern over her financial situation and her desire for a secure life were the main reasons she decided to become a public official, she enjoys her job very much. She is especially proud to be a public official when she sees how year after year, Danang City continues to grow and develop.

11. A new public official with a graduate degree receives about ₫1.300.000 (US\$75) monthly (Poon, Hung, & Truong, 2009, p. 217). In Vietnam, female public officials retire at 55 and male officials at 60.

Case 4: Boong from Cambodia

Boong is a 24-years-old man who works in the General Department of Taxation (GDT) under the Ministry of Economy and Finance.¹² He became a civil servant in January 2012. His primary duty is determining the amount of tax that is levied for real estate. When he became a public official, his rank was level B.¹³

How He Became a Public Official

The recruitment process for public officials in Cambodia is decentralized. Each government agency recruits and selects its workforce by itself anytime it has vacancies. Boong took the civil servant examination in 2011. The subjects covered in the examination were economics, accounting, taxation, computers, and English. About 15,000 people applied for public sector jobs that year, and 300 in all became public officials across the three civil servant levels. Boong was a senior in university; therefore, he applied to for a level B position. Because he did not know when the next examination would be scheduled, he decided he needed take the examination then. The previous examination had been held in 2008. He passed the examination and started working for a provincial government in January 2012.

Why He Wanted to Become a Public Official

The first reason Boong wanted to be a public official was that being a public tax official is regarded as an excellent occupation and is a very popular job in Cambodia. People think public tax officials earn more money than other public officials, although in general, civil servants receive meager salaries and cannot survive on their wages in Cambodia (World Bank, 2013). Their pay level is lower than that offered by private companies and nonprofit organizations. The average monthly salary of public officials was \$75.5 in 2009 (Korm, 2011). Usually, public officials have a second job even though having a second job is not quite acceptable. Many civil servants work as lecturers or consultants to earn extra income when they are off duty. However, although public officials in custom and taxation departments receive the same salary as other public officials, tax officials also receive monthly bonuses based on the tax

12. The interview was conducted on April 5, 2016.

13. In Cambodia, there are three levels of rank for tax office civil servants: level A, B, and C. For recruitment and selection purposes, level A requires a bachelor's degree, and level B requires at least three years of university or an associate bachelor's degree. Level C requires a high school diploma.

revenue they collected the previous month. For example, the Tax Audit Department gives special bonuses to individuals or groups of tax auditors depending on their performance. These policies are the result of government reforms designed to reduce the level of corruption in the tax administration. The more tax they collect from citizens, the greater their bonuses. Because the GDT does not receive a government budget, it can use 1.5% of the tax revenue for its own expenditures, and so it also gives extra money to certain of its tax officials as a general reward depending on their position.

The second reason Boong wanted to become a public official was his major at his university. He majored in economics and business management at the National University of Management. He was an excellent student in his high school and was able to get a government scholarship provided by the Ministry of Education for his university education. During his study at the university, he became interested in becoming a public tax official.

The third reason was his mother and uncle. After he passed the civil servant examination in 2011, he received another scholarship to study film production in South Korea, and so he needed to decide whether to become a public official or to accept the scholarship and begin on another career path. His mother and uncle strongly encouraged him to become a public official instead of going to study abroad. Even though it was his last chance to change his career, he could not disregard his mother and uncle's suggestion because his father had passed away when he was at university, and his father's company went bankrupt.

The last reason was that he knew he would feel honor and pride in being a public official. Public officials in Cambodia enjoy high social standing and reputation, although they do not earn enough salary for living in general.

Case 5: Firman from Indonesia

Firman is a 31-year-old man who worked at the Treasury Unit of Ministry of Finance from 2007 to 2015.¹⁴ When he became a public official, he was grade 2-c, which requires an associate degree from a three-year professional school.¹⁵ Firman is currently working as a frontline officer in the Disbursement of Fund Section of the State Treasury Office. His job responsibility is to check and analyze documents and invoices of the department's stakeholders.

14. The interview was conducted on March 24, 2016.

15. In Indonesia, rank for civil servants starts at 1 and goes to 4. Each rank has four grades (a, b, c, d). It usually takes four years to move to a higher grade. High school graduates can apply for 2-a positions. 2-c grade requires an associate degree. 3-a positions require a bachelor's degree, and 3-b positions require a master's degree.

Why and How He Became a Public Official

Firman originally wanted to work for a private company and be an entrepreneur. However, he had to become a public official because of his family's financial situation. Firman's father was a food seller in a market, but the business was not good, and the situation got worse after the Asian financial crisis in 1997. Even though his major was natural science in high school, because of the financial situation, he needed to decide to go to the State College of Accounting to become a public official. The State College of Accounting is a specialized school that offers a free three-year program administered by the Ministry of Finance. Many Indonesian government agencies run professional schools, such as the Institute of Public Administration under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and College of Mineral and Energy under the Ministry of Mineral and Energy, from which they hire graduates. The government fully funds these schools.

He was sad about but proud of himself as well for going to the school. The college was not what he wanted, and he needed to live far away from his family; however, it was hard to get into the school, and everyone around him said he would have a better future ahead because he had attended it. It made him and his family proud. The training took place in Jakarta, and he chose budgeting as a major. To stay at the school, he needed to maintain a 2.75 or higher GPA, could not have more than two absences, and could have no grade below a C in any subject. After he had graduated the school, he became a public official in the Ministry of Finance.

Another reason he wanted to be a public official was the job security the career provided. Even though the salary level in the public sector is lower than that of the private sector, civil servants enjoy strong job security in Indonesia.¹⁶ And the last reason was that public official is a prestigious occupation in Indonesia.

Summary of Cases

Table 2 provides a summary of interviewees' profiles and the factors that led them to choose public service careers. With respect to individual factors, public service motivation instilled by the family's religious life and a desire to contribute to society were intrinsic motivations in the interviewees' selection of a public service career. Possibility of career development, the integrity of the agency the interviewee was

16. In his case, his first salary was ₩850,000 (USD\$65). It was 80% of regular salary without benefits because he was doing on-the-job training. After the job training period, he would receive a full salary and benefits.

interested in working for, family security, an interest in bureaucratic power, a desire for social recognition, job popularity, and job security were extrinsic motivation factors. With respect to environmental factors, family recommendations, university major, family's financial situation, and the example of parents' public service careers were important immediate motivating factors, while larger social factors included the Asian economic crisis. In each case, the interaction of individual and environmental factors played a part in the individual's decision to pursue a public service career.

Table 2. Profiles of Interviewees and Their Reasons for Choosing a Public Service Career

| Name | | Juan | Kamal | Boong | Thu | Firman |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Country | | The Philippines | Bangladesh | Cambodia | Vietnam | Indonesia |
| Gender | | Male | Male | Male | Female | Male |
| Age | | 29 | 35 | 24 | 27 | 31 |
| Agency | | Policy Development and Planning Bureau, Department of Social Welfare and Development | District administration office, Ministry of Public Administration | General Department of Taxation, Ministry of Economy and Finance | Department of Home Affairs, Danang City government | Treasury Unit, Ministry of Finance |
| Entering Grade | | grade 3 (social welfare officer) | grade 6 (senior assistant secretary) | level B (tax officer) | officer (entry level) | grade 2-c |
| Years Employed | | 7 years | 7 years | 3 years | 4 years | 8 years |
| Determinants | | | | | | |
| Individual Factors | Intrinsic Motivation | -public service motivation influenced by family's religious life | | | -contribution to society | |
| | Extrinsic Motivation | -possibility of career advancement -agency's integrity | -family security -bureaucratic power - social recognition | -popularity of job -social reputation of public career | -job security | -job security -social recognition |
| Environmental Factors | Immediate Context | | | -mother and uncle's recommendation -university major | -family's financial situation -parents' public service career | -family's financial situation |
| | Larger Social Context | | | | | -economic crisis |

SURVEY OF DETERMINANTS OF PUBLIC SERVICE CAREER—

The second study provides descriptive statistics about which factors were most important in encouraging public officials in developing countries to choose a public service career. An online survey via Google Forms was conducted by me from November 14 to December 13, 2019. One hundred seventy public officials in developing countries who had graduated from and were in a master's program at a university in Japan received the survey through their email. To increase the number of respondents, I asked them to share the survey link with other colleagues if they wanted. One hundred forty-four public officials responded to the survey in the end. Appendix 3 provides demographic information of the sample and the respondents. The main question was "How important were each of the following in your selecting a public service career?" Table 3 presents the items and descriptive statistics. Respondents answered each item using a 7-point Likert scale, where 7 equaled very important and 1 very unimportant.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

| Determinants | Mean | Rank | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | Observations |
|---|-------|------|--------------------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Job Security | 6.333 | 1 | .88 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Future Personal Growth | 6.135 | 2 | .943 | 2 | 7 | 141 |
| Opportunity for Educational Development | 6.099 | 3 | 1.148 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| PSM* | 6.091 | 4 | .6598 | 4 | 7 | 136 |
| Lifelong Employment | 5.929 | 5 | 1.171 | 1 | 7 | 142 |
| Social Status and Prestige | 5.894 | 6 | 1.067 | 2 | 7 | 141 |
| Social Recognition | 5.886 | 7 | 1.106 | 2 | 7 | 140 |
| Promotion | 5.858 | 8 | 1.119 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Recognition of Achievement | 5.766 | 9 | 1.030 | 2 | 7 | 141 |
| Social Benefits | 5.636 | 10 | .9907 | 2 | 7 | 140 |
| Work Itself | 5.567 | 11 | 1.030 | 2 | 7 | 141 |
| Power to Influence People and Society | 5.397 | 12 | 1.393 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Bureaucratic and Social Networks | 5.348 | 13 | 1.276 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Need a Job for Family or Me | 5.329 | 14 | 1.380 | 1 | 7 | 140 |
| Flexible Time | 5.326 | 15 | 1.442 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Family Suggestion and Support | 5.218 | 16 | 1.410 | 1 | 7 | 142 |
| Less Competence and Commitment Required after Securing Employment | 4.532 | 17 | 1.442 | 1 | 7 | 141 |
| Pay (Salary) | 4.214 | 18 | 2.070 | 1 | 7 | 140 |

* PSM score combined and averaged three items: desiring a job that contributes to community and national development, that allows one to help others, and that is useful to society.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of Responses to Each Item and Scale Individual Factors

| Individual Factors | Very Unimportant | Unimportant | Somewhat Unimportant | Neutral | Moderately Important | Important | Very Important |
|---|------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Intrinsic Motivation | | | | | | | |
| Contributing to Community and National Development | 0 0% | 1 0.71% | 1 0.71% | 3 2.13% | 16 11.35% | 55 39.01% | 65 46.10% |
| Being Useful to Society | 0 0% | 1 0.71% | 2 1.42% | 7 4.96% | 15 10.64% | 62 43.97% | 54 38.30% |
| Helping Others | 0 0% | 1 0.72% | 4 2.88% | 6 4.32% | 27 19.42% | 61 43.88% | 40 28.78% |
| Work Itself | 0 0% | 1 0.71% | 3 2.13% | 16 11.35% | 42 29.79% | 53 37.59% | 26 18.44% |
| Extrinsic Motivation | | | | | | | |
| Job Security | 1 0.71% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 4 2.84% | 11 7.8% | 54 38.3% | 71 50.35% |
| Future Personal Growth | 0 0% | 1 0.71% | 2 1.42% | 5 3.55% | 17 12.06% | 60 42.55% | 56 39.72% |
| Opportunities for Educational Development | 1 0.71% | 1 0.71% | 4 2.84% | 6 4.26% | 19 13.48% | 44 31.21% | 66 46.81% |
| Lifelong Employment | 1 0.7% | 1 0.7% | 4 2.82% | 8 5.63% | 29 20.42% | 43 30.28% | 56 39.44% |
| Social Status and Prestige | 0 0% | 3 2.13% | 1 0.71% | 9 6.38% | 25 17.73% | 60 42.55% | 43 30.50% |
| Social Recognition | 0 0% | 3 2.14% | 2 1.43% | 9 6.43% | 25 17.86% | 56 40.00% | 45 32.14% |
| Promotion | 1 0.71% | 3 2.13% | 0 0% | 9 6.38% | 27 19.15% | 59 41.84% | 42 29.79% |
| Recognition of Achievement | 0 0% | 0 0% | 5 3.55% | 7 4.96% | 31 21.99% | 71 50.35% | 27 19.15% |
| Social Benefits | 0 0% | 2 1.43% | 2 1.43% | 11 7.86% | 38 27.14% | 64 45.71% | 23 16.43% |
| Power to Influence People and Society | 4 2.84% | 3 2.13% | 8 5.56% | 11 7.80% | 33 23.40% | 56 39.72% | 26 18.44% |
| Bureaucratic and Social Networks | 1 0.71% | 3 2.13% | 9 6.38% | 21 14.89% | 28 19.86% | 57 40.43% | 22 15.60% |
| Flexible Time | 4 2.84% | 4 2.84% | 7 4.96% | 15 10.64% | 38 26.95% | 43 30.50% | 30 21.28% |
| Less Competence and Commitment Required after Securing Employment | 5 3.55% | 16 11.35% | 13 9.22% | 26 18.44% | 34 24.11% | 40 28.37% | 7 4.96% |
| Pay (Salary) | 1 0.71% | 56 40% | 1 0.71% | 10 7.14% | 35 25% | 0 0% | 37 26.43% |
| Environmental Factors (Proximal Context) | | | | | | | |
| Need a Job for Family or Me | 2 1.43% | 6 4.29% | 7 5% | 16 11.43% | 31 22.14% | 54 38.57% | 24 17.14% |
| Family Suggestion and Support | 3 2.11% | 6 4.23% | 9 6.34% | 13 9.15% | 41 28.87% | 48 33.80% | 22 15.49% |

Among 18 factors, job security was the one that was most important to the public officials I surveyed in their decision to pursue a public service career. Future personal development, opportunities for educational development, PSM, and lifelong employment were the next most important reasons, while salary, the prospect of less competence and commitment being required after one secured employment, family suggestion and support, flexible time, and a need for a job were the five least important factors.

Table 4 presents the frequency and percentage of the responses to each item and scale. For intrinsic motivation, more than 80% of respondents indicated that contributing to community and national development and being useful to society were important or very important considerations in their decision to be a public official. 72.66% of respondents answered that “helping others was important or very important. 56.03% of public officials in this study replied that work itself is important or very important when choosing a public service career.

For extrinsic motivation, 88.65% of respondents answered that job security was important or very important to be a public official, 82% responded that future personal growth was important or very important, 78.02% answered that opportunities for educational development were important or very important, and 69.72% responded that lifelong employment was important or very important. 73.05% and 72.14% of respondents answered that social status and prestige and social recognition were important or very important, respectively, while 71.36%, 69.5%, 62.14% answered that promotion, recognition of achievement, and social benefits were important or very important, respectively. Even though power to influence people and society and bureaucratic and social networks were not major determinants, 58.16% and 56.03%, respectively, of respondents still answered the two factors were important or very important. 33.33% of public officials responded that the prospect of less competence and commitment being required after they had been employed was important or very important. Surprisingly, the pay was the least important factor in choosing a public service career in this survey. Only 26.43% of respondents answered that pay was important or very important, while 40% of them indicated that pay was unimportant.

For environmental factors, 55.71% of respondents answered that a need a job for their family and themselves was important or very important, and 49.29% replied that the role of family in suggesting and supporting a public service career was important or very important in their decision to pursue one.

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The case studies describe individual factors that interact with environmental factors in an individual's decision to choose a public service career, and the descriptive statistics show the relative importance of 18 factors. Both the case studies and the descriptive statistics suggest that PSM is an essential intrinsic motivation for individuals who decide to go into the public sector and that job security, future personal growth, the opportunity for education and development, social status and prestige, and social recognition are important extrinsic motivations. Factors related to bureaucratic power—the power to influence people and society and the opportunity to participate in bureaucratic and social networks—were not stressed as much in the survey results as in the case studies. The pay was the least important factor in selecting a public service career in the survey, and no one mentioned pay in the case studies. Although the recommendations of family and the need for a job owing to the family's financial situation or a regional economic crisis were factors in the interviewees' decision to pursue a public service career in the case studies, they were not the prime reasons mentioned by the survey respondents.

Based on the findings from both studies, the following theoretical and practical implications follow. First, that public service motivation, as an intrinsic motivation, is an important reason why the individuals I interviewed chose a public career choice validates the long-held belief that PSM is important in the decision to enter public service and also suggests that religion can play a part in sowing the seeds of PSM. Juan from the Philippines indirectly mentioned that his altruistic motivation derived from his religious life. The Philippines is a religious country where 86 percent of the population identifies as Roman Catholic. From the time he was young, he participated in various church services and developed his public service motivation from that experience. According to Vandenabeele and Steven Van de Walle in their comparative study of public service motivation, the Philippines has the second-highest PSM score of the countries they examined (2008, p. 238). Overall, its PSM score was 5.56 on a 1-7 Likert scale. Even though there is no empirical study about the relationship between religion and public service motivation in the Philippines, religious beliefs are strongly related to “commitment to the public interest/civil duty and compassion,” as Perry puts it (1997, p. 184), and so it stands to reason that Juan's religious devotion played a part in his PSM. The survey also shows that PSM was an essential reason for respondents' public service career choice, and so the results from both studies confirm the positive relationship between public service motivation and public career choices that other studies have found (Lewis & Frank, 2002; Taylor, 2005; Vandenabeele, 2008; Steijn, 2008; Vandenabeele et al., 2015; Piatak, 2016; Wright et

al., 2017, Ko, 2012; Ballart & Rico, 2018).

Second, the fact that job security was an important reason why the individuals I interviewed and surveyed chose a public service career in this study confirms many previous studies. As C.A. Chen and colleagues (2018, p. 371) mention, “job security is the most commonly cited reason” why individuals choose a public service career. Public employees, even in the USA, highly value the job security of public sector jobs, and the general perception is that jobs in the public sector offer the most job security most (Houston, 2000; Frank & Lewis, 2004). Ballart and Rico (2018) also note that job security occupied the highest rank in importance for job preferences among undergraduate students in Spain. Yeow Poon, Nguyen Khac Hung, and Xuan Troung (2009) also remark that job security was the most important reason individuals choose to become being public officials in Vietnam, and Ribaun Korm (2011) reports that “long term job/lifelong employment” was the most important reason individuals choose to become civil servants in Cambodia (p. 111). Regardless of economic and political conditions, job security might be the most crucial reason individuals choose to become public officials. Governments in developing countries should offer strong job security to attract a highly competent workforce to the government.

Third, social recognition, the fact that the prestige and social status of public officials were important reasons individuals chose public service careers distinguishes individuals in developing countries from those in developed countries, as interestingly, social recognition (high prestige and social status) is the least important reason individuals in the United States decided to pursue a civil servants career (Jurkiewicz et al., 1998). In developing countries, where the private sector is not fully developed, meaning there are fewer job opportunities, and public officials wield a lot of bureaucratic power, a public service career is very attractive (Korm, 2011). Ferdous Jahan (2006) also notes that social status and recognition are the underlying reason that younger people become civil servants in Bangladesh.

Fourth, that future personal growth and the opportunity for educational and career development are important factors to point out the need for human resource departments to consider the career development needs of public employees (Joo, Park, & Oh, 2013). Educational and career development opportunities make public service careers more attractive to people who are ambitious. Governments in developing countries might provide more opportunities for their employees to further their education and advance their careers in order to attract more people to the public service sector.

Even an interest in bureaucratic power was not a primary reason the individuals I surveyed decided to go into public service, bureaucracy is an essential feature of developing countries’ history. In many developing countries, democracy is not fully

developed; public officials historically have had authoritative power over citizens, and government bureaucrats have the means to abuse their power to benefit themselves. In these situations, belonging to a bureaucratic network might be another benefit of being a public official because it can allow one to protect one's family's security. The power distance index value of developing countries is quite high (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005), which means that power is more unequally distributed in workplaces and society. In a high-power distance society, power overrides right and people who have power enjoy privileges, as tradition, family, and charisma are the base of power.

The fact that pay was not an important factor in why the individuals in this study decided to enter the public sector could be interpreted in two ways. First, it indicates that people who are inclined to work in the public sector less likely to value monetary rewards (Perry and Porter, 1982; Wittmer, 1991), which in turn suggests that financial compensation or incentives are not the best means for attracting people to the public sector or making them work harder. Second, considering the situation in developing countries, people might not expect to receive an adequate salary level with a public service career because their salary levels are notoriously low. Inadequate compensation may lead to corrupt practices, such as absenteeism, speed money, bribes, and misuse of public resources (Quah, 2006; Chêne, 2009). Even though pay was not an essential factor in selecting public service career among the individuals in the survey, the fact that compensation is so low is a problem; in order to recruit the most skilled and qualified individuals into public service and prevent turnover to other sectors, such as international NGOs, the government should provide sufficient compensation to public officials (Chêne, 2009).

That the family's security, family's financial situation, and parents' lifestyle as role models were influential in deciding these subjects' future careers might reflect the extent to which these countries are more oriented toward collectivism. In a collectivist society, families are crucial, an extended family structure is typical, social harmony is an essential virtue, personal opinions are not respected as much as they are in an individualistic society, and loyalty is considered a critical element in the family (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The career choice of Asian Americans has been found to reflect their families' expectations, and families are highly involved in their career decisions (Tang, Fouad, and Smith, 1999). Even though they are far from their countries of origin, this cultural background is still influential in the career choices of Asian Americans. This study provides further support for the idea that cultural values, as an immediate environmental factor, are strongly related to career-related behaviors.

Even though the current study has presented intriguing results and implications regarding public service career choice in developing countries, selection bias and the

fact that the samples are unrepresentative are problems in both the case studies and the descriptive statistics. A nonprobability sampling was used to select the interviewees for the case studies and survey respondents, which gives rise to internal and external invalidity issues, and the representativeness problem should not be ignored (McCurdy & Cleary, 1984; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). Therefore, the results of this study are not likely to be generalizable. However, the population of this study was too vast for a random sampling, and it is not in fact possible to access public officials in developing countries without using a nonprobability sampling method in practice.

CONCLUSION

This study is exploratory research into the determinants of public service career choice in developing countries. Job security, PSM, social status and recognition, future personal growth, and opportunity for career development are essential factors in why the individuals in developing countries choose public service careers. Also, an interest in bureaucratic power and family-related factors reflect particular cultures of developing countries, such as high-power distance and collectivism. Even though this study is limited by selection bias and unrepresentativeness, it confirms the hypotheses of many previous studies, such as the importance of job security (Chen et al., 2018; Lewis & Frank, 2002; Taylor, 2005), PSM (Lewis & Frank, 2002; Taylor, 2005; Vandenabeele, 2008; Ko, 2012), and future career and education development (Joo et al., 2013) in the decision to pursue a career in public service. This study also finds that social recognition and social status are crucial in an individual's decision to enter the public service sector in developing countries, unlike the USA, and that bureaucratic power and networks are other extrinsic factors that motivate individuals to select a public service career in developing countries.

For future research, this study proposes examining how these critical factors are associated with or influence organizational behaviors, such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention in developing countries, topics that have not been addressed in studies on bureaucratic behavior, with more representative samples. Moreover, future research could look at other countries that share a similar culture, history, or location, such as African or Central Asian countries.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview Dates and Time Durations

| | Interview Dates | Time Duration |
|--------|-------------------|------------------|
| Case 1 | February 11, 2016 | 1 hour 2 minutes |
| Case 2 | February 18, 2016 | 39 minutes |
| Case 3 | March 24, 2016 | 1 hour 3 minutes |
| Case 4 | April 5, 2016 | 46 minutes |
| Case 5 | March 24, 2016 | 44 minutes |

Appendix 2. Main Interview Questions

1. When did you decide to be a public official?
2. Why did you want to be a public official?
3. Can you explain how you became a public official?
4. What was your perception of the social reputation of public officials at the time you were looking for a job in the public service sector?
5. What was the job market like at that time?

These questions are the main interview questions. I adjusted and expanded each question based on the interviewees' responses.

Appendix 3. Distribution of Country, Gender, and Age across Samples and Respondents

| Countries | Number of Samples | Number of Respondents | Percentage (Respondents) |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Afghanistan | 10 | 5 | 3.5 |
| Algeria | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Argentina | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladesh | 1 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Cambodia | 9 | 30* | 20.98 |
| Congo DRC | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Côte d'Ivoire | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Egypt | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Fiji | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Gabon | 1 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Georgia | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| India | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Indonesia | 13 | 2 | 1.4 |
| Kenya | 1 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Kyrgyz Republic | 8 | 8 | 5.59 |
| Laos | 9 | 14* | 9.8 |
| Madagascar | 1 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Malaysia | 1 | 2* | 1.4 |
| Mongolia | 8 | 6 | 4.2 |
| Morocco | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mozambique | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Myanmar | 61 | 35 | 24.48 |
| Nepal | 2 | 13* | 9.09 |
| Pakistan | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The Philippines | 3 | 7* | 4.9 |
| São Tomé and Príncipe | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| South Africa | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Sri Lanka | 2 | 1 | 0.70 |
| Tajikistan | 8 | 2 | 1.4 |
| Tuvalu | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Uzbekistan | 0 | 3* | 2.1 |
| Vanuatu | 1 | 1 | 0.7 |
| Vietnam | 12 | 5 | 3.5 |
| Zambia | 1 | 5* | 3.5 |
| Total | 170 | 143 | 100 |
| Gender | | | |
| Female | NA | 64 | 44.44 |
| Male | NA | 80 | 55.56 |
| Total | 170 | 144 | 100 |
| Age | | | |
| 21-30 | NA | 52 | 36.9 |
| 31-40 | NA | 76 | 53.9 |
| 41-50 | NA | 11 | 7.8 |
| Over 50 | NA | 2 | 1.4 |
| Total | 170 | 141 | 100 |

* Since I asked respondents to share the survey link with their colleagues if they wanted, the number of respondents is higher than sample's number in these countries.