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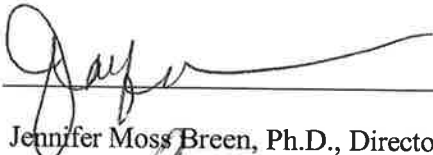
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IMPACT OF POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP IN A
BUREAUCRATIC SETTING

By

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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of Creighton University in Partial
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Abstract

Government employees operate within the confines of a bureaucratic framework that often limits creativity and collaboration causing employee engagement issues. Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS) is a leadership theory that highlights self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency as catalysts to improve processes by helping an individual reach their full potential. This quantitative study attempts to understand the applicability of POS in a state government setting. Findings from a non-experimental survey of Indiana government employees reveal a significant negative relationship between POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency—and an employee’s frustration level with bureaucracy. However, findings do not affirm a significant positive relationship with tenure. Based on the results of this study, the creation of an awareness campaign is suggested to help senior leadership in Indiana, as well as in other states, develop a better understanding of POS and how to apply the theory to their leadership style.

Keywords: Positive organizational scholarship, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resiliency, bureaucracy

Dedication

For my husband, Steve – my math tutor and favorite person. I am forever grateful for your constant love, patience, and encouragement during this process. The small things and the big things have not gone unnoticed and are appreciated beyond measure. Cheers to the adventure of living life to the fullest!

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I would also like to acknowledge Governor of Indiana, Eric J. Holcomb, for his commitment to taking Indiana to the *Next Level*. Your enthusiasm and drive to do the right thing and do it well are inspiring. I am honored to be part of the team focusing on opportunities that make a difference in the lives of countless Hoosiers.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background

Government agencies are often criticized for their lack of collaborative, service-oriented, problem-solving. Indeed, the word bureaucratic is frequently interpreted as stifling creativity or doing things the same way they have always been done. The policy process is cumbersome and involves many actors that are engaged in the discussion and a variety of rules and regulations that guide actions. President Ronald Reagan (1986) famously stated, "I think you all know that I've always felt the nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government, and I'm here to help." Re-enforcing this idea, Gallup (2017a) reports that only 28% of Americans are satisfied with the federal government and list the top frustration as governmental processes. The view of state government is slightly more favorable compared to the federal government, but often individuals group both federal and state into a generic government category.

Statement of the Problem

Government employees provide government services to the public. The public's perceptions of the government may be shaped by the service experience. In the state of Indiana, most government processes are prescribed by administrative code, rule, or statute. These serve as a framework for the employee to follow. This framework can be viewed as bureaucracy or red tape. Rosenfeld (1984) defines red tape as "guidelines, procedures, forms, and government interventions that are perceived as excessive, unwieldy, or pointless in relation to decision making or implementation of a decision" (p. 603). Bureaucratic processes may create efficiency and time challenges not just for the public, but also for the government employee. Efficiency issues may stem from

procedures and forms that have not been updated or revised since their legislative passing. This may cause frustration for the public because of the time it takes to get something done, and frustration for the government employees because bureaucracy creates a barrier making the task more difficult to accomplish. Christenson (1991) presumes that most people have a negative story to tell about their experience with government bureaucracy and the amount of time it takes to receive a desired service. A state government employee may need to overcome bureaucratic stigma and offer customer service that is focused on efficient processes and timely assistance in order to change poor public perceptions.

Gallup (2017b) reports that 71% of state and local government employees are not engaged workers. The Institute for Public Sector Employee Engagement (2017) states that private sector employees are more engaged than public sector employees by more than six percentage points. This means a government employee is not likely involved in driving innovation or improving their work environment. The government employee is not encouraged to look at things differently and find solutions to stagnant processes. The status quo is too often viewed as sufficient. Unfortunately, Indiana ranks the highest in the country for non-engaged employees with 57% citing dissatisfaction with their work (Gallup, 2017b). This does not help retain or attract new talent. The Center for State and Local Government Excellence (2017) highlights that 92% of state and local government human resource managers describe the biggest issue they face is recruiting and retaining qualified staff. The Partnership for Public Service (2012) finds that only 6% of surveyed college graduates plan to work in government after graduation. Potential solutions to help improve the effectiveness and attractiveness of working in a bureaucratic setting could be

found in positive organizational scholarship (POS).

POS is an umbrella concept that combines multiple approaches used in organizational studies around the theme of positivity (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011). POS focuses on the possibilities rather than the challenges of organizational life by looking at processes and outcomes with a positive lens in personal and organizational settings (Spreitzer & Cameron, 2012). The main components of POS are self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency (Youssef & Luthans, 2015). POS may be what is needed in state government in order to help leadership refocus employee attention on the possibilities that public service can offer rather than the efficiency and time challenges caused by bureaucracy.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this non-experimental survey study is to identify the relationship between the elements of POS and a state employee's tenure and level of frustration with bureaucracy.

Research Question/Hypothesis

POS could be used as a tool to help government employees cut through the bureaucratic process in a state government setting. A closer look at current employees' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency may show there is a relationship between those factors and the level of frustration with bureaucracy in the state agency. The independent variables are the components of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. The dependent variables are the level of frustration with bureaucracy and the longevity of the state employee. The following research question guides this quantitative study: What elements of POS improve the bureaucratic process?

Hypothesis #1: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration with bureaucracy will decrease.

Hypothesis #2: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this observational survey study is to understand the effect of POS in a state government setting. The quantitative results provide recommendations to help senior leadership in the state of Indiana determine what characteristics of POS improve bureaucratic culture.

Methodology Overview

The methodological approach is a quantitative non-experimental study. Quantitative research is chosen because this method examines the relationships among variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An online survey is used to gather information about the elements of POS and how employees rank their agency's level of bureaucracy. Each component contributes unique data that assists in identifying if there is a relationship between POS and a state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure.

According to a Gallup (2017b) survey of 43 states, Indiana has the highest percentage of unengaged employees. Fifty-seven percent of state and local government employees in Indiana are failing to engage in adequate problem-solving and innovation. Gallup (2017b) also reports the entire Midwest region ranks the highest in the country for the percentage of unengaged employees. There has been no formal theory describing why the Midwest ranks so high, however, Gallup (2017b) speculates that cultural norms could

play a role. This could mean there is a large portion of government employees who are not thriving in their work environment and reaching their full potential. Indiana state government provides a perfect setting to test the impact of POS that could be beneficial to not only Hoosier bureaucrats, but government employees throughout the Midwest and the country.

The target population for this study is 30,872 Indiana state employees from 64 agencies. The only criteria for an individual to participate in the study is for the person to be an Indiana state government employee. Compliance with this criterion is easily met considering an individual does not have a state government email address if they are not currently employed with the state. The sampling is a probability, random sample given that each participant in the population of interest has the same opportunity to join (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The online survey is sent to state employee's email address by their agency director. Using the agency director ensures the email is delivered to the employee's inbox and did not get filtered to a spam folder. It is also helpful having the email come from a trusted source indicating it is safe to open the email and click on the survey link.

Online surveys are created in *Qualtrics* and the program continues to serve as the repository for all data received. This protects anonymity and confidentiality for the information obtained from participants. The survey includes questions that are answered on a closed-ended Likert-type scale that focuses on the elements of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience—and how state employees measure bureaucracy in their agency. Babbie (2017) promotes the Likert scaling method as the best way to receive standardized responses when trying to measure attitudes and opinions.

Once the survey information is collected, two empirical tests are conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the components of POS and a state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. The statistical software *STATA* is used to help analyze the data. Bivariate and multiple regression analysis are performed to test the effect of POS characteristics on employee frustration with bureaucracy and employment longevity while controlling for other factors.

Definition of Relevant Terms

There are many terms that are used throughout the study. In order to prevent any confusion to the reader, below is a list of definitions that may be helpful in understanding the purpose and intended meaning.

Bureaucracy: Burdensome rules, regulations, and processes experienced by government employees and constituents.

Employee tenure or longevity: The number of years an individual has been employed by the state of Indiana.

Senior leadership: An individual who has been appointed by the Governor of Indiana to serve in a leadership capacity for the administration as a state government employee.

State government employee: An individual who works for the state of Indiana.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Personal Biases

Limitations

Limitations are external conditions that restrict or constrain the research scope and may impact outcomes (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). One of the limitations of this

methodological approach is other factors not related to POS that influence state employees' bureaucratic perceptions. These variables are out of the researcher's control. Examples are family issues, difficult colleagues, past experiences, or workload.

It is important to note although the independent and dependent variables are clearly defined, the researcher is aware that there could be endogeneity, and in particular reverse causality. The state employees' level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure could impact the employees' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency or the reverse could happen. The cause could become the effect. The author acknowledges this is an issue and weakness in the research. This could mean there is no solution to the problem.

The research tool is a survey because a mechanism is needed to measure perceptions. The assumption is that individuals who took the survey honestly answered the questions. Sometimes even when a survey is anonymous, the individual gives less than a candid response.

Another limitation is not compensating any of the participants for filling out the survey. The state of Indiana has very strict laws on gift-giving regardless if it is a large or small gift. Because the researcher is a government employee and survey participants are government employees, adherence to this rule is important to avoid the perception of a *quid pro quo*. This could explain the limited sample size and therefore, increase the uncertainty in the estimates.

Delimitations

Bryman and Burgess (1994) describe delimitations as factors that prevent a generalizable claim. A delimitation of the study is the inclusion of closed-ended Likert scale responses to the survey rather than only open-ended responses. This is done on

purpose to give uniformity to the analysis instead of the researcher trying to interpret what the respondents want to imply or feel. This calculated decision ensures the independent and dependent variables are measured the same way. Employee tenure is the exception. It is collected by both open and closed-ended responses. The open-ended approach allows for the participant to type the number of years of state employment and the closed-ended approach gives the participant a set of choices. The reason to have a dual approach is two-fold. This method allows for a check and balance on closed-ended category answers compared to what the participant typed. This could also provide a specific time-frame that identifies a certain amount of years that a state employee may express more or less frustration with government bureaucracy.

Indiana state government employees are chosen specifically because of the access the researcher has to this population, and for the fact Indiana government employees rank the highest in the nation for being unengaged. Other states could be contacted, but the researcher assumes it would be more difficult and yield fewer completed surveys. Since the sample is only state government employees from Indiana there may be limited generalizability. The positive to only doing the survey in the state of Indiana is the ability to control for a number of other cultural and geographic factors that may not be comparable across states.

Personal Bias

Research bias exists because the author is also a state government employee. To minimize bias, the author carefully considers each step in how data is collected and analyzed. The author will not allow knowledge and experiences to influence the interpretation of the data and findings. The author ensures quality and trustworthiness in

the data by meticulously keeping track of all information collected.

The author is also careful to not inject her point of view or experiences when analyzing the data. This has potential to be a major ethical concern even if it is unintentional. The author has a propensity to be optimistic and acknowledges her strongest strength is positivity based on the Gallup Strengthfinder test (Gallup, 2016). Given the author's professional experience, she expects some elements of POS to positively influence bureaucracy perceptions of state government employees because the author has witnessed similar encounters with others.

Leader's Role and Responsibility in Relation to the Problem

One of the many challenges facing leaders is how to most effectively get a task accomplished or solve a problem. Issues can be complicated with many parties that are interested in influencing the outcome. Lacking validated data to guide decisions, senior leaders may settle on maintaining current practices. Senior state government leaders are appointed by the governor. Therefore, they have a limited amount of time to serve. If the governor does not win re-election, the window of service may only be four years. Senior state government leaders should maximize his or her time and apply organizational theories such as positive psychology, positive organizational behavior, or positive scholarship theory to their leadership style.

POS is grounded in the belief that leaders should build upon strengths, cultivate gifts, and overcome obstacles by staying positive and looking for opportunities (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003). Rath and Conchie (2008) suggests an impactful leader is always investing in strengths. This approach may help motivate non-engaged employees in state government. The most important leadership role is empowering

employees to be the best they can be and thrive in a bureaucratic setting that champions tackling tough problems through the unique lens of positivity (DeRue & Workman, 2011, p. 785). This behavior is reminiscent of a servant leader's attributes of having foresight and being a systems thinker. Sipe and Frick (2015) define the characteristics of foresight and a system thinker as imagining possibilities, anticipating the future, displaying creativity, demonstrating flexibility, and being comfortable with complexity (p. 6). These leadership tendencies align with the components of POS by showcasing self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency.

The Jesuits provide one of the best examples that illustrate the essence of POS. They were founded in 1554 and left a legacy of not just talking about leadership, but living leadership (Lowney, 2003). POS is living leadership. One of the principles the Jesuits encouraged is ingenuity. Lowney (2003) described ingenuity as embracing creativity and flexibility. The elements of POS foster creativity and flexibility that might be important for senior leadership to mimic and also cultivate in state government.

Significance of the Study

In a state government setting, activity is often reactionary with rules and regulations guiding the course of action. An event occurs, a solution is presented, legislation is enacted, and a process is developed for state employees to follow. Is there a different way to look at the bureaucratic process that is more inclusive and collaborative for all parties involved?

There is limited research done on how POS applies to a state government setting. The most comprehensive study is presented by Jones (2017), who qualitatively highlights the importance of managers cultivating positivity within government. Feeney and

Boardman (2010) study the correlation between “work motivation, perceptions of the current work environment, past work experience, worker behavior”, and outcomes of highly positive public managers. POS has also been tested in other quasi-government settings such as healthcare (Calarco, 2011; Dadich, Hodgins, & Crawford, 2018) and education (Lucas & Goodman, 2015; Shults, 2008), as well as, in the private business sector (Meyer, 2015; Roberts, 2006). Despite limited POS research in a government setting, the topics of self-efficacy optimism, hope, and resiliency are the subject of much research in other areas, as scholars describe how each influences well-being (Lucas & Goodman, 2015), motivation (Thompson & Christiansen, 2018), and work production (Burger, Crous, & Roodt, 2012). Examining the relationship between POS and an employee’s level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure provides a foundation for future research in discovering how senior leadership can be more proactive in promoting an atmosphere that champions POS.

Understanding the impact of self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency on the employees’ perceived level of bureaucracy and longevity in a state agency could influence an employees’ ability to problem-solve. This study makes a recommendation that could empower senior leadership to make more informed decisions when engaging with a variety of actors on contentious issues. Better professional development decisions could also result in improved understanding of how POS impacts employee morale, retention, and recruitment. According to Gallup (2017b), low morale costs state and local governments nearly \$100 billion a year.

More research is needed to better understand the nexus between leadership and POS (Lucas & Goodman, 2015). There is a consensus that positive conditions allow

people to thrive. Therefore, the purpose of POS has been to create conditions under which individuals can flourish by maximizing their strengths, engaging in meaningful reflection, and improving work outcomes (Buck, Carr, & Robertson, 2008). This study contributes to the understanding of applying POS successfully to a bureaucratic framework.

Summary

POS has limited implementation in a state government setting. However, bureaucracy is the perfect setting for incorporating the principles of POS. POS looks at the opportunity rather than the challenge of a problem (Spreitzer & Cameron, 2012). With so many issues and actors, senior leadership has a short amount of time to problem-solve. The components of POS, namely—self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency—could impact a state employee’s bureaucratic perception and improve the bureaucratic process.

A quantitative non-experimental survey approach is the best option for use in this dissertation in practice. By concentrating on government employees in the state of Indiana, the author is able to collect information pertaining to POS and the influence it has on government processes. Gathering data through an online, open and closed-ended survey helps explain the phenomena of positive organizational theory. Measuring variables to determine relationship helps in analyzing the data and producing results.

Awareness of the limitations of the study are beneficial as other factors may have impacted a state employee’s perception. The delimitations of a closed-ended survey and the sample group of state employees acknowledges the lack of flexibility and diversity. The author’s bias in being a government employee and also excelling in positivity is

noted and carefully handled to mitigate risks.

The author measures POS in a government setting by having participants score each element, their level of frustration with bureaucracy, and how long they have been a state government employee. This action determines if there is a relationship between the variables.

POS seeks to be used as a tool to help government employees cut through the red tape in a state government setting. A closer look at current employees' self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency may show there is a relationship between those factors and the level of frustration with bureaucracy in a state agency.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review provides findings on the current study of positive organizational scholarship (POS) and addresses the limitations. First, relevant sources of literature investigate the concepts and history of POS. Second, definitions of theoretical applications and components are presented and analyzed. Third, scholarly discussions and implications of self-efficacy hope, optimism, resiliency are incorporated into POS theory. Fourth, the concept and assumptions associated with bureaucracy is examined and explained. Finally, findings are highlighted to address gaps within the current body of literature.

POS: Concept and Meaning

In this section, the goal was to clarify the nature of POS and better define its boundaries. There are many definitions and interpretations of POS. The most common and generic definition of POS is the study of positive outcomes at the organizational level (Cameron et al., 2003; Seligman & Csikszentimihalyi, 2000). Cameron et al. (2003) explain POS as “positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations and their members that focus on dynamics that typically are described by words such as excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, resilience, or virtuousness” (p. 4). Cameron et al. (2003) identify POS as concentrating on positive outcomes at the individual, group and organizational level, whereas Koonce (2017) focuses on positive outcomes at individual, relational, and collective organizational levels. Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld’s (1999) perspective encourages collective mindfulness in determining human behavior at an organizational level that result in improved culture and better

outcomes. Cameron and Spreitzer (2011) highlight the ability of POS to focus on creating opportunities within the organization that fosters strength, resiliency, and healing causing the individual and organization to flourish. Vogel (2017) asserts the most important component of organizational success is developing the individual by challenging employees through positive energy.

POS allows for new insights into the effects of organizational norms and processes on employee behavior, and why some strategies may be more productive than others (Cameron et al., 2003). POS is seeking to identify through scholarly research and theory how positivity brings out the best in people and causes individuals to reach their full potential (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011). POS determines what builds up individuals and organizations, documents successes, and denotes what is life-giving and inspiring. The theory is important because Peterson, Waldman, Balthazard, and Thatcher (2008) contend that a leader's level of positivity influences how employees think, feel and behave. Part of a leader's responsibility is to instill positivity into the organization. Positivity can be interpreted to be inspiration, motivation, and confidence (Peterson, et al., 2008). Dutton and Glynn (2007) say the feeling can cause individuals to experience a positive state that results in peak performance.

Caza and Caza (2008) describe POS as a shift from negativity to positivity and expanding the viewpoint of what constitutes a positive outcome. It is a change in outlook and climate for the organization (Pace, 2010). This is also known as a deviance continuum, where outlook goes from negative to normal to positive (Luthans & Avolio, 2009). The goal is to "make the impossible, possible" (p. 302). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) describe the change as no longer dwelling on the negative, but

adopting a mindset that improves and enhances future processes.

Each word has meaning in POS theory. *Positive* holds the process and outcome in the organization accountable for improving and elevating perceptions (Cameron & Caza, 2004). *Organizational* is the structural framework where phenomena occur (Cameron et al., 2003). *Scholarship* is the theoretical and scientific examination of what is positive in the work-setting (Cameron & Caza, 2004). POS theory is studying the motivation, promotion, and impact of a positive phenomenon in the organization and figuring out how to identify and capitalize on the experience (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011).

Two metaphors are presented in research that assist in understanding POS. Caza and Caza (2008) liken POS to having a hammer in your toolbox. It simply serves as an additional tool that helps a leader in an organization build a successful team with positive outcomes. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) compare POS to conditions that produce a heliotropic effect. A heliotropic effect often occurs when plants move or grow towards the sun (Cameron, 2012). A positive environment is analogous to sunlight in that it promotes positive energy and practical creativity for employees (Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2011). Following this rationale, individuals may behave like other biological systems in nature showing an inherent disposition towards the positive (Vogel, 2017).

The literature appears to be consistent in defining POS theory. The focus is on the organization, and how members who exhibit positivity achieve successful outcomes. Each word in POS is chosen for a specific reason that embodies the purpose and idea of the theory. There are varying interpretations, but the crux of the theory relies on a person flourishing in a work-setting producing positive results. The heliotropic effect gives the most compelling picture of how positivity uplifts not only the individual, but all those

who are in contact with the individual. Positivity is life-giving (Diener, 2009; Lilius, Kanov, Dutton, Worline, & Mitlis, 2012).

POS History

POS is a relatively new theory emerging at the turn of the century. A group of individuals was putting together a conference to study positive experiences in organizations (Meyer, 2018). Unfortunately, while planning the conference, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, occurred in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania. There was a strong desire “to bring attention to and understand how to cultivate flourishing in an organizational setting amidst the context of challenge and pain” (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2011, p. 8). To start a conversation, the Center for Positive Organizational Scholarship was established at the University of Michigan by Kim Cameron, Wayne Baker, David Mayer, Gretchen Spreitzer, and Lynn Wooten (Cameron et al., 2003).

The POS movement has been successful in creating a conceptual outline for assimilating research and generating a scientific and theoretical framework by which others who are interested in studying positivity can apply the information to any field. The emphasis is on POS in the workplace and how to achieve positive work-related outcomes. The next section shows how POS was birthed from two different fields, psychology and organizational behavior.

Components and Theoretical Applications

POS is based on the scientific study of positive psychology and positive organizational behavior (POB). Each theory focuses on the concept of positivity, but applies this phenomenon differently. Positive psychology identifies the strengths and

POB develops and manages these strengths (Luthans, 2002a). It is the intertwining of these theories that produces POS. A comparison of positive psychology and POB will be presented as well as the similarities that are shared with POS.

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is the study of the “conditions and processes contributing to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions” (Gable & Haidt, 2005, p. 104), as well as, the understanding of how well-being and excellence impact individual optimal functioning (Donaldson, Dollwet, & Rao, 2014). Positive psychology is simply a scientific study of individual “strengths and virtues” (Sheldon & King, 2001). Positive psychology redirects the study of what is deficient in people or an organization to highlighting and promoting strengths (Ramlall, 2008). The goal of positive psychology is to create organized environments that cultivate human potential (Peterson & Spiker, 2005). Positive psychology is a science of experiences, individual traits, and institutions that endeavors to positively improve quality of life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The field of positive psychology was founded as a way to promote the study of psychological characteristics that benefit individual and organizational well-being (McNulty & Fincham, 2012). Positive psychology is placing an emphasis on people’s virtues in place of their vices. An example is not focusing on mental illness but rather mental health (Cohrs, Christie, White, & Das, 2013). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) contend positive psychology is about instinctive experiences that cultivate satisfaction and contentment for the future and happiness in the present.

On a personal level, positivity opens the possibility for individuals to have the

“capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom” (Ramlall, 2008, p. 5). At the group level, positivity stimulates “civic virtues in the institution that move individuals toward better citizenship” (Ramlall, 2008, p. 5). Positive psychology aims at studying what makes life worth living (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), and focuses on positive experiences, emotions, and well-being (Cohrs et al., 2013). The aim is to have a pleasant and meaningful life through experiences (Seligman, 2002) producing emotions such as hope and optimism (Cohrs et al., 2013) that contribute to individual and corporate happiness. McNulty and Fincham (2012) contend that well-being is not only individual qualities and characteristics that contribute to optimal functioning, but could also be a person’s social environment. Once an individual’s strengths are identified, there is a natural desire to want to develop and cultivate those strengths. Positive psychology is responsible for the birth of POB (Luthans & Avoli, 2009).

Positive Organizational Behavior (POB)

Luthans (2002b) defines POB as the study of individual strengths that can be evaluated and managed to improve work performance. These strengths could be innate characteristics such as intelligence, talents, and hereditary traits (Youssef & Luthans, 2007) or strengths that can be developed and trained in people (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman, & Combs, 2006). POB enables organizations to take a more comprehensive look at the individual, giving improved insight into the labor force and strategic methods of changing behavior (Ramlall, 2008). POB helps workers understand what they do and those who work for them. POB tries to understand the positive aspects of work and their

impacts on employee and organizational performances. POB is still being studied so as to better comprehend its effects on individuals and the workplace.

Positive psychology focuses on identifying strengths that lead to a meaningful life or productive work environment. POB seeks to understand how individuals are wired and how to manage the psychological capacities for better work performance. POS concentrates on organizational outcomes that develop individuals by using their strengths. All three theories—positive psychology, POB, and POS—center around the theme of positivity and flourishing. The difference between the three theories is when they are used and for whom. Positive psychology is helpful in a discovery stage for an individual or organization when analyzing and promoting a different way to think, do, and achieve optimal happiness. POB is advantageous for coaching or growing an individual or organization in reaching their maximum capacity. POS concerns itself with positive processes and outcomes driving individuals and organizations to shift their way of thinking and change their behavior to rise to a new level of exceptional performance. In order for individuals to reach the POS objective, certain elements such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency may play an important role.

Implications of Self-Efficacy, Hope, Optimism, and Resiliency

Self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency are the elements that make-up POS. All four have instruments used to measure and determine if individuals or groups reflect these characteristics. Below each component will be described, its relationship to POS, and the various settings in which studies have taken place.

Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as the belief people have within themselves

to govern their behavior in order to reach their goal. Hoy and Misekel (2001) describe self-efficacy as a self-assessment alerting the individual if they have what it takes to complete a task. Luthans and Youssef (2007a) highlight it is a proactive rather than reactive personal initiative. People who display self-efficacy may gravitate toward challenges because they possess high levels of motivation and perseverance to accomplish their goals (Luthans & Youssef, 2004).

Self-efficacy is sometimes used interchangeably to mean self-confidence (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Stajkovic and Luthans (1998b) characterize self-efficacy as the confidence to pursue a difficult task in order to achieve the desired result. It is a confidence or trust that an individual has in oneself to successfully complete a goal (Bandura, 1977). Confident people engage in challenging tasks, have arduous amounts of perseverance, and are open to constructive criticism to ensure they stay on course (Peterson et al., 2008).

Luthans and Youssef (2004) argue that the most impactful way for an individual to develop self-efficacy is to experience success. It is a balancing act for a manager to provide challenging tasks, but attainable goals. Self-efficacy is not restrained by personal values but is an individual's faith in oneself to do the task (Sezgin & Erdogan, 2015). Self-efficacy can be cultivated through experiences, learning models, and social persuasion (Luthans & Youssef, 2007b). Self-efficacy improves how an individual feels, thinks, and acts (Schwarzer & Fuchs, 1996).

A General Self-Efficacy Scale was developed and has been applied to various fields (Chen, Gully, and Eden, 2001). Chen et al. (2001) uses it to distinguish between self-efficacy and self-esteem determining that self-esteem is related to affective variables

and self-efficacy is related to motivational variables that indicate how successful a person will be at work. Doubell and Struwig (2014) study women in a decision-making or executive role from South Africa and found that self-efficacy is a contributing factor that impacts a woman's business career. Walumbwa, Lawler, Avoilio, Wang, and Shi (2005) investigate the role of collective efficacy and found there is a correlation to work commitment and satisfaction. Self-efficacy is not only measured in leadership literature (Taberner, Chambel, Curral, & Arana, 2009, Walumbwa et al., 2005), but also in healthcare to predict success in smoking cessation programs (Godding & Glasgow, 1985; Chen, Yeh, Tang, & Yu, 2015), exercise programs (Chen, Wang, & Chiu, 2016; Chen, Dai, & Gao, 2017), and nutritional programs (Chen, Acton, & Shao, 2010; Chen & Shao, 2009).

Hope

Hope takes advantage of a person's motivation and behaviors (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Snyder, Irving, and Anderson (1991) portray hope as a motivational state based on action that produces energy to meet goals. Hope creates the determination and will-power to accomplish the goal (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Hope is the mechanism to establish the goal, determines how to accomplish the goal, and clears any roadblocks that impede an individual from reaching the goal (Peterson et al., 2009). Individuals without hope are unable to believe they can meet a goal or have the motivation to overcome obstacles to reach the goal (Snyder et al., 1991). Evidence indicates that hope impacts performance outcomes and work attitudes (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Hope is grounded within the limits of reality (Safri, 2016). It is not a fantasy idea that may come true, but has an active component of planning to make it happen (Franken

& Brown, 1996). An individual sets a goal and has the motivation to achieve the goal (Snyder, 1994). Lopez (2009) describes hope as having a vision for the future, the ability to start working toward the goal, and lastly coming up with multiple best-case scenarios to keep the individual on target to reach the goal when problems arise. Hope gives an individual a deeply personal reason to keep going (Safri, 2016).

Hope is studied in numerous leadership settings. Ashu, Singh, and Devender (2015) find that a hopeful attitude contributes to happiness and well-being and is an important aspect of having a good life. Jensen and Luthans (2005) observes entrepreneurs who exhibited authentic leadership and determined that hope gives a competitive advantage to entrepreneurs because they are able to flourish in a challenging environment. Norman, Luthans and Luthans (2005) discover that by using a contagion model, a leader's hope level impacts followers because followers take on the hope state of the leader and mirror feelings. Examples of other fields using the Adult Hope Scale is in healthcare to determine levels of hope after a diagnosis (Everson, Goldberg, Kaplan, Cohen, Pukkala, Tuomilehto, & Salonen, 1996; Snyder, 2002), in a university psychology setting (Babyak, Snyder, Yoshinobu, 1993), and also in a business setting (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Optimism

Optimistic people believe that good things rather than bad things will happen (Scheier & Carver, 1985). Optimists do not reflect on failures or disappointments (Seligman, 1998), but stay positive which drives ambition (Carver & Scheier, 2002). What is considered positive or negative could be based on an individual's cultural values. Optimism explains positive experiences through personal involvement, but also can be

learned or developed (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Optimists establish positive expectations that drive them to pursue their goal (Carver & Scheier, 2002). Optimism is linked with positive outcomes, that include “physical and psychological health, well-being, coping, and recovery” (Scheier & Carver, 1992). Optimism is an attitude that good things will happen regardless of one’s ability or reality to have them happen (Safri, 2016). Optimism differs from hope, because hope is based on an established goal that is in the realm of possibility and takes effort to accomplish (Snyder, 1994).

The Life Orientation Test has aided many studies when researching optimism. Results have shown that age, gender, and education did not impact optimism, but good health and quality of life were statistically significant (Bredal et al., 2017). Hui et al. (2007) contend that in an unfavorable environment, a leader’s behavior and optimism influences the performance of the team. The test is also used in the medical field to measure levels of optimism in healthy individuals versus chronic heart failure patients (Steca et al., 2017), to evaluate if dispositional optimism impacts adolescent well-being (Mozani, Steca, & Greco, 2014), and to assess teacher morale and organizational climate (Hart, Wearing, Conn, Carter, & Dingle, 2000).

Resiliency

Luthans (2002a) defines resiliency as the ability to overcome adversity and failure. Resilience is learnable, and can be developed in ordinary people (Masten, 2001). Process-focused strategies that build coping mechanism can help individuals overcome in times of adversity (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Coutu (2002) describes resilient people as those who understand reality, gravitate towards purposeful values, and can adapt easily to unexpected situations. The POB definition of resiliency points out that even positive

events that increase responsibility can be overwhelming and takes time for individuals to bounce back (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Resiliency may help bring an individual back to their normal level of performance. Resilience acknowledges the necessity of prospective and retrospective strategies when dealing with challenges (Peterson et al., 2009). Values and beliefs are important as they can vary widely in terms of their character and purpose within different environments (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Resilience has also been a predictor of positive work-related outcomes (Luthans et al., 2007) and is even known to help individuals bounce back with higher performance levels than before the event (Peterson et al., 2009).

The Psychological Resilience Scale has been used in a plethora of ways. For example, Beal, Stavros, and Cole (2013) survey government employees going through organizational changes, and concluded that low resiliency impacts optimism and hope. Lambert and Lawson (2013) use the scale to assess counselors who lived through Hurricane Katrina and Rita and discovered those who took the time for self-care were more resilient. Wingo et al. (2017) study veterans who suffered from PTSD, and findings reveal veterans are more resilient when they are engaged within various social circles. Regardless of the setting, resiliency measures how an individual is able to respond to something good or bad that happens to them.

Hope, optimism, and resiliency can be innate characteristics or learned (Masten, 2001; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Values are identified as important for assisting an individual during positive or difficult events to reach goals or bounce back to normal performance standards (Coutu, 2002; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). By understanding the definition of each and knowing how the qualities apply to various situations could prove

helpful to an individual in a leadership position.

Next, the author will delve into the concept of bureaucracy and give an overview of the meaning. Trying to manage and improve bureaucracy in government is not a new idea, but an endeavor that many elected officials have tried to tackle. Bureaucracy not only impacts the public, but also the government employee.

Bureaucracy

Government employees provide government services to the public. The government processes are prescribed by administrative code, rule, or statute. These serve as a framework for the employee to follow. This framework is called bureaucracy or red tape. Below the concepts, assumptions, and measurability of bureaucracy will be discussed.

Concept

Over the last several years, bureaucracy has gained recognition as being an important policy area (Keyworth, 2006). It is important to note that bureaucracy is not a government worker in the executive branch that implements policy, but rather refers to the policy process. A nickname for bureaucracy is red tape. Elected officials are often applauded by promising to cut red tape in government. An example is President Bill Clinton's reform *From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less* (Gore, 1993). President Clinton proposed cutting red tape by providing efficient services that cost less for taxpayers. Rosenfield (1984) defines red tape as "guidelines, procedures, forms, and government interventions that are perceived as excessive, unwieldy, or pointless in relation to decision making or implementation of a decision" (p. 603). It can be construed as unnecessary and burdensome steps that must be

followed. It is interesting to point out that bureaucracy is viewed differently by the international community versus the United States. Bureaucracy overseas is associated with a relationship between the government and outside stakeholder that produces corruption (Walker & Brewer, 2008). However, in the United States, it is an internal problem that represents excessive rules and regulations (Walker & Brewer, 2008). The focus of this study will be on bureaucracy in the United States, particularly the state of Indiana.

Assumptions

There is a debate whether or not red tape is objective or subjective. Bozeman (1993) feels bureaucracy is objective. It is “rules, regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden for the organization” (p. 283) that could hamper organizational effectiveness (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011). If studied objectively, the researcher looks at the time required to do certain tasks (Kaufmann & Feeney, 2012) or the number of rules promulgated (March, Schulz, & Zhou, 2000). Pandey, Coursey, and Moynihan (2007) contend bureaucracy is subjective and is based on an individual’s experience in the organization. Bozeman and Feeney (2011) claim bureaucracy should be measured by examining an individual’s perception of whether or not they have encountered ineffective rules and procedures. For the purpose of this study, the researcher is focused on the subjective view of bureaucracy.

Measurability

There are two commonly used instruments that measure bureaucracy or red tape. The General Red Tape (GRT) scale asks one question: “If red tape is defined as burdensome administrative rules and procedures that have negative effects on the

organization's performance, please assess the level of red tape in your organization" (Pandey & Scott, 2002). The respondent chooses a number between 0-10 with 0 signifying no red tape and 10 signifying the highest level of red tape. The GRT scale has appeared in over 20 peer-reviewed journal articles, and is referred to as "a staple measure for red tape in public administration literature" (Bozeman & Feeney, 2011, p. 84). The other instrument is the Three-Item Red Tape (TIRT) scale. This scale was developed because the GRT scale was perceived as giving the participant a negative bias when asking about the negative effects of red tape. The GRT assumes the participant understands what red tape is and does not offer a definition. The TIRT simply asks the participant to judge how burdensome, unnecessary, and ineffective their experience has been with organizational rules (Borry, 2016).

Bureaucracy can mean different things to different people, but the central theme is government provides slow and inefficient services that frustrate not only the public but also the government employee. Elected officials have tried to eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, but it may be up to the government employee to help articulate which rules and regulations are cumbersome and could be improved. Extensive research has been done on measuring red tape, and the general consensus is a subjective approach is best using a simple one question test.

Limitations and Gaps in the Literature

POS is a relatively new theory with its beginnings after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In this short amount of time, there have been numerous studies in various fields. In healthcare, POS has promoted refocusing on positive patient care (Havens, 2011), the implementation of a new clinical management system (Dadich, et al.,

2018), the impact of POS on nursing environments (Calaraco, 2011), and effective communication for nurse leaders in acute and home health settings (Hill, 2007). In education, POS is applied to a project-based learning class for undergraduate leadership students (Lucas & Goodman, 2015), to a community college system changing to a strength-based approach (Shults, 2008), to relationships between organizational culture and organizational virtuousness (Vallett, 2010), and to discovering if consumer structures are facilitated by organizational principles and practices within universities (Naidoo, R., Shankar, A., Veer, E., 2011). In business, POS examines a high-tech start-up firm's performance (Peterson et al., 2009), assists in reducing budgetary frustration during budget participation (Roopa, 2014), and proves successful in various international business settings (Stahl, Tung, Kostova, Bruhn, 2016). Despite the numerous studies that have been conducted pertaining to POS, it is evident that there is a gap in scholarly research that specifically takes into account the elements of POS in a state government setting.

Summary

This literature review investigates the concept of POS. POS is the practice of looking at positive outcomes at the organizational level that not only causes the individual to thrive but the organization to flourish. POS is in its infancy and was birthed from positive psychology and POB. Positive psychology explores how individual experiences and feelings contribute to success. POB endeavors to understand individual psychological capacities that strengthen work performance. POS seeks to be a hybrid that supports developing the individual that could yield positive outcomes for the organization. All three theories have the commonality of building upon strengths to try

and correct the weakness. However, it is worth recognizing that positive individuals do not necessarily equate to a positive collective unit (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency are defined. Each element can be an inherent characteristic or learned (Masten, 2001, Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Values are a reappearing theme that drives self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency in positive psychology, POB, and POS. Established instruments are used in quantitative studies that show validity and reliability.

There are gaps that were uncovered. The application of POS is found in multiple fields such as healthcare, education, business, and international settings; however, implications of POS in a state government setting is limited.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

State government employees are tasked to provide services to the public. The process can often be cumbersome, challenging, and thankless. Elements of POS may assist state employees in navigating through the bureaucracy and could provide opportunities to deliver great government service in a creative and helpful way. The purpose of this non-experimental survey study is to identify the relationship between the elements of POS and a state employee's tenure and level of frustration with bureaucracy. In this chapter, the author presents the research question that guides the study and the hypotheses. Next, the research design and data collections are explained. Finally, the ethical considerations are described by chronicling the steps taken to protect participants in the study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

POS could be used as a tool to help government employees cut through the bureaucratic process in a state government setting. A closer look at current employee's self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency may show there is a relationship between those factors and the level of frustration with bureaucracy in the state agency. The independent variables are the components of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. The dependent variables are the level of frustration with bureaucracy and the longevity of the state employee. The overarching research question is what elements of POS could improve the bureaucratic process? Two hypotheses are investigated in the study to answer the research question.

Hypothesis #1: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration

with bureaucracy will decrease.

Hypothesis #2: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase.

Research Design

A quantitative non-experimental survey is used for the research project. Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommend a survey design because it enables a researcher to describe the attitudes and opinions of a population. The researcher is interested in understanding the attitudes and opinions of state government employees. The rationale for using this type of methodology is to observe a correlation between POS characteristics exhibited by state employees and their perceived attitudes and opinions about bureaucracy in their state agency. A quantitative method is used to characterize data sources, identify participants, craft surveys, evaluate information, and report results. Following problem definition and examination of relevant research, survey questions are designed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These findings could help senior leadership develop strategies that foster POS in their employees and prove to be the catalyst for changing the culture and perception of state government.

The independent variables are the components that make-up POS; they are self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. These characteristics were chosen because they are most widely associated with POS (Bandura, 1997; Coutu, 2002; Luthans et al., 2007; Masten, 2001; Seligman, 2002; Snyder et al., 1991; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). The dependent variables are the level of frustration with bureaucracy and the longevity of the state employee. Studies show that bureaucracy is related to an employee's unwillingness to take risks (Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998) inability to collaborate with others, ineffective

communication (Feeney & Bozeman, 2009), and often not staying in a position for very long (Pandey & Kingsley, 2000). Tenure could be important because state government leadership has limited time during a governor's four or eight-year term to engage in problem-solving tasks that achieve levels of cooperation in policy-making and implementation.

The confounding variables collected are age, gender, ethnicity, education, agency, employment, and position in state government. The confounding variables measured are age, gender, ethnicity, education, and position. Two confounding variables are not measured. Agency is used to help the researcher gauge participation from the various agency categories. Employment is not measured, because the number of years the participants typed rather than the grouped category of employment is tested. The typed number of years allows for a more precise measurement of tenure.

It is important to note although the independent and dependent variables are clearly defined, the researcher is aware that there could be endogeneity, and in particular reverse causality. Endogeneity occurs when a value is determined by the state of other variables (Pearl, 2009), and reverse causality is the expectation variable X will cause variable Y (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure could impact the employee's self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency or the reverse could happen. The cause could become the effect. The author acknowledges this is an issue and a weakness in the research. This could mean there is no solution to the problem. However, the author investigates and mitigates the reverse causality using bivariate and multivariate regression.

Participants/Data Sources

The data sources are human participants. The population is 30,872 state government employees in the state of Indiana that make-up 64 state agencies (Indiana Transparency Portal, 2019). State agencies in Indiana are categorized into seven categories: economic development, public safety, education, transportation, health and human services, conservation and environment, and general government (Indiana Transparency Portal, 2019).

The only criteria an individual needs to participate in the study is for the person to be an Indiana state government employee. Compliance with this criterion is easily met because an individual does not have a state government email address if they are not employed with the state. To receive access to individuals that work in the various agencies, the author asked each agency director if they would be willing to send out the survey electronically to all of their employees on the researcher's behalf. Using the agency director ensures the email is delivered to the employee's inbox and does not get filtered to a spam folder. It is also helpful having the email come from a trusted source indicating it is safe to open the email and click on the survey link.

Once a confirmation email was received from the Agency Director, the researcher sent a follow-up email with an introductory paragraph explaining the study and a link to take the online survey. If an agency director declined the author's request, the agency was excluded from the study. The intention is to have a representative and diverse sample of all agency categories.

Two surveys were sent to state employees. Due to a coding error by the researcher, questions measuring the variable resiliency were inadvertently omitted from

the survey. This caused information to only be collected for self-efficacy, hope, and optimism. Survey participants will be described by the date in which the survey information was collected. Participants in Survey B will be described first followed by Survey A.

Survey B was sent on February 4, 2019 and closed on February 15, 2019.

Twenty-six out of 64 agency directors responded to the request to forward the survey to their employees. The number of state employees that could have received the survey from the agency director was 17,736 (57% of the total state government population). Total number of Survey B respondents are 865 (n=865).

General demographic data is asked of each participant. The questions did not require an answer in order to participate in the survey. The average age of the respondents is between 41 and 50. There are 359 (50%) males, 354 (50%) females, and 152 individuals that did not indicate a gender. The majority of participants indicated they had a bachelor's degree or higher (n=566; 79%). Only 82 (9%) participants indicated they did not attend college. The majority of participants identify their ethnicity as white/Caucasian (n=661; 85%). The largest response from an agency category is Conservation and Environment (n=283; 40%) followed by General Government (n=193; 27%). Years of experience range from 1 to 46 with the average being 13 years.

Survey A was open from March 4, 2019 until March 9, 2019. Nineteen of the remaining 38 agency directors, who did not previously take the survey, responded to the request to forward the survey to their employees. Sixteen agency directors agreed to send the survey and three agency directors declined. The number of state employees that could have received the survey from the agency director is 1,465 (62% of the total state

government population). Total number of survey respondents are 332 (n=332).

General demographic data is asked of each participant. The questions did not require an answer in order to participate in the survey. The average age of the respondents is between 41 and 50. There are 130 (39%) males and 202 (61%) females. The majority of participants indicated they had a bachelor’s degree or higher (n=136; 66%). Only 57 (17%) participants indicated they did not attend college. The majority of participants identified their ethnicity as white/Caucasian (n=272; 82%). The largest response from an agency category is General Government (n=255; 67%) followed by Economic Development (n=40; 12%). Years of experience range from 1 to 44 with the average being 12 years. Results from the descriptive questions for both surveys are presented in Figure 1- 6.

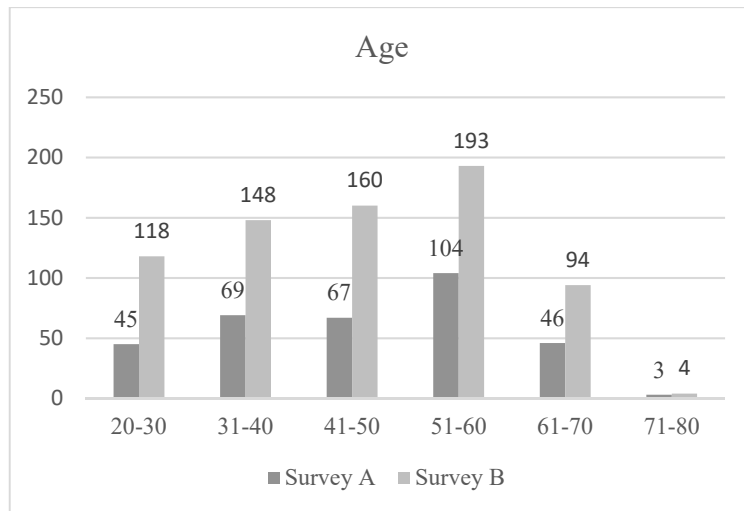


Figure 1. Age results from Survey A and B

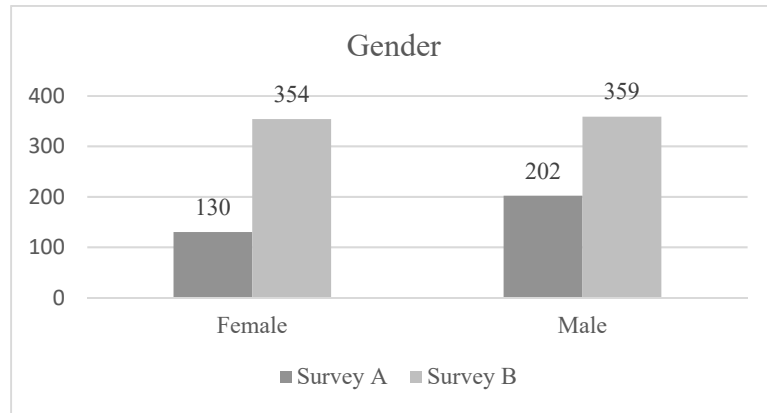


Figure 2. Gender Results from Survey A and B

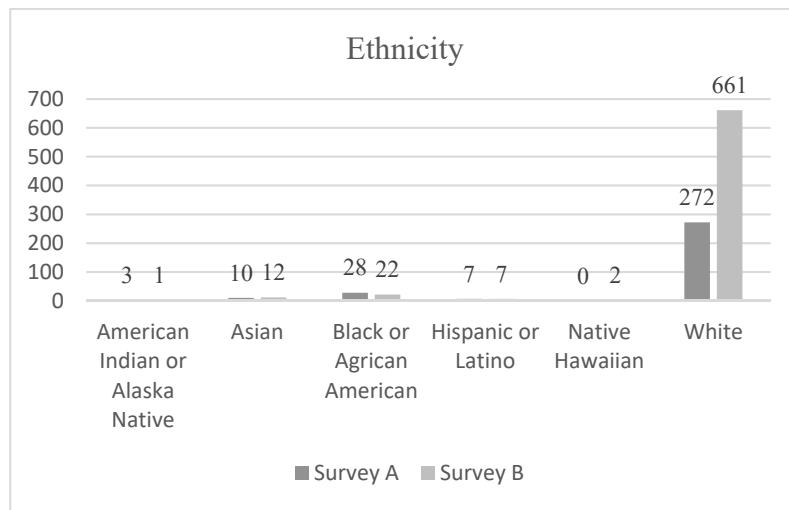


Figure 3. Ethnicity Results from Survey A and B

The imbalance in ethnicity identification is explained by examining the demographic makeup of the state of Indiana. The United States Census Bureau (2018) indicates that 85.4% of the state is White/Caucasian with 9.7% black or African American, 2.4% Asian, 7% Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin, and 0.01% Pacific

Islander. State government employees represent the overall demographic population of Indiana.

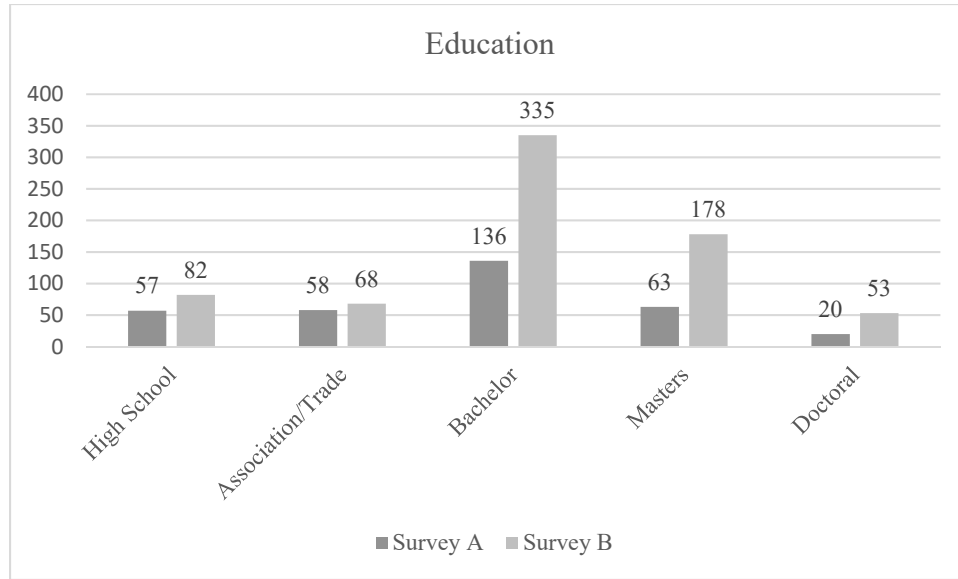


Figure 4. Education Results from Survey A and B

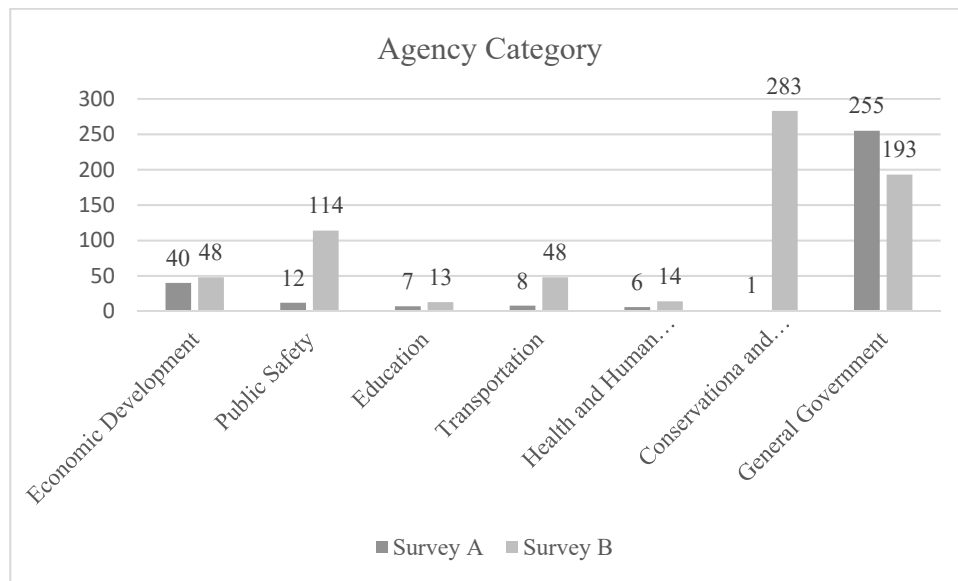


Figure 5. Agency Category Results from Survey A and B

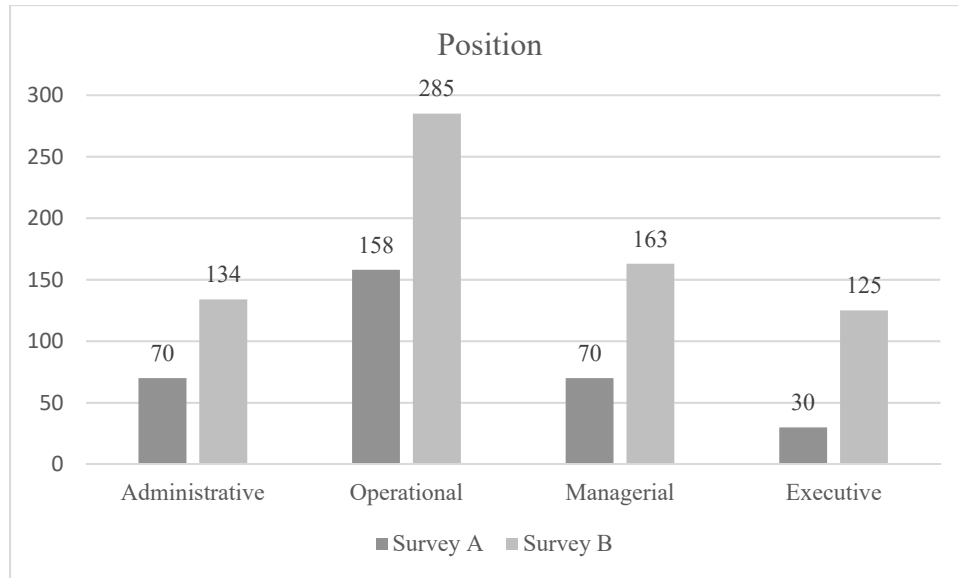


Figure 6. Position Results from Survey A and B

Online surveys are created in *Qualtrics* and the program continues to serve as the repository for all data received. This ensures anonymity and confidentiality with the information obtained from all of the participants. The survey includes questions answered on a closed-ended Likert-type scale that focused on the elements of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience—and how state employees measure bureaucracy in their agency.

Data Collection Tools

The data instrument used to collect information is two online surveys. A survey is the most convenient way for information to be transmitted to a large number of individuals in multiple government agencies throughout the state of Indiana. The online program *Qualtrics* serves as the platform for building the surveys and gathering the data. The survey used questions from the published standardized measures of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience, and perceived level of bureaucracy. The Cronbach’s Alpha test measured the reliability of each of the indices of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. In Survey A and Survey B the coefficient was over .700. Survey A ranged

between .794 and .882 and Survey B ranged between .789 and .862. Results show a high reliability for the testing instruments.

Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001) developed the General Self-Efficacy Scale that has high ratings in validity and reliability. It presents eight phrases for the participant to answer on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The scores were added to produce a global score ranging from 8 to 40. Higher scores indicate higher self-efficacy. A sample question is "I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself" (Chen et al., 2001). See "Appendix A" for the complete questionnaire.

There are two different questionnaires that can be used to test hope. The researcher picked Snyder's (2002) Adult Hope Scale instead of the scale that applies to children since there were no children taking the survey. There are 12 questions. Four questions answer individual thinking, four questions answer organizational thinking, and four questions are fillers (Snyder, 2002). Responses are recorded on an eight-point Likert-type scale (1 = definitely false to 8 = definitely true) (Peterson et al., 2009). The total score is equal to adding the individual and the agency thinking questions together. A sample question is "I can think of many ways to get out of a jam." See "Appendix B" for the complete questionnaire.

There are two different means to measure optimism: The Life Orientation Test (LOT) and The Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOTR). The researcher chose the LOTR scale that measures optimism versus pessimism by evaluating ten phrases. Three items measure optimism, three items measure pessimism, and four items serve as fillers. Respondents rate each item on a five-point Likert-type-scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 =

strongly agree). A sample question is “In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.” See “Appendix C” for the complete questionnaire.

There are three resiliency instruments that range from six to 20 items. The author picked the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith, Dalen, Wiggins, Tooley, Christopher, & Bernard, 2014). There are six items on the scale. Three are positively worded and three or negatively worded. Participants responded using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). A sample question is “I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times”. See “Appendix D” for the complete questionnaire.

There are two commonly used instruments that measure bureaucracy or red tape. The General Red Tape (GRT) scale asks one question:

“If red tape is defined as burdensome administrative rules and procedures that have negative effects on the organization’s performance, please assess the level of red tape in your organization” (Pandey & Scott, 2002).

The respondent chooses a number between 0-10 with 0 signifying no red tape and 10 signifying the highest level of red tape. Bozeman and Feeney, (2011) highlight the GRT scale is the standard measure in public administration literature for red tape, and has been written about in more than 20 peer-reviewed journals.

The other instrument is the Three-Item Red Tape (TIRT) scale. This scale was developed because the GRT scale is perceived as giving the participant a negative bias when asking about the negative effects of red tape (Borry, 2016). The GRT assumes the participant understands what red tape is and does not offer a definition. The TIRT simply asks the participant to judge how burdensome, unnecessary, and ineffective their experience has been with organizational rules (Borry, 2016). The TIRT is used in the

surveys.

Lastly, descriptive statistics of confounding variables are collected. This includes age (20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71-80, 81 +), gender (male and female), ethnicity (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian, White), education level (high/secondary school, bachelor, master, doctoral) agency category (economic development, public safety, education, transportation, health and human services, conservation and environment, and general government), experience (under four years, more than four years, under eight years, more than eight years), and position (administrative, operational, managerial, executive leadership). There is also an open-ended question asking how long the individual has worked in state government. The participant is able to type the number of years in a text box.

Data Collection Procedures

First, all required documents for the research proposal were submitted to Creighton University's IRB committee for review and approval. Roberts (2010) comments this step helps ensure the participants are protected throughout the entire process. Agency directors were asked if they would be willing to assist the researcher in forwarding a description of the survey and a link to their global employee email list. Once permission was received from the agency director, an invitation to participate in the current research study was emailed to state employees from the agency director. The invitation contained detailed instructions and a link to access the survey. A generic email address creightondocoralstudent@gmail.org was created that linked to the surveys in case participants had questions or feedback.

The surveys were developed in *Qualtrics* to assess if there was a relationship between POS and a state employee's tenure and level of frustration with bureaucracy. All research data was securely stored on a password-protected computer to ensure safety and confidentiality throughout the dissertation process.

Data analysis began as soon as the survey closed. Data was exported to *Excel*. In *Excel*, text data collected regarding the participant's number of years worked in state government was reviewed and formatted. Any numbers that were typed as words were converted to numbers and any decimals were rounded to the appropriate numerical entry. The files were imported into *STATA*. This allowed variable scoring of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency to take place, as well, as recoding of the confounding variables gender, ethnicity, and agency.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher adhered to all ethical guidelines set forth by the IRB and Creighton University. The researcher completed the IRB review process before beginning data collection. Please see "Appendix E" for the IRB approval, "Appendix F" for participant invitation, and "Appendix G" for participant bill of rights.

The priority is to protect participants in the study. Participants are never asked for their name or contact information to ensure anonymity. Despite the Agency Director sending the email survey to an employee's state government email address, once the employee clicked on the link to the survey there was no way to identify who participated in the survey. The data was sent directly to *Qualtrics* and not to the agency director or researcher. There were three emails received at the generic address, creightondocoralstudent@gmail.com asking clarifying questions. Each email was

answered promptly. Confidentiality was granted for any information received.

It is important to note, the rights of human subjects are considered and protected during each step of the data collection. Participants experienced no social, psychological, or financial harm as a result of this research. The researcher made certain the individuals taking part in the survey remained anonymous and did not collect any contact information.

Summary

This chapter highlights the research design and methodology of the dissertation in practice. This quantitative non-experimental study uses an online survey to reach a sample of government employees in the state of Indiana. The researcher wants to understand if there is a relationship between self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency displayed in a bureaucratic setting based on an employee's longevity. The data collected may assist senior leaders in state government foster elements of POS that improve the process and deliver services in a creative and collaborative way.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The intent of this observational survey study is to identify the relationship between the elements of POS and a state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. This chapter presents the data analysis and results that correspond to the dissertation hypotheses: (1) as an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration with bureaucracy will decrease; (2) as an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase. Findings from two statistical tests will be analyzed and discussed.

Presentation of the Findings

This section is organized by hypothesis. Each hypothesis is tested using bivariate and multivariate regression. Regression analysis allows the researcher to see if changes in the independent variables correlate with changes in the dependent variables (Nimon & Oswald, 2013). Both bivariate and multivariate tests are performed to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables. Considering the hypotheses are directional, a one-tailed test is used to determine significance. An Ordinary Least Square Regression (OLS) is used because the dependent variable is measured on an interval scale. This is the most common estimation method for linear models that identifies the strength of the relationship between variables (Hutcheson, 1999). Results are presented from two surveys. The differences in the surveys are described in Chapter 3. Surveys are compared to each other and results are found to be similar despite different sample sizes and sampling from different government agencies. Survey A has four independent variables: (1) self-efficacy, (2) hope, (3) optimism, and

(4) resiliency. Survey B has three independent variables: (1) self-efficacy, (2) hope, and (3) optimism. Survey A and Survey B both have two dependent variables:

(1) bureaucratic frustration and (2) tenure of Indiana state government employees

Hypothesis #1: Bivariate Regression Results

Hypothesis #1: As an individual’s POS traits increase, the individual’s frustration with bureaucracy will decrease. A bivariate regression is used for the analysis of both Survey A and Survey B to assess the strength of the association between the variables. Each independent variable is tested separately.

In Survey A, there is a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy ($p < 0.10$), hope ($p < 0.10$), optimism ($p < 0.10$), resiliency ($p < 0.01$) and bureaucratic frustration as shown in Table 1. A negative correlation means state employees’ bureaucratic frustration drops when POS elements are more prevalent.

Table 1. Survey A: POS and Bureaucratic Frustration, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Bureaucratic Frustration | Bureaucratic Frustration | Bureaucratic Frustration | Bureaucratic Frustration |
| Self-efficacy | -0.067* (0.041) | | | |
| Hope | | -0.029* (0.026) | | |
| Optimism | | | -0.052* (0.037) | |
| Resiliency | | | | -0.426** (0.248) |
| Constant | 7.235*** (1.409) | 6.527*** (1.446) | 6.176*** (0.832) | 6.562*** (0.938) |
| <i>N</i> | 298 | 295 | 291 | 296 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.009 | 0.004 | 0.007 | 0.010 |

Standard errors in parentheses
 * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

Self-efficacy causes levels of bureaucratic frustration in state employees to fall. For every one-unit increase in a state employee's self-efficacy, there is expected to be a .067 decrease in bureaucratic frustration. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of self-efficacy is a 1.206 decrease on the bureaucracy scale. The findings appear to indicate that state employees who have self-efficacy are less bothered with bureaucratic red tape.

Bureaucratic frustration also appears to weaken when hope is displayed. For every one-unit increase in state employee's hope there is a .029 decrease in bureaucratic frustration. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of hope is a .87 decrease on the bureaucratic frustration scale. The study supports a relationship between hope and negative feelings about red tape at work. More hope means less bureaucratic frustration for the state employee.

Optimism also appears to diminish bureaucratic frustration in state employees. Survey results show that for each additional unit of a state employees' optimism, bureaucratic frustration is decreased by .052. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of optimism is a 1.196 decrease on the bureaucratic frustration scale. Results show a statistically significant relationship between these two variables.

State employees' bureaucratic frustration declines when high levels of resiliency are present. Findings show for each additional unit of a state employees' resiliency, bureaucratic frustration is decreased by .426. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of resiliency is a 1.350 decrease on the bureaucracy scale. The data shows state employees who are resilient have less bureaucratic frustration.

The R^2 value is between .004 and .010, which means between 0% and 1% of the

variation in POS can be explained through state government employees' frustration with bureaucracy. With R^2 so close to zero, it suggests the independent variables explain little of the variance in the dependent variable. This bivariate regression of each POS element in relation to bureaucratic frustration provides statistically significant data from Survey A to support hypothesis 1, but it also suggests that POS elements are not having a large effect on bureaucratic frustration.

Survey B results also indicate that there is a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy ($p < 0.10$), hope ($p < 0.10$), optimism ($p < 0.10$) and bureaucratic frustration. A negative correlation means state employees' issues with bureaucracy declines when elements of POS are more prevalent.

Results from both Survey A and Survey B (findings in Table 2) are similar. Self-efficacy, optimism, and hope show a strong relationship with bureaucratic frustration.

Table 2. Survey B: POS and Bureaucratic Frustration, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Bureaucratic Frustration | Bureaucratic Frustration | Bureaucratic Frustration |
| Self-efficacy | -0.099*** (0.028) | | |
| Hope | | -0.036* (0.019) | |
| Optimism | | | -0.097*** (0.026) |
| Constant | 8.696*** (0.963) | 7.261*** (1.018) | 7.443*** (0.590) |
| <i>N</i> | 643 | 637 | 644 |
| R^2 | 0.019 | 0.006 | 0.020 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

Self-efficacy and optimism show the most statistically significant correlations with bureaucratic frustration and produce comparable results. For every additional unit of state employees' self-efficacy and optimism, bureaucratic frustration is decreased by .099 and .097 respectively. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of self-efficacy and optimism is a 2.277 and a 2.134 decrease on the bureaucracy scale, respectively. The results reveal that employees who have self-efficacy and optimism will have lower levels of bureaucratic frustration.

Survey B also shows that bureaucratic frustration is mitigated when hope is encountered. For every one-unit increase in state employee's hope there is .036 decrease in bureaucratic frustration. The difference between the minimum and the maximum of hope is a 1.332 decrease on the bureaucracy scale. Findings suggests state employees' who have hope experience less bureaucratic frustration with the agency's red tape.

The R^2 value is between .006 and .020, which means between .6% and 2% of the variation in POS can be told through state government employees' bureaucratic frustration. The R^2 is low, and indicates the independent variables account for relatively little of the variance in the dependent variable. The bivariate regression provides statically significant results from Survey B to support hypothesis 1, indicating that the increased presence of elements of POS decreases perceived levels of bureaucratic red tape. Both Survey A and Survey B support hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis #1: Multivariate Regression Results

Multiple regression is also used for the analysis of Survey A and Survey B. This technique is chosen because it is one of the oldest and most widely understood of multivariate techniques available. It is also a highly efficient method for building a

composite of many predictors that are both highly correlated with an outcome variable of interest, as well as, with main independent variables (Hutcheson, 1999). Because the dependent variable is measured on an interval scale, ordinary least squares regression (OLS) is chosen. Variation Inflation Factor analysis (VIF) was run to determine multicollinearity in the OLS regression. Each independent variable measured less than 10 in both Survey A and Survey B. The mean VIF for Survey A was 1.16 to 1.18 and in Survey B was 1.21 to 1.23. These numbers reflect an insignificant contribution to the standard error in the regressions. Furthermore, no two variables were included in any regression if they had a collinearity of more than 0.60.

Survey A and Survey B measure the same independent and dependent variables as the bivariate regression, but also introduce confounding variables to avoid spuriousness. The confounding variables are age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and position. Categorical values like gender and ethnicity are nominal and are converted to numeric values using dummy variables (Fields, 2013). For this study, a dummy variable value of 1 means the input data is the category represented by the dummy variable, and the dummy variable of 0 means the input data is not the category represented by the dummy variable. For example, gender is coded, 1 = female and 0 = male. Another example of using a dummy variable is ethnicity, in which 1 = white and 0 = non-white. Non-white includes: (1) American Indian or Alaska Native, (2) Asian, Black or African American, (3) Hispanic or Latino, and (4) Native Hawaiian. Minority categories were collapsed because they represent a small percentage of the respondents and are theoretically similar in that they represent minority racial categories. The rest of the confounding variables of age, education, and position are measured on ordinal scales.

In Table 3, a significant negative correlation exists between self-efficacy and bureaucracy ($p < 0.10$) and resiliency and bureaucracy ($p < 0.10$). The confounding variable of gender has a statistically significant negative relationship, and ethnicity, education, and position have a statistically significant positive relationship with a p value < 0.05 .

Table 3. Survey A: POS, Bureaucratic Frustration and Confounding Variables, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 Bureaucratic Frustration | Model 2 Bureaucratic Frustration | Model 3 Bureaucratic Frustration | Model 4 Bureaucratic Frustration |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Self-efficacy | -0.063* (0.039) | | | |
| Hope | | -0.032 (0.025) | | |
| Optimism | | | -0.042 (0.035) | |
| Resiliency | | | | -0.373* (0.235) |
| Age | -0.104 (0.120) | -0.085 (0.121) | -.100 (0.122) | -0.074 (0.121) |
| Female | -.0.648** (0.320) | -0.633* (0.323) | -0.647** (0.323) | -.623** (0.320) |
| White | 1.462*** (0.398) | 1.483*** (0.402) | 1.305*** (0.414) | 1.507*** (0.397) |
| Education | 0.350** (0.144) | 0.376*** (0.145) | -0.303** (0.147) | 0.340*** (0.145) |
| Position | 0.430*** (0.186) | 0.459** (0.189) | 0.433** (0.188) | 0.411** (0.188) |
| Constant | 4.777*** (1.589) | 4.230*** (1.514) | 3.806*** (1.138) | 3.945*** (1.195) |
| <i>N</i> | 290 | 287 | 284 | 288 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.144 | 0.141 | 0.123 | 0.139 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

The results indicate that self-efficacy is a factor in lowering state employees' bureaucratic frustration. The minimum and maximum self-efficacy range is between 1 and 24. The median score is 12. The cut-off for the first quartile is 11 and for the third

quartile is 16. The difference, therefore, between the first and third quartiles of employees' self-efficacy, correlates with a .315 decrease in bureaucratic frustration. When confounding variables of gender, ethnicity, education, and position are introduced, there is still a statistically significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and bureaucratic frustration. Self-efficacy appears to help state employees deal better with bureaucratic red tape.

Resiliency continues to have statistically significant association with limiting bureaucratic frustration even when other predictor variables are added to the regression. The confounding variables of ethnicity, education, and position produce similar results as self-efficacy and do not change the relationship. A state employees' range of resilience is between 1 and 4.17. The median score is 2.167. The cut-off for the first quartile is 2 and the third quartile is 2.667. Moving from the first quartile of employees' resiliency to the third quartile, we would expect a decline in bureaucratic frustration by .249, which appears to be a substantively modest, though statistically significant effect.

While there is a statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and bureaucratic frustration and resiliency and bureaucratic frustration, both hope and optimism have a null effect on the dependent variable when control variables are introduced. The R^2 value is between .123 and .144, which means between 12% and 14% of the variation in bureaucratic frustration can be explained by elements of POS and other variables in the models. Results from Survey A partially supports hypothesis 1 with 2 out of 4 variables having a significant effect on bureaucratic frustration.

Survey B multivariate results are displayed in Table 4. There is a statistically significant negative correlation between bureaucracy and self-efficacy ($p < 0.01$), hope

($p < 0.01$), and optimism ($p < 0.01$). These results are similar to what was found in Survey A in terms of self-efficacy, but differ in the statistically significant findings for hope and optimism. The confounding variables of age, education, and position in state government are found to be statistically significant with at least a p value < 0.10 . The findings of Survey B present a statistically significant negative relationship with age and a statistically positive relationship with education and position.

Table 4. Survey B: POS, Bureaucratic Frustration and Confounding Variables, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 Bureaucratic Frustration | Model 2 Bureaucratic Frustration | Model 3 Bureaucratic Frustration |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Self-efficacy | -0.112*** (0.028) | | |
| Hope | | -0.049*** (0.019) | |
| Optimism | | | -0.115*** (0.027) |
| Age | -0.173** (0.099) | -0.179** (0.100) | -.160* (0.100) |
| Female | -.0236 (0.222) | -0.270 (0.224) | -0.260 (0.220) |
| White | 0.330 (0.453) | 0.503 (0.462) | 0.221 (0.451) |
| Education | 0.161* (0.112) | 0.177* (0.112) | 0.152* (0.111) |
| Position | 0.262** (0.124) | 0.242** (0.125) | 0.284** (0.122) |
| Constant | 7.331** (1.204) | 6.015*** (1.237) | 6.087*** (0.908) |
| <i>N</i> | 613 | 610 | 615 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.072 | 0.057 | 0.077 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

The self-efficacy minimum and maximum range is between 1 and 24. The median score is 17. The cut-off for the first quartile is 15 and for the third quartile is 20. Moving from the top to the bottom quartile, self-efficacy will decrease bureaucratic

frustration by .560. When the confounding variables of age, education, and position are introduced, there is still a statically significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and bureaucratic frustration.

Hope also minimizes bureaucratic frustration. State employee range of hope is between 1 and 38. The median score is 29. Findings in the first quartile is 25 and in the third quartile is 32. The difference between the minimum to the maximum of hope is .343. The confounding variables also impacted bureaucratic frustration the same as with self-efficacy.

Optimism also appears to reduce bureaucratic frustration. State employees' range of optimism is between 1 and 23. The median score is 16. Findings in the first quartile is 14 and in the third quartile is 19. The results indicate that an increase in a state employees' optimism from the first quartile to the third quartile is associated with a .575 decrease in bureaucratic frustration. Age has a statistically significant negative relationship indicating that older bureaucrats experience less bureaucratic frustration and education and position have a statistically positive relationship, indicating that more educated bureaucrats in positions of higher authority are more frustrated by red tape.

There is a statistically significant relationship between all three elements of POS-self-efficacy ($p < 0.01$), hope ($p < 0.01$), and optimism ($p < 0.01$). The R^2 value is between .057 and .077, which means between 5% and 7% of the variation in POS can be illustrated through state government employees' perception of bureaucracy. This multivariate regression provides statically significant data from Survey B to support hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis #2: Bivariate Regression Results

Hypothesis #2: As an individual’s POS traits increase, the individual’s work longevity will increase. A simple linear regression is carried out to investigate the relationship between the elements of POS and tenure. The current study describes tenure as the number of years an individual has been employed by the state of Indiana. Table 5 shows the results from Survey A and Table 6 show the results from Survey B. Both surveys have a similar conclusion. There is a statistically significant negative relationship with self- efficacy ($p < 0.05$) and tenure. There are null effects between hope, optimism, resiliency, and tenure.

Table 5. Survey A: POS and Tenure, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Tenure | Tenure | Tenure | Tenure |
| Self-efficacy | -0.322** (0.160) | | | |
| Hope | | -0.019 (0.105) | | |
| Optimism | | | -0.105 (0.147) | |
| Resiliency | | | | -.656 (0.971) |
| Constant | 22.545*** (5.450) | 12.618** (5.747) | 13.962*** (3.349) | 14.091*** (3.662) |
| <i>N</i> | 323 | 320 | 316 | 321 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.012 | 0.000 | 0.002 | 0.001 |

Standard errors in parentheses
 * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

Self-efficacy is the only element of POS that shows a statistically significant negative relationship with the number of years a person is employed in state government.

Self-efficacy causes a state employees' tenure to decline. In Survey A, for every one-unit increase in a state employees' self-efficacy there is expected to be a .332 decrease in tenure, and for every 10-unit increase in a state employees' self-efficacy there is anticipated to be a 3.32 decrease in tenure. In Survey B for each additional unit of state employees' self-efficacy, tenure is expected to decrease by .189 and for each 10-unit increase of self-efficacy, tenure is expected to decrease by 1.89. Self-efficacy has the opposite effect of what was predicted by the researcher. The findings appear to indicate that state employees who have self-efficacy will depart from state government at a quicker rate than employees who do not have self-efficacy.

Table 6. Survey B: *POS and Tenure, OLS Regressions*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Tenure | Tenure | Tenure |
| Self-efficacy | -0.189** (0.107) | | |
| Hope | | -0.025 (0.072) | |
| Optimism | | | 0.060 (0.104) |
| Constant | 19.435*** (3.656) | 14.294*** (3.951) | 11.804*** (2.327) |
| <i>N</i> | 633 | 627 | 635 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.005 | 0.000 | 0.001 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

Survey A and Survey B have the same R^2 value, which means between 0% and 1% of the variation in POS can be explained by how long an employee stays employed with the state. The R^2 is low, and suggests the independent variables explain little of the variance in the dependent variable. Both bivariate regressions for Survey A and Survey B

did not provide statically significant positive results to support hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis #2: Multivariate Regression Results

In Table 7, the multivariate regression results for Survey A show a statistically significant negative correlation between tenure and self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$) and tenure and optimism ($p < 0.05$). As a state employee’s self-efficacy and optimism improves, they are more likely to leave state government. There are null effects between hope, resiliency, and tenure.

Table 7. Survey A: POS and Tenure with Confounding Variables, OLS Regressions

| | Model 1 Tenure | Model 2 Tenure | Model 3 Tenure | Model 4 Tenure |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Self-efficacy | -0.277** (0.142) | | | |
| Hope | | -0.113 (0.094) | | |
| Optimism | | | -0.279** (0.131) | |
| Resiliency | | | | -1.056 (0.855) |
| Age | 3.759*** (0.435) | 3.822*** (0.441) | 3.859*** (0.442) | 3.830*** (0.441) |
| Female | -1.020 (1.174) | -.889 (1.186) | -1.102 (1.180) | -0.959 (1.180) |
| White | 2.739** (1.425) | 2.855** (1.436) | 3.014** (1.472) | 2.953** (1.429) |
| Education | -1.462*** (0.532) | -1.448*** (0.536) | -1.414*** (0.539) | -1.505*** (0.537) |
| Position | 1.400** (0.679) | 1.476*** (0.693) | 1.455*** (0.684) | 1.406** (0.689) |
| Constant | 8.724* (5.715) | 4.851 (5.603) | 4.730 (4.148) | 2.970 (4.330) |
| <i>N</i> | 318 | 315 | 312 | 316 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.257 | 0.250 | 0.256 | 0.254 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

Self-efficacy and optimism show a significant negative correlation with longevity, and also have the most similar effect. For every one-unit increase in state employees’

self-efficacy, there is anticipated to be a .277 decrease in tenure, whereas for each unit increase in state employees' optimism, there is expected to be a 2.79 decrease in tenure. As a state employee becomes more self-efficacious and optimistic, they appear to leave state government. When confounding variables of age, ethnicity, education, and position are introduced, there is still a negative relationship between self-efficacy and tenure and optimism and tenure. Education has a statistically significant negative relationship, indicating that more educated bureaucrats have less tenure and age and position have a statistically positive relationship, indicating that older bureaucrats in positions of higher authority have more tenure. State employees who exhibit self-efficacy and optimism may not stay in state government for very long.

These results show the R^2 value is between .250 and .257, which means between 25% and 26% of the variation in POS can be explained through state government employees' tenure. This multivariate regression only indicates statically significant data for self-efficacy and optimism, and measures to the contrary of what was predicted in hypothesis 2. Results from Survey A do not support hypothesis 2.

Survey B findings are illustrated in Table 8. There is a statistically significant negative correlation between tenure and self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$). There are null effects between hope, optimism, and tenure. The confounding variables of age and position in state government are found to be statistically significant each with a p value < 0.01 . There is a statistically negative relationship with education ($p < 0.01$). Regardless of the confounding variables introduced, there is still a negative relationship between self-efficacy and tenure. Findings acknowledge state employees who have self-efficacy may have a shorter tenure in state government.

Table 8. *Survey B: POS and Tenure with Confounding Variables, OLS Regressions*

| | Model 1 Tenure | Model 2 Tenure | Model 3 Tenure |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Self-efficacy | -0.185** (0.086) | | |
| Hope | | -0.055 (0.058) | |
| Optimism | | | -0.101 (0.083) |
| Age | 4.623*** (0.264) | 4.630*** (0.266) | 4.800*** (0.265) |
| Female | -.0339 (0.674) | -0.383 (0.678) | -0.398 (0.673) |
| White | 0.128 (1.475) | 0.757 (1.492) | 0.303 (1.473) |
| Education | -0.859*** (0.340) | -0.905*** (0.339) | -0.860*** (0.339) |
| Position | 1.440*** (0.373) | 1.527*** (0.377) | 1.405*** (0.373) |
| Constant | 4.403 (3.637) | -0.403 (3.700) | -0.160 (2.741) |
| <i>N</i> | 616 | 611 | 618 |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.383 | 0.383 | 0.395 |

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$; one-tailed test

The results indicate, state employees who exhibit self-efficacy could leave state government quicker. Self-efficacy is the only component of POS showing a strong relationship with tenure. The minimum and maximum self-efficacy range in state employees is between 1 and 24. The median score is 17. The cut-off for the first quartile is 15 and for the third quartile is 20. The difference between the first and third quartiles of employees' self-efficacy correlates with a .925 decrease in tenure. There is a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$) and tenure. The test shows significance, however, it is the opposite way predicted. The researcher anticipated a higher effect of POS would cause a state employee to remain in state government longer.

The R^2 value is between .383 and .395, which means 38% and 40% of the

variation in tenure can be explained by elements of POS and other variables in the models. Much of this variation, however, is due to the variable age. Those who are older are naturally much more likely to have longer tenure. The R^2 values are the highest in Table 7 than all of the other tests run. This multivariate regression did not provide positive statistically significant data from Survey B to support hypothesis 2.

Analysis and Findings

The researcher seeks to understand if a relationship exists between elements of POS and state government employees' perception of bureaucracy and tenure in the state of Indiana. To assess the potential relationship, the researcher examines raw data from two surveys that were distributed to state government employees in Indiana between February 4, 2019 and March 8, 2019. To answer the guiding research question, the researcher explores two hypotheses.

Hypothesis #1: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration with bureaucracy will decrease.

Bivariate regression analysis provides empirical evidence from both Survey A and Survey B to support hypothesis 1. Each element of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency—portray statistically significant correlation to bureaucratic frustration. As each component of POS increases, state employee's frustration with bureaucracy decreases.

Multivariate regression analysis from Survey A provides strong support for self-efficacy and only a relationship for hope, optimism, and resiliency. When confounding variables of gender, ethnicity, education, and position are introduced there is still a statistically significant negative relationship between self-efficacy, resiliency, and

bureaucratic frustration.

Using multivariate regression, Survey B finds strong support with statistically significant relationship with each POS component studied: (1) self-efficacy, (2) hope and (3) optimism. Regardless if confounding variables are added, there is still a significant relationship between self-efficacy, hope, and optimism.

Results reveal state employees who possess self-efficacy, hope, and optimism are less frustrated with bureaucracy. Survey A and Survey B find a statistically significant relationship between components of POS and bureaucracy. Specifically, as each element of POS increases in state government employees, their perception of bureaucracy decreases. Hypothesis 1 is supported.

The findings support field research that suggests POS is an effective approach to manage employee engagement, motivation, and work productivity (Cameron et al., 2003). In a comprehensive literature review, numerous studies show that POS proved beneficial in a work setting (Luthans & Avolio, 2009; Peterson, et al., 2008). The author concludes that POS should be considered to improve a variety of employment engagement issues including motivation and productivity.

Hypothesis #2: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase.

Bivariate regression analysis provides data from both Survey A and Survey B that does not support hypothesis 2. Survey A shows self-efficacy and optimism and Survey B shows only self-efficacy displaying a statistically significant negative relationship to tenure. As self-efficacy increases, employee tenure decreases. Survey A and Survey B reveal that hope and resiliency have a negative correlation to employee tenure. The

difference between the two surveys are the results based on optimism. Survey A shows optimism to have a negative correlation to tenure, however, in Survey B optimism has a positive correlation. As optimism increases, tenure decreases. The results do not show that any of the components of POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, or resiliency— have a statistically significant positive relationship to tenure. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Neither the multivariate regression analysis from Survey A nor Survey B provide strong support for self-efficacy, hope, optimism or resiliency to have a positive relationship to tenure. The opposite appears to be the case and each of the components of POS cause government employees to leave state government. In Survey A, there is a statistically significant negative relationship with self-efficacy and optimism, whereas, Survey B only shows the significance with self-efficacy. The remaining variables of hope and resiliency in Survey A and hope and optimism in Survey B only show a negative correlation to tenure.

In Survey A, confounding variables of age, ethnicity, education, and position are statistically significant, and gender is not. In Survey B, cofounding variables of age, education and position are statistically significant, and gender and ethnicity are not. In both surveys, there is still a significant relationship between self-efficacy and tenure regardless of the confounding variables introduced.

Results reveal state employees who gain self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resiliency are not prone to stay in state government. Survey A and Survey B find a statistically significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and tenure. As each element of POS increases, state employees' tenure decreases. This is the opposite effect

of what was predicted. The research hinted that individuals who felt engaged at work tended to stay in their jobs for a longer period of time (Buck, Carr, & Robertson, 2008; Pandey and Kinsley, 2000). Peterson et al. (2008) highlight confident people engage in challenging tasks, have arduous amounts of perseverance, and are open to constructive criticism to ensure they stay on course. It was assumed challenging tasks requiring perseverance to keep an individual on course could describe a state employee working in the confines of a bureaucratic framework. The findings of the literature review and results of the surveys did not concur.

It is also important to note although the independent and dependent variables are clearly defined, there could be endogeneity, and in particular reverse causality. The state employee's tenure could impact the employee's self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. Meaning the longer an individual is employed by the state the less self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency the state employee may exhibit. The regression could be picking up on the dependent variable causing the independent variable. In particular, the consistent effect of self-efficacy could be interpreted to mean that as people stay in bureaucracy longer, they feel less self-efficacy, all things being equal.

The surveys find there are no statistically significant positive impact from POS on state government employees' tenure for hypothesis 2. Bivariate and multivariate regressions show the results do not support the hypothesis. There are no strong positive associations between POS characteristics and state government tenure. There was the opposite effect, as POS increased, employee tenure decreased. Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Summary

The researcher conducted an analysis of the survey data to better understand the relationship between POS and a state government employee's perceived level of bureaucracy and tenure. Two hypotheses are developed for analysis: (1) As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration with bureaucracy will decrease, and (2) As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase. Hypothesis 1 was supported and hypothesis 2 was not supported.

FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The goal of the current study is to determine if there is a relationship between the elements of POS and a state government employees' level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. A comprehensive literature review finds that self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency are linked to improving employee motivation and productivity, as well as, organizational outcomes in a variety of fields. The current study attempts to narrow the gap in research on POS in a bureaucratic setting and strives to contribute to a better understanding of how POS impacts state government employees' attitudes, perceptions, and activity. The analysis allows the researcher to determine if POS is a beneficial tool for senior staff to promote in state government. In the previous chapter, the results of this quantitative study were explained in detail. This chapter provides a review of the study and discusses the implementation of the proposed solution, implications for action, and recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with a final summary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this observational survey study is to identify the relationship between the elements of POS and a state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this observational survey study is to understand the effect of POS in a state government setting. The quantitative results provide senior leadership in the state of Indiana a recommendation about which characteristics of POS improve bureaucratic culture.

Summary Findings

POS looks at the opportunities rather than challenges in each situation (Spreitzer & Cameron, 2012). Engaging with state government employees and understanding how they work through bureaucratic issues may improve the way state government employees deliver services. POS concerns itself with positive processes and outcomes driving individuals and organizations to shift their way of thinking and change their behavior to rise to a new level of exceptional performance. The overarching research question tries to determine what elements of POS could improve the bureaucratic process? To answer the research question, two hypotheses are examined and below are the findings.

Hypothesis #1: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's frustration with bureaucracy will decrease.

To determine the potential association, bivariate and multivariate regression are performed and a statically significant negative relationship is found between POS and frustration with bureaucracy. As state employees POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency—increases, their frustration with bureaucracy decreases. Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis #2: As an individual's POS traits increase, the individual's work longevity will increase.

To figure out the possible relationship, the researcher executes a bivariate and multivariate regression. There is a statically significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and employee tenure. This result, however, is the opposite of what is hypothesized. As self-efficacy increases, employee tenure decreases. Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

There are a few potential reasons for this outcome. As a state employee develops more self-efficacy in the role, there is a better understanding of the bureaucratic process and an individual is able to navigate through red tape. Higher levels of self-efficacy indicate a state employee possess confidence to engage in challenging situations to accomplish the goal (Peterson et al., 2008). Companies may be interested in pursuing someone with experience, who understands confusing regulations and statutes, and has internal relationships within state government. This could be attractive because the state employee can easily figure out red tape and get things done. Hence, why private entities may seek to hire state government employees with POS, thus decreasing their tenure in state government.

Another reason could be if a state government employee is disengaged and feels unfulfilled in a position, there is no reason for an employee to stay loyal to state government. Pandey and Kinsley (2000) point out that one of the consequences of disengagement is not staying in a position for a very long time. A leader should be creating an environment that encourages an employee to flourish or the state employee may look for other opportunities that do.

Proposed Solution

The following section provides a proposed solution based on the results of this study. The study is built on current theory and practice that suggest POS produces meaningful benefits in many fields. The quantitative data collected for this study re-enforce the notion that POS has an impact, and in particular, in a state government setting. The aim of this study is to determine which components of POS assist in improving a bureaucratic culture. Based on the quantitative results, each component of

POS—self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency—improve an employees’ ability to deal favorably with bureaucracy. The researcher recommends developing a POS awareness campaign. The awareness campaign would introduce senior leadership to the concept of POS. The program would center on education, evaluation, and engagement. Senior leadership should be educated on the concept of POS. Each member of the senior team should evaluate their own style of leadership and their current work environment. Once there is an awareness, senior leadership may want to incorporate these POS elements into their leadership style. A POS style of leadership is significant for change because it motivates and inspires followers to focus on the larger goal, which is the change being implemented. By encouraging and creating an environment that champions POS, state employees may have the ability to reach their full potential and flourish in their organizational setting. The benefits could lead to state employees providing better government service because they are not letting the confines of bureaucracy impede their work output, but are creatively finding solutions to work within a bureaucratic framework. This could lead to higher employee engagement, who in turn will serve their constituents more effectively.

Support for the Solution

This study clearly shows that state government employees positively respond to POS. Each element of POS displays strong support for reducing employees’ frustration with bureaucracy. While some of the onus is on the employee to personally cultivate the POS elements, in an organizational setting, the responsibility is with the leadership of the administration to understand and foster POS. Leaders at the top are responsible for what happens at the organization (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Olson and Simerson (2015) describe

a strategic leader as one who influences others toward a particular goal. The goal is for employees to reach their full potential, be engaged with the process, and provide outstanding government service. This could happen if senior leadership understand the concept of POS and purposely promote these components within their spheres of influence. Vera and Crossan (2004) explain that a leader can exert influence to increase morale, employee engagement, and organizational learning.

Factors and Stakeholders Related to the Solution

POS examines how organizations can unlock the potential of their employees so they have more fulfilling experiences, collaborate more effectively together, and help their organization thrive (Cameron et al., 2003). Research shows, especially in Indiana, state government employees are the least fulfilled and engaged at work (Gallup, 2017). A government setting appears to be an appropriate location to test POS theory. This leadership approach is designed to inform senior leadership in the state of Indiana about the importance of POS and serve as a vital tool to improve employee motivation, engagement, and productivity.

Potential Barriers and Obstacles to Proposed Solution

There are a few barriers that could manifest when trying to implement the proposed solution. They are time, senior leadership turnover, and a state government mindset. The researcher will highlight each issue.

Senior leaders in the state of Indiana are appointed by the governor. There is a small window of opportunity to make changes and see results. The window of time usually consists of four years unless the governor is re-elected and the time is extended to eight years. If this proposed solution is implemented late in a governor's tenure, there

may not be enough time to fully see the plan through to fruition. Currently, the governor of Indiana is in his third year of his first term.

Senior leadership turnover due to job intensity, scrutiny, and burn-out may also be a barrier. Sometimes members of senior leadership in a governor's administration leave their position in state government to pursue other opportunities and do not serve a full term. The Indiana governor's office currently has 26 employees (Indiana Transparency Portal, 2019). Since the governor took office in January of 2017, there have been 8 employees that have left to pursue other opportunities. Changes in senior leadership may make it difficult for state government employees to want to invest the time to build relationships and trust with a new member of senior leadership if they are only going to serve in the administration for a limited amount of time.

The mindset of the state employee and senior leadership could also be a potential barrier. As discussed above, a state employee could feel like senior leadership is trying to implement the latest leadership trend and know they just have to wait out the administration until the next person comes along. Senior leadership could reject POS and not feel like it is a priority or part of the job assignment. Senior leaders may be more focused in implementing policy of the administration instead of taking time to promote an environment that encourages POS and cultivates POS characteristics in state employees. The individual mindset of both the state employee and senior leadership should not be a barrier but a mutually beneficial relationship that creates positive outcomes. Koonce (2017) describes this as "creating internal rewards that, in turn, generate external rewards of individual, relational, and collective sustenance and positive consequence" (p. 23). This type of thinking or change may not always be welcome, but

by building trust and including others in the process could lead to a stronger commitment to organizational goals (Burke, 2014). This approach would be beneficial not only to senior leaders but to state employee as well.

Change Theory

Change theory is an integral part of the researcher's proposed solution and provides a reference to guide the leader through the process. Kurt Lewin's change theory has three steps: unfreeze, freeze, and refreeze. It is an evaluative strategy that identifies a topic (unfreeze), implements a solution (freeze), and institutionalizes the change effort (refreeze) (Herr & Anderson, 2015).

This theory will help senior leadership navigate implementing POS in a state government setting. The theory presents a systematic approach facilitating creative thought by identifying how change can be achieved and sustained. Herr and Anderson (2015) describe the theory as "creating knowledge by problem-solving in a real-life situation" (p. 12). It is based on action research focused on content, context, and process issues (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). This approach will offer support for the POS awareness program. Grounded in organizational change theory, Lewin's three stages will provide a framework to successfully execute and evaluate the POS initiative.

Implementation of the Proposed Solution

This study aims to provide senior leadership in Indiana state government evidence-based information showing there is a relationship between POS and an employee's perceived level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. The recommendation is a POS awareness program that focuses on educating senior leadership to the concept, providing tools to help evaluate senior leadership's style and work

environment, and offering suggestions on how to incorporate positivity into the workplace to help state government employees feel more engaged. Results of the research revealed a significant relationship between POS and perceived levels of frustration with bureaucracy. The findings are applicable to individuals who work in a state government setting.

Factors and Stakeholders related to the Implementation of the Solution

The purpose of the study is to determine if there is a relationship between POS and bureaucracy in a state government setting. The findings suggest there is a correlation. The next steps are to use the results of the study to develop a POS awareness program for senior leadership. The POS awareness program would take into account the proposed approach of action that leads to education, evaluation, and engagement of senior leadership with state employees. There are many steps to making the implementation of the solution a reality. The first action may need to be gathering all stakeholders together to find out the needs of senior leadership and the government employee. A stakeholder analysis could assist in determining who should be involved in helping to pinpoint important organizational issues. The stakeholder analysis may allow for many voices to be heard and concerns to be addressed giving helpful insight to leadership (Bryson, 2011). The purpose would be to build trust and garner buy-in for the process (Wells, 1998).

The more individuals that are part of creating the solution, the more committed they will be to the mission because they are doing something they care about it (Wells, 1998). Strategic planning is important because it brings a team together to “share a common understanding of and commitment to the purpose, preferred future,

behavioral expectations, and next steps toward improvement” (Gurley, Peters, Collins, & Fifolt, 2014, p. 225) Planning activities may develop trust and provide an outlet to talk about uncertainty and organizational change. Understanding gives information meaning and organizes knowledge (Wells, 1998).

Leader’s role in Implementing the Proposed Solutions

Many individuals will need to be part of the process of implementation. The researcher must generate interest and receive approval to develop a POS awareness program. There will need to be buy-in from the governor’s office in order for the concept to be promoted and encouraged amongst senior leadership. Stajkovic and Luthans (1998) assert that leaders who understand the POS behavior model may positively effect task performance. This could lead to efficient and inexpensive ways to improve work performance without increasing costs. The research findings will need to be presented by highlighting the impact of POS in a bureaucratic setting. The results of the study demonstrate the value that POS has to offer as an effective strategy to improve employee engagement. However, increasing POS in state employees could have an unwanted effect of helping engaged and motivated employees leave state government.

The State Personnel office should be consulted and asked to be part of the implementation process. State Personnel could be instrumental in providing and disseminating information. State Personnel already provides new senior leadership and employee orientation, sends a weekly newsletter, and coordinates various online personal and professional development programs. Creating a POS module adopting the current platform the state uses to improve personal and professional development may be the easiest way to provide POS education. Youssef and Luthans (2007) suggest short

trainings for individuals about POS elements could lead to intentional results that help accomplish organizational goals.

Senior leadership may have the most influence on state government employees. They are setting the goals, providing direction, and troubleshooting when problems arise. Senior leadership is the mouthpiece of the governor's administration and acts as the liaison between government employees, agency directors, legislators, and stakeholders. Senior leadership knows the pulse of state employees and can create collaborative teams to accomplish goals. In order for senior leadership to incorporate POS into their leadership style, they should be introduced to the concept of POS that educates, evaluates, and helps them develop ways to engage state government employees.

Building Support for the Proposed Solution

Evaluation and Timeline for Implementation and Assessment

In order for there to be a successful implementation of the proposed solution, there needs to be an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each entity. The key players involved in the execution of the proposed solution include the governor's office, state personnel, senior leadership, and government employees.

Permission should be received from the governor's office for a POS awareness program by July 2019. A working group of stakeholders should be assembled to develop the framework for the POS awareness campaign by September 2019. The goal would be to roll out a POS awareness campaign by January 2020. This would incorporate designing content to be included in new senior leadership orientation, infusing elements of POS into the weekly employee e-blast, and creating a POS module that would be added to the online library of personal and professional development opportunities

available to leadership and employees through the state's health and wellness program.

One of the goals of this dissertation in practice is sharing the findings of the study and contributing to the greater field of POS. The researcher plans to promote the results of this study in a variety of mediums. This may include reaching out to the National Governors Association, Democratic Governors Association, Republican Governors Association, and Midwest Governors Association to name a few. These are organizations that are resources to state governor offices. These associations plan gatherings that senior leadership from various governor offices go to and engage with for information and ideas. Improving state employee engagement and productivity through POS could be a potential presentation, panel, or white paper topic.

The researcher will also submit abstracts to annual conferences that focus on state government and public administration. This will assist in presenting the research and publicizing the findings. The researcher will make changes as necessary to the dissertation in practice in order to conform to scholarly article standards of various peer-reviewed journals.

Implications

Practical Implications

This research strives to contribute to the greater good by providing a better understanding of the impact of POS in a state government setting. Quantitative data is analyzed to provide an evidence-based recommendation for senior leadership in the state of Indiana. Two surveys produce compelling evidence for inquiry and provide current and relevant insight into state government employee attitudes, perceptions, and processes. This data reveals a significant relationship between POS and a state employee's

perceived perception of bureaucracy, and an inverse relationship for POS in regards to employee tenure. Senior leadership should consider the importance of POS as a means to improve employee engagement and assist in developing state employees to reach their full potential.

Implications for Future Research

Future research is needed to further examine the relationship between POS and state government employees' frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. Surveying state employees throughout the Midwest, and in other areas of the country, should be explored to determine if similar findings exist. Future research should consider a study that not only surveys state government employees who are providing services, but also constituents who are receiving the services. This would measure both groups bureaucratic frustration and provide a correlation or contrast in perception levels. Future research could also include a survey to state employees at the start of a governor's first term. After senior leadership goes through a POS awareness program, an employee survey could be sent annually for the next four years of a governor's term. Surveys could be compared to the previous year to see if there has been an improvement in employee engagement based on POS implementation.

Implications for Leadership Theory and Practice

The conclusion drawn from this study provide further support regarding the importance of POS and how it relates to managing and leveraging state employee engagement. The results of this study suggest this topic should be talked about with senior leadership. By doing so, Indiana state government may be positioned better to embrace change, invest in employees, and provide better government service.

POS is grounded in the belief that leaders should build upon strengths, cultivate gifts, and overcome obstacles by staying positive and looking for opportunities (Cameron et al., 2003). The most important leadership role is empowering employees to be the best they can be and thrive in a bureaucratic setting that champions tackling tough problems through the unique lens of positivity (DeRue & Workman, 2011, p. 785).

Organizational leaders have a responsibility to care for the whole person, *cura personalis*, which includes the body, mind, and spirit (Geger, 2014). Removing obstacles and creating an environment that promotes personal development falls under the umbrella “doing all that is possible to promote good health and preventing any and all activities that might cause damage to the body and mind” (Wilson, Goldstein, & Pennington, 2015, p. 29). Vogel suggests that commitment to the growth of people (Spears, 2010) is essential to organizational success. POS is grounded in the belief that leaders should build upon strengths, cultivate gifts, and overcome obstacles by staying positive and looking for opportunities to make things better (Cameron et al., 2003). The purpose of servant leadership is for individuals while being served, to improve their health, wisdom, liberty, and autonomy, and increase the probability of becoming leaders themselves (Greenleaf, 1977). POS and servant leadership complement each other perfectly. As leaders positively invest in employees, it causes the employee to flourish and the organization to produce successful outcomes.

Summary of the Study

Research suggests that 57% of Indiana state government employees feel unengaged which is the highest ranking in the country (Gallup, 2017b). To make matters worse, 28% of citizens describe bureaucracy as being the most frustrating aspect of

government (Gallup, 2017a). POS theory has been implemented in many fields with tangible results that show an improvement in overall employee engagement, processes, and service (Dadich et al., 2018; Feeney & Boardman, 2010; Lucas & Goodman, 2015; Meyer, 2015). With limited research on the impact of POS in a state government setting, the researcher engaged in collecting quantitative data from Indiana state employees in order to test the relationship and provide an evidence-based recommendation to senior leadership.

The objective was to explore if an association existed between POS and a state employee's level of frustration with bureaucracy and tenure. Quantitative results reveal state employees who possess high levels of POS do have a lower level of frustration with bureaucracy. However, high levels of POS in a state employee does not mean a longer tenure of employment with the state. In fact, employees who possess high levels of self-efficacy left state government quicker than other state employees. Bivariate and multivariate regression were conducted on two surveys administered to state government employees. Results support hypothesis 1 showing there is a strong statistically significant correlation between bureaucracy and POS which includes self-efficacy ($p < 0.10$, $p < 0.01$), hope ($p < 0.10$, $p < 0.10$), optimism ($p < 0.10$, $p < 0.01$), and resiliency ($p < 0.01$). Findings did not support hypothesis 2, however, the relationship between tenure and self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$) was statistically significant but in the opposite direction. State employee with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to leave state government. In the short-term this could appear as a problem. However, this gives senior leadership another opportunity to shift perceptions and create an environment that empowers and engages employees to reach their full potential in state government.

With results confirming a relationship between POS and an employee's frustration level with bureaucracy, this provides senior leadership with the opportunity to create a change in state government culture that helps senior leadership move government employees from being disengaged to flourishing. It is viewing obstacles as opportunities to improve bureaucracy while making the impossible possible (Luthans & Avolio, 2009). The recommendation is a POS awareness campaign that provides an introduction to POS theory and allows for an introspective evaluation of the leader's own level of POS and the environment they cultivate. The goal of the POS awareness campaign is to promote POS in state employees in order to improve bureaucratic culture. The researcher acknowledges the risk in building POS in a bureaucratic setting may cause engaged employees to leave state government. However, if senior leaders understand how the various elements of POS influence state employees, a culture change could begin to occur that alters perceptions of a bureaucratic institution positively. This may provide a new way of doing things that causes employees to not only be more engaged, but to stay in state government.

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Appendix A

General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I will be able to achieve most of the goals I set for myself. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| When facing difficult tasks, I am certain I will succeed. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| In general, I can achieve outcomes that are important to me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I believe I can succeed at most tasks to which I set my mind. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I am confident I can manage well on many different tasks. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Compared to other people, I do most tasks well. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Even when things are tough, I can manage quite well. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Appendix C

Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) (Carver, 2013)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| In uncertain times, I usually expect the best. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It's easy for me to relax. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| If something can go wrong for me, it will. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I'm always optimistic about my future. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I enjoy my friends a lot. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It's important for me to keep busy. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I hardly ever expect things to go my way. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I don't get upset easily. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I rarely count on good things happening to me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Appendix D

The Brief Resilience Scale (Peterson et al., 2009)

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have a hard time making it through stressful events. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I usually come through difficult times with little trouble. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Appendix E

**Institutional Review Board**

2500 California Plaza • Omaha, Nebraska 68178
 phone: 402.280.2126 • fax: 402.280.4766 • email:
 irb@creighton.edu

DATE: January 24, 2019

TO: Rebecca Holwerda, EdD
 FROM: Creighton University IRB-02 Social Behavioral

PROJECT TITLE: [1374778-1] Impact of Positive Organizational Scholarship in a Bureaucratic Setting

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
 DECISION DATE: January 24, 2019

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The following items were reviewed in this submission:

- Advertisement - Advertising Material (UPDATED: 01/20/2019)
- Application Form - 402 Application for Determination of Exempt Status - Survey (UPDATED: 01/20/2019)
- Creighton - IRB Application Form - Creighton - IRB Application Form (UPDATED: 01/19/2019)
- Letter - Information Letter (UPDATED: 01/20/2019)
- Letter - Letter of Agreement (UPDATED: 01/14/2019)
- Protocol - Study Protocol (UPDATED: 01/20/2019)
- Questionnaire/Survey - Survey Questions (UPDATED: 01/20/2019)

This project has been determined to be exempt from Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects as per 45CFR46.101 (b) 2.

All protocol amendments and changes are to be submitted to the IRB and may not be implemented until approved by the IRB. Please use the modification form when submitting changes.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Scheuring at 402-280-3364 or christinescheuring@creighton.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Creighton University IRB-02 Social Behavioral's records.

Appendix F

1/9/19

Dear Participant,

You are receiving this email because you are a state government employee. I am in need of your input for my doctoral research. I am studying the impact of Positive Organizational Scholarship in a bureaucratic setting. The elements of Positive Organizational Scholarship are self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. If you would like to provide your input, you may do so by clicking on the link below which will direct you to an online survey.

State Employee Survey

The online survey will be open for two weeks, and will close at 11:59pm on February 15, 2019. Participation is voluntary, and there will be no compensation for taking the survey. If you begin the survey, and no longer want to continue, simply stop answering the questions, and exit the survey. There are no risks in participating in the survey. All the information submitted will be anonymous and confidential. No contact information will be requested or required in participating in the survey. Information will be collected by a third-party survey and data analysis system, and all information will be safely stored and protected by password verification.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Holwerda
Creighton University doctoral student

Appendix G

Bill of Rights for Research Participants

As a participant in a research study, you have the right:

1. To have enough time to decide whether or not to be in the research study, and to make that decision without any pressure from the people who are conducting the research.
2. To refuse to be in the study at all, or to stop participating at any time after you begin the study.
3. To be told what the study is trying to find out, what will happen to you, and what you will be asked to do if you are in the study.
4. To be told about the reasonably foreseeable risks of being in the study.
5. To be told about the possible benefits of being in the study.
6. To be told if there are any costs associated with the study and if you will be compensated for your participation.
7. To be told who will have access to information collected about you and how your confidentiality will be protected.
8. To be told whom to contact with questions about the research, about research-related injury, and about your rights as a research participant.
9. If the study involves treatment or therapy:
 - a. To be told about the other non-research treatment choices you have.
 - b. To be told where treatment is available should you have a research-related injury, and who will pay for research-related treatment.