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ABSTRACT

A modified focus group approach was used to assess the perceptions of teachers involved in basic skills pilot site projects in Oklahoma after the second year. The two 5-year projects were implemented to develop, apply, evaluate, and advance approaches that strengthen basic competencies of students enrolled in vocational programs. Of the three applied courses--Applied Math, Principles of Technology (PT), and Applied Communications, teachers viewed Applied Math most favorably. Although instructors were also generally positive about PT, opinions about Applied Communications were not as positive. The main difficulty was that it was "really not English." Teachers felt a strong need for effective communication among teachers at individual schools, teachers at different schools, teachers and administrators, and school personnel and the community. They noted the following changes and outcomes: changes in the students, especially in the applied math courses; increased communication among teachers; and changes in teachers, such as changed teaching style, different view of basic skills, and different view of vocational education. Teachers were supportive of the basic skills program. Three main areas of advice were given: (1) basic skills enhancement needs to begin early, before students are juniors and seniors in high school; (2) teachers need to communicate often and effectively with one another; and (3) teachers should take advantage of workshops and others who can help. (YLB)

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**THE IMPACT OF APPLIED ACADEMIC SKILLS
IN VOCATIONAL AND NONVOCATIONAL CLASSROOMS
AS SEEN BY TEACHERS:
A Focus Group Study**

**Oklahoma Basic Skills
Pilot Project**

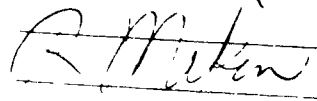
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Introduction

In 1987, two five-year pilot projects began in Oklahoma with the goal of developing, applying, evaluating, and advancing "approaches that will strengthen the basic competencies -- in communications, mathematics, science, critical thinking, and problem-solving -- of students enrolled in vocational programs" (SREB Review Team Report, 1989). These projects, conducted in cooperation with the Southern Regional Educational Board's Vocational Education Consortium, have been in place for two full school years.

In order to assess the perceptions of teachers involved in the basic skills pilot site projects, a modified focus group approach was used. The focus group technique attempts to gain information about a subject by engaging participants in discussion centered around a small number of questions. While specific answers to individual questions are important, what is of most interest are the group dynamics; that is, the interactions among all members of the groups.

One group was held at each site, with six teachers from the High Plains site and seven teachers from the Red River site participating. The teachers were from both vocational and nonvocational classrooms. Participating from nonvocational schools were teachers representing math, science, and English classes. All participants provided input into the group discussion. It seemed that the two groups shared similar feelings and opinions, and that the differences observed were more of degree than kind.

To guide the discussion, five primary questions were developed for the focus groups. These were: 1) what is your overall assessment of the pilot site project? 2) what works? 3) what have been specific outcomes at the basic skills pilot sites? 4) what should be done differently from here on out? and 5) if someone was starting such a project, what advice would you give them?

As stated previously, the main intent of the focus group is not to have specific answers from each participant to each question, but to gain a general understanding of where the individuals stand on the issues raised in the questions. This being the case, responses to one question often related to more than that one question. For example, when answering the first question, "what is your overall assessment of the pilot site project," teachers responded from the perspective of what worked for them, which was the second question.

Dividing this report into answers to specific questions would be an artificial representation of the group process. Instead, the report will address topics which emerged in response to the questions.

The following is a listing of those topics, in the order in which they will be addressed. First is a discussion concerning the applied courses, Applied Math, Principles of

Technology (PT), and Applied Communications. The second topic is the cooperation and communication among teachers, including specific committees which were formed as a part of the basic skills project. Third are outcomes observed as a result of the project. The fourth section of the report presents considerations for the project that the participants had about what should be done differently, or what persons at other schools who are considering a basic skills project should consider. The final section contains the conclusions.

In reading this report of these focus group sessions, it is important to remember the comments expressed by group members are not necessarily representative of the entire staff at the pilot sites. The purpose of a focus group is to gain an in-depth understanding of how certain individuals feel about a topic, rather than superficially survey a larger number of persons.

Applied Courses

Without question, the program which were viewed the most favorably is Applied Math. The teachers using this curriculum spoke highly about the materials. The following comment reflects the overall feelings about this course: "The only thing I can say is get rid of every general math class in high school and replace it with applied math. I would never go back to teaching general math; if I had a choice I would not. It's made me feel better as a teacher, and it's made my kids feel better as students."

The primary attraction of this course was that students easily recognize the direct application the materials have to the "real world." One teacher stated, "All the years before, and even in my algebra classes now, they say, 'when are we ever going to use this stuff?' After the first week or two in applied math, they don't ask."

A concern which was voiced about the mathematics materials was that it was written for students who had exposure to pre-algebra mathematics, and many of those taking the course were not at that level. This necessitated the instructor moving more slowly through the material. While this inability to complete all the material was of some concern, the expressed sentiment was that the students would learn well that material to which they were exposed.

Teachers were generally positive in their assessment of the Principles of Technology course, but some caution was expressed. There were two main reasons for the caution. The first was the difficulty in integrating the course into existing vocational courses, and the second was the importance of having the correct equipment and the time to familiarize oneself with the laboratory exercises before teaching the course.

One vocational teacher, who integrated PT into an existing class, said, "I kind of have some mixed emotions. I am still behind it a lot." This instructor went on to state that his students came in for specific vocational training and did not see the relationship between some of the PT material and the vocational program. The teacher felt that it would be most effective to pull out aspects of the PT curriculum which fit into the specific vocation. "Don't try to lockstep with a pre-existing program, because there is no

place to squeeze or make that kind of squeeze to do justice to the [vocational] program."

The academic teachers who were teaching PT expressed more favorable opinions about the program. One instructor stated, "I'm convinced every day that it is needed, that it's necessary; that it's necessary at the high school level or junior high prior to deciding your vocation."

As with the Applied Math, PT allowed students to immediately apply the knowledge to which they are exposed in class. Pupils were noted to say that they could use the information to 'soup up their cars.' Teachers noted that the lab exercises were an important component of the PT classes. In order for the laboratory exercises to work, a full set of equipment is needed. Not all classes have all the equipment at this time.

PT also provided opportunities to reinforce communication skills. On lab days in one class, "I won't tell which ones beforehand, that day. I say, 'You and you come up here and explain this to the class, what you're going to do.' They communicate what's going to happen, and then as many as we can go through and do the experiment." While this was a useful exercise, time constraints made it difficult to do this for every exercise.

Finally, instructors must devise additional activities on lab days for students who are not currently engaged in the lab activities. "When we just have one set [of equipment] and we can't set up another lab, there's a lot of people out there just messing around and it's hard to have them working on math skills and some other things." This problem was also faced by instructors of the Applied Math course.

While instructors are mostly positive about the Applied Math and PT courses, the opinions about Applied Communications were not so positive. The main difficulty expressed about the program was "that's really not English." As one teacher stated, "The material was just not applicable to the curriculum that we had to teach. When you have suggested learner outcomes in the state, and you have to meet that criteria, this doesn't match up with what we were required to do. In turn, we did what the state required instead of following a basic skills program."

At one site, participants felt the communications materials were life skills as opposed to English skills. At the other site, a distinction was made between English and the more focused communications. English teachers did not perceive that the materials provided instruction in language arts, and so they were not supportive of the course.

One group member stated that the modules were centered around various vocational areas, and since only one or two persons from each area was in the class, the other students felt the material did not apply to them. This teacher's recommendation was that the modules be integrated into the appropriate vocational classes.

Group members at each site proposed reasons why there were problems in the communications area. These were there were no corresponding "communications" courses taught at the vocational schools, and that English teachers as a group were very turf conscious and unwilling to give up traditional approaches to teaching English.

While these are perhaps reasons for the perceived failure of the communications programs, a lack of dynamic leadership is probably a major factor. One person involved in the communications aspect of the project stated "... but I don't know if the committee ever functioned. I felt like the committee function was a farce. It was a waste of our time because no one was teaching the course to come in and discuss what they were doing with it."

It was evident that this committee member felt that the communications effort should be centered on the course, and that no one on the committee took the initiative to lead the group in more effective communication.

In spite of the negative connotations regarding the communications course as a whole, teachers had positive remarks to make about individual portions. The most positive aspect of the program identified was the role playing. This part allowed students to practice conflict resolution in a simulated business environment.

Communication/Cooperation

A great deal of time was spent during each of the two sessions on the topic of communication. There appeared to be a strong need for effective communication among teachers at individual schools; teachers at different schools; teachers and administrators; and school personnel and the community, including parents and students. While many communication needs surfaced, instructors also discussed positive effects the project has had on communications.

Communication among teachers. In the discussion concerning communication among teachers, both positive and negative aspects were raised. On the positive side, teachers felt their teaching was stronger as they were aware of the skills being taught in other classes. "It helped me tremendously when we had our meeting at the vo-tech. I had no idea the amount of math they needed in machine shop."

This increased awareness of what was occurring in other classes was a positive aspect of the project. It also was negative, in that it made teachers realize how important it was to know about other classes, and how little they actually knew what other instructors were doing. As one teacher stated, "I think there's been more interaction (among teachers) since we've started the project. Personally I don't think there's been enough."

In addition to increased awareness of what was being taught in other classes, teachers were available to provide assistance and advice when needed. One teacher spoke about help she had received from instructors at her site who were teaching different classes; "You really need someone who has experience to give suggestions and ideas. It really helps to be able to talk to others doing similar things."

On the down side of the communications, a great deal of frustration was expressed concerning the need for more communication. This frustration resulted from two concerns. The first was the lack of time in which to meet and discuss the project with

others at one's own school and other schools. The second frustration stemmed from the perceived lack of support from persons in the administration.

One instructor stated that he had attended an out-of-state training session on basic skills. He received very helpful material which would be of benefit to other teachers. He stated that there was "no opportunity to tell the elementary teacher what I saw, no opportunity to the rest of the ... teachers. It's on the divan at home. You just don't get the chance to share."

One of the issues appeared to be ownership of the project. Persons at some of the schools appeared to believe that the purpose of the project was to bringing students into the vocational schools. "The meetings were [at the vocational school], and people say, 'Where's the money coming from?' People said, 'Vo-tech.' So it was like a vo-tech project." An interesting point is that some vocational instructors felt like the project was for the non-vocational schools, since the equipment went there.

At the outset of the project, it appeared that some vocational and academic instructors got off to a poor start. At some initial meetings, "the public school people were defensive because the vo-tech people were saying 'okay, [the students] are not getting this, and they're not getting this.' The public school teachers were saying, 'yes they are, because we gave it to them here, here, here, and here.' That was not the whole purpose. The whole purpose was just to reinforce and go back over, and it never got past that."

This issue was faced to some degree by all individuals and groups. Many were able to successfully resolve the issue and cooperate on the tasks before them. Some, however, were not able to get past-blame laying as to why students did not have the skills they needed.

Communication with administrators. Communication among administrators and teachers were considered very important, but effective communication did not seem to be consistently occurring. An important vehicle for communication between teachers and administrators were committees. These committees had differing degrees of effectiveness. As stated in the previous discussion, the communications committee did not appear to be effective. This was most likely due, in part, to a lack of effective leadership. However, other committees, such as those relating to math and science, appeared to function well.

In addition to sometimes ineffective communication, teachers appeared to feel there was not enough communication between teachers and administrators. One instructor stated, "I think probably the administration gets together and talks about what needs to be done and should be done, and they probably meet with the basic skills group and they discuss these and what classes and order the books, and you know, have it all planned for us, and then we come in and they say, 'this is what we need to do, and here it is.' Well, they haven't asked us, 'will this work? How much time will it take?' and stuff like this."

The above statement also brings out the feeling that assignments in the project are made somewhat arbitrarily. One instructor stated she had no idea why she was assigned to teach a specific course. Another stated she really enjoyed teaching the course to which she was assigned, but did not know if she would be allowed to teach it the following year.

When discussing the support needed for the project, group participants stated that many administrators did not evidence awareness of the project. One teacher stated, "I find myself wondering if the upper administration at the vo-tech knows anything about the basic skills project because I don't feel like it does."

While some teachers felt administrators were not aware of the project, others stated that some seemed to be in opposition to it until they became more fully informed. Attendance at a national conference appeared to change the attitude of one administrator.

The teachers in the focus groups saw themselves as the prime movers of the basic skills project. As one instructor stated, after a lengthy discussion on communication, "I hate to say this, guys, but what it's going to amount to is that teachers are going to have to take the horn by the bulls. I meant that the exact way I said it. I think if we don't do it, it probably won't get done."

Communication with parents/community. As with many other areas, teachers at both sites agreed that both students and others in the community needed to be more aware of the project. As one teacher stated, "I think we're a little behind on selling the community. For those students that are going into the vocational area that this [basic skills project] will get them so that they will have a better chance of excelling, therefore, making more money."

One vocational teacher stressed the importance of making parents aware of the importance of basic skills in vocations by relating, "When students come out here, in some cases, they don't feel they have to use proper grammar, and if we try to grade them on it, then we have these parents calling us, 'This is not an English class. Why are you correcting my daughter's work?'"

One school did provide the community an opportunity to learn about the programs, with some success. "We had an open house this year, and instead of just an open house, we did an expo. We had booths set up from all the different departments, and we had one for the PT. It was really neat, and the people who came in from the community were amazed at some of the things the kids were doing. They were just saying, 'What class is this again? I need to get my kid in that class.' As long as they didn't know it was basic skills, they'd be real impressed. I think the basic part makes them think that it's remedial."

An issue of some importance at each site was the importance of upgrading the image of vocational education, especially the knowledge and skills needed there. "There's been some parents that I've talked to, you know, suggesting that there child take certain

course in vo-tech, and, 'I don't want my child in there. They'll be labeled a dummy.' The parents need to know that they're not a dummy." Teachers stressed that many vocational courses were as rigorous as college preparatory classes. Another side to this issue is letting students know that they will need the academic subjects in vocational classes.

Outcomes

Members of each group stressed that it is too early to determine the full effects of the basic skills projects. "I'm not sure we've been involved in it long enough to see what kind of impact or changes made here have on our program. Basically, we started last year, really didn't get in the full swing until this year, so unless the students currently enrolled in some of the basic skills classes here and vocational classes at our schools, we're not going to see as much impact on them as we could. Maybe next year will be better." In spite of this caveat, which was expressed at both sites, group participants did note some changes.

The outcome cited most frequently was the changes in the students, especially in the applied math courses. The second outcome, in frequency, was the increased communication among teachers. Finally, some teachers indicated they had changed their teaching styles, had changed the manner in which they viewed basic skills, or had a different view of vocational education.

The effects of the project on students can best be summed up by the following quote, "Once they can do it, and see they can do it, all of a sudden there's a turn around. They know they're capable."

Also, "A lot of students, after they go through these applied courses, find out that they're not dumb after all." This sentiment was repeated by a number of teachers in each group. "It's amazing. I do have a few kids in [applied math] that have had algebra, and it's amazing when I have my special ed kids telling my algebra kids how to solve their problems. The confidence that it builds in those kids and the respect that it gives the other kids for them, because they can tell you how to do it, they just may not know their multiplication tables."

Speaking humorously, a PT instructor stated that he waits until the end of the class to tell his students that they have taken a physics course. Many students had the belief that they could not perform well in a physics class. Also relating to PT is the instructor who stated, "I've enjoyed seeing the kids learn how to interact with each other and how to use the equipment to solve problems."

During the groups, teachers shared stories about students who seemed to blossom during the project. One special education student enrolled in applied math and a machine shop class. "There were times when we would be doing problems dealing with the machine shop, and he would tell me how to do the problems. That really makes them feel good

when they can tell the teacher first-hand, 'well, this is the way we do it, you know.' It made him feel really good."

"All of a sudden, the real quiet, real bashful, real countrified, backward student, did [well on a test], and you can just see a little spark in his eye come up, you know, 'I did this.' So we went on and went through our math, and he excelled in it all the way through. He place first in the district contest last year. Got a full scholarship to Okmulgee now, and going to college, and nobody in his family, as far as he ever knows, has ever gone to college. It sure makes a difference when they can see that they can excel at something."

It appeared, not surprisingly, that it is the at-risk students who have benefitted most from the project. "I've had one student that's been at-risk. He's been a little bit slow and a little bit lazy, but I let him do most of the experiments, and he just loves it. I used him in some today. They were simple, but he thinks it is a big deal to get to do them, so it's really increased his self-esteem. He's brought his average from 75 at the first of the year; he's always in the 80's now."

While changes were evident in individual students, instructors also noted changes in the classes. One teacher stated that absenteeism and behavior problems had declined in her classes as a result of the applied curriculum. "Since I've been teaching the applied math as opposed to the general math, I do not have near the discipline problems I had before, because they're always busy and they're working with their groups and concerned about getting along with those other kids." In addition, "... in general my attendance rates are much higher and the amount of papers that are turned in. Overall I see the kids becoming more active and less discipline problems for me and teaching each other." She believed that these changes were because the students saw the material was applicable to the "real world" and that they could successfully complete the work.

The aspects of the basic skills pilot project which teachers found to be most beneficial included the use of small groups and the integration of the material into existing class work. A number of academic teachers stated how different classes had become since using the small group format suggested in the applied curriculum.

"After using this with the applied math, I have started more group work in my other classes because I find they will ask each other questions where they may not ask me questions when they don't understand something." The positive sentiments regarding group interaction by a teacher at one site were echoed by a teacher at the other site who stated, "My classroom is not teacher-centered. It's definitely people-centered now." Opinions were expressed regarding the need for teachers to allow noise and students to interact with other students and not just the instructor.

When not discussing students, it appeared that many of the other topics which arose in the focus groups directly or indirectly related to communications. One outcome of the project already noted is the increased communication among teachers, and an increased awareness of what other teachers are doing. "I think one of the good things that came from the whole project is the opportunity to get together with teachers from this area

and to be able to work on. It was like a cooperative process among the schools and the vo-tech to get to know what others are doing, to be able to get a chance to discuss things that were going well and weren't going well."

A number of vocational teachers stated that this project had increased their awareness of the basic skills which are a part of their classwork. As one teacher said, "The basic skills has not changed what I teach. It maybe changed a little bit how I teach it, and how I relate to it. Really, it just reinforces what we're teaching. I really think the vocational teachers have taught this all along. We've been told, 'Okay, now this is a basic skill, and this is what they've identified,' and I think that's helped us a lot."

While this is positive, it also reflected the feeling shared by some vocational instructors that the primary focus of the basic skills project should be in the academic setting, with the vocational teachers reinforcing those skills. This feeling of "us and them" was more prevalent among the vocational teachers, but was not vocalized by all vocational instructors.

Considerations for the Project

All of the teachers were supportive of the basic skills program, and felt it was needed in all schools. They were asked both what should be done differently, and what advice would they give to persons interested in starting such a project. The answers to these two questions were indistinguishable. Teachers would recommend to others what they wish would happen/continue to happen at their schools.

There were three main areas of advice given: basic skills enhancement needs to begin very early, before students are juniors and seniors in high school; teachers need to communicate often and effectively with one another; and they should take advantage of workshops and others who can help.

There is little need to dwell on the first point. There can be little argument with the fact that students need to have basic skills before they can prepare for college or a vocation. "Our classes are pretty well set up. We've got so much we've got to teach and so much area we've got to cover, and then when you throw something else in there you've got to leave something out, or it's really got to go with what you're already teaching in order to get through that course in that period of time so that they can be job-ready and get that job." While the preceding quote is from a vocational instructor, it could also have been made by non-vocational instructor.

One teacher expressed the following 'vision', "I can see where it would really work together if they were learning it in the school here and taking our classes, and of course, that's what it's all about, and we reinforce all those skills they are learning and showing them where they all apply to the workforce. But wouldn't it be ideal if they already had all that so when they came to our area then,... I like to talk about college, let's do this for higher education, or let's do this to get a job and go on to work instead of backing up and trying to pick up something that they've had."

This statement brings up the second major suggestion made, which was that teachers need to communicate. There are a number of aspects to communication. Regarding the general need to communicate, one teacher stated, "We've got to start doing this. General ed and the vo-tech systems and even our area are going to have to buy into this, too. We're going to have to start working together. We're going to get eaten alive if we don't."

Another teacher said, "We're going to have to start communicating and working as a team more and more all the time." Not only did the group participants feel they needed to communicate effectively with one another, they felt they should include other instructors who were not currently involved in the project. "The more you get people involved, the more they'll understand what it's all about and that's it."

One of the most important considerations which came out during both group sessions was the need for vocational and non-vocational teachers to become more aware of the skills taught in each other's classes. "Something else I'd like to see and that is vo-tech teachers going into the academic teachers' classrooms, and vice versa. I know that's hard. You don't want to leave your kids with babysitters, and I don't either. But we're going to have to do that, somehow, or maybe bring my people up there and you bring your people down here." This quote is only one of a number of similar proposals made at each site.

"I think what would be good, they need to have a professional day where the teachers can come to vo-tech and see what we do. That's the thing they need to do, because we haven't done that yet. or they haven't done that in my classes, so I feel like they don't really know. I still think we're going through the administration, and I still feel like everyone else knows, and we're still on the bottom and we don't know exactly what's going on. So what else is new? I think they need to involve us more."

This report has already cited opinions that teachers are not as involved in the planning aspects of the project as they would like to be. There would be, of course, consideration given in order that teachers would not be expected to donate additional time to the project.

Regarding the need to attend workshops, one teacher related, "I definitely think before a teacher goes into this, they need to attend some workshops. I did not have that privilege, and it was like the spring of last year before I ever attended a workshop to realize what I was supposed to be doing, what the course was designed for."

In addition to attending workshops, teachers expressed the need to have contact with persons at the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education. Said one teacher, "It was good to be able to visit with some of the people from the State Department, too, like Belinda McCharen and some of them, that work with this."

Conclusions

The first item which should be noted in this conclusion is that it is too early to make final judgements about the basic skills pilot projects. One may examine indications and some determination about the direction in which the projects are heading; however, it is too soon for judgements.

With this caveat in mind, it is appropriate to identify a number of positive outcomes observed. These outcomes include the positive changes in student performance and self-esteem, the changes which individual teachers have experienced in the manner in which they approach basic skills and teaching in general, and the increased awareness of and communication among teachers.

While enhanced communication was identified as a positive outcome of the project, it was also seen as the greatest need. An important goal for teachers is to communicate more effectively with each other, with administrators, with personnel at the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education, and members of the local communities.

Teachers were aware that increased communication would take more time. They would like to develop methods for allowing communication without adding to their already overburdened schedules.

In spite of the frustrations experienced in the two years of the basic skills project, each of the group members made an overall positive assessment of the process and outcomes so far.

"Those students are learning skills that they're going to take out into the work force. It has also given those kids a lot of success."

END

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine whether data from a 1988-89 Kentucky survey measured differences in the value level held by minority and women administrators and their respective counterparts (majority and male administrators). The sample included 1,500 public service managers who had received inservice training and 1,500 who had not. The 1,471 respondents included 49 minority administrators. Survey participants responded to nine statements reflecting public services values on a Likert scale. A two-way MANOVA was performed to test all nine hypotheses simultaneously. Additional one-way univariate and stepdown F tests and other statistics were produced to complete the analyses. Minority administrators' responses indicated that they did not feel that the general public were as ignorant about the complexity of decision making in government agencies as did their majority counterparts. Nor did minority administrators value the importance of being aware of public opinion concerning their agencies as much as their majority counterparts. Female administrators differed significantly from male counterparts on four value measures. They felt to a greater degree that agencies should provide equal treatment for minorities and women, but disagreed to a greater extent that political influence was important for an agency to help a citizen. Women administrators felt to a greater degree that high quality services should be provided and democratic principles should be applied at the workplace and when dealing with the public. (24 references) (YLB)

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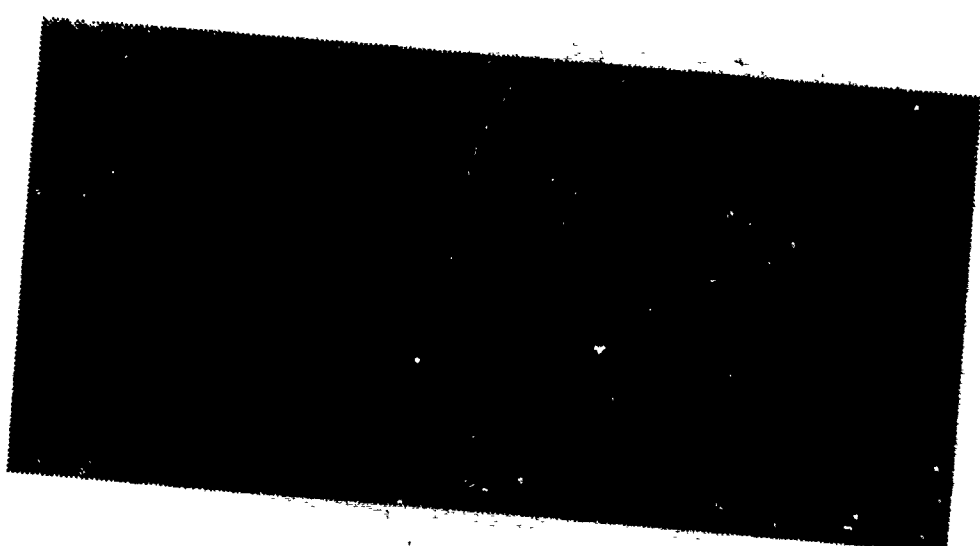
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I.

INTRODUCTION

Persons working in public sector agencies comprise an identifiable population whether at the state or local government levels. From among that layered population, persons with administrative responsibilities also constitute a distinct group based on their position titles and duties. In view of their identifiability as a group and periodic attention to their the requisites of their work (i.e., duties and responsibilities), how they view their work in terms of public service values is a matter of intrinsic import. In this paper reference is made to a body of literature that is concerned with the public service values of public administrators and focuses on one aspect of a recent study of state government public administrators in Kentucky. The specific target is a set of women and minority public administrator respondents to a self-administered questionnaire.

II.

THEORETICAL CONCERNS

Research interest in the public service values of public administrators may be justified from differing theoretical perspectives. (Wynia, 1974; David, 1980; Brint, 1980; Nalbandian, 1983; Thompson, 1987) Development of public service values among public administrator trainees has been considered as a crucial element of public service education and training programs. This has raised the methodological concern about an empirical measurement to identify the pre- and post-training public service values of those who undergo managerial training in public service training institutions. (Mohapatra, 1990) Administrative values research in the non-American administrative settings has demonstrated complex sub-cultural variations in the administrative values of administrators. (Montgomery, 1986; Bhambhri, 1972; Weaver, 1970).

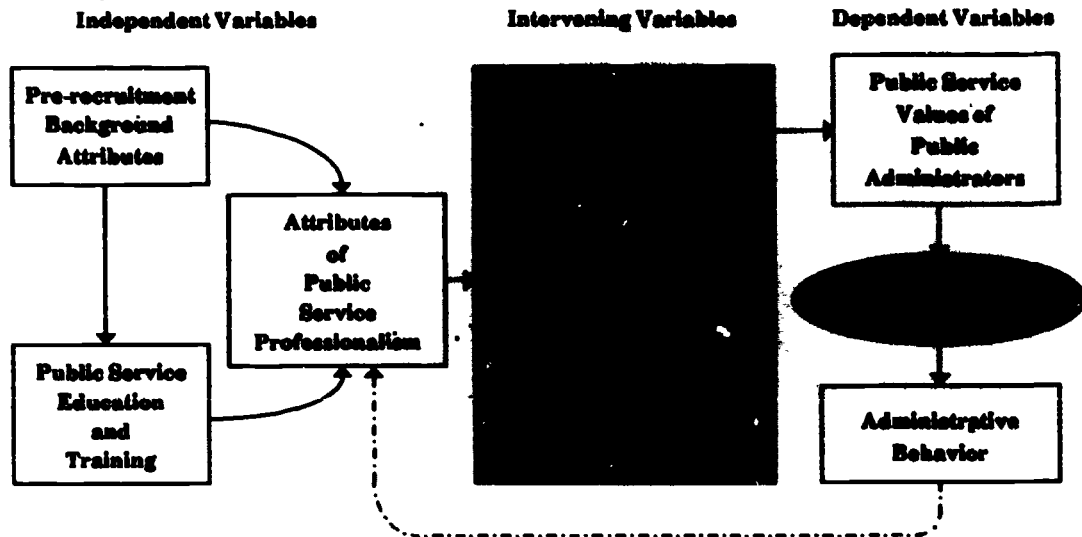
Research on public service values of American public administrators has also been conducted by many scholars. (Huckle, 1983; Klinger, 1988; Marsh, 1977; Meier, 1976; Moore, 1977; Saltstein, 1983; Thompson, 1978). These researchers do not directly suggest that public service values of administrators are likely to impact the role perceptions of public administrators or that they influence their actual day-to-day administrative behavior in diverse public agency settings. Nevertheless, the work of these scholars suggests the need to establish a conceptual framework for studying public service values of public administrators.

The conceptualization proposed in Figure 1, provides a theoretical foundation for the present empirical study. The public service values of administrators have been considered as the outcomes of two key independent variables: pre-recruitment background of administrators and their public service education/training. These variables influence the development of public service professionalism. The major intervening variables that have mediating influence are the *political culture* of Kentucky and the *administrative culture* of state agencies. Further, this model suggests an indirect link between the public service values of administrators and their day-to-day administrative behavior.

Values are pervasive and consequently difficult to measure directly. However, some researchers feel that attitudes and opinions held by an individual are reflective of the values that individual has internalized. Therefore, one way to find out about individual and group values is through interviews or written self-administered questionnaires, that asks the respondent to say what is good, bad, moral, immoral, desirable, or undesirable. (Eitzen, 1988)

The testing of this comprehensive model is possible only when appropriate empirical data are available for all proposed indicators. Present analysis is limited to the public service values of minority and female administrators. The model is presented to provide the

Figure 1 A Conceptualization of Research Variables Influencing Public Service Values of Public Administrators in State Agencies of Kentucky



theoretical rationale for this analysis. The proposed theoretical model has raised two key research questions.

How pervasive are public service values among public administrators in government agencies? Do such sub-groups as minority and women public administrators significantly differ in their public service values? In general, some variations in administrative values based on ethnicity and gender are likely. Accordingly, the focus here is on women and minority administrators in terms of how they may differ toward certain public services values.

Although there is no known finite set of values germane to public administration, there are some values that seem to be more obvious than others. For example; attitudinal responses were sought to a number of value oriented areas on a self-administered questionnaire used to collect data for a National Science Foundation funded project (RII-S70495) completed at the end of May, 1990. One question, containing nine (9) value oriented items, was used to collect the data for this paper. Figure 2 shows this question.

Therefore, the research presented will test the following nine (9) hypotheses on the basis of empirical data in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Hypotheses

- H1a Minority administrators would have higher level of commitment toward "providing quality services" than do their majority counterparts.
- H1_b Women administrators would have higher level of commitment toward "providing quality services" than do their male counterparts.
- H2_a Minority administrators would have a higher level of disagreement toward "client satisfaction with government services" than do their majority counterparts.
- H2_b Women administrators would have a higher level of disagreement toward "client satisfaction with government services" than do their male counterparts.
- H3_a Minority administrators would have a higher level of commitment toward "providing equal treatment" than do their majority counterparts.

Figure No. 2

21. Here are some statements that have been made about the workings of government agencies in the U.S. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these (Please circle the appropriate number).

	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree
a. Government agencies should provide high quality services to their clients.	2	4
b. Clients of government agencies are not satisfied with the services provided.	2	4
c. Government agencies should provide equal treatment to minorities and women.	2	4
d. Political pull is important in whether a government agency will help a private citizen.	2	4
e. Democratic principles cannot be applied in dealing with the employees of government agencies.	2	4
f. Government agency officials should care about public opinion concerning their agency.	2	4
g. Citizens are not knowledgeable about the complexity of decision making in government agencies.	2	4
h. Government agency officials should be responsive to the legitimate requests of elected officials about problems of their constituents.	2	4
i. The merit system in public service is outweighed by political pull in influencing merit appointments.	2	4

- H_{3b} Women administrators would have higher level of commitment toward "providing equal treatment" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{4a} Minority administrators would have a higher level of belief that "political pull is important whether an agency will help a client" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{4b} Women administrators would have a higher level of belief that "political pull is important whether an agency will help a client" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{5a} Minority administrators would have a higher level of belief that "democratic principles can be applied in the workplace" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{5b} Women administrators would have a higher level of belief that "democratic principles can be applied in the workplace" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{6a} Minority administrators would have a higher level of belief that "administrators should care about public opinion" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{6b} Women administrators would have a higher level of belief that "administrators should care about public opinion" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{7a} Minority administrators would have a lower level of belief that "clients are ignorant about the complexity of the decision making process in government" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{7b} Women administrators would have a lower level of belief that "clients are ignorant about the complexity of the decision making process in government" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{8a} Minority administrators would have a higher level of belief that "officials should be responsive to the legitimate requests of elected officials about problems of their constituents" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{8b} Women administrators would have a higher level of belief that "officials should be responsive to the legitimate requests of elected officials about problems of their constituents" than do their male counterparts.
- H_{9a} Minority administrators would have a higher level of belief that "the merit system is outweighed by political pull" than do their majority counterparts.
- H_{9b} Women administrators would have a higher level of belief that "the merit system is outweighed by political pull" than do their male counterparts.

III.

RESEARCH SETTING AND DATA SOURCES

A 1988-89 survey research project in Kentucky has provided the data base for this empirical study. This study was supported by a three year grant from the National Science Foundation. A random sample of 1,500 Public Managers in Kentucky who had undergone a week long Management Training Program and a matching sample of 1,500 untrained Kentucky Public Managers was surveyed. The three-wave mail survey resulted in 1,471 responses. However, it should be mentioned that there were only 49 responses from minority administrators. Therefore, all minority respondents were grouped in a single minority category.

IV.

DATA ANALYSIS

The survey instrument included nine statements reflecting a range of public services values. As can be seen in Figure 2, the items used to seek responses from the respondents was fitted with a five (5) point scale. The fifth point was provided to accommodate a "Don't Know" response, while the other four points constituted a Likert scale. Only those cases that responded one, two, three or four were used in this analyses.

A two-way MANOVA (see Figure 3) was first performed to test all nine (9) hypotheses simultaneously.

Figure 3 Two-way Manova Model (Ethnicity by Gender)

		ETHNICITY	
		WHITE	MINORITY
G E N D E R	MALE	H1a Through H9b	H1a Through H9b
	FEMALE	H1a Through H9b	H1a Through H9b

Additional one-way univariate and stepdown F tests and other statistics were produced to complete the analyses. A probability level of $\alpha \leq .05$ was used as the critical significance level. High means approach agreement for those items stated in the positive while high means approached disagreement for those items stated in the negative.

Overall Analysis

A two-way MANOVA with nine dependent variables was executed using ethnicity and gender as independent or reference variables. The results of the MANOVA indicate that significant statistical differences do exist for the main effects of gender and ethnicity, and that no interaction effects were statistically significant.

Ethnicity

Table 1 contains the main effect multivariate F test for ethnicity.

**Table 1 Multivariate Test of Significance
Question 21 (A - I) by Ethnicity**

Test name	Value	Multiv.F.	Hypoth. d/f	Error d.f	Sign. of F.
Pillais	.03163	4.37338	9	1205	.000 *
Hotellings	.03163	4.37338	9	1205	.000 *
Wilks	.03163	4.37338	9	1205	.000 *
Note	F Statistics are exact				

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

As can be seen in Table 1, the multivariate F of 4.37338 is significant at the probability of $\alpha = .000$. Univariate F tests were performed to determine where the value differences exist. Table 2 contains the results of this test.

As can be seen in Table 2, ethnicity accounted for differences in only two of the nine (9) value/attitudinal areas. These differences were found to exist for reflected values with respect to awareness of public opinion and citizens' perception of government decision making complexity. Therefore, hypotheses H₁, H₂, H₃, H₄, H₅, H₈, and H₉ are rejected.

**Table 2 Univariate Test of Significance
Question 21 (A - I) by Ethnicity**

Variable	Hypoth. M.S.	Univariate F	Significance F
Government agencies should provide high quality services to their clients.	.33056	3.02512	.082
Clients of government agencies are not satisfied with the services provided.	.04285	.08161	.775
Government agencies should provide equal treatment to minorities and women.	.13854	.71127	.399
Political pull is important in whether a government agency will help a private citizen.	2.53563	2.048941	.153
Democratic principles cannot be applied in dealing with the employees of government agencies	.15530	.17709	.674
Government agency officials should care about public opinion concerning their agency.	2.21030	6.91853	.009 *
Citizens are not knowledgeable about the complexity of decision making in government agencies	8.38938	16.42098	.000 *
Government agency officials should be responsive to the legitimate requests of elected officials about problems of their constituents.	.89734	1.93489	.164
The merit system in public service is not weighed by political pull in influencing merit appointments.	1.99520	1.67498	.196

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

In order to determine if some relation might exist between the awareness of public opinion and complexity of government decision making reported values, two additional univariate and stepdown F tests were performed, placing each criterion in the top position. The stepdown F test did not reveal any measured relationship between the two dependent or criterion variables. Table 3 contains the results of the last univariate and stepdown F test. Notice that both stepdown F ratios remain significant.

**Table 3
Univariate and Stepdown Tests of Significance
Question 21 (G and F) by Ethnicity**

Variable	Hypoth. M.S.	Univariate F	Significance F	Stepdown F	Stepdown Significance
Citizens are not knowledgeable about the complexity of decision making in government agencies	7.01778	14.00680	.000 *	14.00680	.000 *
Government agency officials should care about public opinion concerning their agency.	2.05992	6.33752	.012 *	5.79526	.016 *

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

In order to determine the direction and magnitude of these differences, it is necessary to compare the mean values for these two measures (see Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21G (decision complexity) by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	\bar{x}	σ	n
White	3.386	.666	1289
Other	3.000	.913	49
Total	3.371	.711	1338

As can be seen in Table 4, white administrators report perceiving that citizens are ignorant of the complexity of making decisions in government to a greater degree than do their minority counterparts. It should be noted that both white and minority administrators believe that citizens are generally ignorant of the decision making process in government.

Table 5
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21F (public opinion) by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	\bar{x}	σ	n
White	3.658	.563	1289
Other	3.449	.738	49
Total	3.650	.571	1338

As can be seen in table 5, white administrators report they believe it is important to a greater degree that it is important to be aware of public opinion than do their minority counterparts. As with the decision measure, both white and minority administrators believe it is important to care about public opinion.

Both of these measures indicate attitude or reflected values held by all administrators; that is, that the public is generally ignorant of the decision making complexities in government, and feel that it is important to be aware of public opinion concerning their agency. In both cases, white administrators reported a higher degree of belief than did the minority administrators. It should be pointed out that a large n size difference exists for the white and minority groups (i.e., white administrators, n = 1289; and minority administrators, n = 49). This condition causes the outcomes to be viewed with caution.

Gender

Table 6 contains the main effect multivariate F test for gender.

Table 6 Multivariate Test of Significance
Question 21 (A - I) by Gender

Test name	Value	Multiv.F.	Hypoth. d/f	Error d.f	Sign. of F.
Pillais	303494	4.83504	9	1202	.000 *
Hotellings	303494	4.83504	9	1202	.000 *
Wilks	303494	4.83504	9	1202	.000 *
Note	F Statistics are exact				

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

Table 7 below contains the univariate F tests for the main effect gender.

**Table 7 Univariate Test of Significance
Question 21 (A - I) by Gender**

Variable	Hypoth. M.S.	Univariate F	Significance F
Government agencies should provide high quality services to their clients.	.43690	4.01652	.045 *
Clients of government agencies are not satisfied with the services provided.	.77327	1.46768	.226
Government agencies should provide equal treatment to minorities and women.	3.13173	16.34293	.000 *
Political pull is important in whether a government agency will help a private citizen.	16.11827	13.13568	.000 *
Democratic principles cannot be applied in dealing with the employees of government agencies.	3.40436	3.93992	.047 *
Government agency officials should care about public opinion concerning their agency.	.00667	.02097	.885
Citizens are not knowledgeable about the complexity of decision making in government agencies.	1.40703	2.72075	.099
Government agency officials should be responsive to the legitimate requests of elected officials about problems of their constituents.	.19540	.42168	.516
The merit system in public services is out weighed by political pull in influencing merit appointments.	1.41974	1.20742	.272

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

As shown in Table 7, four of the nine measures indicate statistically significant differences because of gender. These being the quality services, client satisfaction, equal treatment and democratic work place values. Therefore, hypotheses H_{2b} , H_{6b} , H_{7b} , H_{8b} , and H_{9b} are rejected.

To determine if any relation exists among the significant measures, additional univariate and stepdown F tests were performed, placing the measures in every possible permutation (i.e., there are 24 possible permutations). One of the permutations with the least significant stepdown F ration is reported in Table 8.

Notice in Table 8, when the effects of the equal treatment and political pull measures are removed, the stepdown F ratios are not significant for the quality services and democratic work place measures. There were other permutations that suggest that the quality services and democratic work place measures are functions of the equal treatment and political pull measures. This means that changes in reflected values held by administrators for equal treatment and political pull precipitates a sympathetic change in the values held for quality services and democratic work place. The analysis did not detect a reciprocal relationship.

Table 8
Univariate and Stepdown Tests of Significance
Question 21 (C, D, A and E) by Ethnicity

Variable	Hyp th. M.S.	Univariate F	Significance F	Stepdown F	Stepdown Significance
Government agencies should provide equal treatment to minorities and women.	3.13173	17.12640	.000 *	17.12640	.000 *
Political pull is important whether a government agency will help a private citizen.	16.11827	15.02410	.000 *	12.50697	.000 *
Government agencies should provide high quality services to their clients.	.43690	3.89171	.049 *	.65437	.419
Democratic principles cannot be applied in dealing with the employees of government agencies.	3.40436	5.00984	.025 *	.73815	.390

*Significant at $\alpha \leq .05$

Table 9 below contains the means, standard deviations and size for the equal treatment measure.

Table 9
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21C (equal treatment) by Gender

Ethnicity	\bar{x}	σ	n
Male	3.789	.449	905
Female	3.904	.351	394
Total	3.824	.462	1299

The high means for both male and female administrators indicate that both report strong positive values toward providing equal treatment. However, female administrators report a significantly stronger commitment to this value (i.e., Male \bar{x} = 3.789, Female \bar{x} = 3.904).

Table 10 below contains the means, standard deviations, and size for the political pull value measure.

Table 10
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21D (equal treatment) by Gender

Ethnicity	\bar{x}	σ	n
Male	2.610	1.139	905
Female	2.873	1.091	394
Total	2.690	10131	1299

As can be seen in Table 10 both male and female administrators report a slight disagreement with the notion that political pull is important in whether a government agency will help a private citizen. It should be remembered that as shown in Table 8, female administrators were significantly in more disagreement than were their male counterparts. Because of the fact that the low grand mean of 2.690 seems to indicate the possibility of some frustration being felt by administrators of both sexes when trying to provide equal treatment.

Table 11 below contains the means, standard deviations and size for the quality service value measure.

Table 11
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21A (quality services) by Gender

Ethnicity	x̄	σ	n
Male	3.876	.355	906
Female	3.916	.296	394
Total	3.888	.336	1299

The means for both male and female administrators indicate a strong commitment to providing quality client services. However, female administrators again report a significantly stronger commitment, and closer agreement among themselves, as indicated by the small standard deviation for their group. It should be remembered that the stepdown F tests determined that this value is somehow the result of the equal treatment and political pull functions.

Table 12 below contains the means, standard deviations and size for the democratic working place measure.

Table 12
Means, Standard Deviations and Size
for Question 21E (democratic principles) by Gender

Ethnicity	x̄	σ	n
Male	3.269	.948	906
Female	3.396	.933	394
Total	3.307	.945	1299

Again, the mean for female administrators indicates that they value a democratic working environment to a greater degree than do their male counterparts. Both, report high means which indicate a high degree of disagreement with the notion that democracy cannot be applied in the work place. As with the quality services measure, this measure is somehow related to the values held for both the equal treatment and political pull values.

At this time it should pointed out that the analysis indicates that quality services and democratic workplace values seemed to be independent of each other, as is the case with their antecedent values of equal treatment and political pull. This condition was unexpected, and thus was not an ingredient in this study's design. However, this condition seems to warrant some consideration in conjunction with the original design.

V.

SEARCH FOR A PROFESSIONAL VALUES CONSTRUCT

Because of the conditions mentioned above, it seemed that performing a factor analysis of the nine (9) items in question 21 might be fruitful. Therefore, one was performed with interesting results.

The particular type of factor analysis performed used the maximum likelihood method of extraction and varimax rotation. This method of analysis uses a X^2 goodness of fit test to determine the best size factor matrix. The analysis was performed using SPSSX software.

The correlation matrix shown in Table 13 below indicates no overwhelming correlations, suggesting that a lot of unique variance is being measured.

Table 13
Correlation matrix of items 21a through 21i

	21A	21B	21C	21D	21E	21F	21G	21H	21I
21A	1.00000								
21B	.01697	1.00000							
21C	.25814	-.05098	1.00000						
21D	-.08792	.23072	-.06609	1.00000					
21E	-.13457	.11824	-.16678	.27415	1.00000				
21F	.16765	.00106	.13822	-.00028	-.02321	1.00000			
21G	.03645	.11205	.00734	.09081	.12228	.04350	1.00000		
21H	.13482	.06000	.10133	-.01772	-.11556	.26359	.05723	1.00000	
21I	-.05827	.15818	-.05879	.25143	.14918	-.09122	.07987	-.09733	1.00000

The skree plot shown in Figure 3 indicates that three orthogonal factors seems to exist as measured by these data.

Figure 3
Skree Plot of Factors Generated by Items 21A Through 21I

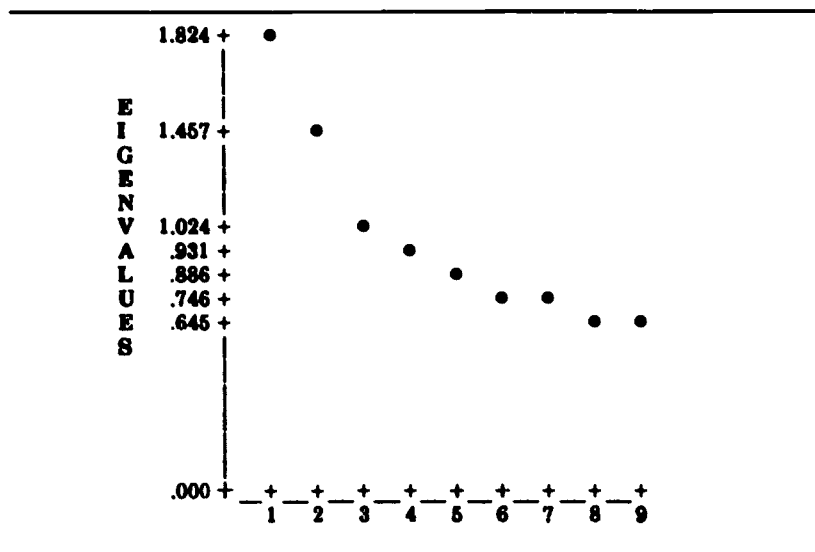


Table 14 contains the varimax rotated factor matrix indicating item loadings. Notice that all items load heavy on one factor only, with the exception of 21F which loads evenly on factors one and three.

Table 14
Three Factor Matrix Generated by Items 21A Through 21I

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
21AH	.99854	-.00149	.13354
21AD	-.00438	.99512	-.09345
21AE	-.08688	.40095	-.21632
21AI	-.08709	.38537	-.07862
21AB	.05981	.38320	.00994
21AG	.05032	.22264	.05780
21AA	.06168	-.03329	.55177
21AC	.03889	-.07735	.49948
21AF	.23012	.02159	.7721

Item 21H is the only item that loads heavily on factor one. This item has been shown to be an indicator of how administrators value the appropriateness of elected officials acting as an ombudsman on behalf of their constituents. (Mohapatra et al., 1990) Therefore, this factor is considered to be reflective of the value held by Kentucky public administrators with respect to the obligation of elected officials to be an advocate for their constituents concerning legitimate matters needing government attention.

Items 21D and 21E represent the dominate loadings on factor two. These two items suggest a reflection of the value toward the principle and application of democracy. Item 21D is concerned with the opinion of administrators as to whether political pull is important for a government agency to help a private citizen, while Item 21E is concerned with the application of democratic principles in the work place.

Items 21A and 21C represent the dominate loadings for factor three. These two items seem to reflect administrator values held as to the provision of equal and quality client services. Item 21A is concerned with the quality of services, while 21C is concerned with equal treatment.

The results of the factor analysis of these data suggest that public service values of public administrators in Kentucky state government is a construct, or system, consisting of three value traits, or subsystems (i.e., ombudsmanic, democracy, and client services).

Although this structural analysis was not proposed in the study design, it does give support to the notion that attitudes and opinions are reflective of values and that a better understanding of their nature can be developed through such exercises.

Analyses Summary

The design tests of this study revealed that ethnicity seems to affect values as reflected by the attitudes and opinions reported with respect to concern for public opinion and public knowledge of the decision making process in government. White administrators reported that they thought public opinion is more important, and that individuals are more ignorant of the complexity of decision making in government agencies than did their minority counterparts.

Gender seems to impact the reflective values held by Kentucky administrators with respect to quality services, equal treatment, political pull, and democratic principles. Female administrators reported stronger attitudes toward each area mentioned above. Stepdown F tests suggest that somehow the reflected values for quality services and political pull precede and influence values held for quality services and democratic principles.

In view of this relationship, a factor analysis was performed and revealed the likelihood that the reflected public service values reported by Kentucky public administrators is a system or construct consisting of three latent traits or subsystems.

VI.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine if the present data did measure any differences in the value levels held by minority and women administrators and their respective counterparts (i.e., majority and male administrators). Eighteen hypotheses were tested. Differences were found for both minority and women administrators, as well as some interesting relationships that possibly give some insight into the nature of the structure of public service values.

Findings

Minority administrators were found to report reflected values that indicated they did not feel that the general public were as ignorant about the complexity of decision making in government agencies as did their majority counterparts. It was also found that minority administrators did not value the importance of being aware of public opinion concerning their agency as much as their majority counterparts. However both groups generally felt that the public was fairly ignorant of the complexities of the decision making process, and that public opinion is important. It must be emphasized that a great size difference exists between the minority and majority administrators groups.

Female administrators were found to differ significantly from their male counterparts on four of the value measures. Women generally felt to a greater degree that agencies should provide equal treatment for minorities and women, but disagreed to a greater extent with their male counterparts that political influence was important for an agency to help a citizen than do. It was also found that women administrators felt to a greater degree than their male counterparts that quality services should be provided and that democratic principles should be applied at the work place and when dealing with the public. The analysis revealed that the reflected values of political and equal treatment somehow influence values held toward quality services and democratic principles.

The model suggests that at least some pre-recruitment background attributes of individuals appear to pervade certain identifiable groups of public administrators, at least for minorities and women as to certain held value levels. The analysis revealed an unexpected glimpse at what may be an underlying structure of a public service values construct, consisting of three latent traits or sub-systems. The traits were defined as values held toward the ombudsmanic role of elected officials, values held toward the principle and application of democracy, and values held toward client services.

Summary

Pre-recruitment background was found to possibly be instrumental in the development of some values. Part of an underlying system of public service values was found to exist.

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