CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE

Turnover Intentions among Street-level Bureaucrats

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

By
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Abstract

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Turnover rates and turnover intentions among street-level bureaucrats are impacting the lives of the people they serve, and the public sector organizations they work for. Public sector organizations have begun to address the problem by implementing policies that assist in the retention of employees. They have also begun to advertise the importance and benefits of working in public service. This paper reviews the current literature on employee turnover in the public service sector, with careful attention to Public Service Motivation organizational fit, work exhaustion, job satisfaction, and age. This study contributes to our understanding of turnover intentions and turnover rate in street-level bureaucrats. Using an explanatory research design, the specific question this research aims to explore is measuring the effects of organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age on turnover intentions among Los Angeles County, street-level bureaucrats, while using PSM as a mediating factor.
Introduction

A problem affecting local public sector organizations’ workforce, such as DPSS, that requires attention and has started to receive it is turnover intention and turnover rate amongst public sector employees. In 2018, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office projected turnover rates for Los Angeles County to be as high as 20 percent over the next five years (LACCEO, 2018). Losing an employee in any line of work case is costly; this is especially true in the public sector. When an employee leaves their position, not only does it affect the people in the organization, but also the people the organization provides services to. The organization must find a replacement to fill the void that the previous employee left behind.

Replacing an employee can be expensive. The organization will spend money on advertising, interviewing, screening, and hiring. The cost of training a new employee is estimated to be 10 to 20 percent of an employees' salary (Boushey & Glynn, 2012). To replace an employee employed in a mid-range position in a public sector organization that earns $46,000 a year, would cost the organization anywhere from $4,600 to $9,200 (Boushey & Glynn, 2012).

Losing an employee also means productivity will decrease, as the new employee will have to gain experience to produce the same amount of work the previous employee was producing. During the time the new employee gains the experience to match the output of the previous employee, the organization will be accumulating a more substantial financial loss as outputs will decrease (Heibutzki, n.d.). Not only will there be a loss in production, but there will also be a decline in customer service. The new employee will not know how to react to certain situations causing service to decline and error rates to go up. High error rates in organizations like DPSS, could lead to state sanctions or even federal sanctions if the error rates are not lowered in time (Rosenbaum, 2015). Losing an employee also affects other employees who see the turnover, which will cause their productivity level to go down (Heibutzki, n.d.). This is in
part to the increased workload the remaining employees will receive, or their morale being affected because the employee leaving was well liked. Also, with the baby boomer generation starting to retire, it is essential to find ways to attract and retain new younger employees.

Therefore, studying factors (e.g., organizational fit, work exhaustion, job satisfaction, age, PSM), which influence Los Angeles County employees’ turnover intention, may be useful. Findings could provide scholars and practitioners with implications to strategically manage public employees who consider leaving their organization due to such organizational or individual factors.
Street-level Bureaucrats

Some of the most vital people in government are not those who are elected, but instead the non-elected officials and administrators who make up the bureaucracies (Lipsky, 1980). These public workers interact directly with the citizens day in and day out. They include law enforcement personnel, social workers, postal workers, and many others who provide or grant access to the government benefits or services to the public. One of the drivers behind the study of public workers was, Michael Lipsky, who in his 1980 publication of “Street-Level Bureaucracy: The Critical Role of Street-Level Bureaucrats” named these public workers, “street-level bureaucrats” (1980). Street-level bureaucrats create the first impression of bureaucracies to the public and how the public views the government. No matter the position of the public service worker, the people receiving services remember the first impression made by that worker and associate it with the bureaucracy. For example, being helped by a rude intake worker at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), leaves the impression of all DMV workers are rude. A big challenge street-level bureaucrats and bureaucracies must face is the turnover rate or turnover intentions of employees who are employed by bureaucracies. Because of this public service motivation (PSM) has been a topic that has caught the eye of scholars and practitioners to address turnover intentions.
Defining PSM

PSM has been defined differently over the years. Perry and Wise (1990) defined PSM as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations” (Perry & Wise, 1990, p.386). This definition focuses on the properties of government that may attract individuals to become involved in public service. An example is, a person becomes a public defender because they believe in the justice system.

Brewer and Selden (1998) defined PSM as “the motivating force that makes individuals deliver significant public service” (Brewer & Selden, 1998, p.417). This definition focuses on the individual being attracted to public service because they want to become involved. A person who joins public service after volunteering would fall under this definition. That person is attracted to the work they were doing as a volunteer and decided to pursue a career in public service.

Rainey and Steinbauer (1999) defined PSM as a “general altruistic motivation to serve the interests of a community of people, a state, a nation or humanity” (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999, p.25). Rainey and Steinbauer’s definition focus on the individual becoming involved in public service due to selfless reasons. An example would be a person who got into teaching because they wanted to help students succeed.

To blend the different definitions, Vandenabeele (2008) defined PSM as, “the belief, values, and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and organizational interest, that concern the interest of a larger political entity and that motivate individuals to act accordingly whenever appropriate” (Vandenabeele, 2008, p.1090). The definition by Vandenabeele (2008), takes all the past definitions and includes parts from each of them. It also considers the organization and its importance to how it can affect the motivation of the employee (Vandenabeele, 2008). For this paper, the definition that will be used to define PSM will be that of Vandenabeele (2008), as it is
one that encompasses the past definitions, but also includes the organization into determining the employee’s motivation.
Scale to Measure PSM

Perry (1996) created a scale of six dimensions to help in measuring PSM. The six dimensions were an attraction to public policymaking, commitment to the public interest, civic duty, social justice, self-sacrifice, and compassion (Perry 1996). This scale allowed scholars to begin researching if PSM had an impact on the turnover rate or turnover intention in public service jobs. Over the years there have been numerous studies to determine whether PSM play a role in the turnover rate or turnover intentions in public service, which conclude that PSM does play a role in turnover rates or turnover intentions (e.g., Bright 2008; Shim, Park, & Eom 2017; Kim 2012; Naff & Crum 1999; Coursey, Brudney, Littlepage, & Perry 2011; Clerkin & Coggburn 2012; Campbell, Im, & Jeoung 2014; and Na & Li-yan 2010).
Literature Review

As previously mentioned, turnover intentions and turnover rates among street-level bureaucrats can be detrimental to Los Angeles County. When studying turnover intentions and turnover rates among street-level bureaucrats, there are certain factors considered. This next section is a review of current literature and how turnover intentions and turnover rates are affected by organizational fit, work exhaustion, job satisfaction, age, and PSM. This section will then provide an overview of the various methodological approaches used by previous authors. Finally, this section will identify the limitations of the current literature and suggest ways to close the gap between previous contributions and future contributions.

The Effect of Organizational Fit, PSM, and Attitudes/Workplace Satisfaction on Turnover Intentions and Turnover Rates

When studying turnover intentions or turnover rates in employees within public sector organizations, it is important to start by examining the organization and see how an employee fits within the organization. After doing so, looking into employee’s attitudes and in relation to the organization and workplace satisfaction would be the next step. When determining the fit between the organization and individual congruence must be achieved. “Congruence between individuals and organizations is achieved in two ways: supplementary and/or complementary” (Bright, 2008, p.152). Supplementary congruence is achievable when the values and goal of the individual and organization align (Bright, 2008). Complementary congruence is achievable when the individual is gaining from joining the organization, for example, an individual taking on a role outside their scope of expertise to gain experience as a supervisor (Bright, 2008). When person-organization (P-O) fit is considered, PSM had no significant relationship to job satisfaction and turnover intentions or turnover rate of employees (Bright, 2008). These results
were found by Leonard Bright (2008), who collected data from a sample of 2005 employees from three public organizations in the state of Oregon, Indiana, and Kentucky. What the study confirmed was when employees’ PSM levels were high, and their beliefs aligned with those of the organization, the employees were less likely to leave the organization. These employees also showed higher levels of job satisfaction. This study demonstrated that high PSM levels could affect the turnover intentions or turnover rate of employees in public sector organizations positively.

Much likely Bright (2008) found that organizational fit influenced turnover intentions and turnover rates, Sangmook Kim (2012) studied how Person-Organization (P-O) fit served as a mediator between PSM and work attitude. The objective was to find if PSM had a significant direct relationship with work attitudes and if P-O fit had any effect on that relationship. Kim (2012) stated that P-O theory, “assumes that person-organization fit completely mediates the relationship between public service motivation and work attitude of public employees” (Kim, 2012, p.830). The results suggested that both PSM and P-O fit might be complementary explanations for work attitudes (Kim 2012). If employees had high levels of PSM, then they were less likely to feel the need to leave their position. It could result in more loyalty by the employee to the organization because of their appreciation towards the organization. What it also found was if PSM was low, but P-O fit was taken into consideration when measuring the relationship of PSM and work attitudes, then employees would still have positive attitudes (Kim, 2012). Even if the employees were unmotivated, they would be inclined to stay with the organization because they enjoyed working in the organization or had created a bond with the values of the organization (Bright, 2008; Kim, 2012).
The findings from Sangmook Kim (2012) could apply to a previous study done by Katherine Naff and John Crum (1999), “Working for America. Does Public Service Motivation Make a Difference?” which looked into the relationship between public service motivation and federal employees’ attributes and behavior. They found PSM affected attitudes towards work. The example they presented was the Clinton administrations’ major government reform effort named National Performance Review (NPR), which called for the U.S. government to be more responsive to citizens and cut red tape (Naff & Crum, 1999). The reactions by employees to the NPR were mixed; with many stating, it did not work but did cause workloads to increase (Naff & Crum, 1999). Their findings suggested that employees with high levels of PSM would still have positive attitudes because they understood that increased workloads were to benefit the organization. Those employees also demonstrated lower intentions to leave the organization (Naff & Crum, 1999).

When an employee has a positive attitude and finds congruence with the organization, they are more likely to go above and beyond their job duties (Campbell & Im, 2015). Campbell and Im (2015) examined the relationship between PSM, change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (CO-OCB), and turnover intention. CO-OCB is discretionary behavior, which is not part of an employee’s formal job duties but supports the effectiveness of the organization (Campbell & Im, 2015). Employees with positive attitudes and strong organizational commitment have a sense of responsibility to take charge, which is an essential driver of CO-OCB; they tend to take on the extra work. They are also employees who are less likely to leave the organization because of their desire to help the organization meet its goals (Campbell & Im, 2015).
Scholars have done research which has shown that workplace satisfaction and organizational fit influence turnover intentions and turnover rates. A study done by David Pitts, John Marvel, and Sergio Fernandez (2011), focused on three dimensions that contribute to turnover intentions. The dimensions were demographic factors, workplace satisfaction, and organizational/relational factors. The study concluded that the most significant factor was workplace satisfaction. It meant that an employee was more inclined to leave if they were not satisfied with the workplace. Relationships with other coworkers also play a role in workplace satisfaction. Interactions between coworkers were found to be a factor in determining employee turnover intentions (Paillé 2013). If an employee’s coworkers create a negative environment, then that employee is more inclined to leave the organization because they are not comfortable in hostile environments. Another study investigated the effect of political change in the public sector and how that affects job satisfaction (Tabvuma, Bui, and Homberg 2014). Findings showed that political elections had a little and temporary effect on men. The study found that women focused on the internal processes of the organization instead of the political party running the country.

The effect of organizational fit, PSM, and attitudes/workplace satisfaction on turnover intentions and turnover rates has also brought up organizational leadership into play (Clerkin & Coggburn 2012; Belle 2013; Du & Yin 2010; Rusaw 2009; Campbell, Im, & Jeong 2014). As mentioned before the organizational fit is an important determinant in turnover intention rate. If an employee believes they are not growing professionally, they are more likely to leave the organization (Bright, 2008). Managers and supervisors must receive proper training on leadership and interpersonal relationships to strengthen the bonds with their employees (Fernandez, Marvel, & Pitts 2011). Creating these bonds will help retain employees, as they will
see investment from upper management (Naff & Crum, 1999). It is also important that managers and supervisors are ensuring that their employees have all the resources they may need to complete their jobs because if they do not have them, it can cause burnout (Campbell, Im, & Jeong 2014). Investing in developing effective human resource management procedures would motivate employees. Clerkin and Coggburn (2012) suggest that public sector organizations should recruit from the private sector as they found high PSM talent in the private sector. They also suggested making job descriptions clear and straightforward, so the applicants could know what they are getting into (Clerkin & Coggburn, 2012). Even when the fit between employee and organization is great, over time, workloads can cause exhaustion.

**The Effects Workload Exhaustion on Turnover Intentions and Turnover Rates**

When looking into PSM levels and turnover intentions and turnover rates, it is also important to investigate exhaustion caused by the workload of public service employees. Jungin Kim (2015) conducted a study to examine the extent to which PSM and burnout are related to turnover intentions. The data was collected from local revenue officers in South Korea for the study. The results found that intrinsic motivation was significant and negatively related to employees’ intention to leave their organization (Kim 2015). There are employees in public service that no matter whatever is thrown at them, will remain at the job; this is because of their intrinsic motivation. These employees get a feel-good feeling from their jobs and continue to show up because their job makes them believe they are fulfilling their purpose. Those employees would work past the point of exhaustion for the greater good, which was fueled by their intrinsic motivation.

The results from Shim, Park, and Eom’s (2017) study support the results from Jungin Kim's (2015) research. They conducted a study to examine the relationship of work exhaustion,
job demands, and public service motivation of street-level bureaucrats' turnover intention (Shim, Park, & Eom, 2017). The sample size was 4974 Korean street-level bureaucrats. The method of collecting data was via surveys. What the study found was that PSM had a direct negative association with turnover intention. PSM reduced turnover intentions among the street-level bureaucrats, who claimed to suffer from workload exhaustion (Shim, Park, & Eom, 2017). It also found that employees dealt with the demands of their jobs differently depending on their PSM level. An employee with low PSM levels would see additional work as a burden, as opposed to an employee with a high PSM level, who would welcome the additional work.

Problematic customers’ behavior was also found to be a cause that drains customer service employees, which then affected their job satisfaction (Poddar and Madupalli, 2012). Research on how the wellbeing of employees is associated with poorer consumer outcomes and higher staff turnover has also been done (Scanlan and Still, 2013), which has caused some public organizations to begin to invest in their workforce. They are doing so by evaluating for ergonomic workstations to prevent fatigue and employees going on disability leave. As the current workforce continues to age, their exhaustion will also increase, so it is important to begin looking at the new generation of available workers to replace the current ones.

**How the Age of an Employee Affects Turnover Intentions and Turnover Rates**

Other researchers have argued that turnover intentions and turnover rates of employees are affected by age (Na & Li-yan 2010; Ertas 2015). In 2012 the Government Business Council [GBC], estimated that the federal government would need to hire more than 200,000 individuals to replace the aging and retiring workforce, which has caused concern among human resource professionals in federal agencies. “Currently, individuals from four different generations share the public-sector workplace, and the U.S. Department of Labor (2009) has estimated that the
share of the Millennial generation in the workforce will increase by 75% between 2010 and 2020” (Ertas, 2015, p.403). Human resource professionals must prepare for the changes that will occur in the current workforce by finding ways of recruiting and retaining the Millennial generation.

According to Nevbahar Ertas (2015), the Millennial generation is reported to have higher intentions to leave their jobs than their older counterparts. The reason being, Millennials prefer unconfined careers, work-life balance, and extrinsic over intrinsic rewards (Ertas, 2015). These findings align with those of Pan Na and Zhou Li-yan’s study (2010), which found senior employees were more likely to remain in their positions because of attachment to the organization. Currently, most senior-level positions are held by those born between 1961 to 1981, who are part of the Generation X population (Ertas, 2015), many of which have worked for a public sector organization for ten-plus years. These employees have time invested in their organizations, and many times, leaving those organizations mean giving up retirement benefits (Na & Li-Yanira, 2010). It also means losing their professional recognition and status, which, to some people, is very important.

Public sector organizations such as Los Angeles County must pay attention to the changes happening in the workforce. They must learn to adapt to the behaviors of the Millennial generation, so they may be better suited to recruit and retain them. If Los Angeles County finds a managerial strategy to recruit and retain the Millennial generation, then it would minimize cost in recruiting and training.

**Methodologies**

The authors of the current literature have utilized primary and secondary data collection and data analysis in their studies. These authors have used a combination of a qualitative and
quantitative method when studying turnover intentions and turnover rates. Many authors used interviews and surveys as a method of data collection (e.g., Bright, 2008). Others used existing data to analyze and arrive at a conclusion for turnover intentions and turnover rates.

**Qualitative**

Kim (2015) used surveys to gather information from local revenue officers from 17 local governments in South Korea. The goals were to identify the extent to which job motivation, social support, PSM, and burnout were related to turnover intention (Kim 2015). Authors Campbell and Im (2016) used in-person interviews to examine the relationship between PSM, CO-OCB, and turnover intentions. Poddar and Madupalli (2012) surveyed 215 customer service employees from different call centers in India to find how problematic customers impacted turnover intentions. Each of the authors used the qualitative approach in different ways.

**Quantitative**

Tabvuman and Bui (2014) based their analyses on data drawn from a large longitudinal data set. The use of secondary sources is common practice in quantitative analysis. Pitts, Marvel, and Fernandez (2011) also used a secondary source, the 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey, to measure the impact of their independent variables on turnover intention among federal employees.

**Limitations of Current Literature**

Based on the available literature, it can be concluded that organizational fit, PSM, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age does affect worker turnover intentions and turnover rates (Bright 2008; Shim, Park, & Eom 2017; Kim 2012; Naff & Crum 1999; Coursey, Brudney, Littlepage, & Perry 2011; Clerkin & Coggburn 2012; Campbell, Im, & Jeoung 2014; and Na & Li-yan 2010). Research would have to be conducted to measure the
effects that factors have on turnover intentions among street-level bureaucrats while using PSM as a mediating factor. Bright’s (2008) study did not consider whether job satisfaction and turnover intentions had any effect on the employees’ PSM level. An area, which should call for examination, as it would help determine if the turnover of employees has a ripple effect on the employees who remain. Another area that requires research is whether the P-O fit would decrease on employees who remain as they see the way the organization handles employees leaving. What can also be concluded by available literature is that worker turnover intentions and turnover rates can be affected by other factors. Which leaves a gap to research the causality between turnover intentions/turnover rates and the external factors, such as age, coworkers, and change in political power.

Another suggestion from the current literature, such as that of Naff and Crum (1999), suggested that research was necessary to examine the demographic and work-related factors that affected attitudes and behaviors. It is important to examine because it can provide answers to turnover intentions. For example, it can determine whether and employees’ intentions to leave the organization are because of the organization or because their means of transportation is public transportation, and the organization are in a location far from public transportation. These questions are questions private corporations answer before opening a new location. A great example is Amazon, who before announcing which cities they would be expanding to surveyed how good public transportation was in that city. If public sector organizations survey locations to determine which are best suited for their employees and the public they serve, then turnover intentions could be decreased.

Some of the presented literature had the limitation of demographics, as their sample size either consisted of one nationality or one age group. To be able to generalize the results, the
sample would have to be a random sample that accounts for different nationalities and different age groups. It would benefit public service organizations by finding the reasons why turnover rates are high in their line of work. By knowing what is causing it, public service organizations will be able to implement programs to re-engage their current employees and attract new employees. Having a re-engaged workforce would have a positive effect on production output. Programs the organizations could implement are training managers and supervisors on interpersonal relationship skills and knowing how important it is for the Millennial generation to have work-life balance. It is crucial to have managerial staff ready to handle some of the challenges they will face when working with them (Ertas, 2015). There is a lack of research on turnover intentions when it comes to Los Angeles County.
Research Question and Aim

What are the factors affecting turnover rates among Los Angeles County employees, and how does PSM mediate their effects? This study aims to understand turnover intentions and turnover rates within street-level bureaucrats within Los Angeles County. The ultimate purpose of this study is to identify the factors that cause the most significant effect on turnover intentions and turnover rates among Los Angeles County employees. The factors to be considered are organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age. PSM will be used as a mediator to determine if it impacts the effect of any of the factors mentioned and turnover rates or turnover intentions.
Design

The research question calls for an explanatory approach. A sequential mixed-methods approach is taken to measure the effect of organizational fit, PSM, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age have on turnover intentions. The aim is to measure the effects that organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age have on turnover intentions among street-level bureaucrats while using PSM as a mediating factor. The methods used for data collection in this study are surveys and interviews. The responses from the surveys and interviews provide units of measurement for the qualitative methodology. This study will use qualitative analysis to help establish the significant effect of organizational fit, PSM, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age on turnover intentions. The quantitative data this study will analyze is the current turnover rates of Los Angeles County employees, existing policies, employee demographical data, money spent on recruitment and onboarding of new employees. This study will use quantitative analysis to help compare the current turnover intention trends as presented in the currently available literature and the findings of this study. The reason for using a mixed-methods approach is to allow for a measurable level of correlation between the independent variables (Organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age) and the dependent variable (turnover intentions). It will enable public organizations to create policies that are more effective and efficient to address turnover intentions and turnover rates.

Los Angeles County will be the public service organization selected for this study. A reason Los Angeles County was selected is because of the number of employees employed. The Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources website reports an employee population of more than 100,000 (Largest Employers in Los Angeles County, n.d.). Having a workforce of that size provides a diverse workforce, which is what is needed to present a significant amount of
data. The diverse workforce of Los Angeles County also increases the transferability of the study to other similar populations.

**Sampling**

The first step in understanding turnover intentions and turnover rates among Los Angeles County employees would be to interview personnel members in their human resource department. The information that needed from them is the emails of all their employees. The essential information needed from the human resource department is the ages of employees working in the county, their current job position, number of years worked, and current turnover rates among employees. Information on policies in place to address turnover rates and its effectiveness from the human resource department of Los Angeles County is to be requested. By obtaining this data, it will allow for a better understanding of the current turnover rate among employees. Obtaining the current policies will provide the current stance the county is taking to address the turnover rate. After analyzing the data hypotheses, will be created to account for all independent variables.

**Hypotheses**

Due to there being four independent variables to test, there are four hypotheses. The first research hypothesis is that younger street-level bureaucrats will have higher turnover intentions. The reason for this hypothesis is because younger workers are presumed to have more flexibility when searching for other job positions. The null hypothesis is that the age of street-level bureaucrats does not affect turnover intentions.

The second research hypothesis is that employees with low job satisfaction will have higher turnover intentions. The reason for this hypothesis is due to the presumption that
employees will look for job opportunities, which will fulfill their goals and aspirations. The null hypothesis would be that job satisfaction does not effect on turnover intentions.

The third research hypothesis is street-level bureaucrats, who report exhaustion from their workload will have higher turnover intentions. The reason for this hypothesis is due to the presumption that street-level bureaucrats who report exhaustion from their workload will be less inclined to stay in a position they feel overworked. The null hypothesis is that workload exhaustion does not play a factor in turnover intentions.

The fourth research hypothesis is that street-level bureaucrats with secure connections with the organization have lower turnover intentions. The presumption is that a strong organizational fit between employee and organization will lower the turnover intentions because they find a sense of fulfillment from that relationship between the organization. The null hypothesis is that bonds between employee and organization do not influence turnover intentions.

PSM would be the mediating factor in the research to determine how PSM affects the relationship between the independent variables (organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age) and turnover intentions.

Data Collection

As previously mentioned, a sequential mixed-methods approach will measure the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The mixed-methods approach is the preferred method of data collection in order to address the research question. Surveys and interviews will be used to collect qualitative data for this study. This section will explain the format and anticipated information from each tool of data collection.

Surveys
The first phase of the study is to administer a survey that will first account for age, education, gender, and length of employment with Los Angles County. The purpose of this set of questions is to create an understanding of the demographics of the participants. The first set of questions will require answers to be filled in by the participants. The survey will then account for relationship with coworkers, job satisfaction, perception of the organization, exhaustion from workload, and how that affects the employee’s intention to leave the organization. To measure job satisfaction participants will be asked: “How satisfied are you with your current job?” This question is asked to measure the current level of satisfaction in their current position. If employees answer negatively to this question, they will most likely have higher turnover intentions. To measure how participants perceive the organization they will be asked: “Are you happy in your work?”, and “Do you believe that the services produced to the public by this organization are important to society?” The purpose of this question is to measure the person-organizational fit if employees answer negatively to this question, they will be more inclined to leave. These sets of questions will use a 5-point Likert Scale (strongly agree/ agree/ neutral/ disagree/ strongly disagree) to express how much they agree or disagree with these questions.

The survey will be administered to all the public service employees from a county in California, to increase participation from all employees. The random sample will include entry-level position employees, mid-level position employees, and management-level employees to have different perspectives. By doing so, it will increase the ability to generalize the results from the survey and apply them to other public service organizations. Making the survey available to all employees will also increase external validity, as every employee will have the same opportunity to participate. Control measures would be taken to ensure that employees do not take the survey more than once if they were to take the survey more than once than it would affect
phase two of the research. Online surveys programs such as SurveyMonkey will be used to administer the survey. The use of an outside survey provider allows for a third party to manage data collection and maintain autonomy effectively. Employees who do not have access to third party webpages because of firewall settings will receive a hard copy of the survey. After the results from the survey are analyzed, and the effect of organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age are considered, phase two of the research will begin.

**Interviews**

Phase two will consist of interviewing a stratified sample of participants that took the survey to measure their levels of PSM. The small group reduces the amount of time, money, and resources used on exploration. Interviews will be held in a controlled environment to prevent any outside distractions. The six dimensions from Perry’s PSM scale (attraction to public policymaking, commitment to the public interest, civic duty, social justice, self-sacrifice, and compassion), will be considered when the interviews are conducted (Perry 1996). Statements will be created to account for the six dimensions from Perry’s PSM scale. An example of a statement is: “My contribution to society is more important to me than personal achievements.” Employees will use a 5-point Likert Scale (strongly agree/ agree/ neutral/ disagree/ strongly disagree) to express how much they agree or disagree with these statements. Employees will have the opportunity to explain their answer selection in-depth.

The goal of the interviews is also to determine whether PSM can have a more significant effect on turnover intentions than organizational fit, attitudes/ workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age. Based on the results that the data from the survey provides, the participants will be broken up into groups. For example, found that age does affect turnover intentions, then the participants will be grouped into under 30 and over 31. The goal is to determine what role
PSM plays into turnover intentions. If the results of the survey do prove that younger street-level bureaucrats have higher turnover intentions, the interviews will allow seeing how PSM may lower their turnover intentions.

**Reliability**

The questions will be kept the same for all the participants to ensure that the survey is a reliable device. One way to measure the reliability of the survey will be to administer it to peers to ensure that the questions are easy to comprehend and that they are only seeking one answer. Testing the survey will also ensure that every variable is considered. Because four independent variables are being tested for it is, important that the survey accounts for them, if not the data that is collected could be incomplete.

The interviews will follow a set of questions, but because some participants may not go into detail with their response, follow up questions will have to be asked to get the most information from the participant. By doing so, it will cause the reliability of the interviews to be lower than the survey. Follow up questions will be recorded along with the original questions. The questions for the interviews will also be practiced on a peer to ensure that they are clear and direct.

**Validity**

Internal validity of the study can be low because the study is not a controlled experiment as no controlled variables are being accounted for. Not having a controlled experiment allows for confounding variables to arise during research, which lowers the internal validity of the research. Confounding variables lower the internal validity as they may suggest correlation when there is not any.
Relying primarily on observational data lowers the internal validity of the study. Observational data can be affected by the biases of those collecting the data. Observational data can also be affected by the interaction of participant and data collector; if the data collector seems unprepared, the participant will notice, and it could affect their answers. The results may indicate that more than one variable may be affecting turnover intentions. If the data does state that more than one variable affects turnover intentions, then it helps public service organizations in addressing the issue faster. The interviews will help increase internal validity because they will demonstrate how the variables are affecting turnover intentions at the same time or if they are reactions to the effect of one variable.

**Transferability**

Because the study will take place within a large public service organization that is in a large county in California, the results shall be easily generalized. The selected public service organization has a diverse workforce that will provide good generalization. Which means replication of the study in a large, diverse county, would yield similar results. Because turnover intentions are always affecting public service organizations, the study can be applied to different levels of government and help determine what is affecting their turnover rate.
Discussion

The study aims to improve turnover intentions and turnover rates among public service organizations. How does turnover rates affect the services provided by public service organizations? By understanding how significant the effect of organizational fit, attitudes/workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age is on turnover intentions and turnover rates among street-level bureaucrats, organizations can be better prepared. Also understanding the positive effects that turnover intentions and turnover rates can provide will help organizations create better policies to retain those new and engaged employees. The study is meant to improve the current processes used by an organization to retain their most valuable asset, human capital.

Ethical Considerations

Due to the sample being street-level bureaucrats that are currently employed by the public service organization, it is important to keep their identities confidential. To ensure that their identities will be kept confidential, participants will receive a confidentiality agreement to sign. The agreement will ensure them that the data collected will be for educational purposes, and their names will remain anonymous. For those participants interviewed, the confidentiality agreement is even more critical as their answers will be part of the results of the study. The confidentiality agreements will also inform management employees that they will not be allowed to alter the findings of the study. It is essential because if the results were to be manipulated or tampered with, then the results would lose external validity.

To ensure that the information provided by the participants is not affected all participation will be voluntary. Management will be asked to not give any incentives to employees who participate in the study, as this may cause employees to participate only for the reward. Participation is voluntary and not required. It ensures that employees are participating in
their own free will and do not feel as if their participation is mandatory. Having voluntary participation from employees is done to have detailed and truthful answers from the participant that will increase the validity and reliability of the research.

To prevent any influence by the person administering the survey, the administrator will distribute the survey and not be present in the room when the participants are completing the survey. Also, during the time of interviews, the questions will be open-ended to prevent any directional influence. Once the answers from the interviews are collected, participants will have the opportunity to review their answers to verify that their answers have not been altered or misunderstood. The information will then be analyzed to determine the findings. A peer will ensure that there was no manipulation of the data, and the interpretation of the findings is correct. It is required to establish certain boundaries because of the connection to the public service organization used in the study. These boundaries will be explained in the confidentiality agreement. The confidentiality agreement will inform participants that answers will not be shared. It will also inform them that their identities will remain anonymous. The participants will receive notification about the conclusion of the study to prevent them from inquiring about the study before the data is analyzed. Participants will receive notification of the publications of the results, so they can read the results if they please.

**Methodological Limitations**

Any study will have its limitations. The first limitation of this study is the analysis of the current turnover rate among Los Angeles County. The county could be inefficient at conducting exit interviews of those employees leaving the county. Another limitation of the study is the effectiveness of the survey and interviews. The answers to the survey and interviews could be unsatisfactory and result in not being able to create a measurable definition of turnover.
intentions. Making the survey available to all the employees within Los Angeles County could result in a high number of participants. Even though a stratified sample will be used for the interviews, the sample size may still be considerably large as the attempt will be to get a broad enough representation to generalize the results. The benefits in terms of insights gained about overall public organizations outweigh the previously mentioned methodological limitations.
Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to explore the significant effect organizational fit, attitudes/workplace satisfaction, workload exhaustion, and age have on turnover rate and turnover rate among Los Angeles County employees. Due to public service organizations’ dynamic nature, they face changes to societal, economical, demographical, and technological influential factors hastily. Faced with a projected 20 percent turnover rate for the next five years, Los Angeles County must implement policies to recruit and retain a successful workforce while maintaining a cost-effective and yet satisfactory workplace (LACCEO, 2018). Street-level bureaucrats carry out a vital duty towards the public they serve, and therefore, it is essential to implement policy to recruit and retain a successful workforce who is readily available to perform effectively and efficiently.
References


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