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Public Service Motivation Scholarship in Africa: A Systematic Review and Research Agenda

Justice Nyigmah Bawole^a, James Kwame Mensah^b, and George Babington Amegavi^a

^aDepartment of Public Administration and Health Services Management, University of Ghana Business School, Legon, Accra, Ghana;

^bDepartment of Business Administration, University of Professional Studies, Legon, Accra, Ghana

ABSTRACT

Although several literature reviews have been published on public service motivation (PSM), none of them focused solely on Africa. Adopting a systematic review of the literature, we analyse articles on PSM scholarship in Africa published between 2005 and 2017. We found that authors in African PSM is consistently increasing with their research published in highly ranked peer-reviewed journals. The antecedents and consequences of African PSM are similar to those of Western countries. Finally, respondents of African PSM scholarship are skewed towards “managerist” and students’ perspective. We proposed agenda for African PSM research with four key interest areas.

KEYWORDS

Public service motivation; african countries; public management; public administration; literature review

Introduction

In recent times, several systematic review articles have been published on public service motivation (PSM) (e.g., Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2016; Vandenabeele, Brewer, & Ritz, 2014; van de Wal, 2015) but none of them focused solely on Africa. Meanwhile, a systematic literature review is a natural step forward to consolidate and advance research (Ritz et al., 2016). Thus, no systematic research overview on PSM has been created in Africa, leaving the body of literature somewhat unstructured and possibly hampering future research. This article fills this void by providing a systematic literature review of PSM scholarship in Africa from 2005 to 2017 in order to build an agenda for future research.

The emergence of the concept of PSM is attributed to a discussion on public service ethics in the 1970s (Buchanan, 1975) aimed at providing a counterview to cynical perceptions of self-interested, extrinsically motivated bureaucrats depicted by public choice theorists (e.g., Tullock, 1976). Drawing insights from the work of Rainey (1982) which showed that public sector employees have stronger interests in pursuing ideological or altruistic goals than their private sector counterparts, Perry & Wise (1990:368) developed the idea of PSM which they defined as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations”. This first definition serves as the basis for other definitions and clarification of the concept as well as its measurement.

For instance, Brewer & Selden (1998:417) defined PSM as “the motivational force that induces individuals to perform meaningful public service”, while Rainey & Steinbauer (1999:23) maintained that PSM is a “general, altruistic motivation to serve the interests of a community of people, a state, a nation or humankind”. Vandenabeele (2007:547) redefined PSM as “the beliefs, 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”. In drawing a distinction between PSM and public sector motivation, Perry and Hondeghem (2008:3) state that the latter refers to more extrinsic motives for public sector employment such as job security, work-life balance, and pension systems.

Over the last two decades, studies on PSM have reached new heights (Bozeman & Su, 2014; Perry, Hondeghem, & Wise, 2010; Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015) despite the fact that the concept did not have significant impact on public administration research in the 1990s (Ritz et al., 2016). For instance, 147 articles were published on PSM between a period of fourteen years—1998 and 2012 (Vandenabeele et al., 2014). This however increased significantly to the extent that a total of 136 articles were published on PSM between 2013 and 2014 (Ritz et al., 2016). It is not surprising given the popularity and the high interest that PSM research generated including efforts to advance measurement

and operationalization of the concept (Bozeman & Su, 2014; Houston, 2011; Kim et al., 2013; Perry, Brudney, Coursey, & Littlepage, 2008; Wright & Pandey, 2008) as well as suggestions for methodological advancement on PSM research (Kim, 2017; van de Wal, 2015).

There are several reasons for the growing popularity of PSM. First, PSM helps to connect public institutions with their core values—relating to behavior, individual motivation, and individual and organizational performance (Vandenabeele et al., 2014). As a result, the current body of research convincingly establishes wide spread prevalence of PSM among public servants (Anderfuhren-Biget, 2012). Second, the cross disciplinary nature of the PSM concept (Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Ritz et al., 2016). PSM is at the crossroads of several disciplines: economics, psychology, management, business, sociology, public administration, and political science. This is evident as PSM research has been published in different scholarly journals outside public administration.

Third, the developments in the research methods used in PSM research are considered an example of good practice in promoting and advancing the field of PSM research (van de Wal, 2015). Finally, the connection between the performance of public sector workers and their motivation. This is evident by the fact that many studies have revealed that motivated public sector workers are more likely to identify with the intrinsic benefits of a job, less likely to quit their jobs, strong commitment to public interest, and are willing to sacrifice to influence public policies (Caillier, 2016; Gould-Williams, 2016; Houston, 2011; Lee & Jeong, 2015; Leisink & Steijn, 2009; Song, Kwon, Cha, & Min, 2016).

Nevertheless, a review of the literature reveals that most of these studies have come from developed countries. Indeed, given the fact that Perry and Wise (1990) conceptualized the notion of PSM and Perry (1996) developed the PSM scale in the context of public institutions in the USA, the initial American dominance in this field should come as no surprise (van de Wal, 2015). As a response to this gap in the PSM literature, the past decade has witnessed scholars testing the existence of PSM in a variety of geographical contexts to examine whether PSM is relevant beyond the American context (e.g., Brenya et al., 2016; Horton & Hondegghem, 2006; Kim et al., 2013; Vandenabeele, Scheepers, & Hondegghem, 2006). Despite research evidence demonstrating the existence of PSM in many countries, very few PSM studies are available in Africa (e.g., Barsoum, 2016; Brenya et al., 2016; Mostafa, Gould-Williams, & Bottomley, 2015; Gould-Williams, Mostafa, & Bottomley, 2013; Ng, Gossett, Chinyoka, & Obasi, 2016). Thus, over 80% of all PSM scholarship

between 1990 and 2013 has been conducted with data from either the United States or Europe (Ritz et al., 2016).

Furthermore, as scholarly research on PSM continues to extend to several geographical regions, the focus of most studies is still on the nature of PSM in developed countries (Liu, Du, Wen, & Fan, 2012; Liu, Tang, & Zhu, 2008). Ritz et al. (2016) in their systematic review of PSM research reveal that 27.5% of PSM studies are from United States, 43.4% from Europe, 17.2% from Asia and the remaining 11.9% from other regions of the world including Africa. They further posit that there were only three studies from Africa that use samples from 11 different Africa countries. Clearly, there is little research on the nature and motives of public employees in Africa. This gap provides an incentive for a systematic review of the African PSM scholarship in order to build an agenda and further research on PSM in Africa.

This is significant for three reasons. First, if the concept of PSM is to make distinctive contribution to social knowledge and develop sharper boundaries (Bozeman & Su, 2014), research will be required from different geographical regions that possess peculiar cultural, historical, governance and institutional context (van de Wal, 2015). Second, despite research confirming the existence of PSM in many countries, differences still exist in the sub-dimensions of the construct (Kim, 2009a, 2009b; Vandenabeele et al., 2006) and in their antecedents and consequences (Houston, 2011; Vandenabeele & van de Walle, 2008). Third, many non-Western countries especially in Africa do not have well-developed public administrations or a well-established public service ethos like their Western counterparts (Van De Wal, 2015).

The article proceeds as follows: first, the methodological approach followed by an overview of the findings of PSM literature in Africa. Third, the paper discussed the key findings of PSM scholarship in Africa. The fourth part provided avenues for further research on PSM in Africa and finally conclusion.

Methodological approach

The concept of PSM has created sufficient interest to warrant this review and to consolidate what has been done so far in Africa. Second, no systematic literature review has been conducted so far in Africa (van de Wal, 2015). This systematic review focuses on publications discussing PSM in Africa from 2005 to 2017 and present the state of knowledge in the field. The analyses in this article started from 2005 because previous research has revealed that PSM research in non-Western settings

started after 2005 (van de Wal, 2015). Studies that were included in the present study were identified as follows: first, a systematic search of seven major online databases—JSTOR, Public Administration Abstracts, Political Science Complete, ScienceDirect, ISI Web of Knowledge, African Journals Online and Africa Bibliography. Second, a search of twelve leading public administration journals was performed. The keywords used for the search were “public service and motivation” and “PSM and Public Service”, “public service and altruism”, “public service and prosocial”, “public work and motivation”, and “public employee and motivation”.

The study further used two methodological criteria for selection of the articles: first, the concept of PSM as described by Perry and Wise (1990) had to be used in the article as a single or at least a major baseline for a variable or topic studied and that PSM had to be measured, even though it could be different from Perry's (1996) multi-dimensional PSM scale. Second, the focus of the article must be on PSM conducted in Africa or with a sample from Africa. Articles not meeting these criteria were excluded and this strategy allowed us to focus intently on PSM articles in Africa. It is important to note that one book chapter and one conference paper were included because the study wanted to capture all the articles on PSM in Africa. Applying these criteria resulted in a set of 10 research articles (marked with asterisk in the references). However, these results may partially reflect the focus of the study on English-language publications. The present review advances the work of Ritz et al. (2016) who found three studies from Africa that used samples from 11 different Africa countries.

Findings and analysis

Number of publications

PSM in the African context is just beginning to emerge even though the concept is far advanced in Western Context. In fact, up until 2005 African scholarship on PSM as defined and measured by Perry and Wise (1990) and Perry (1996), respectively, was almost non-existent. However, since 2013, the number of PSM publications in Africa has been growing steadily. A sum of 10 PSM articles were published during the period of this study with slightly less than half published in 2016 (4 articles, 40%). This confirms the view that scholarly interest in PSM has increased over the past decade in response to the call for the global academic community to advance the theory and measurement scales of PSM (Ritz et al., 2016). The 10 articles

Table 1. Summary of general information on the samples*.

Geographical region	Country	Number of samples
North Africa	Egypt	4
	Morocco	1
West Africa	Ghana	2
	Nigeria	2
	Burkina Faso	1
	Mali	1
	South Africa	3
Southern Africa	Botswana	1
	Zambia	1
East Africa	Ethiopia	1
	Rwanda	1
Total		18

*Multiple classifications per study were possible

used for the review had samples from 18 African countries and this has been summarized in Table 1 below. This illustrates a gradual interest in PSM research in Africa and even though relatively small yet covered a number of countries in Africa.

Number of authors

The number of authors of PSM research in Africa has increased over the past few years. The number was relatively low in 2008, with only 2 authors who were both from Europe. However, over the years, there have been a substantial increase in the number of new authors from 2013 to 2017 (20 authors). Thus, a total of 23 different authors contributed to the 10 articles of this review as shown in Figure 1. In 2013 there were 4 authors, 2 authors in 2014 and 1 each in 2015 and 2017. The highest number of authors—13 was recorded in 2016. Of the 10 articles, 6 (60%) were coauthored. Only 1 out of the 6 coauthored articles featured a partnership between authors from African institution and Western institution. The remaining articles featured a partnership between authors from non-Western institutions (1 article), Western institutions (4 articles).

An evaluation of the institutional affiliations of the new authors reveal that many scholars are taking up PSM scholarship in Africa: Ghana (7 authors, 31.82%); Nigeria (3 authors, 13.64%); United Kingdom (3 authors, 13.64%); and Netherlands (3 authors, 13.64%). The remaining authors were based in Egypt (1); Botswana (1); Canada (1); United States of America (1); Belgium (1); and South Korea (1). The leading authors in African PSM research are Ahmed Mohammed Sayed Mostafa, Julian Seymour Gould-Williams, & Paul Bottomley while Gould-Williams, Mostafa & Bottomley's (2013) paper had the highest number of citations.

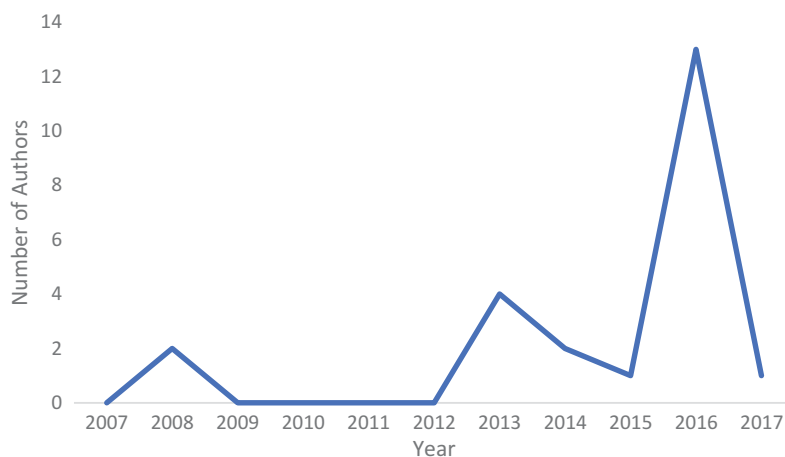


Figure 1. Number of authors per year (2007–2017).

Publication outlets

With reference to publication outlets, the findings revealed the following: 1 book chapter, 1 conference proceedings (International Social Sciences and Tourism Research conference), and 8 journals articles. It is noted that, 6 (60%) of the articles were published in public administration/management journals, namely: *Public Administration Review*, *International Journal of Public Administration*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, and *International Review of Administrative Sciences*. Even though other related journals in different fields also published PSM research in Africa, public administration/management journals dominate—an indication that African PSM scholarship have established outlets for publishing its research. The other two journals were outside the discipline of public administration: *Personnel Review*, and *Social and Management Research Journal*. This is an indication that PSM research is now being researched in other disciplines in the social sciences (Perry & Vandenaabeele, 2015). In total, 80% of these journals published just one article while 20% published two articles.

Research designs and methods

Almost all the studies in Africa used primary data collection methods through interviews and questionnaires. The review shows that data gathering was not a major challenge as respondents tend to be cooperative (Gould-Williams et al., 2013). Thus, the rate of return for the articles reviewed was between 51% and 80%, with an average return rate of 66.25%. The high rates of return can be attributed to the fact that the questionnaires were self-administered directly at the workplace. The data collection method predominantly used was survey

questionnaires that are administered to respondents (5 articles, 50%), whereas 3 articles (30%) used secondary survey data from International and National surveys such as the World Values Survey, International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), and Egypt Labour Market Panel Survey.

Only 2 articles (20%) employed a mixed method approach. A significant proportion of the study participants were from the public sector and were occupying managerial, non-managerial or supervisory positions. Other participants included students in a Master of Public Administration (MPA) programme and private sector workers. The sample size for the articles ranges from 60 to 12,085 respondents. The study by Barsoum (2016) used the most extensive sample size—49,211 consisting of 49,186 survey data and 25 interviews. The average sample size of the samples is 1,870.

The study categorized the research designs used in the articles as either quantitative or mixed method. The findings showed that, 80% used quantitative design while 20% used a mixed method approach. There is however no purely qualitative design used in the articles that were analyzed. The review revealed the use of various analytical techniques for analyzing the data in the various articles as reported in Table 2. More than half of the analytical

Table 2. Distribution of analytical methods used*.

Analytical methods	Frequency	%
Univariate/descriptive statistics	2	16.67
Bivariate/multivariate: measures of association or tests of differences	3	25.00
Multivariate: structural equation modeling (SEM)	3	25.00
Multivariate: Logistic regression	1	8.33
Multivariate: factor analysis	1	8.33
Qualitative analytical technique	2	16.67
Total	12	100.00

*Multiple classifications per study were possible

methods (66.67%) used multivariate or binary analysis. For instance, measures of association or tests of differences, logistic regression, structural equation modeling, and factor analysis to assess the reliability, validity and internal consistency of Perry's PSM scale. Again, 33.3% of the articles used qualitative analytical techniques and descriptive statistics. Inventory of the scales used to measure PSM in Africa reveal Perry's (1996) PSM scale as the main instrument employed by the studies. Half of the articles (50%) reviewed used all four dimensions of Perry's (1996) PSM scale. Some of the studies modified Perry's scale by using some of the dimensions in the scale but kept the changes in line with Perry's original scale.

Scope and content of study

PSM research in Africa over the years has sought to answer various research questions. The review categorized the various research goals into eight broad areas in accordance with the classifications employed by Ritz et al. (2016). Each study was coded according to this scheme, making it possible for multiple coding as illustrated in Table 3. Of the studies in the review, 10 (26.32%) assessed the correlation between PSM and various outcome variables while 7 studies (18.42) explored the relationship between PSM and potential antecedents. Six studies (15.79%) addressed the practical implications for human resource development, while 6 studies (15.79%) compared PSM across the public, private and non-profit sectors. There were 4 studies (10.53%) that tried to further develop instruments for measuring PSM. Three (7.89%) studies used data set from multiple countries by comparing an African country with different other countries from the rest of the world. There were 2 (5.26%) studies that dealt with conceptualization and further development of theoretical perspectives. The findings on the

distribution of the scope and content of study are reported in Table 3 below.

The few studies on PSM in Africa have focused on examining the relationship between PSM and outcome variables as well as the relationship between antecedents and PSM. This indicates that there is more room for research in the field of PSM in Africa. Importantly, the review showed that there was no study that constituted a review or a research review on PSM in Africa. This may be partially attributed to the limited number and the "infant" development of empirical studies on the continent. This is unfortunate in that a systematic literature review serves as a natural step forward to consolidate and advance research in a particular field (Ritz et al., 2016). Therefore, the absence of a systematic review of PSM research in Africa has left the body of PSM literature somewhat unstructured and possibly hampering its future research especially in Africa. This article therefore serves as an important starting point to consolidate and move PSM research in Africa forward. Studies that emphasize further theoretical development and measurement instruments are important as they can help scholars to comprehend the nuances of PSM research in Africa.

Theoretical approaches

Scholars who have studied the concept of PSM in Africa draw on various theoretical frameworks and approaches. These theoretical frameworks and approaches were grouped in line with the 11 major theoretical lines used by Ritz et al. (2016) in their systematic review of PSM, even though only six were used in Africa PSM scholarship. PSM was not included as a separate category because articles in the present study had discussed substantially the PSM framework introduced by Perry and Wise (1990). The findings showed that theoretical frameworks used to explain the concept of PSM in Africa are adopted from available Western scholarship, such as rational choice theory, culture, job choice theory and motivation as presented in Table 4. Even though there is evidence

Table 3. Distribution of scope and content of study*.

Lines of study	Frequency	%
Correlating PSM with outcome variables	10	26.32
Implications for HRM/managerial practice	6	15.79
Correlating antecedents with PSM	7	18.42
Theory conceptualization, motives & dimensions, integration with other theories	2	5.26
Comparison (African country with countries outside Africa)	3	7.89
Further development of measurement instruments	4	10.53
Comparing PSM across sectors (public/private/non-profit)	6	15.79
Review study/research overview	0	0.00
Total	38	100.00

*Multiple classifications per study were possible

Table 4. Distribution of underlying theories.

Underlying theory	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Public Administration	10	47.62
General theories of motivation	4	19.05
Job choice theories	3	14.29
Rational choice theories	2	9.52
Ethic, values, religion and culture	1	4.76
Organizational culture	1	4.76
Total	21	100.00

*Multiple classifications per study were possible

that the concept of PSM exist in many countries (Houston, 2011; Kim et al., 2013; Vandenaabeele et al., 2006), the use of Western theories in African PSM scholarship is problematic in that there are cultural differences between the two context and this has potential to influence both the antecedents and consequences of PSM.

For instance, Vandenaabeele & Walle (2008) maintained that culture plays a crucial role in the outcome of PSM in different context. In examining differences in PSM across the world, their findings demonstrate that in some regions, some of the dimensions of PSM were not related to public sector employment due to differences in the culture and values of people across these regions. Dur and Zoutenbier (2014) also reported in their comparative research which included nine African countries that public sector workers from these developing countries have strong evidence for a mutually reinforcing role of altruism and mission alignment than their counterparts in developed countries. This finding echoes the culture of collectivism amongst Africans (Hofstede, 1983) and these collectivist values may not have been considered in the development of the PSM theory especially since the concept was developed in a Western context.

Research on the antecedence of PSM in Africa and the rest of the world also shows some differences in findings. For instance, the study of Barsoum (2016) in Egypt reveal that there is no clear gendered pattern of the preference for a public service job whereas a study in United States by Piatak (2016) concluded that females were not eager and less likely to work in the public sector. These differences in findings can be attributed to the contextual differences between the two countries. These two countries have different socio-cultural and economic opportunities and these factors can influence the outcome and antecedence of PSM. Similarly, Liu, Hui, Hu, Yang, & Yu (2011) suggest that in East Asian public sectors, relationships and social environments are particularly important in determining one's career. This finding is similar to what pertains in West Africa, where because of the limited economic and job opportunities the motivation to work in the public service is mainly premised on getting employed and earning a living for most citizens.

Consequently, a contextualization of these theories is necessary to take into account local realities (Vigan & Giauque, 2016) and avoid universal application of Western theories. This calls for more research into the theoretical development of PSM in Africa. Indeed, van de Wal (2015) suggested that to take the field of PSM further, non-Western PSM researchers should start developing and testing more unique theories of PSM

outside the Western context. Alternative theories that can be used to test the concept of PSM in Africa are institutional theory, expectancy theory, social cognitive theory, stakeholder theory, social exchange theory, theory of planned behavior and general motivational theories.

Antecedents of PSM in Africa

The antecedents of PSM in Africa have not been deeply explored. The review showed that the most common researched antecedents are age, gender, personal values, and education. Other frequently studied variables include job attributes and behaviors, job security, training and development, and job stress. Barsoum (2016) found a strong relationship between variables such as education and gender and PSM in Egypt. The study further shows a strong preference to work in the public service as people's level of education increases. In their study of civil servants in Ghana, Brenya et al. (2016) found a strong relationship between personal values of civil servants and PSM. Their findings reveal that most civil servants see it as their responsibility to protect the interest of the public by showing concern to their fellow society members who are deprived and vulnerable. These results suggest that people in collectivist and masculine cultures are more likely to show higher levels of PSM than those in individualist and feminine cultures (Kim, 2017).

Similarly, Ng et al. (2016) found that in Botswana a person's specialization with reference to education can influence their level of PSM. Their findings show that public administration students place more value on intrinsic benefits of employment in the public sector than business students who prefer extrinsic rewards leading to a weak influence on PSM. Barsoum (2016) shows that people are willing to take lesser pay to work in public institutions in Egypt because the public sector provides job security. Similarly, Gould-Williams et al. (2013) show that perception of job security is an important predictor of PSM. However, in Nigeria, the findings of Oyewobi (2013) reveal that extrinsic motivators such as opportunities to advance in career and recognition are positively and significantly correlated with PSM.

With reference to the empirically tested dimensions of PSM, findings from Botswana show that self-sacrifice has weak relationship with people's desire to work in the public service (Ng et al., 2016). The findings of Brenya et al. (2016) in Ghana and Oyewobi (2013) in Nigeria reveal that positive relationships exist amongst the dimensions of PSM and the desire of people to work in the public service and promote the interest of

citizens. However, the findings also show that attraction to policy making has no effect on the decision of people to serve in the public sector. On the other hand, findings from Ghana by Brenya et al. (2016) reveal a strong relationship between the desire of people to work in the public service and self-sacrifice. Similarly, Ng et al. (2016) found no relationship between the altruism and the desire of people for public service in Botswana. Kura (2016) also found no relationship between civic duty and employees' desire for public eco-initiatives in Nigeria.

Many studies have emphasized the relevance of cultural, organizational values, and dispositions in explaining PSM and the motives of public sector workers. Thus, expectations, values and attitudes of individuals are affected by culture and consequently shaping PSM (Kim, 2017) and this further influences an individual's perception about public service. In exploring the relationship between national culture and PSM, Kim (2017) demonstrates that masculinity is positively related to individuals' PSM whereas individualism is negatively correlated with individuals' PSM. In their case, Dur and Zoutenbier (2014) found that mission alignment is a strong determinant of people working in the public sector. In a sample of professionals in the Egyptian health and higher education sectors, Mostafa et al. (2015) noted that employee perceptions of high performance human resource practices are positively associated with PSM.

Given the relatively small number of studies in this review, caution is required in generalizing the conclusions on the antecedents of PSM in Africa. More importantly, for antecedent variables that have been researched by one or two scholars. In summary, the findings from the review showed that culture, organizational and individual factors are the antecedents of PSM in Africa. These findings are similar to other studies found in Western countries (e.g., Bright, 2005; Jin, McDonald, & Park, 2016; Perry et al., 2008; Wright & Pandey, 2008), and Asia (e.g., Jin, 2013; Kim, 2016; Lee & Jeong, 2015). Perhaps, it is possible that salary, religion, employee perception, unionization, employee-management relations, job scarcity, family status, political affiliation, and work flexibility could explain public sector job choice and thus, serves as antecedents of PSM in Africa.

Consequences of PSM in Africa

Current studies show that the most commonly researched consequences of PSM are P-O fit, organizational citizenship behavior, job commitment, job satisfaction, job stress, and quit intentions. Gould-Williams et al. (2013) in their study of Egyptian higher education

and health sector workers found that PSM had a positive and significant association with P-O fit, suggesting that the fit of employees with their organizations is strengthened as individual levels of PSM increase. The study further found a positive but nonsignificant relationship between PSM and quit intentions. Finally, they found a significant positive association between PSM and work-related stress indicating that as employees' PSM increased, their levels of work-related stress was also likely to rise. Similarly, studies have found a positive and significant relationship between PSM and organizational citizenship behavior (Gould-Williams et al., 2013; Mostafa et al., 2015). Mostafa et al. (2015) in a similar study of Egyptian higher education and health sector workers, found that PSM was positively related to affective commitment.

Oyewobi (2013) for his part examined the influence of PSM on job satisfaction and commitment among public sector quantity surveyors in Nigeria. The study reveals a strong relationship existing between self-sacrifice and organizational commitment, denoting a commitment on the part of civil servants to promote public welfare. These findings were also confirmed by Kura (2016) in Nigeria and Barsoum (2016) in Egypt. Gould-Williams et al. (2013) on their part show that all the dimensions of PSM had a significant positive effect on P-O fit, even though, both commitment and self-sacrifice had stronger relationships with P-O fit than attraction to policy making and compassion. Brenya et al. (2016) report that most public sector workers in Ghana with higher PSM, perform better on the job but, the study also revealed that inability of the public sector to meet the aspirations of workers demotivates them and they will move to a better sector at the least opportunity.

These results are consistent with previous studies in North America, Europe, Asia, and South America that there is a strong relationship between PSM and other factors such as P-O fit, desire to influence public policy, work performance, and organizational commitment (Piatak, 2016; SoSong et al., 2016; Lee & Jeong, 2015; Dur & Zoutenbier, 2014; Caillier, 2016; Leisink & Steijn, 2009). Thus, irrespective of cultural background, there is a strong relationship between employees with higher PSM and outstanding performance in the public service.

Discussion of the findings

This article adopted a rigorous review of the Africa literature on PSM with the purpose of providing a clear and comprehensive picture of the research done from 2005 to 2017. This does not only offer an

opportunity to learn from previous Africa PSM research findings, but also as a useful starting point to build an agenda for future PSM research in Africa. Based on the review, the research now discussed below the findings and implications of Africa PSM scholarship.

First, it was noticed that the number of authors in African PSM was consistently increasing. Thus, from only 2 authors in 2008 who were both from Europe, it sharply increased to 20 authors by 2017 with African scholars (55.46%) dominating—a manifestation of African authors gaining grounds in PSM scholarships in their own “backyard” as well as calls to examine PSM in different context (e.g., Kim, 2017; van de Wal, 2015). Interestingly, most of the articles (60%) were coauthored bringing a blend of different cultural background to PSM scholarship. This trend is important as it helps unravel the nuances of PSM and such studies having wider implications across difference cultures. Even though there are calls for context-specific theories on PSM (e.g., Kim, 2017; van de Wal, 2015), this collaborative research could also help in building universal theories of PSM as called by recent studies (e.g., Ritz et al., 2016; Vandenabeele et al., 2014). This also shows that African PSM research is not only of interest to Africans but Western scholars as well.

Second, despite the “infant” nature of PSM scholarship in Africa, the publications are in highly ranked peer-reviewed journals (e.g., *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*). This demonstrate commitment to higher-quality research on PSM from African scholars and increased legitimacy of such research in the eyes of editors and reviewers. Indeed, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* is number one out of the 47 public administration journals while *Public Administration Review* is number two. These high-ranked journals are extremely selective and publish only the most important, novel and best-supported scientific discoveries, which will then, as a consequence of their quality, achieve greater exposure and go on to be highly cited. Therefore, these research has set a very good tone for further Africa PSM research to follow. Similarly, PSM research in Africa has been published in journals outside the discipline of public administration. This shows the relevance of PSM for audiences in other disciplines in the social sciences.

Third, the findings from the study showed that the antecedent of PSM in Africa include age, gender, personal values, occupation, education, job attributes and behaviors, roles, job security, training and development. With the limited number of studies exploring the antecedents of PSM in the African literature,

scholars can explore salary, religion, employee perception, unionization, employee-management relations, job scarcity, family status, political affiliation, work-life balance, work flexibility, organizational culture, basic psychological needs satisfaction to enhance the theoretical basis of the PSM concept. Similarly, the consequences of PSM in Africa among others are P-O fit, organizational citizenship behavior, job commitment, job satisfaction, job stress, job performance, and quit intention. Thus, in general, findings of PSM research in Africa are similar to Western context. Perhaps, this is probably due to the use of similar theories, research and methods. Moreover, most of the PSM studies in Africa did not modify Perry’s original PSM scale to suit local context, hence, the similarity in findings. The similarity can also be attributed to the limited number of antecedents that have been studied in PSM research in Africa. It may be possible that if more antecedents such as salary, religion, unionization, job scarcity, family status, and work flexibility are researched in future they may lead to some differences in findings.

Despite these similarities, there are few differences such as job security and cultural values. Thus, Barsoum (2016) argued that “the preference for employment in the public sector is the status of a national culture among the segment of the educated” (p. 211) “the preference for public-sector jobs in Egypt has become part of a national culture” (p. 213). This probably unveils the multiplicity of the realities of the African continent (Vigan & Giauque, 2016). Thus, whereas PSM findings from North Africa did not report of any gender preference in employment in the public service, findings from Ghana by Brenya et al. (2016) reported of male preference to females in public sector employment scheme. Indeed, findings also showed that organizational factors such as values and culture, human resource practices, working conditions and mission alignment strongly influence PSM in Africa (Barsoum, 2016; Brenya et al., 2016; Gould-Williams et al., 2013).

Fourth, taking a critical examination of the analysis of PSM scholarship in Africa bring to bear a number of methodological issues. First, cross-sectional survey data (50%) dominate in the research methods while 30% used longitudinal data. This raises concerns about the causality of the results and perhaps, at the moment scholars should refrain from making causal interpretations of the result, instead make associational inferences. Indeed, this also creates common method bias problems which may contaminate the results. Second, whereas most of the respondents are public sector-related employees, the samples were taken from respondents occupying managerial, non-managerial or supervisory positions

(Brenya et al., 2016; Gould-Williams et al., 2013; Kura, 2016; Mostafa et al., 2015; Oyewobi, 2013), MPA and MBA students (Ng et al., 2016), and unemployed youth (Barsoum, 2016). This shows that the respondents of PSM studies in Africa are skewed toward a “managerialist” perspective and students, raising concerns about the generalizability of the findings.

Fifth, Western theories were used to explain PSM in Africa. Whereas the results are not in doubt, it is obvious that there are differences between African and the West. Thus, research has discovered that the motivation of public service officials in non-Western contexts might be spurred by a range of extrinsic motivations—pecuniary incentives, job security (Chen, Hsieh, & Chen, 2014; Taylor & Beh, 2013), or at least by mixed motives extending beyond just PSM (Yung, 2014). Indeed, findings from Egypt (Barsoum, 2016; Gould-Williams et al., 2013) show that Islamic culture influences the preference for public sector jobs.

This study has some relevant practical implications for public service and public administration in Africa. First, the study found valuable evidence of positive consequences accruing from PSM to the extent that employees with high PSM can enhance the productivity of public organizations. Accordingly, public managers need to recruit and select employees based on their motives to serve the public (Bright, 2007). One possible way to determining potential employees’ level of PSM, is to administer Perry’s PSM questionnaire during the recruitment process to help in selecting and employing people who are motivated to serve the public into the public service.

Second, it appears that PSM is not wholly determined by individual employee values but also influenced by some organizational interventions. It is therefore crucial for public managers to institute PSM-enhancing interventions, while avoiding practices that may weaken employee PSM. In addition, other factors such as job security, job flexibility, job attributes and behaviors, training and development, and job stress also influence employee PSM. Therefore, public managers should communicate these factors to current employees and potential employees more during job interviews. Furthermore, public managers can also organize socialization programs on PSM to inculcate into new and existing employees the culture of PSM to influence their reasoning and instill in them the drive to promote the public interest.

A research agenda for African PSM scholarship

Even though efforts are being made to study PSM, the findings show that there is the need for more PSM

studies in Africa. Therefore, this study explores and builds on previous recommendations to propose pertinent research areas to the study of PSM in Africa. This, the research does not claim to be all-encompassing, rather it seeks to point out what can serve as a guide, basis, and chart the course for PSM research in Africa. This is extremely important to advancing the field of PSM across the globe.

First, testing or developing PSM instrument in Africa. Whereas there are differences between the West and Africa, most Africa PSM studies have used Perry’s (1996) scale for measuring PSM. Similarly, relatively few studies (e.g., Brenya et al., 2016) have made conscious effort to test Perry’s (1996) PSM scale in Africa. To bridge this gap, it is suggested that Africa scholars take the field of PSM further by moving away from simply testing and validating Perry’s (1996) scale or debunking Western PSM findings, or from “copying” existing instruments, approaches and data collection methods just as pointed by van de Wal (2015) as a good way to further the field of PSM in non-Western context. As a matter of fact, many scholars have called for more research to understand the underlying dimensions of PSM in different national context (Dur & Zoutenbier, 2014; Kim, 2017; Vandenabeele & Walle, 2008).

Second, even though there are similarities, there exist differences between the antecedents and consequences of PSM in both Western and African contexts. These findings could be attributed to the differences in culture, social, political and economic differences. Naturally, these are only preliminary findings that will require further studies to validate, especially with the limited PSM studies in Africa. For instance, Gould-Williams et al. (2013) posit that Egyptian culture is shaped by Islamic work values which are similar to those of PSM and therefore, it is possible that Islamic work values affected respondents’ behaviors in their study. They argued that to advance the relationship between cultural values and PSM, future research should “disentangle the unique contributions of PSM vis-à-vis collectivism, which appears to have synergistic effects on PSM in Egyptian public sector” (Gould-Williams et al., 2013, 615).

Dur & Zoutenbier (2014, 153) propose that a new direction for non-Western PSM research including Africa would be to examine how “cultural differences affect the supply and sorting of motivational workers”. Similarly, Kim (2017) echoed that future research needs to examine the relationship between national level culture and the dimensions of PSM. In addition to culture, van de Wal (2015) mentions that social and political environments can also affect PSM levels. Cultural theories, especially Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimensions’

framework could be useful in this direction. With the limited number of studies exploring the antecedents of PSM in the African literature, future studies can explore other antecedents such as salary, religion, unionization, job scarcity, family status, and work flexibility to enhance the theoretical basis of the PSM concept.

Third, comparative studies between Western and African context will add greatly to a range of PSM debates. Thus, comparative study between master of public policy and MPA students from China and the United States shows that the former are far less driven by intrinsic factors (Infeld, Adams, Qi, & Rosnah, 2010). Moreover, in Africa cultural values, job security and work environment (Barsoum, 2016; Gould-Williams et al., 2013) influence PSM and subsequently its consequences. As noted by van de Wal (2015:79), public sector motivation may crowd out, or at least coexist with PSM in the make-up of the motivational spectrum of public sector employees in non-Western settings. It is crucial for further studies not to only compare Western and Africa countries but also compare several African countries in order to highlight possible differences and similarities in PSM findings giving the different sociocultural practices across the African continent.

Fourth, the use of robust methodologies will help strengthen the existing results of Africa PSM scholarship. The current scholarship is dominated by cross-sectional survey data undermining the causality of the results. This concern about the over reliance on cross-sectional survey in testing the nomological network of relationships and confirming claims about PSM's associations with other variables has long been raised by scholars (e.g., Vandenabeele et al., 2014; Wright & Grant, 2010) which has also been clearly stated in most PSM research as a limitation (e.g., Gould-Williams et al., 2013; Mostafa et al., 2015). Therefore, the study argues that robust methodologies would increase both internal validity and contextual realism in further PSM research in Africa. Among such robust methodologies may include policy-capturing and longitudinal research designs, field experiments and quasi-experiments (Gould-Williams et al., 2013; Mostafa et al., 2015; Wright & Grant, 2010). Even though recent PSM research in African has begun in this direction especially with longitudinal data (e.g., Dur & Zoutenbier, 2014) and as such shows the promise of new research designs and illuminate the prospects for improving internal validity, reliability, and contextual realism of future PSM research in Africa.

Conclusion

The aim of this systematic review was to take stock of PSM research in Africa from 2005 to 2017 in order to build an agenda for future research. The review showed that PSM research in Africa is gradually gaining prominence to the extent that the number of PSM scholars in Africa has increased from 2 in 2008 to 23 by 2017. Whereas PSM research in Africa is still young, most of the articles were published in high-ranked public administration/management journals. In spite of this, some also appeared in journals outside the discipline of public administration demonstrating the increasing application of the concept across other disciplines. It was noted that quantitative research designs dominate and that research on PSM in Africa draws on theoretical frameworks developed in Western context while Perry (1996) measurement scale was the most widely used in African PSM research.

In going forward, it is crucial not to only test the reliability and validity of Perry's (1996) measurement scale of PSM but also develop PSM scales that fit the African context. Comparative studies either within African countries or between Africa and Western countries would also aid in advancing the field of PSM. There is further need to disentangle the unique contributions of collectivism which appears to have synergistic effects on PSM. The study also calls for the use of robust methodologies that would help increase both internal validity as well as establish causalities in African PSM findings. It is important to note that this study does not claim to have covered exhaustively all the PSM research in Africa between 2005 and 2017. These results may partially reflect the focus of the study on English-language publications. There are probably some PSM research which may be unpublished and it is generally difficult to access unpublished documents. These limitations are not likely to affect the findings of the study.

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