

PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION OF STREET BUREAUCRATS: ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES IN IMPLEMENTING LEARNING FROM HOME POLICIES

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Abstract

This article details the motivation of public services from street level bureaucrats (teachers) of Serang Junior High School in the implementation of learning from home, based on a policy issued by the government, namely the Learning from Home (BDR) policy in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Respondents filled out questionnaires provided based on Public Service Motivation (PSM) indicators to learn more about their professional experience. Using quantitative methods, the findings showed that street-level bureaucrats showed high value public service motivation and found the dominant factor influencing public service motivation (PSM), namely the dimension of responsibility (commitment) to the public interest in the indicator bwork sincerely amounted to 0.929. The research offers insight into the motives of civil servants during times of crisis and while working in innovative new capacities.

Keywords: M Activation of Public Services, Learning from Home, Street level Legislation

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic has become a challenge for every country and citizen of the world. As an unprecedented disease, Covid-19 requires acute crisis and destabilization, characterized by extreme uncertainty and urgency stemming from the rapid and continuous dynamics of unpredictable circumstances (Gofen & Lotta, 2021), Covid-19 has significant implications for the development of the scale of human life, including in the field of Education (Kharas, 2021). Several countries closed schools and the learning activities of at least 290.5 million students in the world were disrupted because the government issued the policy. (Mastura & Santaria, 2020).

The ability to respond quickly and appropriately is key to getting through a crisis well. In the field of education, Indonesia issued lockdown, social distancing, and PPKM (community activity restriction programs) policies that had an impact on prohibiting schools or educational institutions from carrying out learning process activities in schools. (Rifa'i, 2023). There are at least two policies in the field of education that affect teaching and learning activities in schools, namely the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 2020 concerning the Prevention of Covid-19. The Education Unit, and the Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education Policy During the Emergency Period of the

Spread of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19), aim to ensure the fulfillment of the rights of students to get educational services during the Covid-19 emergency, protecting education unit residents. Based on this policy, all schools in Indonesia are required to conduct the learning process from home. The policy of teaching and learning from home which is carried out online is a new activity in the world of education, especially at the elementary and junior high school levels. As something new, of course, the policy has experienced various problems and challenges in its implementation. (Hasniati, 2022).

Public service motivation is very important in people's lives, because it plays a role in providing various services and facilities needed. Road bureaucrats are employees who are in the field and directly interact with the community, they have a central role in delivering public services to the community. One of the significant events is the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic which affects many aspects of life including the education system. Online learning is an alternative solution to continue the education process during the pandemic. The implementation of online learning carries various implications, both in terms of technology, social and psychological, which can affect the motivation and effectiveness of street bureaucrats' public services.

The success of public policy depends on the capacity of street-level bureaucrats that act as moral agents (Zacka, 2017). According to Lipsky (2010) principals and teachers who are in direct contact with the communities served are called street level bureaucrats. Tummers and Bekkers (2014) Street level bureaucrats are civil servants who interact directly with the public and have a formal duty to improve the welfare of society while meeting the demands and priorities of the particular communities they serve. Gofen & Lotta (2021) explain that street-level bureaucracy, serves as the front line of public service delivery and is critical in government responses to crises and emergencies. Understanding the motives of street-level bureaucrats in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic is important to shape the way employees think about resilience, motives and performance during difficult times. Crises, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, disrupt the environment in which street-level bureaucracies work, creating a disconnect between the individuals they serve and the government and changing these conditions can result in deviations from street-level norms. Rauhaus (2022) looked specifically at what motivates field employees to participate and their public service motivation in general. Public service motivation according to Crewson (1997), Wright (2007), Perry (2018) is a widely used framework for examining bureaucratic behavior and showing that individual values and needs align with the mission of public organizations.

Lockdown policies in various places, social distancing and physical distancing are policies to suppress the spread of Covid-19 to limit people's social interactions with others and reduce activities outside the home. The policy has a significant impact on learning activities. Schools, teachers, and students can no longer hold face-to-face meetings in the classroom for the learning process. Every teacher must conduct the teaching process online, and teachers need skills in the field of information technology (Mastura & Santaria, 2020). The policy of learning from home raises various pros and cons, as well as problems, among students and teachers. The results of research conducted by (Kisworo et al., 2021; Nugraha et al., 2020) that online learning methods are not effective for teachers and students. Online or distance learning at

home makes teaching staff less optimal in providing learning materials to elementary school students. The material is not discussed thoroughly, so school students cannot understand it properly. In addition, online learning media makes students feel bored because they cannot meet their friends.

In this study, the motives of these street-level bureaucrats are explored, looking specifically at what motivates teachers in the implementation of learning from home programs and the motivation of their public services in general. This analysis presents data collected from Serang city junior high school teachers (street-level bureaucrats). This was followed by a discussion on the motivations of public services from street-level bureaucrats and quantitative data presented to highlight teachers' experiences in the home learning program during Covid-19. Finally, conclusions and implications for street-level bureaucrats and show the influence of public service motivation on the implementation of learning from home programs.

LITERATURE

Public Service Motivation at the Street Level Bureaucrats

Service motivation is widely used to explore not only why individuals choose public service jobs, but also how motives affect their performance, particularly at the street level when interacting with community members. Research (Perry & Wise, 1990) explores the theory of public service motivation (PSM), which includes personal sacrifice and duty for the public interest by assuming a relationship of performance, efficiency and effectiveness. Public service motivation relates to a certain normative orientation to serve the public interest, loyalty in carrying out duties and social justice. Public service motivation is a widely used framework for examining bureaucratic behavior and demonstrating that individual values and needs align with the mission of public organizations (Perry & Wise, 1990; Crewson, 1997; Wright, 2007). The definition of PSM often includes elements of altruism. Bright (2008) says that altruism motivates individuals to serve the public interest and helps understand individual tendencies to engage in altruistic or prosocial behavior (Pandey et al., 2008). Perry (1996, 1997) offers four dimensions of PSM measurement, which include interest in policymaking, commitment to the public interest, compassion and self-sacrifice.

Street-level leaders are diverse groups tasked with improving people's welfare and assisting their citizens (clients) as public employees who interact directly with citizens. (Cohen & Hertz, 2020) as well as playing a key role in policy implementation and having a strong influence on policy outcomes (Brodkin, 2007). Serving the community directly because it is at the forefront of government but farthest from the center of power (Maynard-Moody, Steven, 2003). Their informal implementation practices, which lie at the interface between government and citizens, directly affect the lives and fates of many individuals (Gofen, 2014; Hupe & Hill, 2007; L. L. G. Tummers et al., 2015). Fleming (2020) provides a further understanding of the behavior of street-level bureaucrats using discretion in assisting public organizations as well as stakeholders. According to Brockmann (2017), an ambiguous work environment requires bureaucrats to carry out policies that occurred during the Covid-19 period. Koumenta (2015) said that individuals who have public service motivation have a commitment to serve the

interests of the public and have an impact on the causality of the services provided. Individual equity and public service motivation are so closely related that it is necessary to get attention in educating public servants to find new ways to foster altruism and public commitment (Christensen, 2014). This research further develops the assessment and measurement of public service motivation on an international scale to better understand the multidimensional areas of self-sacrifice, interest in public participation, commitment to public values, and compassion (Rauhaus, 2022).

It is important to understand more about the motives and experiences of street level bureaucrats, which is a term commonly used to replace street level bureaucrats during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as teachers in carrying out learning from home as a fulfillment of rights to the community, at certain times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Existing literature has explored the behavior and experience of street-level bureaucrats delivering quality public services efficiently, effectively, and equitably. Leaders of government and non-profit organizations need to manage, measure, develop, and adapt to meet the needs of citizens, especially in times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic (Hasniati, 2022). Public service motivation is widely used to explore not only why individuals choose public service jobs, but also how motives affect their performance, particularly at the street level when interacting with community members (Rauhaus, 2022). Understand further the motives and experiences of street level bureaucrats such as teachers, especially during the Covid-19 period who have the task of implementing learning from home policies. Therefore, it is very important to understand the experiences and motives of street-level bureaucrats during the pandemic in carrying out education using the learning process from home.

Research Approach

This study used a quantitative method approach of data collected from a survey conducted in July 2022. 297 street-level bureaucrats i.e. teachers of Serang City Junior High School by filling out the questionnaire that has been presented, The next step in conducting a validity test, the low validity of a questionnaire instrument can be seen with the help of the AMOS 22 computer program. If the loading factor of a question item reaches 0.50 or greater then the item is important in interpreting the construct it ±measures To find the dominant factor of public service motivation in the learning experience from home, the survey instrument includes public service motivation steps to determine the motives of individual street-level bureaucrats at work. To fill in the instrument using the Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). PSM measurement adapted from Perry (1996) offers four dimensions of PSM measurement, which include interest in policy making (Interest in matters related to the work environment, Interest in making public policy), Responsibility to the public interest (Work sincerely, provide service as much as possible because it is a priority), feelings of sympathy or affection (serving society and feeling the emotional state of others, feeling sympathetic and trying to solve problems that exist in society), self-sacrifice (siap to sacrifice if for the good of society, service programs in society are more meaningful than personal achievements).

FINDINGS

The survey data illustrates that field officers have high levels of PSM, which is presented in Figure 1. It is quantitative that assesses from four dimensions of PSM.

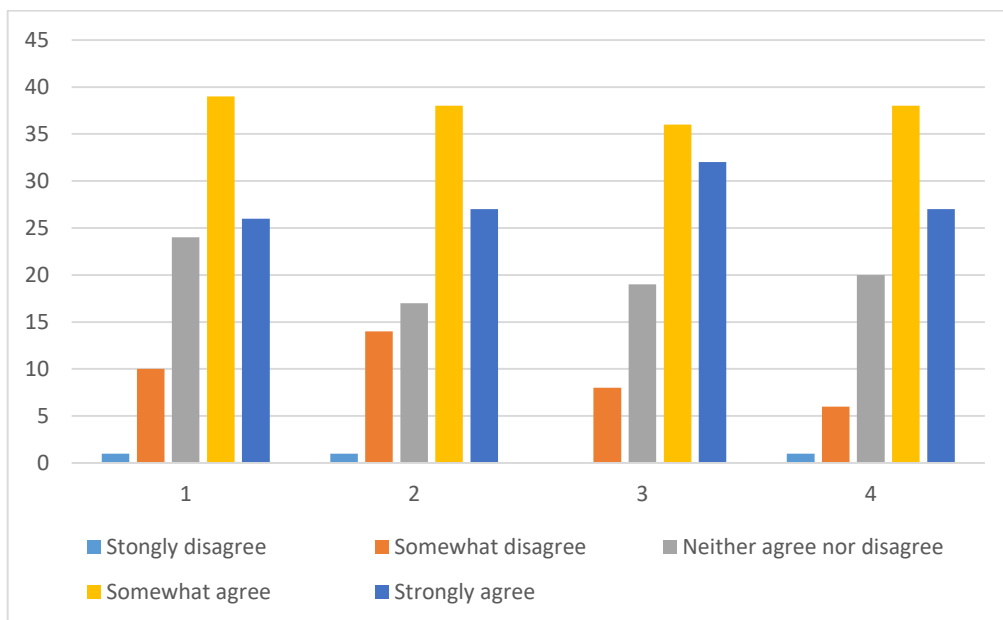


Figure 1: Teachers' PSM actions in implementing BDR

Street level bureaucrat shows interest in policymaking from the lowest score to the highest grade, as 1 percent agree with the work environment and 39 percent agree on the work environment which means there is an internal encouragement of teachers to be involved in decision-making and policy-making processes related to service and feel called to Participating and making useful contributions to the wider community, teachers provide support for students in helping difficulties in understanding lessons. The responsibility for public interest is aimed at the lowest score of 1 percent strongly disagree and the highest value of 38 percent somewhat agree, that the street level bureaucrat shows commitment to the public interest, feels professionally responsible to provide quality education even though in a pandemic situation.

The act of providing service as much as possible because it is a priority from the lowest 8 percent states somewhat disagree to high 36 states somewhat agree, street level bureaucrat (teachers) provide maximum service to the community (students) in the process of learning from home, they try to arrange appropriate learning materials and methods with student characteristics, so that online learning becomes more effective and interesting for students, Furthermore, acts of compassion show the lowest score of 6 percent somewhat disagree and the highest 38 percent somewhat agree, this means employees (teachers) are ready to understand students' feelings and experiences in the implementation of learning from home when students experience difficulties in understanding the material.

The next result in Figure 2 highlights quantitative evidence on the dominant factors affecting public service motivation with confirmatory analysis, the average percentage of Extracted Variance (AVE) values between items or indicators of a set of latent constructs is a convergent summary of PSM measurement indicators adapted from Perry (1996).

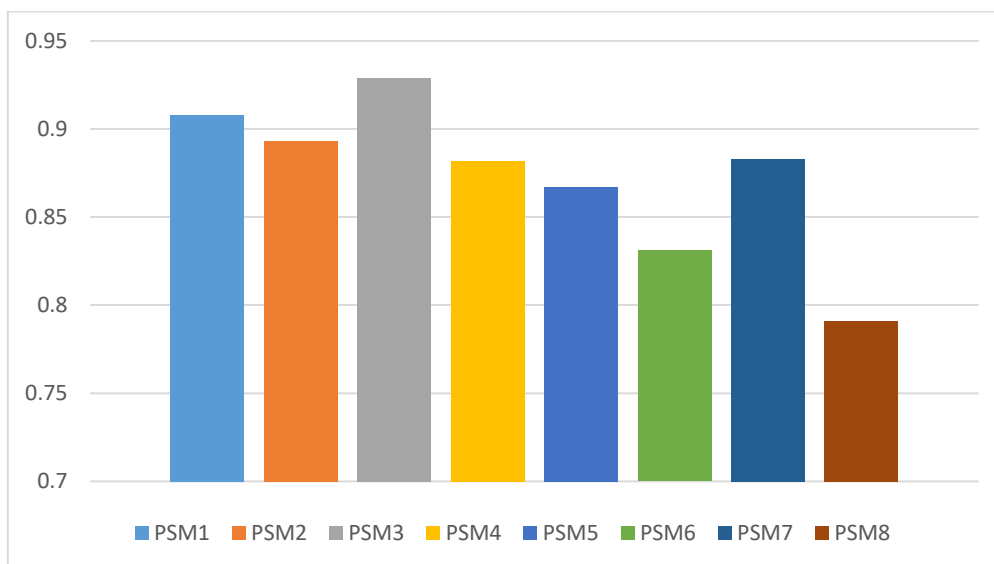


Figure 2: Dominant factors affecting PSM

The first imposition of interest in policy making consists of indicators of interest in matters related to the work environment has a value of 0.908 and indicators of interest in making public policies have a value of 0.893. Interest in policy makers is the temperament of individuals to serve in the public sector, to engage in policy-making processes and activities for community development and social growth. These findings support Miao et al's (2019) research on a person's ability to influence public policy to increase an individual's self-esteem to engage in public service. Individuals interested in public policy dare to influence others to gain change in the organization. Interest in policymakers is closely related to motives or desires to serve the public interest can be in the form of individual interests in certain public programs or services due to the existence of a sincere stance or belief, affection for social interests.

One form of public service is the implementation of BDR policies, street level bureaucrat understands BDR policies in accordance with established rules. Such as learning schedules and learning assignments are taken by parents/guardians of students once a week at the end of the week and or disseminated through available communication media, then teachers and parents/guardians meet to submit assigned assignments. During offline learning assisted by parents/guardians of students according to the schedule and assignments that have been given. Street Level Bureau can make visits to students' homes to check and assist learning the second dimension of responsibility (commitment) to the public interest is measured by two indicators, namely working sincerely 0.929 and providing service as much as possible because it is a priority with a value of 0.882. This finding is in line with Lee's (2002) research that demonstrates the commitment of local firefighters to public safety and commitment to the

community. These findings are also in line with research on altruistic PSM, self-sacrifice, and commitment to public interests (Bright, 2008). Responsibility in the public interest is the personal tendency to fight for public values and serve the public interests of the organization (Miao et al., 2019). Robbins et al., (2018) provide a definition that commitment is a condition of an individual taking sides and maintaining his membership in achieving goals in an organization. Richard M. Steers & Osland, (2020) suggest that organizational commitment as a sense of identification (belief in organizational values), involvement (willingness to try the best possible for the benefit of the organization) and loyalty (desire to be a member in an organization) reflected by employees in an organization. Perry (2018) expresses commitment to the public interest, namely a person's desire to fulfill community obligations, especially the desire to serve the public interest, remain loyal to duty and government. In addition, organizational commitment is a condition where employees are very interested in the goals, values, and goals of their organization, more than just formal membership because in it like, provide willingness and involvement in seeking efforts to fulfill interests in their organization (Kim, 2005).

Low commitment reflects a person's lack of responsibility in carrying out their duties. Questioning commitment is the same as questioning responsibility, thus, the measure of commitment of a leader who in this case is the principal, teacher is related to delegation of authority (empowerment). In this case, the street level bureaucrat carried out the BDR policy carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic in accordance with the regulations and guidelines related to the implementation of the BDR process. The implementation of education during the pandemic is carried out online in various forms and models adapted to student conditions. The Ministry of Education and Culture through Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 (Circular Letter of the Minister of Education and Culture: Implementation of Education Policy in the Emergency Period of the Spread of COVID-19 in 2020) related to the provisions of the learning process from home, among others: Online or distance learning is carried out from home to provide a meaningful learning experience for students without the burden of completing all curriculum achievements for grade advancement and graduation. Home learning can focus on life skills education, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learning from Home: learning activities and tasks between students may vary according to their interests and circumstances, including considering gaps in access/facilities to study at home; Evidence or products of Learning from Home activities by providing useful qualitative feedback and are not required to provide quantitative assessments. The third dimension of feeling sympathy or affection is measured by two indicators, namely serving the community and feeling the emotional state of others 0.867 and feeling sympathetic and trying to solve problems that exist in society has a lower value of 0.831. Affection is a sympathetic relationship and affective bond with community members (Miao et al., 2019). This dimension is characterized by the desire to help others, reflected in the nature of prioritizing social interests (altruism), participating in feelings felt by others (empathy), having moral convictions and other prosocial desires. This dimension is shown by the attitude of street level bureaucrat who remain patient in serving students. Having the ability to feel the emotional state of others, feel sympathetic and try to solve problems, and understand other people's perspectives, street level

bureaucrat has a dimension of self-sacrifice, especially during the Covid 19 pandemic which carried out the learning process from home where this learning was carried out online and offline.. In online learning, learning uses technological media, even with a simple technology media, namely what sap because it is easy to use both by students and parents at home.

The fourth dimension of self-sacrifice is measured by two indicators of sacrifice if for the good of society has a value of 0.883 and the program of service in society is more meaningful than personal achievement has a low value of 0.791. Research conducted by Piatak & Holt (2020) illustrates that field officers are motivated to go beyond their work to help community members. Self-sacrifice is the willingness to sacrifice one's interests for the help of others. Self-sacrifice in which there is an attitude of love for the motherland, responsibility in carrying out duties (duty) and loyalty. Employees have strong ethics in providing services to the community that are consistent in fulfilling the public interest (Miao et al., 2019). The BDR policy in the city of Serang in its implementation is carried out without regard to time, meaning that the learning process is carried out around the clock, therefore teachers or educators provide services to students anywhere, anytime and innovate in carrying out the learning process from home, so that students do not feel bored. From the measure of PSM Street level bureaucrat revealed that responsibility (commitment) to the public interest on the indicator that is sincere work 0.929 has the highest value, this means that the most dominant factor in public service motivation actions.

CONCLUSION

Street-level bureaucrats as a whole showed a high level of the four dimensions of PSM tested and showed that street-level bureaucrats implemented BDR programs well as a form of fulfilling rights to the community during Covid-19, These findings are in line with previous research on PSM at the street level and offer interesting and unique implications for civil servants who worked overtime during the pandemic. Understanding the motives of street bureaucrats in times of crisis is important to see the success of learning from home programs in accordance with predetermined regulations. During Covid-19, all elements engaged in preparedness by assessing human resource capabilities and starting to develop strategies to utilize existing human resources in new ways and create collaboration between students, parents and teachers. This research explores the unique experiences of street-level bureaucrats working in new programs during the Covid-19 pandemic in implementing learning from home programs. Although there is a lot of research on the various elements of PSM, this work in particular finds the dominant motive for public service motivation (commitment to the public interest in the indicators of genuine employment has the highest value). The study offers implications for governments to pay attention to street-level bureaucrats in providing services to the public. This work also contributes further to understanding the experiences of street-level bureaucrats in times and unprecedented crises and offers examples of how the motives of street-level bureaucrats can be improved to meet the demands of people's needs especially in education during future pandemics and crises.

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