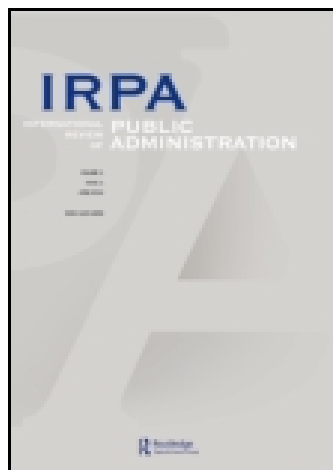


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A Cross-Country Study of the Relationship between Weberian Bureaucracy and Government Performance

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A CROSS-COUNTRY STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WEBERIAN BUREAUCRACY AND GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE*

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This paper challenges the long-term criticism of the efficiency of the Weberian model of bureaucracy, on the hypothesis that its performance or competitiveness might be context specific, as what works best in some bureaucratic settings is unlikely to work to the same degree in others. To perform this assessment, this study analyzes relationships between characteristics of the Weberian model of bureaucracy and government performance in nations possessing different levels of democratic development. The key finding of this research is that the Weberian characteristic of bureaucratic professionalism is most strongly and positively associated with good government performance in nations where democracy is less developed. This can have special implications for developing countries, where democracy is usually not well established and furnishing good governance with a well-functioning bureaucracy is an urgent goal for effective implementation of development programs.

Key words: bureaucracy, Weber, government performance

INTRODUCTION

From a public management perspective, Weberian bureaucracy (WB) has been criticized for the heavy emphasis it places upon efficiency. While no strict definition exists, the concept of WB generally refers to a cluster of administrative values rather than distinct practices, and therefore cannot be directly falsified in the process of administration. As such, WB has served as a prime research subject for the prescription of public sector reforms over the course of the past several decades (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Accordingly, over time scholars have often stereotyped the according to its dysfunctions (e.g., Merton 1957).

More recently, this form of bureaucracy has also sustained heavy criticism from those espousing new public management (NPM). NPM advocates the pursuit of bureaucratic reforms that ostensibly intend to alter the way a bureaucracy functions, primarily through the introduction of “market principles” (Osborne & Gaebler 1992; Hood 1991; Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004; Pollitt 2009). Prominent streams of logic guiding NPM reforms are new institutional economics, which advocates the use of various forms of incentive to bolster employee output, as well as managerialism, which advocates greater emphasis upon results and value, as opposed to process (Hood 1991; Rhodes 1996; Evans & Rauch 1999; Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Thus, ultimately what is advocated by NPM is a shift away from traditional WB and toward more market-based and therefore flexible forms of administrative bureaucracy (Osborne & Gaebler 1992).

However, this debate over the desirability of WB is often couched in rather absolute terms; it is viewed as something that either works well, or not. Yet the appropriateness of such an absolutist perspective has been called into question, with some suggesting the performance of public sector models of bureaucracy may be contingent upon context. To elaborate, previous research has observed that the performance of a bureaucracy is heavily influenced by the characteristics of the environment it operates in (Wilkins & Ouchi 1983; Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Accordingly, cultural, historical, economic, and political contexts may serve to differentiate the performance of WB across different national contexts, implying that the decisions regarding the form of a public sector bureaucracy should take into consideration the context in which it operates (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). As an example, we may consider pioneering work done by Rauch and Evans (2000), which highlighted the importance of the political context of a bureaucracy because, for example, political will to engage in vigorous monitoring and to implement appropriate strategies is often lacking in less politically developed countries.

Few empirical studies of cross-national comparisons on this topic have been conducted (Dahlström et al. 2010), and the reason for this dearth of comparative literature regarding government bureaucracies may be attributable to an absence of reliable data on national bureaucratic structures (Brans 2003, 426; Lapuente 2007, 301; Im et al. 2011). Yet, despite the data limitations, cross-national comparisons of bureaucratic performance are important to pursue because they offer tangible insights into optimal bureaucratic structures for

countries with different contexts.

This research intends to contribute to the discussion over the desirability of WB by empirically examining the relationship between features of WB and bureaucratic performance across different nations, and government competitiveness more generally. Accordingly, the specific research question this study asks is “Do the impacts of WB on performance vary across different political contexts?” More specifically, this research will focus upon addressing the contextual factor of level of democratization, which will be included in our empirical model. This factor is particularly important, as the level of democracy is linked to a variety of contextual factors, related to economic wealth, history, geography, and government competitiveness (Jackman 1975; Rothstein 2005).

Theoretically, the findings of this research will contribute to debates over the benefits associated with WB by demonstrating how certain contextual features, such as level of democratization, may serve to differentiate performance. In terms of practical contributions, the empirical evidence provided by this research will provide practitioners with concrete suggestions for how to pursue administrative reforms that are suitable for particular national contexts. Taken together, the overarching contribution of this research is to shed light on ways in which the civil service can be reformed in order to increase bureaucracy’s ability to foster the competitiveness of government according to certain contextual factors.

The Weberian Model of Bureaucracy and its Virtues

Weberian bureaucracy is referred to most often in a pathological manner. WB is typically contrasted with models of bureaucracy that borrow features from market-oriented bureaucratic structures, although the ideals espoused by WB and NPM are not mutually exclusive and can even be said to hold a lot in common. Neither the WB nor NPM model of bureaucracy is easily defined, as both have theoretical and practical uses. Nevertheless, WB has generally been discussed more from a theoretical perspective, while NPM models of bureaucracy have been discussed from a more practical perspective. These different points of emphasis in the discourse surrounding the two approaches to bureaucracy are likely to cause some degree of confusion. Nevertheless, one commonly agreed-upon point of distinction between the two bureaucratic models is that NPM structures are said to place particular emphasis upon flexibility, which is said to stem from blurring the distinction between the state bureaucracy and other areas of society (Pollitt 2009), while WB is generally said to emphasize rigidity. Accordingly, it is commonly argued that the NPM form of bureaucracy is most adept at dealing with a perpetually changing environment with a basis in market principles (Christensen & Lægreid 2001). On the other hand, WB, which focuses primarily upon the importance of process, has been found by previous research to increase levels of red tape, decrease levels of job satisfaction, lead to a greater sense of alienation among employees, and ultimately reduce levels of organizational performance (DeHart-Davis & Pandey 2005).

Accordingly, this vein of criticism has led to calls to “let managers manage” (Norman 2001), and to the subsequent introduction of market-oriented human resource practices that facilitate lateral entry into the civil service and introduce monetary incentives (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Such changes are said to stimulate an emphasis upon results and flexibility, which may in turn result in the production of public services that better satisfy citizens (Van Ryzin 2007; Brewer 2007; Pollitt 2009). Ostensibly, those who stand to benefit from a more responsive and results-oriented state bureaucracy first and foremost are the citizens.

Another criticism of WB is that it is too insulated from society. Ideally, the state must answer to the demands and needs of citizens and its environment, as opposed to dictating them. However, in WB, citizens’ ability to guide the actions of their bureaucracy is limited, as bureaucracy is separated from actors in its environment, such as citizens. Additionally, given bureaucrats’ obligation to faithfully execute the law, public sector bureaucracy is also said to be separated from political influence. In order to protect bureaucrats from external pressure, Weber (1968) argued that bureaucrats should be anonymous to outsiders, which implied non-transparency. Thus, WB stands in clear contrast to the NPM model, which emphasizes customer-oriented and transparent administration. Here, it is important to emphasize that WB was actually identified by Weber (1968:975) as “efficient” and “rational” way of organizing. Max Weber’s ideal bureaucracy is characterized by features such as rules implemented by neutral officials, merit-based recruitment and career advancement, expert training, rule-based action, clear lines of authority, and hierarchical organization. These features, which Weber considered to be inherent to modern bureaucracy, resulted in its technical superiority over other forms of organization.

Drawing on the original insight of Weber (1968: 1904–1911), Evans and Rauch (1999, 2000) further investigated the virtues of the Weberian model of bureaucracy by focusing on specific features of WB, such as meritocratic recruitment, internal promotion, career stability, and competitive salaries; they identified these characteristics of WB as determinants of bureaucratic performance and predictors of economic growth. This is referred to as the “Weberian state hypothesis.” More interested in low-income countries, Evans (1992, 1995) argued that the replacement of a patronage system by recruitment of state officials to a professional merit-based state bureaucracy is a necessary condition for a nation to be “developmental.” More concretely, they suggest that governments in less developed countries should form what they call Weberian bureaucracy, which has institutional characteristics of meritocratic recruitment through competitive examinations, civil service procedures for hiring and firing rather than political appointments and dismissals, and filling higher levels of the hierarchy through internal promotion.

Evans (1992, 1995) explains how those ingredients of the Weberian state combine to produce good bureaucratic performance. A capable pool of officials can be cultivated by making entry to the bureaucracy conditional on passing a civil service exam, and paying salaries comparable to those for private positions that require similar skills and

responsibility.¹ Internal promotion provides job stability, and this stability forms stronger ties among bureaucrats, in turn improving communication and effectiveness. This causes members of the organization to consider at greater length what their colleagues think of them, which leads to greater adherence to behavioral norms. Their job performance is valued because they entered the bureaucracy on the basis of merit and skill rather than political connections; concerns about how much they can accomplish on behalf of their political clan are less important under this system. Internal promotion generates long-term career rewards that reinforce adherence to codified rules of behavior and can also offer a sense of commitment to corporate goals, thus developing “*esprit de corps*.”

These features of WB are in line with descriptions of Asian bureaucracy by Frederickson(2002) and Ouch(1981). Bureaucracies in countries adhering to Confucian value systemshave for long operated on principles such as recruitment by highly competitive exam, placed strong emphasis on merit and morality, and possessed a strong hierarchy based upon internal promotion and lifetime employment. The Asian bureaucracies run by these personnel administration methods are commonly argued to have produced remarkable performance, as evidenced by the “Asian Tigers” success stories.

Bureaucratic performance is often analyzed based on a principal-agent model in the economics literature. Rauch (1995) attempted to marry this principal-agent framework to the Weberian state hypothesis. In his analytic framework, internal promotion is viewed as the recruitment of the principal from the ranks of agents. The principal is the only actor who exercises power in the sense of deciding or influencing the mix of services the bureaucracy supplies. Rauch assumes individuals have different levels of desire to impose their preferences over collective goods on the public, and imposing preferences requires effective bureaucracy that can fulfill the mission. A principal values exercising power and spends more time and effort supervising his or her agents to insure that agents are implementing the principal’s preferences, while spending less time and effort looking for ways to line his or her own pockets. In order to increase the chances of becoming a principal, agents in an internal promotion system are more responsive to supervision. Because agents who care about power are more likely to become principal, principals are, in turn, more likely to care about power, and as a result principals supervise their agents more closely. By this process, a virtuous circle is generated by internal promotion; internal promotion increases the value or expectation that the principal places on exercising power, and this increases the extent to which the bureaucracy as a whole carries out its assigned tasks of providing public goods, while decreasing the extent to which it implicitly taxes the private sector through large-scale corruption (Rauch 1995).

Weberian Model of Bureaucracy in LDCs

Analysis of incentive-based bureaucratic forms has generated challenges to the Weberian state hypothesis (Rauch & Evans 2000). The meritocratic civil service system

has civil service protection as well as formal examinations. It is argued that civil service protection de-motivates public officials, because firing them is difficult. A civil service system based on WB, in other words, has worse monitoring, from this perspective. Requirements such as formal examinations can prevent qualified outsiders from being hired. In the same respect, internal promotion can function as a barrier to entry that blocks the best candidates, who could be appointed to higher positions in an open system. These arguments are often addressed by NPM advocates in the discussion of bureaucratic reform.

Even though NPM approaches to bureaucratic reform are somewhat contradictory to WB, some have even argued that WB can be seen as a precondition for implementation of NPM reforms (Bale & Dale 1998; Schick 1998). In the 1990s, developmental studies started to debate the applicability of NPM-style reform such as that of New Zealand to less developed countries, and they found that some preconditions were needed as a basis for the NPM reforms to ensure their success (Wallis & Dollery 2001; Common 1998). In New Zealand for example, there was a well-functioning political market; relatively competent civil service with a tradition of political neutrality; little concern about corruption or nepotism; a consistent and well-enforced legal code, including contract law; and a competent but suppressed private sector. It has been argued that an appropriate reform mix for developing countries should reflect major differences in these preconditions, and NPM reforms in developed countries, such as the reform carried out in New Zealand, are simply notable to be transplanted (Bale & Dale 1998; Schick 1998; Wallis & Dollery 2001; Common 1998; Neshkova & Kostadinova 2012). In addition, establishing a modern bureaucracy can be a necessary condition for many developing countries. In the same vein, Randma-Liiv (2008, 2009) highlights specific characteristics in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries as to bureaucratic reforms, summarizing key findings with further suggestions:

It is clear [...] that NPM provides a wrong medicine for the CEE problems. Meanwhile, many of the above-made points refer to the necessity to Weberian principles before introducing modern management mechanisms in CEE [...]. The key for further development in CEE countries is to first ensure the presence of the "Weberian" elements [...] and only then start gradually building the "Neo" elements by introducing individual modern management tools. (Randma-Liiv 2008; 2009, 12–13).

Then why do political context and more specifically democracy matter for the performance of a bureaucratic organization? Rauch and Evans (2000) pointed out shortcomings in assumptions guiding the theoretical predictions made by NPM, indicating that political context can make a difference; the organizational performance of NPM has been advocated according to analysis using the principal-agent model, but Rauch and Evans (2000) argue that this principal-agent approach to NPM can be not applicable to developing

countries. In the principal-agent model supporting NPM, a powerful and determined outside monitor (principal) is believed to reduce corruption and improve delivery of services by his bureaucratic agents (Klitgaard 1991), and the principal can elicit better performance from his agents using strategies such as performance-based pay (Caiden 1988; Aucoin 1990; Boston et al. 1991). However, there is a flaw in this principal-agent approach to NPM in that it assumes away the problems in developing countries, where the political will to engage in vigorous monitoring is lacking, or worse yet, the principal is corrupt (Rauch & Evans 2000; Rauch 1995). In other words, the standard assumption of such a principal-agent approach is that the principal is not corrupt, which misses the reality of what Rauch (1995) called “the predatory state” in less developed countries. In this respect, Rauch (1995) extended the modeling to the side of the principal as well as to the side of the agent to retain the utility of this approach, considering different levels of political control. Rauch (1995) and Rauch and Evans (2000) conclude that WB is better suited to less developed countries than NPM when considering the political context of those countries.

Drawing on the discussion above, the level of democratization in the environment where a government bureaucracy works is likely to be a crucial factor. The failure of previous empirical research to question the impact of democracy on administrative performance is surprising, as the tension between administrative and democratic values has been highlighted for quite some time (Rosenbloom 2008). In particular, from the time of Wilson and his landmark essay, “The Study of Administration” (1887), the question of how to reconcile bureaucratic performance with democratic ideals has remained high on the scholarly research agenda. At the crux of the argument made by Wilson, as well as more contemporary research, is the difficulty in reconciling WB with the democratic demands of popular oversight and accountability (Pollitt 2009). They pointed out the incompatibility between WB and democracy.

Among the empirical studies, Rauch and Evans (2000) have tested the relationship between the aforementioned structural characteristics of WB and bureaucratic performance, focusing their analysis in particular upon WB’s impact on economic growth in developing nations (Evans & Rauch 2000). Their empirical studies have made initial steps toward testing so the called Weberian state hypothesis, but their data and empirical modeling needs to be elaborated upon. More specifically, the empirical studies by Rauch and Evans conducted statistical tests using only a sample of less developed countries, but did not explicitly assess the role of political context as a key moderator in their theoretical modeling. Therefore, this study tested the moderating role of democracy to see whether the political context is actually a factor that differentiates the performance of WB. Further, Evans and Rauch collected data from thirty-five countries, and so there is a need to check the reliability of the result by testing it with a larger sample of nations.

Our study used recently collected Quality of Government data that cover more than one hundred countries, providing better rigor to the results. Rauch and Evans measured bureaucratic performance with proxy measures such as corruption or the economic growth

rate, but we think government performance indices can be a better measure because they are closer to the theoretical approach used by Rauch (1999). Therefore, this study uses government performance indices as a dependent variable.

Dimensions of the Weberian Model of Bureaucracy

As we mentioned earlier, this study focuses on several specific features of WB as identified by Rauch and Evans (2000). Those features are meritocratic recruitment, internal promotion, career stability, and competitive salaries. While they identified these features independently, Dahlström et al. (2011) assert that there are structural dimensions with respect to what Rauch and Evans call Weberian features. Using expert survey data, Dahlström et al. (2011) grouped the Weberian features by factor analysis methods, and found that the features can be categorized into three dimensions, which they labeled bureaucratic professionalism, bureaucratic closedness, and competitive salaries.

Bureaucratic professionalism can be thought of as placing greater emphasis upon the merit-based qualities of potential members of the state bureaucracy (Berman et al. 2010; Teodoro 2010) and therefore judging applicants according to their “technical knowledge” (Stewart 1985), as opposed to their political loyalties (Neshkova & Kostadinova 2012). Thus, professionalism-oriented bureaucracies are beneficial, as they serve to imbue state bureaucracies with capacity (Haga et al. 1974). Commonly, senior-level positions are filled by internally promoting members of the organization (Rauch & Evans 2000, Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004). Promotions are based upon a mixture of seniority and performance, as opposed to political affiliations and loyalty (Pollitt 2009). Dahlström et al. (2011) see the dimension of bureaucratic professionalism as a mixture of meritocratic recruitment and internally recruited senior officials.

The second dimension is bureaucratic closedness. In their research on twentieth-century civil service systems, Auer and colleagues (1996) created a two-type typology of the national bureaucracies they studied with a focus on hiring practices. These two types of state bureaucracy were categorized as “open” civil service systems (e.g., U.S., UK, Netherlands) and “closed” civil service systems (e.g., France, Germany, Spain). Bekke and Van der Meer (2000), finding cleavages similar to those found by Auer et al., clarify the “open” and “closed” system typology, asserting that an “open” system is characterized by hiring practices in the state bureaucracy similar to those of the private sector, implying freer movement of employees into and out of the public sector. In contrast, “closed” systems are marked by restrictions to entry into the administrative system in the form of a rigorous civil service examination and low incentive to move out of the state administrative system due to the prospect of lifetime tenure (Auer et al. 1996). Dahlström et al. (2011) view the dimension of bureaucratic closedness as a mixture of a formal examination system, lifelong tenure, and regulation by special employment laws.

Competitive salaries are a relatively straightforward component of WB. In order to

attract competent personnel, salaries offered in the public sector must be on par with those offered in the private sector (Rauch & Evans 2000). Failure to offer such salaries runs the risk of attracting personnel from a less talented labor pool, or not attracting personnel at all. Our study put less emphasis on this feature of WB, because this research focused mainly on the role of political context in the relationship between WB and government performance, and competitive salary, Rauch and Evans posit, is less influenced by political context in terms of its impact on performance. We do not, however, neglect the role of monetary rewards in forming competitive bureaucracy, therefore we tested the effect of performance-based pay, which is what NPM reform strategy emphasizes. In other words, we tested two types of monetary reward, one advocated by WB and the other advocated by NPM, even though those two are not conflicting strategies but, rather, complementary.

Model and Methodology

In order to test WB's applicability to different contexts, here we must designate bureaucratic "efficiency" as the dependent variable. Although there is a lack of internationally comparable data on bureaucratic efficiency, several datasets of overall government performance exist. These indicators of government performance are weak in exclusively measuring bureaucratic efficiency, because those indicators are a composite of different aspects of the performance of various government activities. Yet these indicators are still valid as a proxy for bureaucratic efficiency. Thus, the dependent variable of this study is government performance, while the independent variable is the degree to which the features of the Weberian model of bureaucracy are present. More precisely, we will examine bureaucratic professionalism, bureaucratic closedness, and competitive salaries as independent variables.

To see the moderating role of democracy, we used an interaction term between bureaucratic professionalism and democracy, and between bureaucratic closedness and democracy. We don't consider the interaction between competitive salaries and democracy, because competitive salary is actually somewhat context-free, as we discussed earlier. For the controlling factors, we considered the level of economic development and that of parliamentary power, which are identified as effective and useful variables to reduce the problem of endogeneity caused by omitted factors.

In performing our analysis, this paper uses the Quality of Government Institute's Quality of Government Survey to measure the bureaucratic characteristics of a country. We have supplemented the Quality of Government Institute's survey data in order to address other contemporary bureaucratic perspectives, such as new public management (Pollitt & Bouckaert 2004), with data on factors such as performance-based pay (Rothstein & Teorell 2008). A detailed explanation of the Quality of Government data, including survey questionnaires, is given in Appendix 1.

The Quality of Government Institute first conducted the survey in 2008, and then

updated it in 2010 with expanded country coverage. Considering possible systematic errors in combining the two survey datasets, our study conducted data analysis for both survey datasets and compared the results in order to check the reliability and consistency of our findings.

The countries that each dataset includes are listed in Table 1. The survey questionnaires of bureaucratic professionalism and closedness are measured by a 1–10 scale; however we standardized the variables into a range from -3 to 3.

Table 1. Countries in QoG Expert Survey Data in 2008 and in 2010

| QoG data 2008 | QoG data 2010 |
|---|--|
| Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan | Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela |
| N=55 | N=103 |

For other variables, we have used data from the World Bank, ICRG, and Freedom House, which are all widely used in comparative research. The data source for each variable is listed in Table 1. We used two different indicators as dependent variables in order

to enhance the robustness of our findings: the World Bank's Government Effectiveness indicator and ICRG's Quality of Government indicator. The Government Effectiveness (World Bank) index combines into a single grouping the responses on indicators such as quality of public service provision, quality of the bureaucracy, competence of civil servants, and credibility of the government's commitment to policies, while in the Quality of Government (ICRG) index, high points are given to countries where the bureaucracy has the strength and expertise to govern without drastic changes in policy or interruptions in government services.

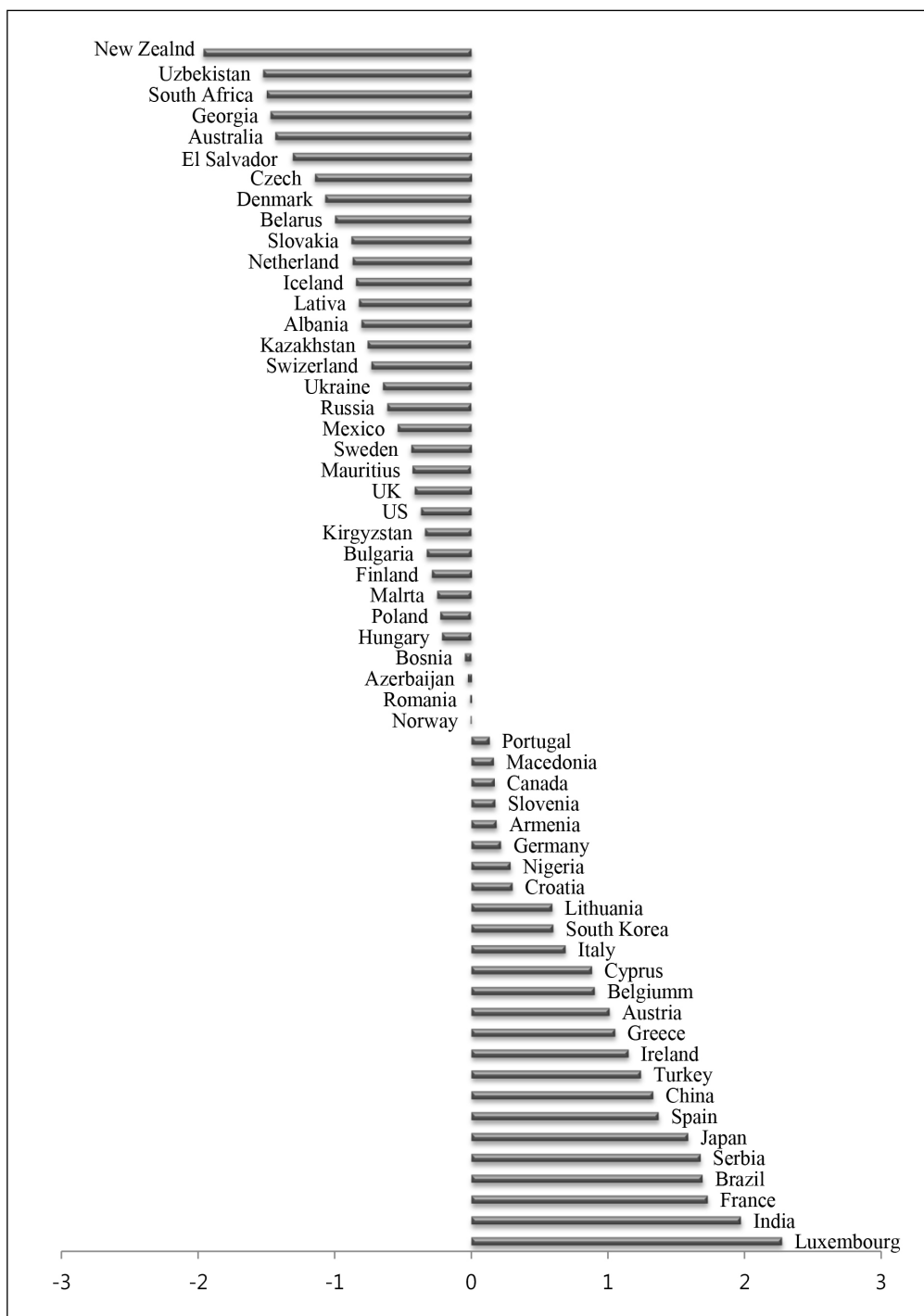
Results

Table 2 presents the summary statistics. The source of each variable is in parentheses. We standardized the scores of bureaucratic professionalism and bureaucratic closedness; therefore the standard deviations of these indicators are exactly 1.00, with a mean of zero.

Table 2. Summary Statistics

| Variable (source) | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|---|----------|-----------|---------|----------|
| Quality of Government (ICRG) | 0.66 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 1.00 |
| Government Effectiveness (World Bank) | 0.70 | 1.09 | -1.12 | 2.25 |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism (QoG 2008) | 0.00 | 1.00 | -1.96 | 2.28 |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism (QoG 2010) | 0.00 | 1.00 | -1.97 | 2.27 |
| Bureaucratic Closedness (QoG 2008) | 0.00 | 1.00 | -2.16 | 2.18 |
| Bureaucratic Closedness (QoG 2010) | 0.00 | 1.00 | -2.16 | 2.17 |
| Performance based pay (QoG 2008) | 3.25 | 0.98 | 1.00 | 5.33 |
| Performance based pay (QoG 2010) | 3.01 | 1.19 | 1.00 | 7.00 |
| Competitive Salary (QoG 2008) | 3.46 | 1.10 | 1.67 | 6.00 |
| Competitive Salary (QoG 2010) | 3.10 | 1.17 | 1.00 | 7.00 |
| Per Capita GDP (World Bank) | 15476.74 | 10535.11 | 1088.51 | 48589.14 |
| Parliamentary Powers (Fish and Kroenig, 2009) | 0.65 | 0.15 | 0.25 | 0.84 |
| Democracy (Freedom House) | 8.24 | 2.61 | 0.67 | 10.00 |

Figure 1 describes relative differences in the level of bureaucratic closedness for each country in the 2008 QoG dataset. We can see from the figure that New Zealand, Uzbekistan, South Africa, Georgia, and Australia have the most open bureaucracies, while Luxembourg, India, France, Brazil, and Serbia have relatively closed bureaucratic systems.

Figure 1. Bureaucratic closedness in 2008 data

The scores for bureaucratic professionalism in the sample countries are shown in Figure 2, which reveals that bureaucracies in Macedonia, South Africa, Serbia, Albania, and Bosnia are the most politicized, while those in New Zealand, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are the most professionalized.

Figure 2. Bureaucratic professionalism in 2008 data



Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis testing the relationships between Weberianess variables and government performance indicators with the 2008 QoG dataset. Model 1 is the base model, which includes Weberianess variables and control variables. Model 2 added the democracy variable and the democracy variable multiplied by the bureaucratic professionalism variable in order to test the moderating role of the democracy variable in the relationship between professionalism and government performance. Model 3 tests the moderating role of democracy in the relationship between bureaucratic closedness and government performance in the same way. Model 4 includes both democracy variables multiplied by professionalism and the democracy variable multiplied by closedness.

Table 3. Regression Results for Government Performance Indicators (2008 data)

| | Government Effectiveness (World Bank) | | | | Quality of Government (ICRG) | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Model 1-1 | Model 2-1 | Model 3-1 | Model 4-1 | Model 1-2 | Model 2-2 | Model 3-2 | Model 4-2 |
| Constant | -1.718*** (0.344) | -1.277*** (0.303) | -1.296** (0.308) | -1.132*** (0.299) | 0.248* (0.081) | 0.325*** (0.083) | 0.269** (0.082) | 0.327*** (0.085) |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism | 0.165* (0.074) | 0.848** (0.300) | 0.161* (0.064) | 0.865** (0.288) | 0.079** (0.017) | 0.291** (0.101) | 0.077*** (0.018) | 0.085* (0.119) |
| Bureaucratic Closedness | 0.034 (0.056) | -0.023 (0.049) | 0.270 (0.146) | 0.263 (0.139) | -0.013 (0.013) | -0.024 (0.013) | 0.026 (0.055) | -0.038 (0.063) |
| Performance-based Pay | 0.076 (0.066) | 0.065 (0.056) | 0.048 (0.058) | 0.037 (0.055) | 0.002 (0.015) | -0.001 (0.015) | -0.001 (0.016) | -0.0007 (0.015) |
| Competitive Salary | -0.054 (0.049) | -0.096* (0.043) | -0.080 (0.045) | -0.070 (0.043) | -0.002 (0.011) | -0.002 (0.011) | -0.004 (0.012) | -0.002 (0.011) |
| Per Capita GDP | 7.64e-05*** (7.88e-06) | 6.46e-05*** (7.87e-06) | 6.51e-05*** (8.12e-06) | 6.97e-05*** (7.91e-06) | 1.34e-05*** (1.75e-06) | 1.32e-05*** (1.98e-06) | 1.28e-05*** (2.17e-06) | 1.31e-05*** (2.11e-06) |
| Parliamentary Powers | 1.803** (0.376) | 0.296 (0.491) | 0.231 (0.499) | 0.233 (0.473) | 0.278* (0.087) | 0.128 (0.124) | 0.140 (0.140) | 0.130 (0.126) |
| Democracy | | 0.116** (0.034) | 0.117*** (0.034) | 0.098** (0.033) | 0.233(0.473) | 0.006 (0.009) | 0.011 (0.009) | 0.006 (0.009) |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism * Democracy | | -0.075* (0.033) | | -8.080* (0.032) | | -0.023* (0.011) | | -0.024 (0.012) |
| Bureaucratic Closedness * Democracy | | | -0.033 (0.017) | -0.035* (0.016) | | | -0.004 (0.006) | 0.001 (0.006) |
| N of Observations | 55 | | | | | | | |

Note: statistically significant at * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$, standard errors are in parentheses

The results in Table 3 suggest that bureaucratic professionalism is significantly and positively associated with government performance in all models, both when the dependent variable is measured by the World Bank indicator and when measured by the ICRG indicator. This means that government performs better when the bureaucracy is professionalized in a Weberian sense. The moderators show significant relationships; the interaction term between democracy and professionalism presents a significant and negative relationship with government performance in model 2-1, model 4-1, and model 2-2, and democracy multiplied by closedness shows a significant and negative relationship with government performance only in model 4-1, while remaining insignificant in other models. In other words, the moderating role of democracy is more consistently significant in the analysis when it moderates the relationship between professionalism and government performance, which implies that the moderating role of professionalism is stronger in less democratic countries. This finding is particularly interesting, as it means that staffing policies pursued within a democratic context may impact government effectiveness and quality differently.

The Weberian characteristics of bureaucratic closedness and performance-based pay were found to have no significant relationship with regard to quality of governance and the effectiveness of government, in both the presence and the absence of democracy. Thus these results suggest that the flow of staff into and out of the state bureaucracy has little to no influence upon the effectiveness and quality of the work performed. In other words, reforms such as those often guided by NPM doctrines that favor increasing mobility between public and private organizations have little influence upon government competitiveness. Further, the lack of a significant relationship between performance-based pay and government effectiveness and quality offers, though partial, support for the arguments made by public service motivation (PSM) advocates who argue that members of the government bureaucracy may be motivated by more than just personal gain (Perry & Wise 1990; Perry et al. 2010).

Still more possible support for PSM may be found in the suggested relationship between competitive salary and government effectiveness and quality. Competitive salary was found to have a significant relationship with government effectiveness only in model 2-1, while it remains insignificant in other models.

For control variables, per capita GDP shows a very consistent and significant relationship with the dependent variable, while other variables do not show consistent results, though they are partially significant in some of the models.

As mentioned earlier, we tested the same models with QoG 2010 survey data in order to check for systematic errors when changes are made in country coverage and data collection. The tests with 2010 data show results consistent with analysis of the 2008 data, as we can see from Table 4.

Table 4. Regression Results for Government Effectiveness Indicators (2010 data)

| | Government Effectiveness (World Bank) | | | | Quality of Government (ICRG) | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Model 1-1 | Model 2-1 | Model 3-1 | Model 4-1 | Model 1-2 | Model 2-2 | Model 3-2 | Model 4-2 |
| Constant | -1.403*** (0.175) | -1.363*** (0.158) | -1.396*** (0.155) | -1.369*** (0.151) | 0.322*** (0.041) | 0.332*** (0.041) | 0.320*** (0.041) | 0.329*** (0.041) |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism | 0.222*** (0.059) | 0.682*** (0.161) | 0.183*** (0.053) | 0.589*** (0.156) | 0.087*** (0.014) | 0.168*** (0.042) | 0.083*** (0.014) | 0.158*** (0.044) |
| Bureaucratic Closedness | 0.053 (0.049) | 0.026 (0.045) | 0.473*** (0.124) | 0.402* (0.123) | -0.014 (0.011) | -0.019 (0.011) | 0.038 (0.046) | 0.015 (0.047) |
| Performance-based Pay | 0.057 (0.038) | 0.040 (0.034) | 0.053 (0.033) | 0.038 (0.032) | -0.004 (0.008) | -0.009 (0.009) | -0.006 (0.009) | -0.009 (0.009) |
| Competitive Salary | -0.002 (0.035) | -0.014 (0.031) | 0.004*** (0.031) | -0.003 (0.030) | -0.002 (0.008) | -0.004 (0.008) | -0.002 (0.008) | -0.003 (0.008) |
| Per Capita GDP | 7.49E-5*** (5.68E-06) | 7.35E-5*** (5.41E-06) | 7.26E-5*** (5.26E-06) | 7.54E-5*** (5.19E-06) | 1.33E-5*** (1.30E-06) | 1.36E-5*** (1.35E-06) | 1.34E-5*** (1.37E-06) | 1.38E-5*** (1.37E-06) |
| Parliamentary Powers | 1.196*** (0.258) | 0.352 (0.337) | 0.239 (0.332) | 0.307 (0.322) | 0.206*** (0.059) | 0.182* (0.085) | 0.162 (0.087) | 0.174* (0.086) |
| Democracy | | 0.078*** (0.021) | 0.076*** (0.020) | 0.075*** (0.020) | | 0.002 (0.005) | 0.003 (0.005) | 0.008* (0.004) |
| Bureaucratic Professionalism * Democracy | | -0.057** (0.018) | | -0.049** (0.018) | | -0.009* (0.004) | | -0.008 (0.004) |
| Bureaucratic Closedness * Democracy | | | -0.052*** (0.014) | -0.047** (0.014) | | | -0.006 (0.005) | -0.004 (0.005) |
| N of Observations | 103 | | | | | | | |

Note: statistically significant at * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$, standard errors are in parenthesis

Bureaucratic professionalism presents a significant and positive relationship with government performance variables in all models. The interaction terms show similar results with the 2008 data analysis: Professionalism multiplied by democracy shows a significant and negative relationship with government performance in model 2-1, model 4-1, and model 2-2, and the interaction term between bureaucratic closedness and democracy is significantly and negatively associated with government performance in model 3-1 and model 4-1.

Implications and Conclusion

The Weberian model of bureaucracy possesses core components of bureaucratic

professionalism, bureaucratic closedness, and competitive salaries (Evans 1995; Rauch 1995; Evans & Rauch 1999; Rauch & Evans 2000; Neshkova & Kostadinova 2012). Rauch and Evans (2000) claim that these elements are essential, as they facilitate monitoring of the work done by the bureaucracy, serve to prevent corruption, and work as an “effective set of internal controls.” As such, these characteristics are mechanisms that are believed to serve to rationalize and formalize relationships and processes within government bureaucracy (Rauch 1995). Through the rationalization and formalization of relationships and processes within government bureaucracy, these core attributes of the Weberian model of bureaucracy are said to combine to produce enhanced bureaucratic performance, as they move state bureaucracies away from informal patronage paradigms toward those of a professional bureaucracy (Nigro et al. 2007).

Of the features associated with WB, our findings suggest that bureaucratic professionalism is the only feature to consistently and positively affect the quality and effectiveness of government, regardless of context. However, perhaps more interestingly, our study also illustrates that bureaucratic professionalism functions differently within different democratic contexts. More specifically, the results of our analysis indicate that bureaucratic professionalism works better in less democratic countries in terms of its impact on bureaucratic performance. As such, these findings offer interesting theoretical and practical implications.

In terms of theoretical implications, the differing impact of professionalism on performance, according to level of democratic development, at a broad level suggests that a single conceptualization of “good governance” may not exist. For example, Andrews (2010) has suggested that countries that perform well on commonly accepted “good governance indicators” often possess different administrative features. Accordingly, the author argues that the meaning of good government is likely to vary according to context (Andrews, 2010: 2). Indeed, the results of this research offer similar theoretical implications, as they contribute to the debate on whether establishing a framework of “best administrative practices” is a feasible objective. In other words, the results and therefore desirability of bureaucratic reform efforts will vary by context. Rose (1993) has argued that the extent to which the administrative practices of one country can be successfully implemented in another is largely, if not entirely, contingent upon the institutional characteristics of the nation adopting the administrative practices. Guided by such logic, it is likely that the level of democracy within a particular national context will also influence the way administrative features associated with that state’s bureaucracy function, such as those associated with WB.

To build upon the point above, the mitigating effect of democratic development on the positive influence of professionalism on performance suggests that in more democratically developed contexts, it may be better for the bureaucracy to be less insulated than in developing contexts. To this end, while definitions of good government may hold constant, the paths to good government may differ.

In terms of the practical implications, most notably this research has found that of the features associated with WB, professionalism may be the most important with respect to performance. Moreover, the findings of this research also imply that, in terms of personnel policies of the public sector, different approaches should be taken according to the level of democratic development. In particular, those nations possessing higher levels of democratic development may be advised to pursue employment policies that permit political nominations to senior-level posts, for example, whereas in less democratically developed nations such practices should be avoided.

The aforementioned practical implication is embedded within a broader vein of literature related to corruption and democratization. A curvilinear relationship (inverted “u”) is found to exist between levels of democratization and corruption; as democratization begins, corruption is said to increase to a certain level of democratization, and then eventually decrease (Rock 2008). Therefore, as professionalism is a useful tool in combating corruption, it is a particularly useful personnel practice during the beginning of the democratic transition phase, but the effect gradually reduces over time as the nation becomes increasingly democratized and is therefore less susceptible to corruption (Rock 2008; Neshkova & Kostadinova 2012).

NOTES

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1. However, not accounted for by Evans is that a “comparable” salary is not possible for bureaucrats in most developing countries.

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APPENDIX 1. Quality of Government data

The Quality of Government Institute at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, conducted an online survey from September 2008 to 2010, targeting public administration experts in a multitude of countries. The sample of experts was obtained by drawing on a pool of members of four major international academic public administration networks (NISPACEE, EGPA, EIPA, and SOG). This was elaborated upon by performing Internet searches, making use of personal contacts, drawing on a list of experts recruited from a pilot survey, and incorporating a limited snowballing component. In sum, a sample of 1,361 persons was obtained, of whom 528, or 39 percent, responded.

The survey's questions for key characteristics are as follows:

(1) Bureaucratic Professionalism

- * Meritocratic recruitment – Q. When recruiting public sector employees, the skills and merits of the applicants decide who gets the job?
- * Political recruitment – Q. When recruiting public employees, the political connections of the applicants decide who gets the job? (reverse)
- * Political elite recruits senior officials – Q. The top political leadership hires and fires senior public officials? (reverse)
- * Senior officials internally recruited – Q. Senior public officials are recruited from within the ranks of the public sector?

(2) Bureaucratic Closed-ness

- * Formal examination system – Q. Public sector employees are hired via a formal examination system?
- * Lifelong careers – Q. Once one is recruited as a public sector employee, one stays a public sector employee for the rest of one's career?
- * Special employment laws – Q. The terms of employment for public sector employees are regulated by special laws that do not apply to private sector employees?

(3) Competitive Salary

- * Salary – Q. Senior officials have salaries that are comparable with the salaries of private sector managers with roughly similar training and responsibilities?

(4) Performance-based pay

- * Performance-based pay – Q. Salaries of public sector employees are linked to appraisals of their performance?