DISSERTATION

THE ROLE OF MANAGERIAL MOTIVATING LANGUAGE IN TURNOVER INTENTION OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Submitted by

Marina M. Brito

School of Education

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Doctoral Committee:

Advisor: Thomas J. Chermack

Dae Seok Chai
Cliff Thomas
Samantha A. Conroy

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF MANAGERIAL MOTIVATING LANGUAGE IN TURNOVER INTENTION OF PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES

This study examined the relationships between three types of managerial motivating language, including a) direction-giving language, b) meaning-making language, and c) empathetic language, and employee turnover intention in the public sector environment. The mediating effect of public service motivation was also examined. Motivating language theory guided this study, variable selection, and hypothesis development.

An online questionnaire was distributed to public sector employees of four local government organizations in Utah, US. Descriptive statistics, reliability, correlation, common method variance, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and bootstrapping were used in this study. The results of the analysis confirmed that the hypothesized conceptual model was supported by data. The path analysis showed that motivating language was significantly and negatively associated with public employee turnover intention. Public service motivation did not have a mediating effect on this relationship.

The findings supported the application of motivating language theory to the public sector environment with some nuances. The significance of the study includes a deeper understanding of motivating language theory, managerial motivating communication in public sector organizations, and practical applicability of results to leadership development training programs that may influence organizational outcomes including employee turnover intention.

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Finally, my deepest appreciation to my family: my son, my father, my husband, my sister, my niece, and to my friends for their patience, ongoing support, and unconditional love.

DEDICATION

To my loving father, Mirza Gasanovich Charandaev,

who always encouraged me to strive for perfection in everything I do and to my mother,

Zuleyhat Magomedovna Charandaeva, who is always in my thoughts and in my heart.

To my wonderful, beloved family, who have been there for me every step of the way cheering

me up, supporting me, helping me on my journey,

my son Ilya, my husband Gary, and my sister Lena.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover has been a focus of academic research for over 100 years. Organizations pay a high price for employee turnover including replacing employees, as well as the loss of tacit organization-specific knowledge and experience, continuity, and quality of service, all of which can critically impact organizational performance and survival (Obalum et al., 2021). In 2019, Gallup, an analytic and consulting firm, claimed that American businesses were losing about $1 trillion dollars annually in voluntary employee turnover with the cost of replacing an employee varying from one half to twice the annual salary of the departing employee (Wigert, 2019). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024), the employee turnover rate for the first month of 2024 was about 5.6% nationwide for private sector industries and 3.8% for public sector organizations. At the average nationwide weekly wage rate of $1,070 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023), the cost of replacing one employee may vary from $27,820 to $111,280. As organizations strive to gain a competitive advantage, reducing employee turnover may present a potential area of cost savings by applying the right human resource management tools and tailoring leadership strategies (Stachova et al., 2021).

COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 changed the turnover dynamics along with causing a world-wide unprecedented economic, social, psychological, and political turmoil. Public sector organizations led the crisis response efforts at the federal and local government levels (Schuster et al., 2020). Many first-responder public health and law enforcement employees experienced adverse effects from the stress of the pandemic (Cole et al., 2021: Johnson et al., 2020: Pappa et al., 2020). Research has shown that stress and safety concerns can demotivate public servants and increase turnover intention (Andreescu & Vito, 2021; Deng et al., 2019).

While private sector organizations are less financially restrained in budget allocations and can attempt to lower employee turnover by using one of motivational tools, increasing extrinsic rewards (e.g., offering higher salaries and more lucrative benefits and perks), public organizations are restricted by public funds management regulations, as they are funded by taxpayers. Based on Gallup's estimation of the turnover cost, a 3.8% turnover can cost a public entity of 1,000 employees about $1 million to $4 million depending on the position. This taxpayer money could instead be spent on public services that benefit communities. Since throwing money at a problem is not a viable option for public entities, they may be interested in other, low-cost forms of motivation to reduce employee turnover.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, some public servants could minimize the risk of exposure to the virus (e.g., teleworking or modified services), while other public service employees, such as police officers and public health workers, were put in danger daily based on the nature of their work. Although these workers displayed selfless behavior to ensure service continuity (Kauzya & Nieland, 2020), it is unclear what motivated these public employees to endure the stress and danger and keep doing their work. The circumstances of COVID-19 have highlighted the question of how public organizations can continue to motivate employees who face danger and are stressed from their work. The question of efficiently and effectively motivating public servants has become a cornerstone of public management (Breaugh, 2021).

Given the cost of employee turnover and the impact on organizations' competitive advantage, scholars have extensively studied employee turnover in various environments (Gilani & Rabbani, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020; Vermooten et al., 2019). While several studies have explored antecedents and outcomes of employee turnover, some areas in the public sector context have not been sufficiently examined, including low-cost intrinsic antecedents, such as

managerial motivating language (ML) and public service motivation (PSM). The lower turnover rate in public organizations compared to private organizations may indicate that other factors specific to the public sector environment (e.g., PSM) influence the workforce. This gap warrants closer attention as it can provide insights for scholars and human resource management practitioners and ultimately lead to a low-cost solution to reduce employee turnover in public sector organizations.

Problem Statement

Given the cost and impact of employee turnover on organizations, it is not surprising that this topic has generated wide attention among scholars and practitioners for over 100 years. Several recent studies have pointed out that the main driving force of employee turnover is a manager who works directly in the employee's immediate work environment (Ivanova, 2019; Malek et al., 2018; Reina et al., 2018). The manager is one of "the most salient aspects of employees' work lives" (Zimmerman et al., 2018, p. 101). Thus, the manager's behavior, personality, management style, and communication are likely to impact employee morale, motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and individual and organizational performance. However, according to Rubenstein et al. (2017), the most researched causes of employee turnover are job satisfaction and organizational commitment, with four and three times more research, respectively, conducted on these areas compared to research on leadership/management as an antecedent of employee turnover. Hence, more research on managerial communication's impact on employee turnover is necessary.

Managerial communication is a significant aspect of employees' daily work environment, as managers spend most of their days alongside their subordinates guiding, correcting, advising, and relating to the employees. Motivating language is an integral part of managerial

communication that affects intrinsic employee motivation (Sullivan, 1988) and employee turnover (Kwon & You, 2021). One school of thought is that employees in the public sector are driven by PSM, a different type of motivation that is other-oriented. It is unlike intrinsic motivation, which is self-oriented (Perry & Porter, 1982; Deci & Ryan, 2012). However, research on the role of ML in employee turnover in the public sector is scarce and merits further attention.

Managerial communication is a frequent component of human resource development programs, including leadership development. However, human resource development programs that have been borrowed from the private sector often lack adequate adaptation to the public sector environment (Nielsen et al., 2020). Given that the annual cost of leadership development is $166 billion (Westfall, 2019), organizations with limited financial resources, including public organizations, may benefit from exploring lower cost aspects of leadership training that have an impact on employee turnover for efficiency, including ML and PSM. PSM is a unique characteristic of the public sector and makes public organizations different from private organizations. Thus, more research is warranted on the use of ML in the PSM-driven environment of public organizations, as it would aid in designing effective and efficient leadership development programs.

Purpose of the Study

Extant research has focused on turnover intention as a proxy to actual employee turnover. Although the two concepts are not identical (Bolt, 2022), turnover intention serves as a good predictor of actual behavior (Chang et al., 2013; Jia et al., 2022). This study examined the relationship between employee turnover intention in the public sector environment and ML in aggregate and the subtypes: (a) direction-giving language, (b) meaning-making language, and (c)

empathetic language. Thus, the independent variables for this study were (a) ML, (b) direction-giving language, (c) meaning-making language, and (d) empathetic language. The dependent variable was employee turnover intention. The mediating effect of PSM on the relationships between ML and the components and employee turnover intention was also examined, as shown in Figure 1.

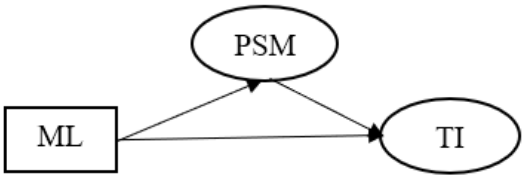

Figure 1. *Simplified Model of the Study*

Note. ML = motivating language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention.

Theoretical Framework

Motivating language theory (MLT) guided this study (Sullivan, 1988). According to MLT, ML affects organizational and individual outcomes including employee turnover intention through intrinsic motivation. ML is an independent variable in this study and comprises: (1) uncertainty-reducing or direction-giving communication, such as goal setting, tasks, policies, and rules (perlocutionary language); (2) communication related to meaning-making and to the creation of mental models (locutionary language); and (3) communication offering encouragement and showing concern and bonding (illocutionary language). Extant research has confirmed a negative relationship between ML and employee turnover intention, the dependent variable in this study (Kwon & You, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2017).

MLT has been primarily researched in private sector organizations. However, the public sector environment introduces a special type of motivation, PSM, which is different from

intrinsic motivation and is more in line with other types of self-determined motivation including internalized motivation and integrated motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Research on MLT in conjunction with turnover intention in the public sector environment with a special focus on PSM is quite rare. This study explores the effects of managerial communication or ML on employee turnover intention and PSM as a possible mediator using MLT among public sector employees.

Operational Definition of Terms

Human Resource Development

No universal definition has been established for human resource development, as it is a fairly young field of science (McLean, 2017). Definitions of HRD have at least three perspectives: (1) focus on functional components, such as performance (Swanson & Holton, 2008); (2) focus on societal and political values (Harbison & Myers, 1964, as cited in Wang et al., 2016); and (3) a combination of functions and values (McLean, 2017). Wang et al. (2016) proposed the following definition of human resource development: "value-neutral, multi-dimensional, and applicable to all host systems without presumed sociopolitical, ideological, historical, cultural, or organizational contexts" and as "a mechanism in shaping individual and group values and beliefs and skilling through learning-related activities to support the desired performance of the host system" (p. 1175).

Motivating Language

ML is spoken manager-to-subordinate communication that is dyadic, one-directional, and affects intrinsic employee motivation (Sullivan, 1988). ML includes three subtypes: (1) direction-giving language; (2) meaning-making language, and (3) empathetic language.

Direction-Giving or Perlocutionary Language

The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines *perlocution* as "an act of speaking or writing which has an action as its aim but which in itself does not affect or constitute the action, for example persuading or convincing." In the original Latin, *locutio* means "speaking" and per- means "throughout." Austin (1962) briefly summarized the definition of a perlocutionary act as "the achieving of certain effects by saying something" (p. 126). This type of language satisfies employees' need for information and aligns with the motivational theories that focus on goal setting, incentives, rewards, job characteristics, expectancy, and other information deficiency.

Meaning-Making or Locutionary Language

The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines *locution* as "an utterance regarded in terms of its intrinsic meaning or reference, as distinct from its function or purpose in context." Locution involves meaning (Austin, 1962) and giving food for thought, which helps employees form concepts and meaning for work. Sullivan (1988) also noted that, "To motivate is to facilitate the communication that leads to meaning making" (p. 106). However, this type of communication is not an intentional act. Examples of communication that fosters the creation of mental models of work meaning and employees' place/role in an organization include gossip, small talk, metaphors, informal conversations about organizational values, myths, and narratives of organizational history or members (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Sullivan, 1988).

Empathetic or Illocutionary Language

The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines *illocution* as "an act of speaking or writing which in itself affects or constitutes the intended action, e.g., ordering, warning, or promising." Austin (1962) described illocutionary speech as an act "which has a certain force in saying something" (p. 126). Illocutionary or empathetic communication "says nothing meaningful about

the world, nor is it instrumental" (Sullivan, 1988, p. 109). In other words, this type of communication is an end in itself and is unique to humans. Nonverbal emotional connotations, gestures, facial expressions, tone, and prosody of utterances displaying empathy and relatedness affect employees on an emotional level and stimulate them to relate and reciprocate accordingly.

Public Sector

The public sector is a segment of the economy comprising government organizations, including federal, local, municipal entities, and school districts. Public sector organizations represent public authority and enforce public policies.

Public Service Motivation

PSM is the motivation to perform public service. Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.) defines public service as "a service rendered in the public interest; governmental employment." However, public service goes beyond the locus of employment, as employees in the private sector, non-profit organizations, and volunteers can also be driven by the desire to serve the public (Taylor, 2010). Staats (1988) claimed that the perception of public service is often synonymous with government service, as it involves meaningful work for the government, community, and social service. In this study, the seminal definition of PSM is used that was provided by Perry and Wise (1990), who stated that PSM is "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions" (p. 368).

Turnover Intention

Although actual turnover and turnover intention are not identical concepts (Bolt, 2022), turnover intention has been widely used as a proxy for actual turnover. For example, when an employee experiences turnover intention, there is a high probability the employee is considering leaving the organization (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). Under certain conditions, such as a

negative change in the internal environment or an increase in the availability of desirable jobs on the market, the intention may lead to actual behavior (Chang et al, 2013).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Two main research questions guided this study. First, what is the relationship between ML and employee turnover intention in the public sector? Second, does PSM affect the relationship between ML and employee turnover intention in the public sector? Based on these overarching questions, 10 research hypotheses are tested in this study (see Figure 2):

H1: Direction-giving language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H2: Meaning-making language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H3: Empathetic language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H4: ML, as a combination of direction-giving language, meaning-making language, and empathetic language, is negatively related to employee turnover intention to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.

H5: Direction-giving language is positively related to public service motivation.

H6: Meaning-making language is positively related to public service motivation.

H7: Empathetic language is positively related to public service motivation.

H8: The combined use of all three types of ML is positively related to public service motivation to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.

H9: PSM is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H10: PSM mediates the relationships between ML and the subtypes, including direction-giving language, empathetic language, and meaning-making language, and employee turnover intention.

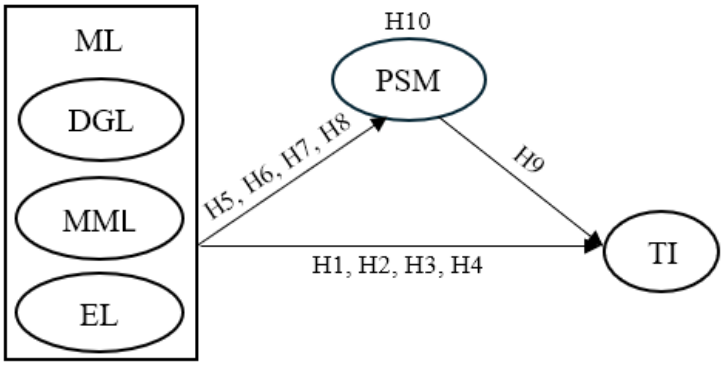

Figure 2. *Hypothesized Conceptual Model.*

Note. ML = motivating language, DGL = direction-giving language, MML = meaning-making language, EL = empathetic language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, H = hypothesis.

Significance of the Study

Research Significance

This study contributes to the HRD literature on organizational development (OD) and training and development (T&D). As mentioned by Cummings and Worley (2013), transfer of behavioral science knowledge to a system enables future system improvements. This study may benefit leadership development programs and influence organizational outcomes.

As an organizational outcome, employee turnover intention research may benefit from this study in several ways. Given that managers have a significant impact on employee turnover intention (Ivanova, 2019; Malek et al., 2018; Reina et al., 2018), this study explores whether ML, as a type of managerial communication, influences turnover intention in the public sector. Research on the effect of ML on turnover intention has been mostly conducted in the private sector even though there are salient differences between the two sectors (Vandenabeele & Schott, 2020). This study extends the research on MLT to the public sector.

The public sector environment is different from the private sector environment in terms of PSM, which may be a different type of motivation than intrinsic stimuli for employees

(Breaugh et al., 2018). This difference presents an opportunity to empirically examine the applicability of MLT to the public sector environment since motivation in the public sector environment includes both self-oriented intrinsic motivation and other-oriented PSM. However, no research has explored MLT in the public sector and the effect of ML on employee turnover intention mediated by PSM. The results of the current empirical study will provide deeper insights on the relationships between ML and turnover intention in the presence of PSM in the public sector environment.

Given the uniqueness of current situation as a post-pandemic recovery period, this cross-sectional study contributes to the research literature by capturing the current state of the post-COVID-19 public workplace environment four years after the start of the pandemic. The findings demonstrate the sensitivity of constructs to workplace changes and their dynamic reflection of changes in society.

Practical Significance

This study has implications for multiple stakeholders. First, given the estimation of the cost of employee turnover, based on Gallup's and BLS data presented earlier, public organizations with limited financial resources may gain a deeper understanding of alternative, low-cost methods to reduce employee turnover (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023b; Wigert, 2019). Managerial communication can be used strategically to affect turnover rates and cost.

Second, HRD practitioners in public organizations can use the results of this study to tailor leadership development programs to the public sector environment. Considering the total annual cost of leadership development of U.S. organizations, both private and public, estimated by Westfall (2019) as $166 billion, the importance of a well-constructed training program that addresses concrete organizational needs cannot be overestimated. The same program applied in

different types of environments may not bring the same results. As public sector organizations host at least two types of motivation, self-oriented and other-oriented motivation, there is a chance that the training programs proven successful in the private sector organizations need to be adjusted in public sector organizations, as two types of motivation may interact.

Summary

Chapter I introduced the research topic. It briefly presented the problem statement, research purpose, theoretical framework, definition of terms, research questions, hypotheses, hypothesized conceptual model, and research and practical significance of the study.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The current study will examine the relationships in the public sector environment among (a) ML as an aggregated construct, and the subtypes of ML: (b) direction-giving language, (c) meaning-making language, (d) empathetic language, and (e) employee turnover intention as an outcome factor. The mediating effect of PSM will also be examined. To achieve this purpose, it is necessary to clearly define the scope of the public sector environment and the population of public sector employees for this study.

Encyclopedia Britannica (n.d.) defines the public sector as a "portion of the economy composed of all levels of government and government-controlled enterprises." Both the non-profit sector and public sector organizations serve society by providing services and involvement in the community (Piatak & Holt, 2021). However, unlike the non-profit sector (also called the "third" or "voluntary sector"), public sector organizations are not voluntary, and unlike private sector organizations, the public sector does not operate for profit (Barman, 2016). Government-controlled organizations exercise public authority and implement public policy. As such, they tend to attract and employ a specific type of employee (Asseburg & Homberg, 2020; Ballart & Rico, 2018; Gans-Morse et al., 2022).

In his seminal work on public service motivation, Perry (1996) contended that the public sector workforce primarily consists of employees who are attracted by the desire to fulfill higher-order needs, and who have certain individual characteristics, such as altruism, prosocial behavior, and values. This view is supported by the person-organization fit concept that suggests that individuals and organizations that share similar values attract each other (Ko & Campbell, 2020). Multiple studies have researched and confirmed the positive relationship between PSM

and sector employment preferences (Asseburg & Homberg, 2020; Ballart & Rico, 2018; Gans-Morse et al., 2022). People with high levels of PSM seem to be attracted to public organizations and have characteristics that are more congruent with the characteristics of public organizations (Bright, 2021).

In this chapter, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks are discussed. After presenting the literature review procedure, the theoretical framework is presented, followed by the hypothesized conceptual model. Then, the concepts and constructs are described including the development of the interactions.

Literature Review Procedure

The goal of this literature review is to identify the knowledge gaps in the extant corpus of academic research by applying the integrative method of a literature review. According to Torraco (2016), the integrative literature review uses past and present knowledge to generate new ideas for future research. The process started by identifying empirical and theoretical publications on the broad topics of leadership and employee motivation. The topic was then conceptually narrowed down to ML, employee turnover intention as an organizational outcome, and public sector as an environment characterized by PSM. The initial literature review process started in September of 2018 and has been continuously refined and updated with new publications through 2024.

Literature Sources

Relevant academic literature was searched, selected, and analyzed. The ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database was used to search for relevant dissertations. Several combinations of keywords were used and produced a dearth of results, almost all of which were from online sources. No dissertations were used for this literature review.

Google Scholar and databases available from Colorado State University library were used as online search engines for academic peer-reviewed articles. The following databases were searched: Academic Search Ultimate, Business Source Complete, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Emerald, JSTOR, and Web of Science. Multiple journals were searched as well, including *Human Resource Management, Human Resource Management Review, International Public Management Journal, Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Public Administration Review, Public Management Review*, and *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. Several referenced and cited publications were also manually searched.

Literature Selection Criteria

The literature was bound by three general criteria: 1) a timeframe between January 2008 and March 2023; 2) peer-reviewed, and 3) relevance to the research topic. The current research trends are presented in the most recent fifteen years of relevant literature and include a mix of empirical studies and conceptual publications. In addition, several seminal publications outside of this timeframe were used as foundational works. The search for the direct combination of the primary keywords, including "managerial motivating language," "public service motivation," and "turnover intention," did not produce results. Thus, the keywords were expanded to synonyms and to the elements of constructs that were informally tracked. About 150 scholarly publications were reserved for the analysis.

Literature Analysis Method

Once the relevant articles were identified, they were analyzed in detail and organized in an Excel spreadsheet tabulated by the selected variables. Some publications were printed as paper documents, while most publications were saved in a .pdf format. Garrard's (2011) matrix

method was adapted and used to synthesize and analyze information. An excerpt from the literature review evaluation matrix is presented in Table 1. The reviewed and critically analyzed literature suggested the theoretical framework, selected concepts, hypotheses, and research methodology.

Theoretical Framework

MLT was used to guide this study. It provides the rationale for the selection of the independent variables, the outcome variable, and a mediating variable.

Origin of the Theory

MLT has been a leadership communication theory for over 30 years (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). MLT adopted concepts from Austin's (1962) speech act theory (SAT), a linguistic theory, which subdivides linguistic acts into three psycholinguistic roles: (1) perlocutionary (what the speaker hopes to accomplish), (2) locutionary (the meaning of the words), and (3) illocutionary (what the speaker is doing while talking and if there is a true intent behind the words). SAT posits that the issuance or production of words, and not the words themselves, are the basic units of human linguistic communication that serve as building blocks of mutual understanding between people. In general, SAT is about the human speech act as an aspect of social interactive behavior. However, Austin (1962) did not describe explicit connection between the speech acts and outcomes beyond the psychological perception of the meaning of speech. MLT is Sullivan's adaptation of SAT to the organizational context and dyadic, one-directional, manager-to-subordinate communication effect on employee motivation and organizational outcomes.

Table 1

Literature Review Matrix

1	APA citation	Year	Population	Researched relationships	Method	Findings
33	Hayes, M. S., & Stazyk, E. C. (2019). Mission congruence: To agree or not to agree, and its implications for public employee turnover. Public Personnel Management, 48(4), 513-534. Doi: 10.1177/0091026019829847	2019	USA 2007-2008 School and Staffing Survey and the 2008-2009 teacher follow-up survey, collected by the National Center of Education Statistics 2,600 teachers	Mission congruence, ---> turnover intention	Quant	At least 11% of teachers are more likely to remain at their current school if they agree that most of their colleagues share their beliefs and values about the central mission of the school. Robust negative relationship between mission congruence and turnover intentions
34	Gan, K-P., Lin, Y., & Wang, Q. (2020). Public service motivation and turnover intention: Testing the mediating effects of job attitudes. Frontiers in Psychology, 11, 1-14. Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01289	2020	China 587 public employees	PSM ---> job attitudes (JS & org commitment) ---> TI	Quant - SEM	Individuals with high PSM are most likely to work for public sector and less likely to leave. Ees' PSM could NOT directly affect TI when JS and org commitment were taken into account. The relationship between PSM and TI was FULLY mediated by JS and org commitment. Cultural context --- ees in collectivistic societies, such as China and Japan) are more inclined to overreport levels of PSM, because they are likely to hide their true intention to leave the job due to the profound influence of Confucianism
35	Ahmad, M. S., Iqbal, F., Siddique, R., Abbas, S., & Fakhr, Z. (2020). Responsible leadership and workplace deviant behaviour: Modelling trust and turnover intention as mediator. Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 41(7), 939-952. Doi: 10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0212	2020	Pakistan doctors, nurses, lab workers (no number)	Responsible leadership --- trust and TI (mediators) ---> deviant behavior	Quant - PLS-SEM	Perceived responsible leadership significantly affects ees' TI and work deviant behaviour. the relationship is mediated by TI. Responsible leadership leads to ees' commitment towards the task, manager and organization, and enhancing ees' trust and mitigating employees' turnover intentions.
36	Tavares, G. M., Sobral, F., & Wright, B. E. (2021). Commitment to public values, charismatic leadership attributions, and employee turnover in street-level bureaucracies. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 542-560. Doi: 10.1092/jopart/muaa057	2021	Brazil 1,009 public education teachers	Perceived leader commitment to public values ---> perceived Charismatic leadership ---> contextual stressors (moderators) ---> voluntary turnover	Quant - SEM, ordinary least squares and negative binomial regression	"Values, beliefs, and expectations that makeup group prototypes in the context of street-level bureaucracies encompass the idealized principles of public administration - the PV" (p 554). "public leaders' perceived commitment to PV can be a critical ingredient for attributions of charismatic leadership in the public sector, expecially in street-level bureaucracies, where PV tend to be more salient". "Charismatic leadership can create a more meaningful and satisfying work experience for front-line, public servants, mainly by increasing person-organization value congruence." p 554
37	Kartono, J. (2021). Influence of high-performance work practices and public service motivation toward turnover intention. Enrichment: Journal of Management, 12(1), 565-571. Retrieved from: https://www.enrichment.iocspublisher.org	2021	Tangerang, Indonesia 107 hospital nurses during Covid 19	Perf appraisal, compensation, employment security, public service motivation ---> org commitment ---> turnover intention	Quant - PLS-SEM	Perf appraisal, employment security, and PSM have a significant negative impact on turnover intention. However, compensation did not. The strongest effect comes from perf appraisal to TI mediated by org commitment. Employment security and PSM were found to be significant in influencing nurse's turnover intention.

Note. Data organized by the year of publication.

Summary of the Theory

MLT emphasizes the importance and effect of a manager's spoken language, ML, on employee motivation, and the outcomes. According to MLT, when a manager's words are consistent, clear, constructive, meaningful, and empathetic, they carry information and motivate employees to perform at higher levels. ML includes three types of communication:

1. Uncertainty-reducing or direction-giving communication, such as goal setting, tasks, policies, and rules (perlocutionary language). This type of language is usually the most prevalent in manager-subordinate communication (Sarros et al., 2014). It generally provides employees with information about tasks, goals, policies, rewards, and performance.
2. Communication related to meaning making and creation of mental models (locutionary language). This type of language gives employees food for thought and helps them form concepts and meaning in their work. The meaning-making process mostly occurs during organizational entry and assimilation, but it can be used continuously to reinforce the meaning of a job.
3. Communication offering encouragement and showing concern and bonding (illocutionary language). This type of language gives managers an opportunity to share their feelings and emotions, thus bonding and showing consideration for others. Managers use this type of communication to express appreciation for employees' efforts (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009; Sullivan, 1988).

According to MLT, ML affects intrinsic motivation (Sullivan, 1988) and outcomes. Unlike controlled extrinsic motivation, which is influenced by external stimuli (e.g., financial rewards and benefits), intrinsic motivation can be achieved by satisfying the needs identified by

self-determination theory (SDT) including the need for (a) competency, (b) autonomy, and (c) relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The competency need can be achieved by aligning organizational and individual goals and providing positive performance feedback by means of the direction-giving language. The autonomy need is satisfied through self-determination of behavior to which meaning-making language contributes by emphasizing organizational values and the meaning of work. The need for relatedness can be accomplished through managerial EL. Employees who believe that their managers are caring people experience higher levels of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These needs are self-oriented and foster personal well-being. Figure 3 presents a simplified model of MLT.

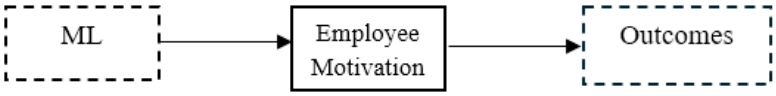

Figure 3. *Simplified Model of MLT.*

Note. ML = managerial motivating language.

For ML to be the most effective in influencing employee motivation and outcomes, certain conditions need to be met. A leader needs to display behavioral integrity with ML or walk the talk (Holmes & Parker, 2017). A leader should also balance the use of all subtypes of ML, and a subordinate needs to be able to perceive the ML (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018).

Research Based on the Theory

The relationships between managerial language, motivation, and organizational and individual outcomes have been researched with consistent results in the US and globally including Europe (Seppanen et al., 2014), Middle East (Binyamin & Brender-Ilan, 2018), Asia (Fan et al., 2013; Nguyen et al., 2020), and Australia (Sarros et al., 2014). MLT has also been

tested against individual outcomes such as employee job satisfaction (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Mayfield et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2020), trust in leadership (Men et al., 2022), feeling of psychological safety (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2021), self-leadership (Mayfield et al., 2021), and creativity (Fan et al., 2013; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2017). Performance has been the leading research area of MLT among organizational outcomes (Kock et al., 2019; Mayfield et al., 2015; Nguyen et al., 2020), along other organizational outcomes, such as culture (Yue et al, 2020), absenteeism, and turnover (Farr & Lind, 2019; Nguyen et al, 2020).

Research on the application of MLT to employee turnover as an organizational outcome has primarily been divided into actual turnover, turnover intention, and the intent-to-stay. Turnover intention and the intent-to-stay are complementary concepts; turnover intention indicates the desire to leave the organization or a feeling of discontent with a job, while the intent-to-stay expresses the likelihood of remaining with the organization or a feeling of contentment with a job (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Although actual turnover may differ from turnover intention or intent-to-stay indicators, turnover intention has been shown to be a good predictor of actual behavior (Jia et al., 2022; Wang & Zhang, 2017).

In the MLT framework, ML has been identified as having a significant effect on the intent-to-stay when mediated by job satisfaction (Farr & Lind, 2019) and self-leadership (Mayfield et al., 2021). Farr and Lind (2019) found that a 10% increase in ML increases employees' intent-to-stay by 4.3%. Nguyen et al. (2020) found that the relationship between ML and turnover intention is more pronounced in western cultures with a medium effect overall across the US, India, and Vietnam. Based on the results of their study, Wibowo and Paramita (2022) concluded that the empathetic language (as a sub-dimension of ML) of empathetic

leadership had a significant direct relationship with the turnover intention of Indonesian nurses who were dealing with COVID-19 patients.

Most research on MLT has been conducted in private sector organizations, although some studies have mentioned public sector employees as a part of the overall surveyed population. For example, Binyamin and Brender-Ilan (2018) conducted research on the effect leaders' use of ML has on employee proactivity. Although public sector employees constituted 34% of the surveyed population, the results did not account for the sector difference or the specifics of the public sector environment. In many other studies, researchers made no distinction between private and public employees. For example, Wibowo and Paramita's (2022) study of Indonesian nurses did not explicitly mention whether the hospitals were public or private institutions. According to the International Trade Administration (n.d.), 36% of the hospitals in Indonesia are managed by the public sector, and studies have shown that public sector employees are driven by PSM rather than by self-oriented intrinsic motivation (Breaugh et al., 2018). Thus, it would be beneficial to determine if there were any differences between the responses of nurses in private versus public hospitals in Wibowo and Paramita's (2022) study. This gap warrants further research and conceptual development of MLT in the public sector environment.

Implications for this Study

Research on MLT in the public sector environment has not been sufficiently advanced. The possibility of the interaction between intrinsic motivation and PSM is a unique condition to observe the relationship between employees' self-oriented motivation and other-oriented motivation and the effect of this interaction on organizational outcomes. This gap merits further attention. Furthermore, almost no research has been conducted on the application of MLT to

turnover intention as an organizational outcome in the public sector context and in the presence of PSM. Due to the lack of empirical evidence, the findings of the current study may significantly contribute to the literature.

Hypothesized Conceptual Model

MLT is the framework for the hypothesized conceptual model (Figure 2). It offers a rationale for the selection of the four independent variables: (1) direction-giving language, (2) meaning-making language, (3) empathetic language, and 4) aggregated ML. Direction-giving language, meaning-making language, and empathetic language form the ML that affects employee motivation and the outcomes. Employee turnover intention is an organizational outcome and a dependent variable. PSM is the mediating variable given that MLT is being applied to the public sector environment, which Perry (1996) claimed is driven by a special kind of motivation.

Constructs and Concepts

This section presents the variables for this study. The variables include the following: (a) ML as an aggregated construct, (b) direction-giving language, (c) meaning-making language, (d) empathetic language, (e) PSM, and (f) employee turnover intention. Definitions, antecedents, outcomes, and relevant research are followed by the research hypotheses.

Independent Variables

Motivating Language

According to Sullivan (1988), ML is a dyadic, one-directional, supervisor-to-subordinate spoken form of communication that affects employees' intrinsic motivation and outcomes. An average leader communicates with subordinates 70% to 90% of the workday (Luthra & Dahiya, 2015; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018), so communication must be effective and mindful. Given the

significance of ML in a work environment, several scholars have attempted to challenge the claims of previous scholars. Mayfield and Mayfield (2018) contended that a one-directional, leader-to-follower vector is not meant to be a monologue and needs to be adjusted for interactional communication that allows a manager to receive immediate feedback, reflect on the subordinate's reaction, and adjust further communication. In a later study, these scholars tested the dyadic type of communication on leaders' strategic communication that is disseminated from top to bottom throughout an organization, thus influencing several organizational layers and groups of employees (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2019). Fun et al. (2014) crossed the boundaries of spoken communication into written electronic communication and motivation of virtual teams and found that leaders of virtual teams who use direction-giving language and empathetic language in written communication are perceived to be more effective and improve performance. In light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, Fan et al.'s research focus may be used as an opportunity to expand spoken communication to the rapidly changing virtual work environment. This gap should be considered in future research.

ML comprises three subtypes: (1) direction-giving language, (2) meaning-making language, and (3) empathetic language (Figure 4; Sullivan, 1988). The direction-giving language is predominantly favored by managers' motivating language (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Managers clarify ambiguous work tasks, disseminate organizational vision, and articulate organizational and performance goals. Direction-giving language is the language of feedback and setting expectations and thus, when it is delivered correctly and clearly, it promotes psychological safety for employees, so they know what is expected of them and how their work will be rewarded; therefore, it promotes performance (Nguyen et al., 2020; Mayfield et al., 2015; Wang & Zhang, 2017).

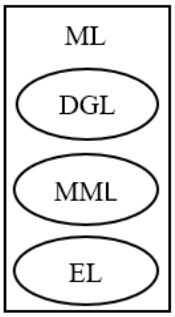

Figure 4. *Subtypes of Motivating Language.*

Note. ML = motivating language, DGL = direction-giving language, MML = meaning-making language, EL = empathetic language

Meaning-making language follows direction-giving language in the frequency of use (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). It is the language of higher-purpose expression. Meaning-making language helps create a feeling of self-efficacy, a sense of pride in one's work, a link between personal and organizational values, and a reinforcement of cultural values and mental models. When employees experience meaningfulness in their work, it is a critical psychological state that affects personal outcomes, such as intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, as well as organizational outcomes, including performance, absenteeism, and turnover (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Duffy et al., 2013).

Empathetic language is the least used type of ML (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). It is a language of emotional connection, compassion, and support. Sullivan (1988) stated that empathetic language needs to be genuine to be effective. Empathetic language is not limited to work events. It is also a way for a supervisor to connect with a subordinate on a personal life level (Nguyen et. al., 2020). Empathetic language has been researched in connection to empathetic leadership and has been shown to positively influence employees' resilience, performance, job satisfaction, innovation, and lower turnover intention (Kock et al., 2019; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022).

Outcomes of Managerial Motivating Language. ML has been found to affect outcomes on both individual and organizational levels.

Individual Outcomes. The individual outcome of ML that has received the most attention from researchers is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is salient for employees' psychological health and overall wellbeing. Multiple empirical studies have found a positive relationship between ML and job satisfaction (Madlock & Sexton, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2020; Refozar et al., 2017). Simmons and Sharbrough (2013) noted that the positive relationship between ML and job satisfaction held true for non-supervisory employees; however, employees in supervisory roles did not confirm this relationship. One of the explanations was that supervisors did not have the need to be acknowledged for the work well done, as their supervisory positions were already a validation of their performance. Other empirically researched individual outcomes of ML with significant positive relationships include self-leadership (Mayfield et al., 2021), psychological safety (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2021), resilience (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022), and effective decision making (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016).

Organizational Outcomes. Performance has been the most studied organizational outcome of ML. Multiple empirical studies have shown a positive significant relationship between ML and the performance of full-time employees (Kock et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2017). However, Mayfield and Mayfield's (2006) older study did not find this relationship in part-time employees. Performance has been measured through self-reports, supervisory evaluations, and qualitative assessments. Besides performance, studies have identified several other organizational outcomes that have a significant positive relationship with ML. The outcomes include the following: creativity and innovation (Fan et al., 2013; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2017), perceived supervisor communication competence (Madlock & Sexton, 2015;

Simmons & Sharbrough, 2013), perceived supervisor effectiveness that may indicate the actual supervisory effectiveness (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Simmons & Sharbrough, 2013), organizational trust (Seppanen et al., 2014), and intent-to-stay (Farr & Lind, 2019; Mayfield et al., 2021). Studies have also identified organizational outcomes with a significant negative relationship with ML including absenteeism and turnover intention (Nguyen et al., 2020; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). However, little research has been conducted on ML in the public sector, which may introduce PSM as a mediator of the relationship between ML and the turnover intention. Thus, outcomes of ML in the public sector warrant further research.

Relationships between the individual subtypes of ML and organizational outcomes have rarely been examined. Therefore, this study reviewed literature about the relationships between each of the subtypes of ML, employee turnover intention, and PSM.

Direction-Giving Language and Turnover Intention. Direction-giving language is the language of informational transparency, goal setting, and feedback, and clarifies the ambiguity of job tasks and rewards. Research on the relationship between direction-giving language and turnover intention is consistent throughout the world. By setting clear performance goals and making sure employees' personal goals align with the organizational goals, managers reduce employee turnover intention (Bellamkonda et al., 2021; Jung, 2014). Jung (2014) analyzed the U.S. federal employees' survey data and confirmed that the relationship between clear goals and turnover intention is negative and applies to the public sector environment.

Managers have also commonly used direction-giving language to provide performance feedback. Gilani and Rabbani (2020) found that role ambiguity is an even higher predictor of turnover intention than goal orientation. Since direction-giving language clarifies job tasks and the purpose of the job, it reduces role ambiguity. Joo et al.'s (2015) research in South Korea also

found that developmental feedback has a significant negative correlation with turnover intention. In addition, when transformational leadership provides high-quality communication during performance feedback, it helps employees improve their work, reduces job ambiguity, and helps employees perceive that their leaders care about their performance and personal development, which improves workplace commitment and reduces turnover intention (Lee et al., 2019). Performance feedback is especially critical during the initial socialization period on the job, as it directly predicts turnover intention and actual turnover. Vandenberghe et al. (2021) argued that new employees need feedback to make sense of the new acculturation process and that the "supervisors are gatekeepers of newcomers' social integration" (p. 537). When new employees do not receive sufficient feedback during the initial socialization period, their turnover intention increases followed by increased actual turnover a year later.

Direction-Giving Language and Public Service Motivation. Direction-giving or perlocutionary language is managerial communication that is informative, increases knowledge, and reduces uncertainty. It also helps employees calculate the relationship between work and goal attainment and see work as a tool to stimulate intrinsic motivation (Sullivan, 1988; Mayfield et al. 1995; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Employees' calculation of the relationship between work and goal attainment and construction of work schemas are not two independent processes. According to Sullivan (1988), the process of reducing uncertainty with the purpose of goal attainment mimics an interview process. For example, an employee questions a manager about job-related details and instructions and determines how to better reach the goal or the expected result. Direction-giving language promotes intrinsic motivation by unveiling ways to attain personal, self-oriented goals and align them with organizational goals. From an SDT perspective,

direction-giving language satisfies the need for competency, which is generally achieved through feedback and communication (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

Goal clarity and performance objectives are also associated with the motivational context of PSM (Perry, 2000). Min et al. (2021) confirmed that various types of feedback improve goal attainment and performance of public sector managers. Jung and Rainey (2011) established that clear organizational and task goals positively influence employees' PSM through psychological channels. Ripoll (2022) also found that setting clear and specific goals positively relates to PSM. By influencing the perception of positive outcomes, managers can present organizational goals and mission in an idealized manner to promote altruistic behaviors (Cho & Kao, 2022). Managers can aid the employees' process of internalization and integration of organizational goals and mission by employees, thereby promoting transformation of intrinsic motivation into PSM.

Individuals with higher levels of PSM self-select into the public sector, as they experience the need to serve the common good (Asseburg & Homberg, 2020). Thus, helping employees satisfy their competency need (intrinsic motivation) helps them be more confident and productive in satisfying their need to serve the public (PSM). Managerial communication that sets clear goals with an emphasis on the organizational mission and public service through direction-giving language may affect both intrinsic motivation and PSM.

Meaning-Making Language and Turnover Intention. Meaning-making language is the language of storytelling, and making a connection between cultural, personal, and work values. It is the language of higher purpose that helps employees realize the meaningfulness and significance of their work (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Despite the claim that meaning-making language is the core dimension of the motivating language, research on this subdimension of the

motivating language is almost non-existent. The taxonomy of meaning-making language includes the following concepts: “cultural storytelling, links between personal and work values, organizational/cultural changes, behavioral guidance, cultural values and mental models, collective/higher purpose, task significance/individual contributions, and innovation” (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018, p. 24). Meaningful work was found to be a close construct that encompasses the elements of the meaning-making language. Meaningful work is defined as work that is perceived as positive, purposeful, personally significant, and worthwhile that activates strengths, aligns values, and adopts a prosocial approach (Mercurio et al., 2023). Meaningful work was identified as a close proximal construct to meaning-making language in this study.

Multiple research studies have identified a strong relationship between meaningful work and turnover intention (Heath et al., 2022; Shaimerdenova et al., 2019; Vermooten et al., 2019). The concept of meaningful work was especially salient during the stressful and unpredictable COVID-19 pandemic and served as a good predictor of turnover intention (Heath et al., 2022). When employees realized that their work was more important and made a difference, it resulted in a more significant negative relationship to turnover intention. Shaimerdenova et al. (2019) also found a significant impact of meaningful work and supportive management on employee turnover intention. Providing employees with an opportunity to craft their job also adds meaning to work and a proactive personality decreases turnover intention (Vermooten et al., 2019).

Meaning-Making Language and Public Service Motivation. Sullivan (1988) contended that besides being a tool to achieve goals and rewards, “work can be an end in itself” (p. 106). Employees come to organizations with values that are already formed. Through informal communication with management, employees adjust their mental models to fit the new environment and make sense of it (Sullivan, 1988). Work helps employees realize their place in

the world and instills a sense of being engaged in meaningful and important behavior (Cossar & Meier, 2018). Management can influence employees' perceptions of meaningful work by using meaning-making language. The meaning-making process is informal manager-subordinate interaction that includes storytelling, sharing cultural values, and expressing behavioral expectations and guidance (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Creating meaningful mental models that are congruent with the organization's goals and mission allows employees to determine their own behavior which increases intrinsic motivation by improving a greater feeling of autonomy or by satisfying their need for autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Maslow (1971) contended that meaningful work is an inherent human necessity for self-actualization and developing one's fullest potential to reach a higher-level intrinsic need of fulfilling one's life purpose.

Meaningful work can increase an employee's desire to perform public service as well. Intrinsic motivation allegedly gives workers a heightened sense of serving others and higher altruistic motives, which are the components of PSM (Tummers & Knies, 2013; Perry, 1996). Hammon et al. (2022) noted that public sector employees value meaningful work over financial compensation and prestige. Vandenabeele and Schott (2020, p. 12) stated that, "Highly public service motivated individuals are expected to perform well and to feel satisfied, as they are working to provide services they perceive as meaningful," and public sector organizations provide the environment for the realization of this need. Schwarz et al. (2020) also found that the leadership of the network governance style encourages their subordinates to connect with the communities they serve, which increases face-to-face interaction with the beneficiaries of the public services, and thus increasing the meaningfulness of work and performance. These studies also support the relationship between meaning-making language and meaningful work as well as

the relationship between meaningful work and PSM. Therefore, meaning-making language is positively related to intrinsic motivation and may be positively related to PSM.

Empathetic Language and Turnover Intention. Empathetic language has been researched as an integral aspect of empathetic leadership. Empathetic language serves as a communication medium to support subordinates' emotions and promote positive influence on the outcomes (Kock et al., 2019). Several scholars have found a significant negative relationship between empathetic language and employee turnover intention (Negoro & Wibowo, 2021; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022; You et al., 2022). Negoro and Wibowo (2021) examined this relationship mediated by the satisfaction of needs. You et al. (2022) researched the relationship in the high-stress environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. A higher indirect significant effect of empathetic language on turnover intention was also observed when mediated by self-regulation (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). When managers express gratitude and appreciation to employees, they can capitalize on employees' prosocial disposition and reduce turnover intention (Davis et al., 2020).

Empathetic Language and Public Service Motivation. Empathetic language provides an opportunity for managers to share their feelings and emotions, thus bonding with employees and showing consideration for others (Mayfield et al., 1995). Mayfield and Mayfield (2018) tied frequent use of empathetic language with positive organizational results. They observed that when a verbal statement is supported by genuine emotional appreciation, bonding occurs. According to Sullivan (1988), managerial illocutionary language is not deliberate or instrumental. Instead, empathy, appreciation, gratitude, and interest are human emotions that are often not expressed in words but through gestures, intonation, and facial expressions. Empathetic language also supports employees' professional development, learning, and growth (Sarros et al.,

2014). Managers engaging in genuine empathetic language acts evoke reciprocal feelings in subordinates, given that an employee who feels a bond with the manager is more motivated to perform better (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2000). By effectively using empathetic language managers fulfill employees' relatedness need. Employees who see their managers as cold and uncaring experience a lower level of intrinsic motivation, while a close relational base creates a feeling of security and positively affects intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

There is a dearth of research on the connection between empathetic language and PSM. Stocks et al. (2009) in one of their older publications summarized the research on the relationship between empathy and prosocial behavior, which is an outcome of PSM (Vandenabeele et al., 2018). The authors claimed that empathy is an other-oriented emotional response that "reflects feelings of compassion, sympathy, tenderness, and the like" and is strongly correlated with helping others (Stocks et al., 2009, p. 649). As an affective dimension of PSM, compassion may be strengthened by empathetic managerial communication. By displaying and promoting compassion and empathy managers may strengthen the internalization and integration of the other-oriented compassion and empathy in employees, thus aiding the process of transformation of intrinsic motivation into PSM. Therefore, the current study proposes that there is a connection between empathetic language and other-oriented motivation which is the essence of PSM.

Aggregated Motivating Language and Turnover Intention. Motivating language has been found to have a significant effect on turnover intention (Kwon et al., 2021; Nguyen et al., 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2017). Nguyen et al. (2020) found that this effect was greater in western cultures. However, some studies have found a significant relationship between ML and turnover intention in eastern cultures as well, including Korea and China (Kwon et al., 2021: Wang &

Zhang, 2017). Wang and Zhang (2017) researched if this relationship was mediated by positive emotions and found an insignificant effect of the mediating variable. Some researchers have also explored the relationship between ML and a complementary relationship with a turnover intention variable: the intent-to-stay (Farr & Lind, 2019; Mayfield et al., 2021). Farr and Lind (2019) found that this relationship was significant. It was later confirmed by Mayfield et al. (2021), who also researched this relationship in conjunction with self-leadership as a mediator. However, the relationship between ML and turnover intention has not been adequately researched in the public sector environment, which may have other factors, including PSM, that can affect this relationship.

Aggregated Motivating Language and Public Service Motivation. Sullivan's (1988) claim that all three types of ML need to be in balance to produce a higher effect on motivation supports Aristotelian and Gestalt psychology postulating that a whole is bigger than the sum of its parts. Managers who use all three types of ML can effectively achieve at least three objectives. They learn: 1) what employees need to know, 2) the importance of informal communication, and 3) the importance of treating employees as people rather than resources (Sullivan, 1988).

In a real work environment, it is impossible to separate communication into purely direction-giving, meaning-making, and empathetic languages. A problem arises when managers primarily focus on one type of language and erroneously ignore the other types or view them as non-essential. However, in some cultures using empathetic language at work violates cultural expectations and can diminish employees' perceptions of the supervisor's competence (Madlock & Sextron, 2015). Nevertheless, direction-giving language has received heightened attention from researchers and managers, as it directly relates to fulfilling work tasks and goals. Meaning-

making and empathetic types of language are no less important as they evoke other areas of intrinsic motivation and contribute to the overall motivation process (Sullivan, 1988).

When managers use multiple forms of motivating language, it produces the best organizational and personal outcomes (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018). Thus, Sarros et al. (2014) proposed that managers develop a repertoire of mixed language types to effectively use the power of communication. Almost no research has focused on the use of ML in the public sector environment. The closest research area that alludes to the importance of using ML in public organizations is on transformational leadership communication (De Gennaro, 2018; Jensen & Bro, 2018; Sun & Wang, 2017). Sun and Wang (2017) stated that transformational leaders communicate organizational goals to subordinates as salient and attractive, inspire followers to transcend individual interests and serve collective interests, empower, and encourage employees while creating a supportive environment for growth and development. The findings in private sector organizations have supported higher effectiveness of a balanced use of ML over relying on one type of ML and that PSM is a combination of rational, normative, and affective motives that are influenced by various subtypes of ML. Thus, this study proposes that the balanced use of ML in aggregate will be more effective on PSM than favoring a certain subtype of ML.

Interactions of ML, Direction-Giving Language, Meaning-Making Language, and Empathetic Language in the Hypothesized Model. The empirical evidence and conceptual framework presented above are the basis for the following hypotheses (see Figure 5):

H1: Direction-giving language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H2: Meaning-making language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H3: Empathetic language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

H4: Combining the three types of ML is negatively related to employee turnover intention to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.

H5: Direction-giving language is positively related to public service motivation.

H6: Meaning-making language is positively related to public service motivation.

H7: Empathetic language is positively related to public service motivation.

H8: Combining the three types of ML is positively related to public service motivation to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.

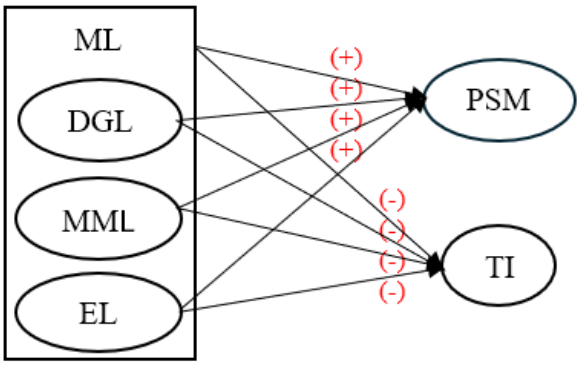

Figure 5. *Hypothesized Interactions of ML and the Components.*

Note. ML = motivating language, DGL = direction-giving language, MML = meaning-making language, EL = empathetic language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, (+) = positive relationship, (-) = negative relationship.

Dependent variables

Public Service Motivation

To accurately present PSM, it is necessary to disentangle the concept. Researchers have compared the construct of PSM to related concepts of intrinsic motivation, altruism, prosocial motivation, and prosocial behavior (Esteve et al., 2015; Piatak & Holt, 2020; Schott et al., 2019; Vandenabeele et al., 2018). Martin (2009) also identified motivation as a higher-order factor or

adaptive cognition that drives adaptive behavior, a secondary-order factor. This perspective helps clarify the differences in some of the related terms and PSM.

PSM and Intrinsic Motivation. Bozeman and Su (2014) stated that "PSM … relates closely to intrinsic motivation" (p. 705). Schott and Pronk (2013) also asserted that intrinsic motivation provides a plausible explanation of PSM. However, there are differences between PSM and intrinsic motivation based on several criteria: (a) impulse origination, (b) temporal focus, (c) motivational needs, and (d) identities (Breaugh et al., 2018). In terms of the focus of impulse origination, Ryan and Deci (2000) identified three contributors to intrinsic motivation: (1) competency (achieved through supervisory feedback), (2) autonomy (an opportunity to determine one's own behavior), and (3) belonging (being part of a group). These contributors are mostly hedonistic and self-oriented motives (Vandenabeele et al., 2018). In contrast, PSM is a eudemonic or other-oriented motive and can be manifested in an activity that may not be seen as interesting and satisfying in itself. The others-oriented nature of the reward of "doing good" can be sufficiently internalized and coincide with the individual's personal values (Jensen & Bro, 2018, p. 537). In other words, the external outcome of an activity is directed at other recipients and not at the performer, yet the performer delivers the service because it is the right thing to do.

The temporal focus of intrinsic motivation is on the present. It focuses on enjoying the process of doing one's work (Deci & Ryan, 2012). PSM, on the other hand, is "future-forward" with a focus on the results of public service. In the temporal focus, PSM is more similar to other types of SDT (i.e., the identified and the integrated motivations) that focus on the achievement of future goals by internalizing and accepting work-related values as one's own. The motivational needs of intrinsic motivation are innate and universal, while PSM-related needs are socially learned (Breaugh et al., 2018). For intrinsic motivation, a person's identity is fully integrated into

the self, while PSM may be displayed through various identities, as different branches of the public sector may emphasize different values and norms (e.g., healthcare, law enforcement, social work, library services). These differences demonstrate that PSM and intrinsic motivation are not the same constructs and should be treated differently (Breaugh et al., 2018; Neumann & Ritz, 2015).

PSM and Prosocial Motivation. Wright et al. (2013) found that PSM and prosocial motivation overlap and are similar concepts. According to Martin (2009), prosocial motivation and PSM are both adaptive cognition concepts. Unlike intrinsic motivation and similar to PSM, prosocial motivation has a eudemonic nature or a drive to benefit others (Vandenabeele et al., 2018). However, prosocial motivation is directed at individuals and groups with whom the actor has direct contact and is based on three psychological mechanisms: (1) feedback from beneficiaries, (2) feelings of appreciation by beneficiaries, and (3) strong emotional attachment to beneficiaries (Schott et al., 2019). PSM, on the other hand, is driven by service to the larger society as the recipient and the actor receives no direct feedback, feelings of appreciation, or emotional attachment (Vandenabeele et al., 2018).

PSM and Altruism. Batson et al. (2014) defined altruism as "a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another's welfare" (p. 3). However, as O'Leary (2019) pointed out, the common definition of altruism is individuals' behavior resulting in benefits to others regardless of the cost to themselves. Schott et al. (2016) noted that a motive and behavior "present two different states of human actions" (p. 1202); thus, altruism is secondary to PSM. Gans-Morse et al. (2022) also referred to altruistic behavior as an outcome of PSM.
Piatak and Holt (2020) distinguished two types of altruism: reciprocal (the basis for cooperation) and kin (helping a family member at the cost to one's own survival). In contrast, PSM has no

expectation of reciprocity and is directed at non-specific members of a community. In addition, PSM is a desire to serve others, which is a goal of public institutions. It is a larger construct that also includes other dimensions of a non-altruistic nature, such as commitment to public interest, attraction to public policymaking, and compassion (Piatak & Holt, 2020; Schott et al., 2019).

PSM and Prosocial Behavior. Prosocial behavior is another observable adaptive behavior that is often compared to PSM and needs to be delineated from PSM. Given that PSM is a type of adaptive cognition that drives behavior (Martin, 2009; Vandenabeele et al., 2018), it affects prosocial behavior (e.g., volunteering). Specifically, PSM drives an individual to do good for others and shapes the well-being of society (Esteve et al., 2015). Piatak and Holt (2020) also found a strong correlation between PSM and volunteering as a form of prosocial behavior. However, Vandenabeele et al. (2018) asserted that prosocial behavior is an outcome of PSM, and these two constructs should not be used interchangeably.

Dimensions of PSM. The theoretical premises on which PSM is based are the rational (maximization of individual utility), normative (conformation to norms), and affective (emotional responses) processes behind human motives (Perry, 2000). Rational processes motivate people to calculate the effort and then choose the action that maximizes the benefits to themselves. Normative processes are behind the preference for rules. Affective processes guide emotional responses to social contexts. Partially based on these premises, Perry (1996) identified four dimensions of PSM: (1) attraction to public policymaking (rational processes), (2) commitment to public interest (normative processes), (3) compassion (affective processes), and (4) self-sacrifice (standalone, independent dimension).

Attraction to Public Policymaking. Attraction to public policymaking is unique to public institutions and can be seen as a power-related component of the policy formulation process and

related to politics (Anderson et al., 2023). This activity may satisfy an individual's feeling of self-importance by viewing policymaking as a contribution to society. This dimension is based on rational motives that strive to maximize individual utility (Perry, 1996).

Ritz (2011) claimed that the dimension of attraction to public policymaking may not accurately represent the concept since most PSM-related studies have generally been conducted on regular public sector employees and not on politicians who are directly involved with policymaking or governance. Thus, Kim and Vandenabeele (2010) suggested renaming this dimension "attraction to public participation," which they considered to be more representative of an affective motive than a rational motive, with a focus on participation in "the public policy process and in activities for community and social development" (p. 704). However, Perry and Vandenabeele (2015) defended the original formulation of the dimension claiming that a disposition toward the governance regime is not exclusive to politicians but represents (a) an individual's loyalty to the governance regime, (b) an individual's belief in the legitimacy of the regime, and (c) whether an individual values the regime.

Commitment to Public Interest. Scholars have assumed that public interest drives the actions of public servants who uphold government regulations in supporting the less fortunate population of a community. Witteloostuijn et al. (2017) concluded that individual traits, such as honesty, humility, emotionality, and agreeableness are behind the desire to serve public interest. Perry (1996) explained that the desire to serve public interests is altruistic in nature. Public sector employees see their role as upholders of government power and consider it their civic duty. To public employees, serving public interests is a matter of administering social justice to enhance social equity of a community (Perry, 1996).

Compassion. Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.) defines compassion as "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it." Compassion is both a moral position and an affective state that Frederickson and Hart (1985) called the "patriotism of benevolence: an extensive love for all people" (p. 549). Public organizations create an environment that allows employees with high levels of compassion to fulfill their need to serve others and act according to their values (Liu et al., 2014).

Self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice is "a strong desire to make a personal sacrifice and serve the public interest… in order to realize the instrumental, value-based… motives of public service" (Heine et al., 2022, p. 217). Perry (1996) compared self-sacrifice with altruistic behavior but did not explicitly call this dimension altruism. Further research has indicated that the two states, self-sacrifice and altruism, are not the same (Kraut, 2020). The difference lies in the benefactor of a self-sacrificial versus altruistic act. Self-sacrificial behavior has no beneficiary and is an abandonment of personal interests that can sometimes take self-destructive forms (Heine et al., 2022). In contrast, altruistic behavior has a benefactor or puts certain others' interests before one's own (Piatak & Holt, 2020). An altruistic person receives a sense of pleasure from doing good for others (Kraut, 2020). Multiple authors have stressed that employees with higher PSM levels are more likely to display self-sacrificial behavior and forgo financial rewards for a higher goal of the greater common good (Heine et al., 2022; Kim & Vandenabeele, 2010; Piatak & Holt, 2020).

In one of the earlier studies, Coursey and Pandey (2007) tried to omit the dimension of self-sacrifice and created a reduced, three-dimensional PSM construct measurement tool. They referred to Perry's (1996) original results that suggested "weak support" for self-sacrifice as a separate dimension (p. 563) and claimed that the three-dimensional approach showed higher

validity and reliability results. However, Kim and Vandenabeele (2010) later claimed the self-sacrifice component of PSM is "a foundation of public service motives" and needs to be preserved (p. 704).

Outcomes of PSM. Scholarly interest in the outcomes of PSM is grounded in the quality of service of which we are all beneficiaries. This section categorizes the outcomes of PSM as individual (job satisfaction, employee organizational commitment, and individual performance), organizational (performance and turnover), and societal (whistleblowing and development of social capital) outcomes.

Individual Outcomes. Breaugh et al. (2018) found that PSM has a stable positive relationship with job satisfaction since PSM satisfies people's needs through job outcomes including the impact on society. This finding was confirmed by Kjeldsen and Hansen (2018) who concluded that job satisfaction is an outcome of PSM, since the public sector environment helps satisfy employees' prosocial needs. Homberg and McCarthy (2015) found that when employees with high PSM are given more opportunities to serve the public, their job satisfaction level is higher. However, Kjeldsen and Hansen (2018) found that the relationship between PSM and job satisfaction may be negatively affected by some organizational characteristics such as red tape and hierarchical authority.

The main reason behind the connection between PSM and organizational commitment is the assumption that individuals with higher levels of PSM are attracted to organizations that create an environment that satisfies their need to do good and to benefit others. These employees tend to serve in a public organization (Potipiroon & Ford, 2017). According to Potipiroon and Ford (2017), the relation between PSM and organizational commitment is stronger when two other factors are also present: high intrinsic motivation and ethical leadership. Bland et al. (2021)

also found high levels of organizational commitment in employees with high PSM whose work environment provided ample feedback and development opportunities. Vandenabeele et al. (2018) confirmed the robust relationship between PSM and organizational commitment.

PSM has been shown to have a positive effect on individual performance, which, according to Perry et al. (2010), is expected, given that employees with high PSM "embrace work characterized by attributes such as high task significance" (p. 684). Vogel and Homberg (2020) listed several individual performance measures including in-role performance, supervisors' evaluation of employees' performance, outcomes, and extra-role performance. Individuals' extra-role performance includes activities beyond formally prescribed tasks (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior). Vogel and Homberg (2020) also concluded that PSM has a strong relationship with various measures of individual performance. In one of the earlier studies, Vandenabeele (2009) evaluated the relationship of each PSM dimension to individual performance and found a strong relationship between all dimensions of PSM and individual performance, except for the dimension of compassion. Vandenabeele's interpretation was that compassion does not fit the professional public sector environment and can be considered favoritism. However, these findings may be specific to the European environment where Vandenabeele conducted his research. Palma et al. (2021) noticed that teachers with high PSM reported higher performance and a desire to benefit students and satisfy their students' needs.

Societal Outcomes. Employees with high PSM levels are more likely to engage in whistleblowing, as they act on motives of contributing to the common good and serving public interest (Caillier, 2017). Thus, employees with high PSM levels believe it is their ethical responsibility to maintain high standards of integrity and protect public interest (Taylor, 2018). For example, Caillier (2017) found that whistle blowing in public organizations increases public

trust in the government and democracy (Taylor, 2018) and is considered self-sacrifice, since challenging unethical or corrupt authority can bring retaliation. Whistle blowing, as an outcome of PSM, is reported primarily in public sector organizations compared to the private sector (Caillier, 2017; Taylor, 2018).

Employees with high levels of PSM are also believed to exhibit higher levels of prosocial behavior and contribute to the development of social capital (Esteve et al., 2015). Andrews (2011) defined social capital as "a structural and attitudinal phenomenon that is the property of communities rather than individuals" (p. 50). High levels of social capital are related to higher economic performance of communities, effective government institutions, high trust in government and democracy, and lower crime rates (Irfan et al., 2023; Priest, 2023). However, Priest (2023) also observed that tight ties between friends and family in social networks in times of collective trauma, such as COVID-19, pervasively impacted trust in federal government.

Organizational Outcomes. In the PSM literature, various interrelated organizational outcomes have been examined, including performance, organizational commitment, and turnover. A strong positive relationship between PSM and organizational performance in public sector organizations is mediated by employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment as well as by individual performance (Vandenabeele et al., 2018). Employees with high PSM usually show a higher person-organization fit with public sector organizations, which leads to higher levels of organizational performance (Petrovsky & Ritz, 2013) and a lower desire to leave (Gan et al., 2020). Qi and Wang (2018) conducted research on Chinese public sector employees comparing the effects of employee morale and PSM on organizational performance and found that while increased morale did not result in increased performance, PSM had "a direct and positive effect on perceived organizational performance" (Qi & Wang, 2018, p. 760).

PSM has consistently shown a significant negative relationship with turnover intention either directly (Jia et al., 2022, Shim et al., 2017) or indirectly, mediated by job attitudes (Gan et al., 2020), organizational culture (Sun & Wang, 2017), and organizational commitment (Kartono, 2021). Kartono (2020) found that during the COVID-19 pandemic, public nurses in the Philippines were overworked, feared being infected, and had high turnover intention if their PSM levels were low. However, nurses with high PSM showed lower turnover intention. High levels of PSM along with intrinsic rewards reduced public employees' desire to look for another job (Stater & Stater, 2019). Hayes and Stazyk (2019) also explored the effect of mission congruence as a part of the person-organization fit in the public sector and found that at least 11% of the teachers were more likely to remain at their current job if most of their colleagues shared their beliefs and values about the central mission of their school.

Interaction of PSM in the Hypothesized Model. As a predominantly public sector feature, PSM has been primarily researched in the public sector environment. Multiple studies have confirmed the relationship between PSM and employee turnover intention (Gan et al., 2020; Jia et al., 2022; Kartono, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed (also see Figure 6):

H9: PSM is negatively related to employee turnover intention.

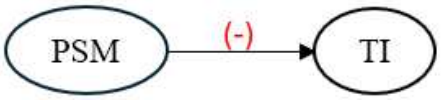

Figure 6. *Hypothesized Interaction of PSM.*

Note. PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, (-) = negative relationship

Turnover Intention

The use of turnover intention as a proxy for actual turnover is supported by the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior. The two theories suggest that attitudes towards behavior are strong predictors of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2015). However, not all researchers share the legitimacy of this proxy relationship. Bolt et al. (2022) expressed concern about the steady increase of research on turnover intention instead of actual turnover, as often intention does not result in action. Between 2001 and 2018, 66% of the research on turnover intention focused on intended turnover compared to 22% on actual turnover (Bolt et al., 2022). Rubenstein et al. (2017) called turnover intention a surrogate variable for actual turnover and warned that reliance on turnover intention may produce misleading results. Nevertheless, the majority of researchers have found that turnover intention is a reliable predictor of actual turnover (Gan et. al., 2020; Hayes & Stazyk; 2019; Kartono, 2021; Stater & Stater, 2019; Wang et. al., 2022). Therefore, this study selected turnover intention as a proxy for the actual turnover.

Turnover Intention as an Organizational Outcome in the Public Sector

In the public sector context, turnover intention has been studied as an outcome of multiple factors, including work exhaustion and job demands (Shim et al., 2017), intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Kim, 2017), high-performance work practices (Kartono, 2021), person-organization fit (Hayes & Stazyk, 2019), social work rewards (Stater & Stater, 2019), and various types of leadership (Li & Xie, 2022; Sun & Wang, 2017, Tavares et al., 2021). While some research has not explicitly identified PSM as part of a public sector environment (Hayes & Stazyk, 2019; Stater & Stater, 2019; Sun & Wang, 2017), the studies have implied the presence of PSM in public sector organizations. Most public sector-related studies on employee turnover

intention have been conducted in the context of PSM. Although the public sector is not by default identified with PSM, Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.) defines public service as "a service rendered in the public interest, governmental employment." Thus, this study treats research on PSM as equivalent to research in the context of the public sector.

Given the financial implications of the employee turnover intention in the public sector, it is surprising that only 4.6% of the PSM-related research on outcomes, including individual, organizational, and societal, has focused on turnover intention (Ritz et al., 2016). Recently, Mussagulova and Van der Wal (2021) confirmed these funding reporting a slightly higher number of studies (6%) on turnover intention in public organizations in non-Western countries. Kim (2017) claimed that strenuous economic conditions in the government cause employee burnout and higher turnover intention. Therefore, it is necessary to explore employees' turnover intention further in the public sector.

Several studies have examined employee turnover intention in the public sector environment through the lens of leadership theories (Fontes et al., 2018; Sun & Wang, 2017; Tavares et al., 2021). Transformational leadership (TL) directly reduces employees' intention to leave. In addition, TL indirectly affects turnover intention by cultivating a collaborative culture, promoting engagement, and affective organizational commitment (Gyensare et al., 2017; Sun & Wang, 2017). Authentic leadership has a significantly positive relationship with organizational culture. Leaders who are perceived as authentic increase employees' commitment to the organization and promote employees' trust in leadership, which reduces negative outcomes, including turnover intention (Alkharabsheh et al., 2018). Responsible leadership enhances employee trust and mitigates turnover intention by promoting employees' commitment towards the job, the manager, and the organization (Ahmad et al., 2020). Charismatic leadership can also

create a more meaningful and satisfying work environment for public servants by committing to uphold public values, thus reducing turnover intention (Tavares et al., 2021). Servant leadership can positively affect change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior and career commitment, while negatively affecting turnover intention (Li & Xie, 2022). Fontes et al.'s (2018) study supported the view that leadership styles depend on the situation and that a high task-oriented and a relationship-oriented type of the leadership style decreases turnover intention and limits bullying in a workplace. Besides disseminating pertinent information, high relationship-oriented leadership style also builds relationships with employees, promotes social interaction, and enhances cooperation in the work environment. Effective communication is at the basis of high relationship-oriented leadership style that promotes positive outcomes and reduces turnover intention in public sector organizations (Fontes et al., 2018). In contrast, Hattab et al. (2022) found that toxic leadership positively influenced counterproductive work behavior and turnover intention, as employees perceived toxic leadership as a breach of the implicit psychological contract.

Considering the importance of effective leadership communication in decreasing employee turnover intention and high costs associated with actual employee turnover, surprisingly little research has been conducted on the role of the ML in the public sector environment and the relationship with the employee turnover intention. The limited studies on the effect of ML on turnover intention merely specify the public sector as a sample pool and do not speak to the specifics of the public sector environment and how it may affect the relationship between ML and turnover intention (Hayes & Stazyk, 2019; Jung, 2014; Shaimerdenova et al., 2019). While leaders' empathetic language (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022), goal clarity (Jung, 2014), and meaningful work (Shaimerdenova et al., 2019) have been shown to have a negative

influence on turnover intention in the public sector, studies have not examined how the presence of PSM affects these relationships. Therefore, more research on these relationships is warranted.

In the public sector literature, PSM has been examined as a mediator between employees' turnover intention and various factors. Kim (2017) found that PSM mediated the significantly negative effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the turnover intention of public employees in South Korea. The positive relationships between work exhaustion and job demands and turnover intention were reduced by PSM (Shim et al., 2017). PSM also promoted an environment in which transformational leadership communication including ML significantly reduced employees' turnover intention (Sun & Wang, 2017). In all cases, PSM had a mediating effect on these relationships. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed (also see Figure 7):

> H10: PSM mediates the relationships between ML and its subtypes, such as direction-giving language, empathetic language, meaning-making language, and employee turnover intention.

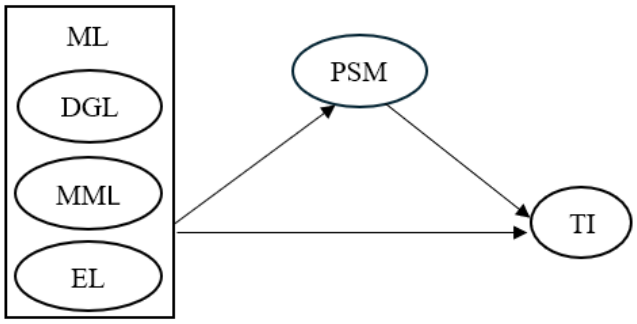

Figure 7. *Hypothesized Mediating Effect of PSM.*

Note. ML = managerial motivating language, DGL = direction-giving language, MML = meaning-making language, EL = empathetic language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention.

Summary

Chapter II presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks based on an integrated literature review. First, the literature review process was described. This chapter also presented the theoretical framework guided by MLT through the origin of the theory, a summary of the theory, research based on the theory, and the implications for this study. The hypothesized conceptual model was introduced based on a detailed description of the concepts and the interactions. The variables include a) ML, b) direction-giving language, c) meaning-making language, d) empathetic language, e) turnover intention, and f) PSM. A research hypothesis was also proposed for each relationship.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This chapter provides an overview of the research design, the sample of the population, the instruments, the procedures of data collection, and the methods of data screening and analysis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the relationships between motivating language and employee turnover intentions in the public sector environment. In addition, the mediating effect of public service motivation was examined.

Research Design

A Qualtrics online questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. Three validated measuring instruments were utilized: *Motivating Language scale* (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007), *Merit Systems Protection Board scale* to measure PSM (Wright et al., 2013), and *Turnover Intention scale* (Kelloway et al., 1999). Several public organizations (state, local, and municipal government) were contacted to obtain permission to survey public employees. Four organizations (two municipalities and two county governments) responded with permission to survey their employees. After the approval from the Colorado State University (CSU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) was received, a series of three surveys was launched. The three researched variables were separated in different surveys two weeks apart. To increase the response rate, a raffle was offered for ten $25 Amazon gift cards to those who fully completed all three questionnaires within a specified time frame (two weeks after each survey). One reminder was sent a week after each survey. All data was collected within six weeks. Once the data had been collected, they were screened based on literature of missing data, outliers, normality, and

multicollinearity. A common method variance (CMV) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were conducted, after which the theoretical model and hypothesized structural correlations using a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis were examined.

Population and Sample

Study Population

Population is "the entire collection or set of objects, people, or events that we are interested in studying" (Coolidge, 2013, p. 38). It is not feasible to get access and study the entire population, so researchers collect smaller samples and use the results to infer data for the whole population (Field, 2009). The population of this study comprises the local government employees. The U.S. Census Bureau lists counties, municipalities, townships, special districts, and school districts as local government organizations (Grundy, 2020). The U. S. Census Bureau reported 14.2 million of local government employees in March 2019. It is not feasible to attempt to survey all local government employees of the U. S.

Sampling Procedure

Two criteria were used for sampling: 1) public sector employees of local government organizations in Utah and 2) employees of all but executive and elected officials' levels. The executive and elected officials were excluded due to the focus of this study on managerial day-to-day communication with subordinates as opposed to leadership strategies.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) usually requires large samples that depend on the complexity of models (Kline, 2016). Kline recommended a minimum of 200 cases for the sample size. This study used 257 valid cases.

Demographic Characteristics

IBM SPSS was used to examine demographic characteristics. Results are presented in Table 2. Female participants (n = 164, 63.8%) outnumbered male participants (n = 91, 35.4%). Participants between 46 and 55 years of age were the largest group (n = 73, 28.4%), followed by the same number of participants in the 26 – 35 and 36 – 45 age groups (n = 63, 24.5%). Next was the group of participants 56 – 65 years of age (n = 34, 13.2%), followed by participants younger than 25 years old (n = 19, 7.4%). The smallest group was over 66 years old (n = 5, 1.9%). Most participants held a bachelor's degree (n = 100, 38.9%), followed by participants with a high school diploma or an equivalent (n = 71, 27.6%). The number of participants with an associate degree (n = 41, 16%) was almost equal to the number of participants with a master's degree (n = 40, 15.6%). Holders of a PhD degree or an equivalent were the smallest group (n = 5, 1.9%).

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Options	N	%
Gender	Male	91	35.4
	Female	164	63.8
	Other	2	0.8
Age	Under 25 years old	19	7.4
	26 – 35 years old	63	24.5
	36 – 45 years old	63	24.5
	46 – 55 years old	73	28.4
	56 – 65 years old	34	13.2
	Over 66 years old	5	1.9
Education	High school or equivalent	71	27.6
	Associate degree	41	16.0
	Bachelor's degree	100	38.9
	Master's degree	40	15.6
	Ph.D. degree or equivalent	5	1.9

Professional Characteristics

Some professional criteria were collected as well. Table 3 summarizes professional characteristics of participants. Most participants were employees without subordinates (n = 182, 70.8%), while first level supervisors and managers were the next largest group (n = 45, 17.5%). They were followed by middle level managers (n = 21, 8.2%) and the smallest group of participants, senior level managers (n = 9, 3.5%). Executive level managers selection was used to control for participants of strategic leadership level, who were not a target group of this study. Most of participants were general employees of public sector organizations (n = 174, 67.7%), followed by public safety employees (n = 57, 22.2%) and public health employees (n = 26, 10.1%). The largest group of participants were fairly new to public sector organizations and had worked in the public sector between 0 and 5 years (n = 84, 32.7%). Participants who have been employed by public sector organizations between 10 and 20 years were the second largest group (n = 67, 26.1%), followed by participants who had worked in the public sector between 5 and 10 years (n = 56, 21.8%) and between 20 and 30 years (n = 40, 15.6%). The smallest group of participants had worked for public sector organizations between 30 and 40 years (n = 10, 3.9%). The largest group of participants had been with their current supervisor/manager between 1 and 5 years (n = 142, 55.3%) followed by participants who had been less than 1 year with their current supervisor/manager (n = 67, 26.1%). Participants who had been working with their current supervisor/manager between 5 and 10 years was the next largest group (n = 22, 8.6%) with the close following by participants who had been with their current supervisor between 10 and 20 years (n = 19, 7.4%). Participants who had been with the current supervisor between 20 and 30 years represented the next to the smallest group (n = 6, 2.3%) and the smallest group of participants had been working for their current supervisor for over 30 years (n = 1, 0.4%).

Table 3

Professional Characteristics

Characteristics	Options	N	%
Status in the organization	Employee (no subordinates)	182	70.8
	First level supervisor/manager	45	17.5
	Middle level manager	21	8.2
	Senior level manager	9	3.5
	Executive level manager	0	0
Area of employment	General employee	174	67.7
	Public safety	57	22.2
	Public health	26	10.1
Years in public sector	0 - 5	84	32.7
	5 - 10	56	21.8
	10 – 20	67	26.1
	20 – 30	40	15.6
	30 – 40	10	3.9
	Over 40 years	0	0
Years with current supervisor	Less than 1 year	67	26.1
	1 – 5 years	142	55.3
	5 – 10 years	22	8.6
	10 – 20 years	19	7.4
	20 – 30 years	6	2.3
	Over 30 years	1	0.4

Instrumentation

To examine the proposed theoretical model and the hypothesized relationships, three instruments were used: ML, PSM, and Turnover Intention. The validity, reliability, and practicality were considered for the selection of the measures. The total number of items was 18, (plus demographic questions) with the Likert scale from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The validity and reliability of each instrument have been confirmed by previous studies (Table 4). However, the construct validity using the principal component analysis (PCA) and the reliability by Cronbach’s alpha (α) were evaluated for this study as well.

Table 4

Reliability of Survey Instruments

Construct	# of Items	Reliability (α) from the reference study	References
Direction-giving Language	3	0.90	Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007
Meaning-making Language	3	0.80	Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007
Empathetic Language	3	0.94	Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007
Public Service Motivation	5	0.84	Wright et al., 2013
Turnover Intention	4	0.92	Kelloway et al., 1999

Measure of Managerial Motivating Language

Motivating Language Scale was created by Mayfield et al. (1995) to measure the three subtypes of ML in the framework of MLT which was developed by Sullivan in 1988. This scale was used to evaluate ML as a second order independent variable with three first order factors in this study: 1) direction-giving language, 2) meaning-making language, and 3) empathetic language. The authors stated the purpose of the scale development as "to specifically measure both a leader's general oral communication skills with subordinates and his/her strategic use of spoken language variance to motivate workers" and to influence organizational and individual outcomes (Mayfield et al. 1995, p. 330).

The reliability of the subscales was high (EL = 0.97, DGL = 0.92, meaning-making language = 0.93) and the multivariate reliability was 0.97. As a result of the scale development and validation process, a total of 16 questions that met retention standards were included into the final scale: 5 of them measure DGL, 5 questions measure EL, and 6 questions measure meaning-making language. Mayfield et al. (1995) suggested the ML measuring scale could be used to

assess predicted positive relationships between ML and key individual and organizational outcomes.

The ML scale underwent further development and revision. This study used a reduced 9-item scale to measure ML, as it was adjusted by Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) from the original 24-item scale to create a more parsimonious measure to encourage better responses. Each subtype of ML is measured by the 3 highest loading items. The instrument showed high reliability and validity: direction-giving language $\alpha = 0.90$, empathetic language $\alpha = 0.94$, and meaning-making language $\alpha = 0.80$. Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) claimed that the reduced scale had adequate reliability that was similar to the original scale and met generally accepted guidelines. By calculating the goodness of fit (0.93) and the chi square (258 with $df = 98$) for partial and full models, the researchers confirmed previous claims that using all three subtypes of ML in balance produces better results than favoring selected subtypes of ML. The examples of questions are: “My supervisor gives me clear instructions about solving job-related problems”, “My supervisor shows concern about my job satisfaction”, and “My supervisor tells me stories about people who have left this organization” (see Appendix C for the full list). The responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale.

Measure of Public Service Motivation

The 5-item measuring scale adapted by Merit Systems Protection Board (Wright et al, 2013) from the original 40-items scale was utilized in this study. The original measuring instrument for PSM was created by Perry (1996) and, by means of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), was distilled from 40 items down to 24 items and to four measurable dimensions: 1) public policy making, 2) public interest, 3) compassion, and 4) self-sacrifice. CFA showed that the reliability coefficient α was 0.90 and that the factor loadings were

from 0.39 to 0.78, which, according to Perry (1996), confirmed the validity. The instrument was deemed appropriate to measure the selected variables and collect individual self-reported opinions.

Later, several reduced scales were proposed to address the issues of the original multidimensional measure of PSM. Due to the "weak support" for the self-sacrifice dimension, Coursey and Pandey (2007, p. 563) proposed to reduce the overall number of dimensions to three. However, Kim and Vandenabeele (2010) called to preserve self-sacrifice as a foundational dimension of PSM. For the generalizability of the PSM research on the international scale, Kim et al. (2013) refined and renamed two of the four original dimensions as attraction to public participation and commitment to public values, while keeping the dimensions of compassion and self-sacrifice. Kim et al. (2013) tested internationally and validated a reduced instrument of 16 items.

The use of the 5-item unidimensional scale for this study is justified by the intention to measure the overall level of PSM rather than the full range of dimensions of PSM. The global scale assumes an aggregated mental process of a survey participant who combines various thoughts and feelings about a multidimensional construct to produce an integrated response (Weight et al., 2013). Several studies used this instrument and confirmed its validity (Miao et al., 2018; Schwarz et al., 2020, Wright et al., 2013). The instrument reported $\alpha = 0.84$. The examples of questions are "Meaningful public service is very important to me" and "Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements" (see Appendix C for the full list). A five-point Likert scale measures the responses.

Measure of Turnover Intentions

Several measuring instruments have been used by researchers to measure employee turnover intentions (Bright, 2008; Kim, 2017; Kim & Fernandez, 2017). Bright (2008) used only 1 question in his study of the relationship between PSM and turnover intention in the public sector. Kim and Fernandez (2017) also measured public employees' turnover intention with only 1 item. Bothma and Roodt (2013) considered 1-item scales limited and tested and validated the turnover intention scale of 6 items. Ike et al. (2023) developed a more elaborate measurement instrument for turnover intention that consisted of 25 items.

The instrument selected for this study was developed by Kelloway et al. (1999) and measures 4 items on a 5-point Likert scale. To reduce the survey fatigue and to increase the response rate (Jeong et al., 2023), this measurement instrument was selected as both parsimonious and comprehensive. The instrument had $\alpha = 0.92$. It was later successfully used by multiple researchers (Dane & Brummel, 2014; Nikkhah-Farkhani & Piotrowski, 2020; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). Dane and Brummel (2013) observed adequate internal consistency reliability with $\alpha = 0.88$. Wibowo and Paramita used this scale to measure turnover intentions of 188 Indonesian nurses during COVID-19 pandemic and had $\alpha = 0.824$. Nikkhah-Farkhani and Piotrowski (2020) successfully used this scale to test turnover intentions of nurses in a comparative study between Iran ($\alpha = 0.83$) and Poland ($\alpha = 0.94$). Sample items of this scale are: "I am planning to look for a new job" and "I am thinking about leaving this organization" (see Appendix C for the full list).

Ethical Considerations

The ethical guidelines outlined by the Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Standing Committee on Ethics and Integrity (AHRD, 1999) and the Institutional

Review Board (IRB) of Colorado State University were followed. Data was rid of identifiers, protected and kept on a private external drive with only a primary investigator having access to it.

Data Collection Procedure

The IRB's ethical guidelines for data collection and management were followed. About 40 local government organizations were contacted by email with the inquiry about the possibility of surveying their employees. Four organizations responded positively. Once the IRB approval was received, a series of three online questionnaires was sent to all participants via an online survey platform Qualtrics. A follow up email reminder was sent to all participants one week after each questionnaire. The first questionnaire was sent on January 19th to 1,616 public employees. The response rate was 23% (n = 370). The second questionnaire was sent on February 2nd to those who responded to the first questionnaire. The response rate to the second questionnaire was 92% (n = 342). The third questionnaire was sent on February 16th to those who responded to the second questionnaire. The response rate to the third questionnaire was 76% (n = 259). The data was collected for six weeks. To increase the response rate, a raffle for ten $25 Amazon gift cards was offered to all respondents who fully completed all three questionnaires.

Data Screening

It is necessary to screen or clean up data before conducting analysis, as spending more time at this stage and resolving issues facilitates an honest data analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The data for this study was screened for missing values, outliers, multicollinearity, and normality using IBM SPSS.

Missing Data

One of the biggest problems for a researcher is the issue of missing data (Kline, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Respondents miss questions by accident or on purpose due to various reasons and "the pattern of missing data is more important than the amount missing" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013, p. 62). Randomly missing data are less serious than non-randomly missing data, as it affects the generalizability of results. IBM SPSS Missing Values Analysis (MVA) helps identify missing data. There are several ways of handling missing values from dropping the entire case to imputing missing values and using them for further analysis to dropping a non-critical variable. None of the ways is ideal and the choice depends on the situation and the quality of data. In the current study, two cases were removed, as the participants did not answer questions about the main constructs, resulting in a total of 257 valid cases. The Qualtrics platform was set to forced responses, so that the participants could not proceed to the next page with missed questions.

Outliers

Outliers skew data. They may be the cause of the normality assumption violation and may produce inaccurate analysis and conclusions. They can cause Type I (rejecting a true null hypothesis) and Type II (retaining a false null hypothesis) errors (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). Kline (2016) recommended considering data more than 3 standard deviations from the mean as outliers. According to Tabachnik and Fidell (2013), there are four reasons for outliers: (1) incorrect data entry, (2) unspecified missing-value codes in the analysis software, (3) the outlier is not a member of the population, and (4) the cases with outlier values have more extreme values than a normal distribution.

Data may have univariate and multivariate outliers. Univariate outliers are significantly different from the mean data in one of the variables. One way to spot univariate outliers is by creating box plots in which the outliers are outside of the box. Univariate outliers are also easy to catch by the frequency distribution of z scores, as $|z| \geq 3.29$ points to an outlier (Field, 2009). Several techniques of handling the outliers can be applied. If there is a good reason to believe that the case does not belong to the population, it can be removed. Transformation is another way of data manipulation to bring data closer to normality. All variables need to go through the same transformation method. The outlier data can also be changed to the next highest score plus one or the standard deviation can be lowered from 3 to 2 (Field, 2009). All instances of handling outliers need to be reported.

Following Kline's guideline, data in this study was converted to z scores and evaluated against the $|z| \geq 3.29$ threshold with IBM SPSS software. Four cases had z scores lower than -3.29. All four outliers were in PSM. The outlier cases were scored as 1 or 5 on a 5-point Likert scale. The maximum percentage of outliers within a variable was 1.55% (4/257), which is an acceptable number of outliers in the data. Additionally, the hypothesized model was tested with and without the 4 univariate outliers and no significant differences were noticed between the two model fits. All four outlier cases were kept for this study.

Multivariate outliers are significantly different from the mean data in multiple variables. Mahalanobis distance is one of the ways to detect multivariate outliers. It calculates the distance of a case from the centroid, which is an intersection of the means of all variables (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). IBM SPSS software was used to identify multivariate outliers. A total of 4 multivariate outliers with $p < .001$ (1.55%) were identified for independent variables. The suggested model was tested with and without the 4 multivariate outliers. No significant

differences were found between the two model fits; hence, the four multivariate outlier cases were kept for this study.

Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity stands for a strong correlation between independent variables. High correlation presents a problem (Field, 2009). It indicates that the highly correlated variables are redundant and inflate the size of errors. Field (2009) recommends using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance. The value of 10 and higher of VIF is the indicator of multicollinearity and the tolerance below 0.1 is a problem (Field, 2009). There are several options to deal with multicollinearity. Some options are to delete the variable with the highest variance proportion, or the variables can be averaged (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). In this study, no multicollinearity has been identified. The VIF values did not exceed 10 (1.201 – 3.347). Tolerance was above 0.1 (0.299 – 0.832).

Normality

Checking continuous variables for normality is an important step in a multivariate analysis (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). In SEM, there is a requirement of data normality for the maximum likelihood analysis (Kline, 2016). Normality is assessed by skewness and kurtosis of data. Skewness is a symmetry of the distribution and kurtosis is a peakedness of the distribution. Perfectly normally distributed data have skewness and kurtosis equal to 0. Transformation is one way of dealing with a univariate (and by extension a multivariate) normality. The original scores are mathematically converted to new scores that are normally distributed. Transformation is also helpful in dealing with heteroscedasticity among residuals that are aspects of multivariate normality (Kline, 2016). Heteroscedasticity can be easily seen on a scatterplot.

In large samples (over 30 cases) skewness and kurtosis are evaluated by absolute values. Kline (2016) suggests that skewness absolute values above 3.0 and kurtosis absolute values above 10 present a problem. IBM SPSS was used to diagnose data normality for this study. As the sample size for this study was 257, absolute values of skewness and kurtosis were evaluated. Skewness ranged from -2.034 to .814 and kurtosis ranged from -1.291 to 3.915. None of the absolute values were above the threshold skewness ($|\pm 3.0|$) and kurtosis ($|\pm 10|$) values.

Data Analysis

Common Method Variance

Common Method Variance (CMV) is "variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent" (Podsakoff et al., 2003, p. 879). The measurement method can introduce various sources of bias: (a) collecting responses on the independent and dependent variables from a single source, (b) item characteristics, (c) item context, (d) measurement context (Jakobsen & Jensen, 2013; Podsakoff et al., 2003). CMV presents a serious methodological problem in empirical research, as it can create a perception of a relationship between constructs that have no relationship (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Siemsen et al., 2010). The measurement method in this study has the potential to introduce CMV to the data, as the same respondents evaluated independent and dependent variables, and all items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Several techniques were used to minimize CMV.

First, it was specified in the online survey description that the responses were confidential, that there were no right or wrong answers, and the respondents were encouraged to be as honest as possible. Second, the items were kept unaltered from the original, previously validated instruments that were simple and concise, and an estimate of the process duration was provided in the description of the survey. Third, the independent, dependent, and mediating

variables were separated into three surveys and were administered at different times, two weeks apart.

Following Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) algorithm for choosing the method of control for CMV, a "single-common-method-factor approach" was taken, as the measurement instrument (a) could not obtain predictor and criterion variables' data from different sources and (b) the sources of the method bias could not be identified (p. 898). The single common method factor approach involves an addition of a first-order unmeasured latent factor to the hypothesized model. The unmeasured latent factor does not have its own indicators and is using items from other variables in the model. One of the advantages of this approach is that the latent factor does not need to be identified and measured. One of the disadvantages of this method is the inability of a researcher to identify the specific cause of the method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Steenkamp & Maydeu-Olivares, 2021). Considering the probability of CMV due to the selected research method, analyses for all models with and without the unmeasured latent factor were conducted.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The identified factors in the proposed model are driven by theoretical research. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to evaluate relationships between the items and the latent variables. CFA estimates factor variances and covariances, factor loadings, and the measurement error for each indicator (Kline, 2016). Maximum Likelihood (ML) was used to evaluate the following parameters: Chi-square (χ^2)/*df* (< 5.0), comparative fit index (CFI) (acceptable if > 0.90), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (close fit if < 0.05, acceptable if between 0.05 and 0.08, problematic if > 0.08), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) (acceptable if < 0.08) (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016).

Correlation Analysis

As all variables in the proposed model are continuous, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) between latent variables was calculated. According to McMillan (2000), an absolute correlation coefficient can be weak (0.10 < 0.30), moderate (0.40 < 0.60), or strong (> 0.70). The *p* value was set at .05 as statistically significant.

Structural Equation Modeling

SEM was employed to examine relationships and a mediating effect between the variables. SEM combines the path analysis of the measured variables, allows for random and nonrandom error, and handles factor analysis of latent variables (Burnette & Williams, 2005). The hypothesized model of this study has one second-order exogenous (independent) variable motivating language (ML) and two endogenous (one dependent, TI, and one mediating, PSM) variables. ML is a second-order construct and a latent variable, which consists of three first-order subtypes (meaning-making language, direction-giving language, and empathetic language). The path analyses were conducted to validate the proposed mediation model and alternative models.

The three steps of the SEM analysis outlined by Burnette and Williams (2005) were followed. The steps are: 1) specification of the model, 2) estimation of parameters, and 3) evaluation of the model fit. Kline (2016) called the first step the most crucial step of SEM. It is a step of creating a graphic representation, a model diagram, of the hypothesized relationships in the form of structural equations. In the proposed hypothesized model, ML and its subtypes were exogenous variables, while PSM and turnover intention were endogenous variables. All indicators in the proposed model were reflective (affected by the latent variable) and all variables were continuous. Each latent variable was assigned a scale for the structural model. Estimation of parameters and the evaluation of the model fit was conducted with the help of the SPSS Amos

software. To evaluate the model fit, χ^2 test and goodness of fit indices were used. Chi-square compares observed data fit to the hypothesized model and is sensitive to the sample size (Klein, 2016). *P* value of a χ^2 should be non-significant (> 0.05) for the proposed model to be acceptable; however, Kline (2016) warned that χ^2 is sensitive to the sample size. Therefore, other indices need to be considered as well. No one single index can accurately identify the model fit (Klein, 2016). Several indices were used in the analysis for this study, including χ^2/ degree of freedom (*df*; < 5), comparative fit index (CFI, > .9), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA, < .08), and standardized root mean residual (SRMR, < .08, Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016).

Mediating Effect

This study examined the mediating effect of the intervening variable, PSM, on the relationships between the source variables, ML and its subtypes, and the outcome variable, employee turnover intentions. Figure 8 demonstrates the simplified mediating relationship where PSM is the mediating factor, and a, b, c' are unstandardized coefficients. A total effect c can be the combination of a direct effect c' and indirect effect a*b: c = c' + (a*b).

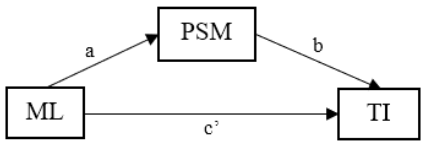

Figure 8. *Simplified Mediating Relationship.*

Note. ML = motivating language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention.

To analyze data without assuming multivariate normality and to evaluate the significance of the indirect effect of a mediating variable, the bootstrapping technique that estimates properties of the population from smaller samples was used (Kline, 2016). In this study, bias-corrected (BC) bootstrap mediation was analyzed using SPSS. As a technique providing the best

balance between Type I and Type II errors, BC bootstrap detects indirect effects. The effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable, of the mediating variable on the dependent variable, and of the independent variable on the mediating variable were randomly identified and resampled 5,000 times with 95% BC bootstrap confidence intervals. For the indirect effect to be statistically significant at .05, the 95% BC bootstrap confidence intervals should include no zero values (Byrne, 2016).

Summary

Chapter III restated the purpose of the study followed by an overview of the proposed research design. The description of the population, the demographic and professional characteristics and sampling procedure for this study were presented. The instrumentation and process of data collection, screening and analysis were described (e.g., missing data, outliers, multicollinearity, normality, CFA, CMV, and SEM). Three surveys containing three measurement instruments were distributed at two weeks intervals. Data screening resulted in 257 valid cases for the final analysis.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, CFA, correlation analysis, SEM, and bootstrap analysis. IBM SPSS and Amos software were used for the analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 5 summarizes the composite means and standard deviations of all variables. A total of 257 participants from 4 local government organizations in Utah, US, answered all items.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Composite Scores for Each Construct

Composite Variable	N	Mean	*S. D.*
DGL	257	3.95	1.22
EL	257	3.88	1.26
MML	257	2.64	1.24
PSM	257	3.88	0.97
TI	257	2.30	1.37

Note: DGL = direction-giving language, EL = empathetic language, MML = meaning-making language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, N = number of cases, S.D. = standard deviation.

Table 6 presents the means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum scores, and the number of cases for all 18 items.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics of All Items for Each Construct

Item	N	Min	Max	Mean	S. D.
DGL1	257	1	5	3.94	1.27
DGL2	257	1	5	3.95	1.195
DGL3	257	1	5	3.95	1.203
EL1	257	1	5	4.12	1.144
EL2	257	1	5	3.68	1.343
EL3	257	1	5	3.85	1.283
MML1	257	1	5	2.65	1.196
MML2	257	1	5	2.59	1.203
MML3	257	1	5	2.69	1.333
PSM1	257	1	5	4.36	1.025
PSM2	257	1	5	4.05	0.953
PSM3	257	1	5	3.61	0.908
PSM4	257	1	5	3.23	1.067
PSM5	257	1	5	4.15	0.885
TI1	257	1	5	2.32	1.37
TI2	257	1	5	2.28	1.416
TI3	257	1	5	2.47	1.395
TI4	257	1	5	2.13	1.304

Note: DGL = direction-giving language, EL = empathetic language, MML = meaning-making language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, N = number of cases, S.D. = standard deviation.

Correlation Analysis of the Full Model

Table 7 summarizes the bivariate correlations (r) between the five variables. Some correlations were statistically significant ($p < .01$), while the following correlations were not significant: 1) PSM and all subdimensions of ML (DGL, EL, and MML); 2) TI and PSM; and 3) TI and MML. According to McMillan's (2000) guidelines, only one significant correlation was strong and four were moderate.

Table 7

Bivariate Correlations in the Hypothesized Full Model

	DGL	EL	MML	PSM	TI
DGL	1				
EL	.782**	1			
MML	.372**	.357**	1		
PSM	0.06	0.09	-0.02	1	
TI	-.339**	-.354**	0.021	-0.041	1

Note: ** $p < .01$, DGL = direction-giving language, EL = empathetic language, MML = meaning-making language, PSM = public service motivation, and TI = turnover intention.

DGL was significantly and strongly correlated with EL ($r = .782$, $p < .01$), and significantly and moderately correlated with MML ($r = .372$, $p < .01$) and TI ($r = -.339$, $p < .01$). The DGL to PSM correlation was weak and non-significant ($r = .06$, $p = > .01$). EL was significantly and moderately correlated with MML ($r = .357$, $p < .01$) and TI ($r = -.354$, $p < .01$). The EL to PSM correlation was weak and not significant ($r = .09$, $p > .01$). MML had non-significant and weak correlations with PSM ($r = -.02$, $p > .01$) and TI ($r = .021$, $p > .01$). PSM had non-significant and weak correlation with TI ($r = -.041$, $p > .01$).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFA was conducted to examine the validity of the proposed model. Standardized and unstandardized factor loadings, standard error (S.E.), critical ratio (C.R.), and p values for all items in the full model are presented in Appendix E. All factor loadings were significant and ranged between .51 and .99, which is above the .3 benchmark (Meyers et al., 2013; Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020).

Several indices were used to evaluate the model fit: χ^2/df (< 5), CFI (> .9), RMSEA (< .08), and SRMR (< .08) (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2016). The p value of CMIN/DF was significant, as it is usually sensitive with large samples (Kline, 2016); however, other indices were acceptable. CFA with CMV identified almost no influence of a single unmeasured latent factor on items. Table 8 presents the model fit indices of CFA with CMV. The χ^2 value was statistically significant; however, other indices were acceptable.

Table 8

Model Fit Indices for CFA with and without CMV

Index	CFA	CFA with CMV
CMIN/DF	1.825	1.839
p	0.000	0.000
CFI	0.960	0.960
RMSEA	0.057	0.057
SRMR	0.0532	0.0532

Note: CMIN/DF = Chi-square minimum/degree of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Alternative Models

Three alternative models with single subtypes of ML were tested to examine Hypothesis 8 and the claim that using all subtypes of ML is more effective than using any single subtype of ML (Mayfield et al., 1995; Sullivan, 1988).

Bivariate correlations (r) among the variables in each alternative model were examined and the results showed the same values as those of corresponding variables in Table 7. The Cronbach's α of the instruments was measured with the collected data. Some values differed

from the reliability values in reference studies (Table 4). MML was measured by three items and had the lowest value of all measures but still acceptable (α = .70), DGL was measured by three items (α = .87), EL was measured by three items and had the highest value of the three subtypes of ML (α = .90), PSM was measured by five items (α = 0.76), and TI was measured by four items (α = 0.92), All items from the original instruments were preserved for this study. Table 9 presents the reliability values in the current study.

Table 9

Reliability (α) of the Instruments in this Study

Instrument	α
MML	0.70
DGL	0.87
EL	0.90
PSM	0.76
TI	0.92

Note: MML = meaning-making language, DGL = direction-giving language, EL = empathetic language, PSM = public service motivation, and TI = turnover intention.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Alternative Models

CFA with CMV for all alternative models indicated no influence from the single unmeasured latent factor on items. The standardized and the unstandardized factor loading coefficients for each factor for each alternative model are presented in Appendix F. All standardized estimates were statistically significant and ranged between .5 and .91 for all alternative models, which was greater than .3 (Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020).

The model fit indices for all alternative models for CFA and for CFA with CMV are presented in Table 10. The p values of χ^2 for all alternative models were statistically significant;

however, other indices were acceptable. The model fit indices for the full model (Table 8) are slightly better than the model fit indices for the alternative models for CFA and for CFA with CMV.

Table 10

Alternative Models Fit Indices for CFA and CMV

Indices	DGL only		EL only		MML only	
	CFA	CFA with CMV	CFA	CFA with CMV	CFA	CFA with CMV
CMIN/DF	2.003	2.043	1.899	1.937	2.415	2.464
p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
CFI	0.967	0.966	0.972	0.971	0.948	0.947
RMSEA	0.063	0.064	0.059	0.061	0.074	0.076
SRMR	0.047	0.047	0.043	0.043	0.065	0.065

Note: CMIN/DF = Chi-square minimum/degree of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

Path Model Analysis

The hypothesized structural model was tested, and the fit indices are reported in Table 11. The χ^2 was statistically significant, which was likely a result of the large sample (n = 257; Kline, 2016); however, other indices were acceptable: CFI and TLI were above .90, while RMSEA and SRMR were below .09. Overall, the hypothesized structural model was acceptable.

Table 11

Model Fit Indices for the Path Model

Index	Value
CMIN/DF	1.813
p	0.000
CFI	0.960
TLI	0.952
RMSEA	0.056
SRMR	0.059

Note: CMIN/DF = Chi-square minimum/degree of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis index, RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.

There was only one significant path in the hypothesized model. The result is presented in Figure 9 along with the standardized path coefficients. Table 12 presents the decomposition of the unstandardized effects.

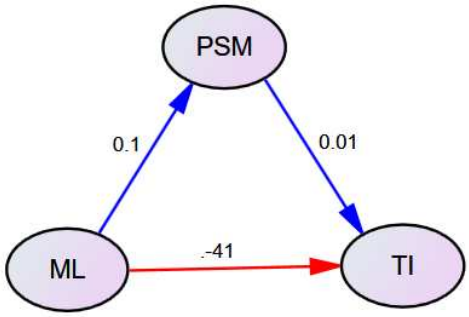

Figure 9. *Standardized Path Coefficients for the Hypothesized Model.*

Note. Red line = negative relationship, blue line = positive relationship, ML = motivating language, TI = turnover intention.

Table 12

Decomposition of the Statistically Significant Unstandardized Effect in the Hypothesized Model

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
ML → TI	-0.513**	0.001	-0.512**

Note. ** Statistically significant at the .01 level, ML = motivating language, TI = turnover intention.

Motivating language was negatively and significantly associated with turnover intention ($b^* = -.41$, $p < .05$). To test Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4, three alternative models with single subtypes of ML were evaluated. Table 13 presents the decomposition of statistically significant unstandardized effects in all alternative models. Standardized path coefficients for alternative models are presented in Figures 10, 11, and 12. DGL was negatively and significantly associated with turnover intention ($b^* = -.38$, $p < .05$). EL was negatively and significantly associated with turnover intention ($b^* = -.40$, $p < .05$). MML did not have a significant association with turnover intention ($b^* = -.08$, $p > .05$). The b^* value for the aggregated association between the motivating language and turnover intention was higher than any single value of the subtypes of motivating language associated with turnover intention.

Mediation Effects

Table 14 reports the statistical significance of the standardized mediation effects of PSM on the relationships among ML, DGL, MML, and EL and TI. Table 15 shows the estimates of the indirect effects and of the standard error (SE), critical ratios (CR) and the respective 95% bias-corrected (BC) bootstrap confidence intervals (CI). PSM was explored as a mediating variable. However, it did not significantly mediate the relationships in either the full hypothesized model or in the reduced alternative model with only one subtype of ML. Table 14

shows that all confidence intervals contained zeros. Motivating language was not significantly associated with public service motivation ($b^* = .10$, $p > .05$). Alternative models were evaluated to test Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7. Neither subtype of ML showed a significant association with PSM.

Table 13

Decomposition of Statistically Significant Unstandardized Effects in the Alternative Models

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
DGL → TI	-0.431**	-0.001	-0.432**
EL → TI	-0.51**	0.002	-0.508**

Note. ** Statistically significant at the .01 level, TI = turnover intention, DGL = direction-giving language, EL = emotional language.

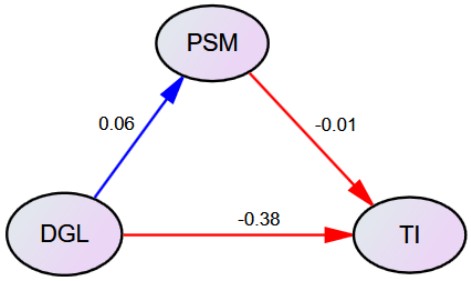

Figure 10. *Standardized Path Coefficients for the Alternative Model with DGL Only.*

Note. red line = negative relationship, blue line = positive relationship, DGL = direction-giving language, TI = turnover intention.

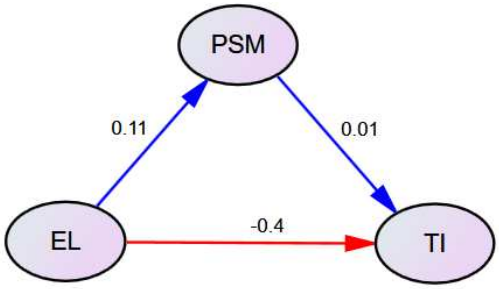

Figure 11. *Standardized Path Coefficients for the Alternative Model with EL Only.*

Note. red line = negative relationship, blue line = positive relationship, EL = empathetic language, TI = turnover intention.

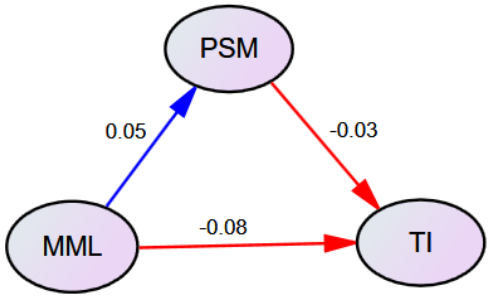

Figure 12. *Standardized Path Coefficients for the Alternative Model with MML Only.*

Note. red line = negative relationship, blue line = positive relationship, MML = meaning-making language, TI = turnover intention.

Table 14

Bootstrap Estimates of the Mediation Effects in the Full and Alternative Models

Path: IV → MV → DV	Product of coefficients			BC 95% CI	
	Estimate	SE	CR	Lower	Upper
ML→PSM→TI	0.001	0.006	0.169	-0.018	0.036
DGL→PSM→TI	0.000	0.006	-0.079	-0.024	0.014
MML→PSM→TI	-0.001	0.004	-0.240	-0.029	0.007
EL→PSM→TI	0.001	0.006	0.253	-0.017	0.04

Note. IV = independent variable, MV = mediating variable, DV = dependent variable, ML = motivating language, PSM = public service motivation, TI = turnover intention, DGL = direction-giving language, MML = meaning-making language, EL = empathetic language, SE = standard error, CR = critical ratio, BC = bias-corrected bootstrapping, CI = confidence interval

Summary

This chapter presented the results of this research. The chapter first described the descriptive statistics, CFA, CMV, correlation analysis, SEM and bootstrap analysis and then presented the model fit indices of the hypothesized model and of the three alternative models. All models had acceptable indices. Path analyses, standardized path coefficients, and hypothesized mediation effects were examined and reported. Detailed descriptions and discussion of the results and implications are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the study followed by a detailed discussion of the results and how they relate to the hypotheses and the extant literature. The theoretical and practical implications are derived. Finally, this chapter presents the limitations of the current research and identifies recommendations for future research.

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between a type of managerial communication and organizational outcomes in public sector organizations. In particular, managerial motivating language was investigated as a set of three subtypes: 1) direction-giving language, 2) meaning-making language, and 3) empathetic language. Employee turnover intention was the researched organizational outcome. Public service motivation was researched as a mediating variable.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study first conducted an extensive review of the relevant literature, and then constructed the theoretical framework. The literature review identified the variables and their interactions and provided a background for the theoretical framework in this study, motivating language theory. Two main questions guided this study:

1. What is the relationship between motivating language and its subtypes and employee turnover intention in the public sector?
2. Does public service motivation affect the relationship between motivating language and its subtypes and employee turnover intention in the public sector?

To explore these questions, 10 hypotheses were tested. The results are presented in Chapter IV and are summarized in Table 15.

Table 15

Summary of the Results of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Direction-giving language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.	Y
H2: Meaning-making language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.	N
H3: Empathetic language is negatively related to employee turnover intention.	Y
H4: ML, as a combination of direction-giving language, meaning-making language, and empathetic language, is negatively related to employee turnover intention to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.	Y
H5: Direction-giving language is positively related to public service motivation.	N
H6: Meaning-making language is positively related to public service motivation.	N
H7: Empathetic language is positively related to public service motivation.	N
H8: The combined use of all three types of ML is positively related to public service motivation to a greater extent than each type of language by itself.	N
H9: PSM is negatively related to employee turnover intention.	N
H10: PSM mediates the relationships between ML and the subtypes, including direction-giving language, empathetic language, and meaning-making language, and employee turnover intention.	N

Note. Y = supported, N = not supported.

Data Collection

Instruments

Three online questionnaires were conducted to collect data for hypothesis testing. The questionnaires contained three validated instruments: *managerial motivating language* (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007), *public service motivation* (Wright et al., 2013), and *turnover intention* (Kelloway et al., 1999) with 27 items, including 9 demographic and professional information

items. Each of the 18 subject items was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5).

Data Collection Procedure

Over 40 local government organizations in Utah were contacted to request permission to survey their employees. Four organizations responded positively. The 1st survey was sent to 1,616 employees and 370 employees responded, and 342 employees responded to the 2nd survey. The 3rd survey returned 259 responses. After screening for missing data, outliers, multicollinearity, and normality, 257 cases were used for the analysis.

Data Analysis

Several data analytical tools were used for this study including CFA, CMV, reliability analysis, construct validity analysis, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, SEM, and BC bootstrapping. The results of Harman's single-factor test did not find CMV in the data.

Measurement Model

The factor analysis in this study was driven by theory-based relationships. CFA was conducted to assess the validity of the hypothesized model (Kline, 2016). Four model fit statistics were used to assess the acceptability of the hypothesized model: χ^2/df (< 5), RMSEA (< .09), CFI (> .9), and SRMR (< .09) (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh & Hocevar, 1985). Although the χ^2/df value was statistically significant, it could be due to the large sample (Kline, 2016). All other fit indices were acceptable.

All standardized factor loading estimates were statistically significant and above the .3 benchmark (Appendix E, Meyers et al., 2013). The correlation matrix among the items for each of the five latent variables was evaluated and all intercorrelations were positive. Most correlation coefficients were above .5 in magnitude (Kline, 2016). However, some coefficients for MML

and PSM were below the recommended value of .5. Since the overall model fit was acceptable, all original items were retained for analysis. CMV analysis did not identify any influence from the single unmeasured latent factor. The model fit statistics with CMV were very close to the statistics of the hypothesized model.

Three alternative models to test Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 were evaluated. The models had only one subtype of ML and the relationship with TI and the mediation effect of PSM were tested. All models were evaluated by the same four model fit indices and all indices (except for p values for χ^2/df) were acceptable. CMV analysis was run for each alternative model, and the results did not identify any influences from the single unmeasured latent factor. All standardized factor loading estimates were statistically significant and above the .3 benchmark (Appendix F, Meyers et al., 2013).

Reliability of all three instruments was conducted and all α values were in the acceptable range (> .7). Construct validity was conducted as well, and all coefficients were in the acceptable range (> .7). Bivariate correlations among the five variables were examined. Some correlations were statistically significant ($p < .01$). However, all subtypes of ML did not have significant correlations with PSM and PSM did not have a significant correlation with TI.

Structural Model

The overall fit indices were acceptable for the full hypothesized model and for the reduced alternative models. The standardized path coefficients between the exogenous, endogenous, and the mediating variables were evaluated during the path analysis. The following section presents details of the results summarized in Table 15.

Motivating Language. ML was an exogenous variable. It was not significantly related to PSM ($p = 0.2$). ML was significantly and negatively related to TI ($b^* = -.41$, $p < .05$).

1. DGL as a subtype of ML was not significantly related to PSM ($p = 0.385$), but it was significantly and negatively related to TI ($b^* = -.38$, $p < .05$).
2. EL as a subtype of ML was not significantly related to PSM ($p = 0.153$), but it was significantly and negatively related to TI ($b^* = -.40$, $p < .05$).
3. MML as a subtype of ML was not significantly related to either PSM ($p = 0.458$) or to TI ($p = 0.246$).

Public Service Motivation. PSM was not significantly related to TI ($p = 0.895$).

Mediation Effect. A BC bootstrap analysis was performed to examine the mediating effects of PSM on the relationships between ML and its subtypes on TI. PSM was found to not significantly influence any of the relationships.

In conclusion, reduced alternative models had acceptable model fit indices.

Discussion

The following section discusses the results of the study in relation to the reviewed literature and the 10 hypotheses.

Discrepancies were observed between the bivariate correlations among the five variables (Table 7) and the parameter loadings in the structural models, which can be explained by the difference of the two types of analysis. The bivariate correlation method measures linear relationships between any two variables. SEM measures the same relationships and simultaneously controls for other variables in the same model (Kline, 2016). Both scores are presented in the following discussion.

Hypothesis 1: Direction-giving language and turnover intention

As a subtype of motivating language, direction-giving language statistically significantly, moderately in magnitude, and negatively predicted employee turnover intention ($r = -.339$, $b^* = -$

.38, $p < .01$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. This finding confirms previous research in the private sector and extends it to the public sector environment (Gilani & Rabbani, 2020; Joo et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2019). Direction-giving language helps employees align personal goals with organizational goals, clarifies role ambiguity, provides feedback and direction for improvement, and has been found to influence employee turnover intention in various cultural environments (Bellamkonda et al., 2021; Joo et al., 2015; Jung, 2014). High quality managerial communication during performance feedback creates a perception of caring about employees' personal development, improves commitment and reduces turnover (Lee et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 2: Meaning-making language and turnover intention

Meaning-making language did not have a significant relationship with employee turnover intention ($r = 0.021$, $b^* = .08$, $p > .01$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 is not supported. This is a surprising result, as Mayfield and Mayfield found that the meaning-making language was the "core dimension of motivating language" that defined "meaning at work" (2018, p. 24). Given the paucity of research on the relationship between meaning-making language and employee turnover intention, meaningful work was accepted as a proximal construct. Research on the association between meaningful work and employee turnover intention is plentiful and supports a strong negative relationship (Heath et al., 2022, Shaimerdenova et al., 2019, Vermooten et al., 2019).

The reason for this discrepancy could be the influence of other unforeseen factors. The post-COVID-19 workplace environment motivated many individuals to reexamine the meaningfulness of their work and reevaluate their personal and professional priorities. In addition, a greater-good purpose of many jobs was weakened, as pandemic-related lockdowns divided employees into essential and nonessential workers (Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022). This

effect may have been more pronounced in public sector organizations with public safety and public healthcare employee groups, which were classified as essential workers, leaving many general employees classified as non-essential workers and doubting the meaningfulness of their jobs.

Another post-pandemic change that may have affected the relationship between meaning-making language and employee turnover intention has been the increase in remote work. Several recent studies have suggested that increased work from home made many employees question the meaningfulness of their work (Afota et al., 2024; Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022). Restricted interpersonal socialization may have also affected the supervisor-subordinate communication. Fan et al. (2014) noticed that the very nature of virtual environment may create conditions for the distortion of meaning of communication, as employees are separated from supervisors in time and space. Meaning-making language, as a type of informal conversations, small talk, gossip, and storytelling, may not naturally occur in a virtual environment. It is possible the meaning-making language was not given due attention even though direction-giving language was still utilized for instructions and feedback in remote work (Shockley et al., 2021) and empathetic language was possibly strengthened by the collective emotion during stressful times (Stanley et al., 2021). Several post-pandemic studies have confirmed that managers and supervisors needed to promote the value and the purpose of work to help remote employees improve a feeling of belonging and their perception of meaningful work (Afota et al., 2024; Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022; Rurkkhum & Detnakarin, 2024). It is also possible one of the questionnaire items for the meaning-making language may have been construed as condescending (e.g., My supervisor/manager/boss “gives me advice about how to behave at the organization’s social gatherings”). Based on these potential reasons, there may be a need to revise the measuring

instrument for meaning-making language considering the new post-pandemic hybrid workplace and specific environment of the public sector.

Hypothesis 3: Empathetic language and turnover intention

As a subtype of motivating language, empathetic language predicted employee turnover intention significantly, moderately in magnitude, and negatively (r = -.354, b^* = -.40, p < .01). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported. This finding confirms previous research (Kock et al., 2019; Negoro & Wibowo, 2021; You et al., 2022) indicating that empathetic language supports employees' emotions, helps them express gratitude and appreciation. Empathetic language also helps employees develop a feeling of belonging and unity with the group and with the supervisor, and promotes prosocial disposition, while reducing turnover intention (Davis et al., 2020; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022).

Hypothesis 4: Aggregated motivating language and turnover intention

As an aggregated construct that comprises all three subdimensions, DGL, EL, and MML, motivating language is significantly and negatively associated with turnover intention (r = -.285, b^* = -.41, p < .01). The beta of the aggregated relationship of ML with TI (b^* = -.41) is higher than the betas of the relationships of each ML subtype with TI (DGL: b^* = -.38, EL: b^* = -.40, MML does not have a significant relationship with TI). This finding supports Hypothesis 4. Using all three types of language affects organizational outcomes stronger than any one type of language (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018; Sarros et al., 2014; Simmons & Sharbrough, 2013).

Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, and 8: Direction-giving language, meaning-making language, empathetic language, and aggregated motivating language and public service motivation

The findings showed the following results:

1. As a subtype of motivating language, DGL had no significant relationship with public service motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 5 is not supported. This is an unexpected result, as both constructs have goal attainment and goal clarity as their area of influence. DGL helps create a mental connection between work and personal goals, while PSM helps transform personal goals into altruistic behaviors (Cho & Kao, 2022). Data collected for this study does not support the hypothesized relationship.
2. As a subtype of motivating language, MML showed no significant relationship with public service motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 6 is not supported. This is also a surprising finding. Meaningful work was selected as a proximal construct to the meaning-making language. Whereas other research studies have found that meaningful work increases intrinsic motivation, altruistic motives, and creates a sense of serving others (Perry, 1996; Tummers & Knies, 2013), the results of the current study do not confirm the hypothesized connection.
3. As a subtype of motivating language, EL showed no significant relationship with public service motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 7 is not supported. This result is unexpected. Data collected for this study did not support the findings of previous studies that showed that the use of genuine empathetic language by managers evokes a reciprocal feeling for subordinates (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018), and that empathy is strongly correlated with helping others (Stocks et al., 2009) and stimulates prosocial behavior, which is an outcome of PSM (Vandenabeele et al., 2018).
4. As an aggregated construct comprising DGL, MML, and EL, motivating language did not show a significant relationship with public service motivation. Thus, Hypothesis 8 is not supported. This is also a surprising finding. Almost no research exists on ML in

public organizations, although multiple studies in private sector organizations have confirmed higher effectiveness of the aggregated and balanced use of all three subtypes of ML rather than favoring one subtype (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2021; Men et al., 2022; Sarros et al., 2014). PSM, as a combination of rational, normative, and affective motives, was expected to be influenced by all subtypes of ML. However, data from this study did not support this hypothesized relationship.

One reason for these unexpected outcomes may be the different motivational impulse origination from ML and in PSM. ML affects a self-oriented type of motivation supported by self-determination theory. The three subtypes of ML satisfy the competency, autonomy, and relatedness needs of SDT, and these three needs are self-oriented. In contrast, the nature of PSM is other-oriented; even though the rational and normative motives are not selfless in origin. The temporal focus of motivation evoked by ML is on the present moment, while the focus of PSM is future oriented (Breaugh et al., 2018). For intrinsic motivation a person is fully integrated into the self. For PSM, a person may act based on their professional identities (e.g., policeman, fire fighter, healthcare worker, social worker). Based on the results of this study, these two types of motivation, self-oriented motivation affected by ML and other-oriented PSM, coexist in the public sector without interaction.

Another reason for these findings may be the institutionally embedded nature of the antecedents of PSM. Formal and informal social groups (e.g., family, schools, church groups, work organizations, associations, and clubs), represent common values of community members and influence identity and PSM formation. (Anderfuhren-Biget et al., 2010; Christensen et al., 2017; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007). PSM-related needs and values are socially learned (Breaugh et al., 2018). Work organizations are a part of the sociohistorical context of the antecedents of

PSM and the work environment (e.g., supervisor-subordinate relationships) is a part of the motivational context (Perry, 2000). However, work-related societal groups are secondary to the family, school, and church groups that affect the process of value formation from childhood. Asseburg and Homberg (2020) suggested that employees who join public organizations are attracted to the public sector because these organizations may provide opportunities to fulfill their pre-formed PSM-related needs. If employees join organizations with pre-formed values, then the work environment and supervisors may not have as strong of an effect on PSM.

Another reason for the absence of a relationship between ML and PSM may be changes in the work format post-COVID. Specifically, hybrid and remote work has affected supervisor-subordinate communication. Since Perry (2000) identified supervisors as a part of the work environment affecting PSM, remote work has changed the conventional work environment. Therefore, employees may feel isolated and lose a relational connection with the supervisor. If the communication expectations are not properly set and there is no practice of daily communication, performance suffers leading to burnout (Afota et al., 2024; Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022; Rurkkhum & Detnakarin, 2024; Shockley et al., 2021). Thus, the changed public sector environment may affect PSM and a possible association with managerial motivating language.

Hypothesis 9: Public service motivation and turnover intention

Public service motivation did not show a statistically significant relationship with TI. Thus Hypothesis 9 is not supported. This result is unexpected, as several studies have shown a strong negative connection between these constructs (Jia et al., 2022; Shim et al., 2017; Sun & Wang, 2017). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Kartono (2020) found that although public nurses were overworked and stressed, they showed lower turnover intention if their PSM levels

were high. Another study by Gan et al. (2020) found that individuals with high levels of PSM are more likely to work for a public sector organization and are less likely to leave. The unexpected findings from the current study could be the result of influence from unforeseen factors.

One reason for these unexpected outcomes could be a change in the post-COVID turnover intention dynamics, which was affected by the so-called "great resignation" (Ng & Stanton, 2023, p. 401). Several factors contributed to the great resignation, and some of them were specific to Utah:

1. The unemployment rate in Utah is lower than the national rate (UT = 2.8%, US = 3.9%, Department of Workforce Services, 2024). Private and public employers in Utah often compete for the same human resources, depending on the job.
2. An increased realization of mortality motivated employees to rethink their life priorities and values (Liu, 2022). Many employees left work to provide childcare, while other employees chose to retire out of fear of getting sick. Utah State University conducted a survey as a part of Women and Leadership Project in 2021 and reported that roughly 16% of Utah women left the workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hansen et al., 2021). Providing childcare was one of the main reasons. Dennison (2023) reported that close to 10,000 baby boomers in the U.S. retire every day since the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. COVID-19 changed the workplace landscape by expanding the telework format and not all employees were willing to go back to their offices. Many public services must be provided in person, thus forcing this segment of employees to look for remote work with other employers.

4. Employers have been willing to pay more to attract and retain qualified employees. The availability of jobs with high pay and better work-life balance (hybrid or fully remote) made it easier for employees to find better fitting and higher paying jobs (Ng & Stanton, 2023).

It is possible that the significant connection between PSM and TI observed and reported by many studies, has since been interrupted by employees' adaptation to the new post-pandemic workplace. More studies post-pandemic are needed to determine if employee turnover intention returns to the pre-pandemic state or if this is a new normal.

Hypothesis 10: Mediating effects of public service motivation

Public service motivation did not show a significant mediating effect on the relationship between motivating language and employee turnover intention. Thus, Hypothesis 10 is not supported. This finding is unexpected, as several studies have successfully tested PSM as a mediator between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation or leadership communication and turnover intention. These studies indicated that PSM had statistically significant mediating effects (Kim, 2017; Shim et al., 2017; Sun & Wang, 2017). Hypothesis 10 was derived from extant studies, but the findings of the current study did not support it. Some unanticipated factors may have influenced this interaction.

A possible explanation for the outcome in this study may be the absence of a relationship between meaning-making language and other constructs (PSM and TI). As a core dimension of motivating language (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018) that helps create meaning of work, meaning-making language was expected to have an association with public service motivation and turnover intention by increasing the perception of meaningful work. However, meaning-making

language had the lowest parameter loadings, which could have affected other relationships in the hypothesized model, including the mediating effect from PSM.

Another reason could be the consequences of the great resignation and post-pandemic "wage wars" (Honigsberg & Rajgopal, 2021). Since 2020, public employers have increased financial rewards to compete with private sector and other public organizations for the same human resources. Figure 13 demonstrates a spike in wage increases since the start of COVID-19 pandemic in Wasatch Front, Utah, local government organizations compared to the pre-pandemic years (Davis County, 2024). Public safety employees (almost 1/3 of study participants) have experienced even bigger increases since the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 14). However, several studies have consistently shown that financial rewards "crowd out" public service motivation (Campbell, 2023; Georgellis et al., 2011). Campbell (2023) noted that public service motivation erodes in highly competitive markets. Georgellis et al. (2011) proposed that financial rewards attract individuals with other than public service motives which increases the number of extrinsically motivated employees. Given that the post-pandemic workplace landscape has changed, further research is needed to determine if this change is permanent or transitional.

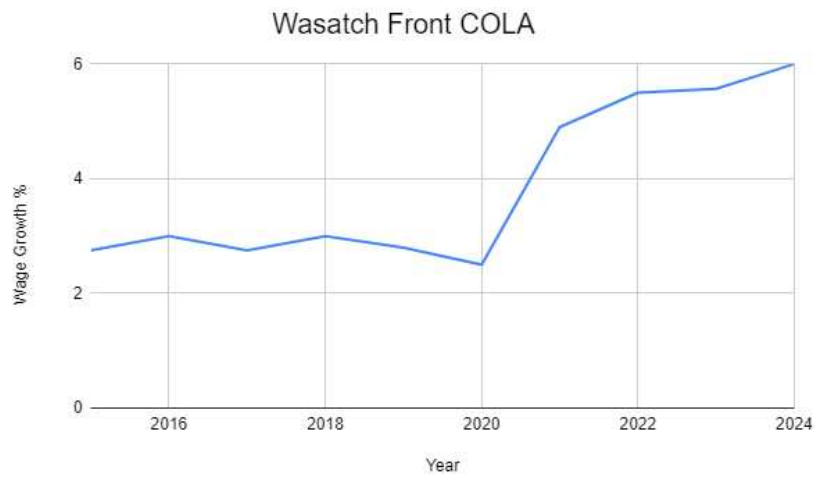

Figure 13. *Wasatch Front 10-year COLA.*

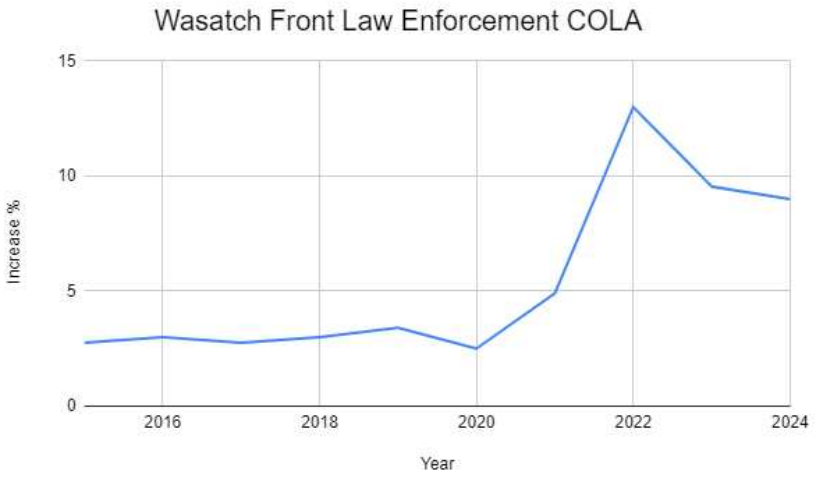

Figure 14. *Wasatch Front Law Enforcement 10-year COLA.*

Theoretical Implications

This study has several theoretical implications for HRD. As an interdisciplinary field of study, HRD is informed by sociological research and other fields (Swanson & Holton, 2008). Aligned with the definition of HRD provided by Wang et al. (2016), this study helps shape individual values and beliefs to support the performance of public sector organizations. Research

on motivating language, public service motivation, and employee turnover intention benefits the theory and practice of HRD in several ways. Given the impact managers have on employee turnover intention, it is important to expand the research on managerial communication and motivating language to the public sector environment. This study applied motivating language theory to the public sector environment and provided a deeper understanding of the relationship between motivating language and public employees' turnover intention.

The findings of this study confirmed this previously researched relationship in the private sector, expanded it to the public sector, and provided unexpected nuances. Direction-giving language, empathetic language, and aggregated motivating language (the balanced use of all three subtypes) had statistically significant negative relationships with employee turnover intention. In particular, one of the subtypes of motivating language, meaning-making language, failed to demonstrate a statistically significant association with turnover intention, even though this study used well-established measurement instruments with acceptable reliability and validity values that have produced statistically significant results in the past. A possible reason for this aberrance is a change in the post-pandemic workplace landscape that introduced many challenges and possibly influenced several hypothesized relationships in this study. The remote work options changed the format, intensity, and quality of managerial communication (Park et al., 2021), employees' psychological well-being (Chai & Park, 2022), and supervisor-subordinate interactions. In particular, motivating language has been primarily researched as a face-to-face type of supervisor-to-subordinate communication. The great resignation and re-evaluation of personal priorities also changed the dynamics of the turnover intention construct. Further periodic research is needed to determine if these changes are temporary and may reverse

to pre-pandemic levels or if they are permanent and represent the new normal, which would possibly require a re-evaluation of constructs and measuring instruments.

Another theoretical contribution of this study was in the field of public service motivation. Using PSM as a possible mediator of the relationship between motivating language and turnover intention introduced the possibility of interaction between the self-oriented and other-oriented types of motivation. However, this mediating effect of PSM was not confirmed by this study. It is possible that meaning-making language is the subtype of motivating language that should be adjusted for the public sector environment to make a connection to public service motivation and to the higher purpose of meaningful work. The results of this study demonstrated that intrinsic motivation, driven by motivating language, and public service motivation coexist in the surveyed public organizations without mutual interaction.

The previously tested and proven negative relationship between PSM and turnover intention was also not supported by this study. This result was also unexpected. However, considering the recent post-pandemic great resignation and wage wars, another unforeseen factor may have been introduced into this relationship. Prior research has shown a significant connection between increased financial rewards and diminished public service motivation. During the post-pandemic recovery phase with unusual pay increases PSM may be at lower levels compared to pre-pandemic levels. Future research in a more stable market is necessary to determine if this change is temporary.

The inertia of PSM in the hypothesized relationships can be attributed to the change in some antecedents of PSM. It is critical to understand that the nature of the antecedents of PSM is institutionally embedded (Vandenabeele et al., 2018). Institutions, as formal and informal societal groups (e.g., the family, schools, church groups, work organizations, and other

associations), represent common values of the members and influence identity formation (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Anderfuhren-Biget et al., 2010). Perry's (2000) original four areas of PSM drive include the (1) sociohistorical context (life events and experiences, family, church, schools), (2) motivational context (job characteristics, work environment, external environment), (3) individual characteristics, and (4) behavior (logic of consequence, logic of appropriateness).

Demographic features including gender, age, and education have received frequent attention from researchers of PSM. Most research studies on the relationship between gender and PSM have found that women are more likely to volunteer (Camilleri, 2007; Ritz et al., 2016). However, Perry and Hondeghem (2008) and Vandenabeele (2011) came to an opposite conclusion. Perry et al. (2008) attributed it to the changing role of women in society and women's increasingly active involvement in the workforce. Vandenabeele (2011) explained it as "the 'male' dimensions of public service motivation…and 'overpower' the feminine dimensions" (p. 101). According to DeHart-Davis et al. (2006) normative (public interest) and rational (attraction to politics and policymaking) dimensions are *masculine*, while the affective (compassion) dimension is *feminine*. Comparison of gender variable means in relationship to PSM in this study produced very close values for males (x bar = 3.85, n = 91) and females (x bar = 3.89, n = 164). Two cases of other than male and female gender identities had a mean of 4.

Other widely researched individual characteristics are age and education. Age has been shown to have a strong relationship to PSM with more mature employees displaying higher levels of PSM (Camilleri, 2007; Perry & Hondeghem, 2008; Ritz, 2016; Vandenabeele, 2011). Given that 31% of the study participants were millennials under 35 years of age and that the generation of baby-boomers have been actively retiring since the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic, it would be reasonable to expect lower levels of PSM.

Higher levels of education (bachelor's degree and higher) showed a strong relationship with PSM in previous studies, particularly in some fields including language, health care, and social science (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008; Vandenabeele, 2011). However, multiple regression analysis of data in this study did not support previous findings about demographic criteria relations with PSM. Neither age, education, status (supervisor vs subordinate), or area of employment had significant relationships with PSM.

One of the most recent reports published by the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute from the University of Utah (2024) identified Utah as the state highest in religious affiliations. Religious adherents in Utah make up 76.1% of population with the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints being the predominant religion of 86%. As one of critical antecedents of PSM, religion may have played an important role in the development of PSM in Utahns including study participants from public organizations. PSM-related values in respondents may be already high and unresponsive to external and secondary influences, such as motivating language, which is imposed by supervisors as a part of the workplace environment.

Considering the changes in the work environment during and after the pandemic, this study can be a reference cross-sectional study at the four-year post-pandemic mark. Although several results were unexpected and several hypotheses were unsupported, they may have captured the workplace dynamics of post-pandemic recovery. The three constructs in this study, ML, PSM, and TI, are sensitive and responsive to societal and workplace changes and evolve accordingly. Future research can be built on the findings of this study.

Practical Implications

The results of this study offer several practical insights for HRD practitioners in public sector organizations. First, the findings confirmed a significant negative relationship between

managerial motivating language and employee turnover intention. When managers balance and effectively use all three subtypes of motivating language, employee turnover intention declines. Lowering employee turnover in the public sector means more responsible management of public funds. Considering the limited funds available to public sector organizations, strategic use of motivating language may be the low-cost solution to employee turnover.

Of the three subtypes of motivating language, managerial empathetic language showed the highest influence on employee turnover intention. Empathetic language satisfies the need for belonging and interpersonal connection. Direction-giving language (i.e., the language of instructions) reduces job ambiguity and helps employees attain goals. This subtype of ML also showed a significant negative connection to turnover intention. When employees know their manager's expectations, receive regular positive and constructive feedback, and know how to do their jobs right, their need for competence is satisfied, which reduces their turnover intention. Meaning-making language is the only subtype of ML that did not show an association with turnover intention. This type of language helps employees form mental models and perceive the meaning of work. Practitioners may need to pay more attention to meaning-making language and adjust it to the public sector environment. HRD professionals can use the results of this study to lower employee turnover intention.

Another key implication for practitioners is that leadership and supervisor development training programs in public sector organizations can be adjusted based on the results of this study to target certain areas of managerial communication. Training could include more motivating language, account for public sector specifics, and focus on what influences organizational outcomes. Training supervisors should particularly focus on setting clear expectations, providing positive feedback, reducing role ambiguity and uncertainty, and creating clear paths to goals

attainment to increase employee confidence and competence. In addition, they should promote connections between the supervisor and subordinates, as well as expressions of empathy and sympathy, as this type of communication leads to subordinates' feeling of reciprocity and belonging. Adjusting meaning-making language in the public sector environment may also mean promoting meaningful work that is both self-beneficial and oriented toward doing good for society. Reminding subordinates of organizational and departmental values and mission, highlighting successful customer service examples, and pointing out the impact on the community residents may create the connection between self-oriented intrinsic motivation and other-oriented public service motivation.

Another implication is encouraging managers to examine the current post-pandemic environment. A possible reason for the lack of association between PSM and ML, and PSM and TI is crowding-out and attenuation of PSM due to the recent wage wars and the great resignation. These changes have affected both the private and the public sectors. Thus, HR practitioners in public organizations may consider revising recruitment strategies. Higher rates of pay may attract applicants who are less interested in serving the public but are more interested in pay. Once a new employee has been hired, they are more likely to leave for a better opportunity and higher pay. One way to mitigate this situation is to adjust recruitment practices by pre-screening applicants and adding public service-related interview questions.

Limitations, Recommendations, and Future Studies

This section identifies several limitations in this study and provides recommendations for future research. First, although the data were collected in three phases at three different times (two weeks apart), there is a possibility of response bias. All data were self-reported and collected from the same participants. The CMV analysis using Harman's single factor test and a

single unmeasured latent factor approach did not identify CMV. However, alternative measurement techniques may be useful for more objective results.

Second, this research can be further improved by collecting data from managers and cross-referencing their responses to subordinates' responses. This approach may help identify discrepancies between managerial communication practices and employee perceptions and further aid in creating more targeted leadership training programs. However, this method may require more assurances of confidentiality to employees, who may be unwilling to respond (or responses may be favorably skewed), knowing that they will be identified and matched with their supervisor. Without such assurances, the research may not generate enough responses for a meaningful analysis.

Third, unlike many previous studies, this study did not show a significant negative relationship between meaning-making language and employee turnover intention. As a core dimension of motivating language (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2018), this relationship was hypothesized to be significant. This discrepancy cannot be attributed to the competing presence of PSM in public sector organizations, as meaning-making language did not have a significant relationship with PSM. Meaning-making language and meaningful work were used as proximal constructs in this study based on their definitions and the ways they influence employees' perception of the meaning of work. A follow-up study would be to retest the relationships in this study and control for meaningful work. Other factors may have influenced these relationships and further research is needed to determine if this is a temporary occurrence brought about by pandemic- and post-pandemic-related changes.

Fourth, the current study was cross-sectional and took a snapshot of data at one moment in time. However, a workplace is not a stagnant formation. It gets continuously influenced by

socio-political, economic, and cultural events. Thus, a longitudinal study could add a dynamic lens to the relationships in this study. Specifically, a longitudinal study with an intervention is needed to retest the relationships found in this study before and after the deployment of a leadership communication training program that targets motivating language and PSM-related values.

Fifth, the demographic variables were not controlled during the data analysis, since this study aimed at examining the overall relationships between motivating language, PSM and employee turnover intention. Thus, the findings may be different if certain demographic variables are controlled, including different generations, religion, political affiliations, socio-economic, and minority status. Female participants (n = 164) in this study outnumbered male participants (n = 91); however, by design, this study did not control for the gender variable. Future studies may focus on the influence of demographic factors on the relationships between motivating language, PSM, and turnover intention in the public sector.

Sixth, this study captured the state of the variables in four local government entities in Utah in the four-year post-pandemic recovery period characterized by increased remote work, the great resignation, and wage wars. Worksite closures, socialization restrictions, lay-offs, public unrest, and many other outcomes of the pandemic affected all public organizations. Motivating language, PSM, and employee turnover intentions were also influenced by societal changes. As a result, several findings did not meet the expected outcomes. Thus, future research studies are needed to determine whether these changes are temporary or permanent. Qualitative research would be beneficial to further examine the post-pandemic workplace and the deeper phenomena of adaptation and recovery that could have influenced relationships in this study.

Summary

A review and a summary of the current study were presented in this chapter. The findings were discussed as they applied to the proposed hypotheses and reviewed literature. Theoretical and practical implications were presented. Finally, limitations of the current study and recommendations for future research were provided.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter

PROTOCOLS

kuali

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

The protocol listed below has been approved by the CSU IRB SBER Fort Collins on Thursday, January 4th 2024.

PI: Chermack, Thomas James

Submission Type and ID: Initial 5110

Title: The role of managerial motivating language in turnover intention of public sector employees.

Approval Date: Thursday, January 4th 2024

Expiration Date: no date provided

The CSU IRB (FWA0000647) has completed its review of protocol 5110 The role of managerial motivating language in turnover intention of public sector employees.. In accordance with federal and state requirements, and policies established by the CSU IRB, the committee has approved this protocol under Expedited review.

The CSU IRB determined that this protocol meets the criteria for approval under Expedited Category 7 (a). Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior)
The IRB approved a Waiver or Alteration of Informed Consent per 45 CFR 46.116(f)]
Risk Level: Minimal
Funding: None

If no expiration date is listed above, continuing review is not required for this study.

The Investigator Manual defines the standards expected of Principal Investigators overseeing the conduct of Human Subjects Research at CSU. Any modifications to the approved study must be

submitted for review through Kuali Protocols. All approval letters and study documents are located within the Activity Log in Kuali Protocols.

What are your responsibilities now, as you move forward with your research?

Document Retention: The PI is responsible for keeping all regulated documents, including IRB correspondence such as this letter, approved study documents, and signed consent forms for at least three (3) years following protocol closure for audit purposes. Documents regulated by HIPAA, such as Release Authorizations, must be maintained for six (6) years.

Site Permission: If your research is conducted at locations outside of Colorado State University (such as schools, hospitals, or businesses), you must obtain written permission from all sites to recruit, consent, study, or observe participants. Generally, such permission comes in the form of a letter from the school superintendent, director, or manager. You must maintain a copy of this permission with study records.

Training: All researchers collecting or analyzing data from this study must renew training in human subjects research via the CITI Program (www.citiprogram.org) every 3 years. New personnel must complete training and be added to the protocol before beginning research with human participants or their data.

Modifications: Change to any aspect of this protocol or research personnel must be approved by the IRB before implementation, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects or others. In such situations, the IRB should still be notified immediately.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others, serious adverse events, and noncompliance with the approved protocol must be reported to the IRB immediately through a reportable event in Kuali Protocols in accordance with the Reportable New Information CSU IRB procedures. When in doubt, consult with the HRPP/IRB.

Monitoring: The HRPP reminds researchers that this study is subject to monitoring at any time by Colorado State University's HRPP staff, Institutional Review Board, Post Approval Monitoring team, or authorized external entities. Timely cooperation with monitoring procedures is an expectation of IRB approval.

Change of Institutions: If the PI leaves Colorado State, the study must be closed or the PI must be replaced on the study or transferred to a new IRB. Studies without a Colorado State University PI will be closed.

Other Approvals: This Colorado State IRB approval covers only regulations related to human subjects research protections (e.g. 45 CFR 46). This determination does not constitute approval from any other Colorado State campus departments, research sites, or outside agencies. The Principal Investigator and all researchers are required to affirm that the research meets all applicable local/state/ federal laws and university policies that may apply.

If you have questions about this determination or your responsibilities when conducting human subjects research on this project or any other, please do not hesitate to contact Colorado State's HRPP at CSU_IRB@colostate.edu or 970-491-1553. We are here to help!

Sincerely,

Colorado State University Human Research Protection Program/ Institutional Review Boards

Attachments

Consent	IRB_ConsentEmailSurveyWithIdentifiers v3.pdf
Recruitment Materials	IRB_ConsentEmailSurveyWithIdentifiers v3.pdf
Consent	General-Waiver-or-Alteration-of-Informed-Consent-1.docx

IRB Approval Amendment Letter

PROTOCOLS

kuali

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

The protocol listed below has been approved by the CSU IRB SBER Fort Collins on Tuesday, January 9th 2024.

PI: Chermack, Thomas James

Submission Type and ID: Amendment 5110

Title: The role of managerial motivating language in turnover intention of public sector employees.

Approval Date: Tuesday, January 9th 2024

Expiration Date: no date provided

The CSU IRB (FWA0000647) has completed its review of protocol 5110 The role of managerial motivating language in turnover intention of public sector employees.. In accordance with federal and state requirements, and policies established by the CSU IRB, the committee has approved this protocol under Expedited review.

The amendment v8 includes updated surveys and current CITI training for Co-investigator.
The study remains Minimal Risk,
Expedited Category 7
Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

If no expiration date is listed above, continuing review is not required for this study.

The Investigator Manual defines the standards expected of Principal Investigators overseeing the conduct of Human Subjects Research at CSU. Any modifications to the approved study must be

submitted for review through Kuali Protocols. All approval letters and study documents are located within the Activity Log in Kuali Protocols.

What are your responsibilities now, as you move forward with your research?

Document Retention: The PI is responsible for keeping all regulated documents, including IRB correspondence such as this letter, approved study documents, and signed consent forms for at least three (3) years following protocol closure for audit purposes. Documents regulated by HIPAA, such as Release Authorizations, must be maintained for six (6) years.

Site Permission: If your research is conducted at locations outside of Colorado State University (such as schools, hospitals, or businesses), you must obtain written permission from all sites to recruit, consent, study, or observe participants. Generally, such permission comes in the form of a letter from the school superintendent, director, or manager. You must maintain a copy of this permission with study records.

Training: All researchers collecting or analyzing data from this study must renew training in human subjects research via the CITI Program (www.citiprogram.org) every 3 years. New personnel must complete training and be added to the protocol before beginning research with human participants or their data.

Modifications: Change to any aspect of this protocol or research personnel must be approved by the IRB before implementation, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects or others. In such situations, the IRB should still be notified immediately.

Unanticipated Problems/Adverse Events: Unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others, serious adverse events, and noncompliance with the approved protocol must be reported to the IRB immediately through a reportable event in Kuali Protocols in accordance with the Reportable New Information CSU IRB procedures. When in doubt, consult with the HRPP/IRB.

Monitoring: The HRPP reminds researchers that this study is subject to monitoring at any time by Colorado State University's HRPP staff, Institutional Review Board, Post Approval Monitoring team, or authorized external entities. Timely cooperation with monitoring procedures is an expectation of IRB approval.

Change of Institutions: If the PI leaves Colorado State, the study must be closed or the PI must be replaced on the study or transferred to a new IRB. Studies without a Colorado State University PI will be closed.

Other Approvals: This Colorado State IRB approval covers only regulations related to human subjects research protections (e.g. 45 CFR 46). This determination does not constitute approval from any other Colorado State campus departments, research sites, or outside agencies. The Principal Investigator and all researchers are required to affirm that the research meets all applicable local/state/ federal laws and university policies that may apply.

If you have questions about this determination or your responsibilities when conducting human subjects research on this project or any other, please do not hesitate to contact Colorado State's HRPP at CSU_IRB@colostate.edu or 970-491-1553. We are here to help!

Sincerely,

Colorado State University Human Research Protection Program/ Institutional Review Boards

Attachments

Consent	IRB_ConsentEmailSurveyWithIdentifiers v3.pdf
Recruitment Materials	IRB_ConsentEmailSurveyWithIdentifiers v3.pdf
Consent	General-Waiver-or-Alteration-of-Informed-Consent-1.docx

APPENDIX B

Organization Recruitment and Consent Email

Dear Participant,

My name is Marina Brito and I am a researcher from Colorado State University in the School of Education department. We are conducting a research study. The title of the study is "The role of managerial motivating language in turnover intention of public sector employees." The Principal Investigator is Dr. Thomas Chermack and I am the Co-Investigator.

We would like you to take a series of three (2 weeks apart) online surveys. The 1st survey will contain demographic and professional questions along with questions in three areas: managerial motivating language, public service motivation, and turnover intentions. The 2nd survey will contain only questions on public service motivation. The 3rd survey will contain only questions on turnover intentions. All questions are of multiple choice answer type. Participation will take approximately 10 minutes for the 1st survey, 2-3 minutes for the 2nd and 3rd surveys. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

You will be entered in a raffle to win one of 10 $25 Amazon gift cards when you **fully** complete all three surveys. You will have an option to either receive the gift card yourself or to donate it to one of two local charities in Utah: The Humane Society of Utah or the Huntsman Cancer Institute – University of Utah Health. Should you choose to receive a gift card, you need to have an Amazon account.

We will be collecting your work email address. If you are one of the 10 winners and choose to receive an Amazon gift card, your name and the email address tied to your Amazon account will be collected as well, so we can send an electronic $25 gift card to your account.

When we report and share the data with others, we will combine the data from all participants. We will keep your data confidential; your name and data will be kept separately on the researcher's password-protected external drive accessible only to the research team. While there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on the role managerial communication and public service motivation play in public sector employee turnover intention.

There are no known risks of participation in this research. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential (but unknown) risks.

The identifiers will be removed from the identifiable private information and after such removal, the information may be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from the subject.

To indicate your consent and willingness to participate in this research and to continue on to the survey, click here: <insert link>.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact me at Marina.Brito@colostate.edu or 307-231-5081. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at CSU_IRB@colostate.edu ; 970-491-1553.

Thomas J. Chermack, Ph.D.
Chair of the Ph.D. program in Organizational Learning, Performance, and Change,
Colorado State University

Marina Brito,
Ph.D. candidate in Organizational Learning, Performance, and Change,
Colorado State University

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire # 1

Demographic Information

1. Please provide your work email address (use the same email address for all three surveys) (_____)
2. If you are one of 10 winners of $25 Amazon gift cards' raffle, how would you like it to be distributed:
   - o Send it to me (My name is …… Email of my Amazon account is …….)
   - o Donate my $25 to the Humane Society of Utah
   - o Donate my $25 to the Huntsman Cancer Institute – University of Utah Health
3. Gender:
   - o Male
   - o Female
   - o Other (_____)
4. Age:
   - o Under 25
   - o 26-35
   - o 36-45
   - o 46-55
   - o 56-65
   - o Over 66
5. Your level of education

- High school or equivalent
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Ph.D. degree

6. Your position status in the current organization
    - Employee (no subordinates)
    - First level supervisor
    - Manager
    - Senior Manager
    - Executive leadership
7. Area of employment:
    - Public safety
    - Public health
    - General employee
8. Combined years working in public sector organizations:
    - 0 – 5
    - 5 – 10
    - 10 – 20
    - 20 – 30
    - 30 – 40
    - Over 40
9. Years with your current supervisor:

- Less than 1 year
- 1 – 5
- 5 – 10
- 10 – 20
- 20 – 30
- Over 30

Motivating Language Scale

The examples below show different ways that your boss (supervisor/manager) might talk to you. Please use the following selections to choose the answer that best matches your perceptions.

Direction Giving/Uncertainty Reducing Language

1. Gives me useful explanations of what needs to be done in my work.
2. Gives me clear instructions about solving job-related problems.
3. Provides me with helpful information about forthcoming changes affecting my work.

Empathetic Language

4. Shows me encouragement for my work efforts.
5. Shows concern about my job satisfaction.
6. Expresses his/her support for my professional development.

Meaning-Making Language

7. Offers me advice about how to behave at the organization's social gatherings.
8. Offers me advice about how to "fit in" with other members of this organization.
9. Tells me stories about people who have left this organization.

Note: 5-point Likert scale from "Very Little" to "A Lot".

Measure of PSM (MSPB Scale)

1. Meaningful public service is very important to me.
2. I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another.
3. Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements.
4. I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.
5. I am not afraid to go to bat for the rights of others even if it means I will be ridiculed.

Note: 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree"

Measure of Turnover Intention

1. I am thinking about leaving this organization.
2. I am planning to look for a new job.
3. I intend to ask people about new job opportunities.
4. I don't plan to be in this organization much longer.

Note: 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree".

You have completed the 1st round of the survey. Please remember that to be considered for the Amazon gift card raffle, you need to participate in all three rounds of survey. The next short survey will be distributed in 2 weeks. Thank you for your participation!

Questionnaire # 2

Measure of PSM (MSPB Scale)

1. Please provide your work email address (use the same email address for all three surveys) (_____)
2. Meaningful public service is very important to me.
3. I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another.

4. Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements.
5. I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.
6. I am not afraid to go to bat for the rights of others even if it means I will be ridiculed.

Note: 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree"

You have completed the 2nd round of the survey. Please remember that to be considered for the Amazon gift card raffle, you need to participate in all three rounds of survey. The next short survey will be distributed in 2 weeks. Thank you for your participation!

Questionnaire # 3

Measure of Turnover Intention

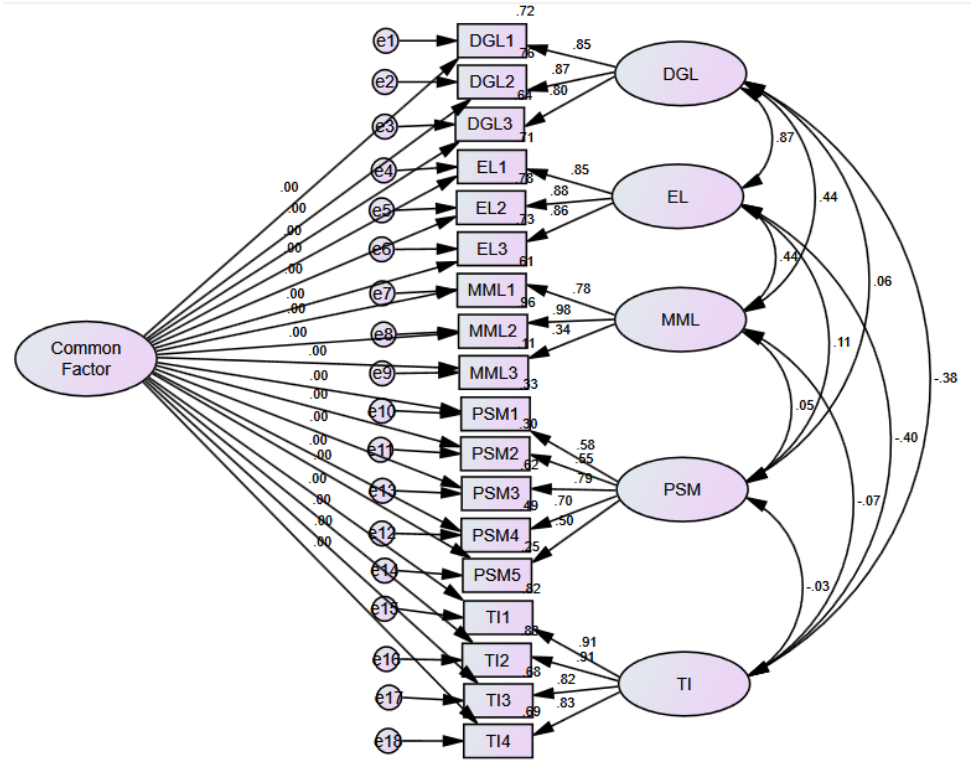
1. Please provide your work email address (use the same email address for all three surveys) (_____)
2. I am thinking about leaving this organization.
3. I am planning to look for a new job.
4. I intend to ask people about new job opportunities.
5. I don't plan to be in this organization much longer.

Note: 5-point Likert scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree"

You have completed the 3rd round of the survey. Please remember that to be considered for the Amazon gift card raffle, you need to participate in all three rounds of survey. Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX D

The Path Model with Common Method Variance



APPENDIX E

Factor Loading Coefficients of CFA of the Full Model

			Standardized	Unstandardized			
			Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
DGL2	←	DGL	0.872	0.966	0.057	17.072	***
DGL1	←	DGL	0.848	1			
EL3	←	EL	0.857	1.135	0.067	16.977	***
EL2	←	EL	0.884	1.226	0.069	17.782	***
EL1	←	EL	0.846	1			
MML3	←	MML	0.335	0.375	0.074	5.087	***
MML2	←	MML	0.991	1			
MML1	←	MML	0.768	0.771	0.078	9.855	***
PSM1	←	PSM	0.578	1			
PSM2	←	PSM	0.547	0.879	0.132	6.643	***
PSM3	←	PSM	0.789	1.208	0.15	8.077	***
TI1	←	TI	0.904	1			
TI2	←	TI	0.91	1.041	0.047	22.042	***
TI3	←	TI	0.824	0.928	0.052	17.995	***
PSM4	←	PSM	0.702	1.265	0.163	7.78	***
PSM5	←	PSM	0.506	0.755	0.12	6.277	***
TI4	←	TI	0.829	0.873	0.048	18.211	***
DGL3	←	DGL	0.796	0.889	0.059	14.984	***

APPENDIX F

Factor Loading Coefficients of CFA of the Alternative Models

DGL Only Model

	Standardized	Unstandardized			
	Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PSM1←PSM	0.579	1			
PSM2←PSM	0.548	0.879	0.132	6.66	***
PSM3←PSM	0.789	1.206	0.149	8.086	***
PSM4←PSM	0.701	1.259	0.162	7.781	***
PSM5←PSM	0.506	0.754	0.12	6.285	***
TI1 ←TI	0.902	1			
TI2 ←TI	0.911	1.044	0.047	21.991	***
TI3 ←TI	0.825	0.931	0.052	17.995	***
TI4 ←TI	0.828	0.874	0.048	18.148	***
DGL1←DGL	0.852	1			
DGL2←DGL	0.9	0.994	0.063	15.858	***
DGL3←DGL	0.757	0.842	0.062	13.653	***

EL Only Model

	Standardized	Unstandardized			
	Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PSM1←PSM	0.578	1			
PSM2←PSM	0.546	0.879	0.132	6.638	***
PSM3←PSM	0.789	1.209	0.15	8.076	***
PSM4←PSM	0.703	1.266	0.163	7.779	***
PSM5←PSM	0.506	0.756	0.12	6.277	***
TI1 ←TI	0.906	1			
TI2 ←TI	0.908	1.037	0.047	22.04	***
TI3 ←TI	0.822	0.925	0.051	17.988	***
TI4 ←TI	0.83	0.873	0.048	18.317	***
EL1 ←EL	0.855	1			
EL2 ←EL	0.876	1.202	0.071	16.88	***
EL3 ←EL	0.857	1.123	0.068	16.514	***

MML Only Model

	Standardized	Unstandardized			
	Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PSM1 ←PSM	0.577	1			
PSM2 ←PSM	0.546	0.878	0.132	6.634	***
PSM3 ←PSM	0.791	1.213	0.15	8.077	***
PSM4 ←PSM	0.703	1.266	0.163	7.78	***
PSM5 ←PSM	0.503	0.752	0.12	6.251	***
TI1 ←TI	0.903	1			
TI2 ←TI	0.909	1.04	0.048	21.831	***
TI3 ←TI	0.823	0.928	0.052	17.922	***
TI4 ←TI	0.833	0.878	0.048	18.319	***
MML1←MML	0.832	0.979	0.051	19.033	***
MML2←MML	0.86	0.979	0.051	19.033	***
MML3←MML	0.594	0.979	0.051	19.033	***