

# **Staying Late: Comparing Work Hours in Public and Nonprofit Sectors<sup>1</sup>**

**Mary Kathleen Feeney**  
**University of Illinois at Chicago**

**and**

**Barry Bozeman**  
**University of Georgia**

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<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author. Email: [mkfeeney@uic.edu](mailto:mkfeeney@uic.edu). An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Public Management Research Conference, Tucson, Arizona, Oct. 25-27, 2007.

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## **Abstract**

Economic theories suggest that work behavior of public and nonprofit employees should resemble one another closely, owing to the lack of profit incentives and managerial or owner oversight of work. However, empirical descriptions of public and nonprofit workers imply that these work forces differ in many ways. One easily conceptualized but nonetheless crucial test of possible differences is level of work activity in the respective organizational settings. This research compares work hours reported in state public and nonprofit organizations by asking: Are there differences between time spent working in public and nonprofit organizations and, if so, what are the determinants of managers' work hours? The study is based on questionnaire data from the National Administrative Studies Project-III. The analytical approach employs ordinary least squares regression. Factors examined in determining work hours include job histories, and perceptions of the organization and fellow employees. Results indicate that managers in the nonprofit sector tend to work longer hours compared to state managers and that work hours are mitigated by external organizational ties, perceptions, and work histories.

**Keywords:** public management, nonprofit management, work hours, public and nonprofit comparison

Public and nonprofit organizations and employees should, according to some economic theories of organization (Demsetz 1967; Kim and Mahoney 2005), resemble one another closely, owing to the lack of profit incentives and managerial or owner oversight of work. However, the few empirical studies (Goutlet and Frank 2002; for an overview see DiMaggio and Anheier 1999) comparing public and nonprofit workers imply that these workers differ in many ways. One easily conceptualized but nonetheless crucial test of possible differences is the level of work activity in the respective organizational settings.

Our research compares time spent working reported in, respectively, public and nonprofit organizations. There are two related research questions: (1) what are the determinants on managers' work hours? (2) are there differences between public and nonprofit organizations and, if so, what explains those differences? Factors examined in determining work hours include job histories and perceptions of the organization and fellow employees.

### **Previous Studies on Time at Work**

While our own research concerns are relatively prosaic, comparing (without normative presuppositions) work hours in public and nonprofit organizations, to say that conceptualizing work hours is relatively simple, should not obscure the mixed meaning and complexity involved in the seemingly straightforward question "how many hours do you work?" For example, is working more a good thing? Does it imply commitment to one's job or profession? Or is it a bad thing, implying that one is a "workaholic" with, at best, no sense of life's proportion and, at worst, cheating one's family of one's time and attention? On occasion, presumptions about work hours can prove embarrassing or off-putting. Harvard University President Lawrence Summers' well known gaffe claiming that women chose not to go into the sciences because they were unwilling or unable to work the required 80 hours per week (Bombardieri 2005) caused a firestorm ultimately ending in his resignation. Moreover, many work hours issues are construed as gender mediated (e.g., Smith 2002; Probert 1997), with family leave policies and outcomes being among the most controversial (Ruhm 1998; Murray 2001). In sum, many of the issues pertaining to work hours are controversial and can inflame passions about such crucial topics as life-work balance, workaholism, and labor exploitation.

Clearly, there are various factors, both positive and negative, which may drive an individual to work longer or shorter hours. First, an employee may feel pressure from colleagues to work after 5pm or she may believe that her ability to get a promotion rests on the perception that she is dedicated to her work and willing to put in extra time in the office. A second individual may work long hours over the weekend because he is overloaded with tasks while a third employee may work extended hours because it takes him a longer number of hours to complete tasks that others do in a shorter time period. Likewise, there are numerous reasons why an individual may spend less time at work. For example, an employee may be an efficient worker who is able to complete tasks ahead of schedule and rewards herself by leaving work early. In summary, the decision to work extended hours or less than average hours is related to a number of personal and situational factors including individual commitments, career expectations, and personal life values and goals.

The literature investigating the number of hours individuals dedicate to work identifies both positive and negative outcomes from working longer than average hours. Researchers typically investigate the number of hours worked through the lens of workaholism or overworking. Workaholics, a term first coined by Oates (1971), are defined as individuals who are driven by an inner motivation, or over-commitment, to work (Seybold & Salomon 1994; Spence & Robbins 1992). Researchers (Machlowitz 1980; Snir & Zohar 2002) describe workaholism as an approach or attitude to work, characterized by the steady allocation of time and thoughts to work-related activity, rather than hours worked alone. Although Oates characterized workaholism as a negative behavior which could be detrimental to an individual's health, relationships, and happiness, more recent research (Machlowitz 1980; Scott *et al.* 1997) argues that overworking, defined as extra hours on the job, can be related to both positive and negative outcomes such as increased performance, job satisfaction, turnover, and personal satisfaction.

While culturally variant (Messenger 2004; Rogerson 2006), most conceptions of “overworking” imply that the individual is working more than 40 hours a week, sometimes in order to do the work of others. Mosier (1983) defined overworking as working more than 50 hours a week, while Grosch and colleagues (2006) developed

categories of over-working ranging from lower overtime (41-48 hours) to higher overtime (70+ hr/week). Overtime work is related to increased job stress and increased participation in work-related decision making (Grosch *et al.* 2006). The research on overworking has found that the number of hours worked affects health (Grosch *et al.* 2006), occupational health (Jeffrey & Lipscomb 2006), leisure time, daily moods, alcohol consumption (Jones *et al.* 2006), and family relationships (Robinson 2001). Research also shows that overworking is related to individual demographics, personal beliefs and fears, work situation characteristics, and perceptions of organizational support of work-personal life imbalance (Burke 2001).

Even though research indicates that increases in hours worked results in lower time and energy given to families (Blair-Loy & Jacobs 2003) and affects men and women in different ways (Harpaz & Snir 2003), work hours alone do not necessarily indicate negative or positive outcomes for workers (Bonebright *et al.* 2000). Excessive working can result in positive outcomes such as personal happiness (Machlowitz 1980, Peiperl & Jones 2001) or increased levels of participation in decision-making and opportunities to develop special abilities in the work place (Friedman & Lobel 2003). Despite this abundance of research on overworking and its potential outcomes, there is no research assessing and comparing work hours in the public and nonprofit sectors. **This analysis takes a first step toward understanding sector-based work with the questions: Are there differences between time spent working in public and nonprofit organizations? And what are the determinants of managers' work hours?**

## **Hypotheses**

There remains little sector specific research focusing on the amount of time public and nonprofit sector employees spend working each week and we know of no work making a direct comparison between public and nonprofit sector work hours. From the standpoint of economic theory, one would infer that both nonprofit and public workers would diverge in their work patterns from equivalent private sector workers.

One of the best-known economic theories of organization, the property rights model (e.g. Alchian and Demsetz, 1973; De Alessi, 1969; Demsetz, 1967) examines the difference between owner-based firms and all others (including both public and nonprofit). While the property rights model does not address distinctions between public

and nonprofit organizations, it posits a variety of bureaucratic ills arising from the absence of oversight from wealth-seeking entrepreneurs, a condition shared by public and nonprofit organizations. According to the theory, the private firm's wealth-seeking entrepreneur has a strong interest in optimizing production to render it as efficient as possible, with respect to *all* elements of production, including labor. The theory portrays government workers as almost necessarily less efficient because bureaucrats have no pecuniary interest in the organization's success. Related, there is no ability in public organizations to transfer property rights and this, too, is viewed as conducive to inefficiency and "shirking." Meanwhile, there is little conceptual space for the nonprofit organization, which may not be profit seeking but certainly has entrepreneurs and owners that have a strong interest in optimizing production. Nonprofits are private organizations subject to distribution constraints preventing them from paying out to individual shareholders but not preventing optimized production to advance the organization's mission. The basic relevance of this body of work is its focus on the importance of owner oversight, profit maximization, and transferability of property rights. Public and nonprofit organizations do not differ substantially on any of the theory's primary components and, thus, both type organizations should have similarly high levels of shirking and low work incentives.

We expect that there will be differences in public and nonprofit workers' patterns of work activity, owing to differences in the legal structure of the respective sectors, work incentives, sector norms, and organizational structures. Typically, public sector managers are salaried employees who work 35 to 40 hours per week. However, this is changing; especially as states decentralize human resources and expand the number of at-will employees. For example, in Georgia approximately 72% of state employees are at-will hires (Hays & Sowa 2006). As the number of at-will employees in a state expands, it follows that restrictions on the amount of time an employee will spend at work each week can weaken, thus encouraging workers to spend more time at work, or enabling them to collect increased compensation for overtime work.

Due to the complex personnel restrictions in the public sector, government employees typically do not receive overtime pay or increased extrinsic rewards for working overtime. State agencies may limit the amount of overtime employees can work by

requiring special permission for overtime. For example, for Illinois state employees to regularly spend more time at work than specified by the position the individual must be “approved by the [CMS] Director and designated on lists maintained by the Director” (2006, 81) and that “[o]vertime work shall be distributed as equitably as possible among qualified employees competent to perform the services required, when overtime is required” (2006, 81). Given the specifications required by the Illinois CMS to authorize and compensate extra time working, it follows that state employees lack the incentives necessary for them to spend extraordinary time at work. Furthermore, although research indicates that public sector workers value opportunities for advancement and intellectually stimulating and challenging work more than nonprofit workers (Crewson 1995, 94; Lyons *et al.* 2006) there is no evidence that public sector workers are more likely to work overtime or stay late.

The lack of overtime work in the public sector could also be explained by an organizational and cultural norm of not working overtime. For example, Izraeli (1990) argues that individuals can be attracted to the public sector because of a high need to control the time they spend at work, since the public sector is known as a place where people can work towards public goals in a work environment where hours are stable. Further, Buchanan (1974, 1975) notes that people enter management positions in the public sector with specific motives (i.e. public service motivation), but encounter frustrations that reduce their organizational commitment, job involvement, and service ethic. It is possible that public sector workers, despite their desire for challenging and intellectually stimulating work adopt the work habits of their peers and the organization, which can include not working overtime or outside of the typical work day. In addition, the sector norms to not work overtime may be reinforced by stereotypes about public sector workers and the actual hours that many public offices are open. Public perceptions of government workers, or bureaucrats, as “lazy, incompetent, devious, and even dangerous” (Goodsell 2004, 3) coupled with office hours that rarely extend beyond 5pm and sometimes close earlier than that, there is little reason to expect that state government employees will stay late or work extra hours for which there is little to no reward.

Like the public sector, the nonprofit sector is not known for paying workers to stay late. Although unpaid overtime is common in the nonprofit sector, research indicates

that a large number of nonprofit managers continue to choose to work overtime (McMullen & Schellingburg 2003). In defiance of the dearth of financial rewards for working overtime, we suspect that workers in nonprofit organizations will be more likely to spend more time at work because of sector norms and expectations.

First, nonprofit organizations, in particular those with more than 20 full-time employees, are more likely to offer flexible work hours to both men and women (McMullen & Schellingburg 2003). Working flexible hours serves to expand the typical workday beyond office hours and the physical walls of the organizations. Though an organization may be open from 8am to 5pm, individuals who work flexible hours become more accustomed to working nontraditional hours, from home and on the road, which reduces the stigma of spending more time working each week.

Second, we assume that spending more time at work, beyond the typical 40 hour work week, will be more common in the nonprofit sector where there are no civil service restrictions, smaller organizations, and more prevalent role conflict and ambiguous job duties (Mirvis & Hackett 1983). A lack of strict job descriptions and position classification frees nonprofit workers to take on tasks beyond their job descriptions and pay level. Furthermore, working in an environment with high role conflict and ambiguous job duties there are more likely higher expectations for workers to take on tasks, regardless of role and job duty, so that the organization can achieve its goals. Finally, working in smaller organizations necessitates that workers take on more than their share of work, and helps to ensure that coworkers are keenly aware of the amount of work each individual is completing which adds pressure on employees to work extra hours. We expect that the combination of typically small organizations and role conflict and ambiguous job duties will help to make nonprofit managers more likely to work extra hours to complete tasks that further the organization's mission. Furthermore, given the reliance on volunteer labor in the nonprofit sector, compared to the level of staff available in many public agencies, we assume that paid nonprofit managers will take on additional duties which require attention beyond the typical day's work hours. Of course, the size of an organization and the number of employees supervised by a manager will tend to mitigate the relationship between sector culture and time spent at work, but holding these



factors (and the other controls) constant, we predict that nonprofit managers will tend to work longer hours than public managers.

*Hypothesis 1. All else equal, managers in nonprofit organizations will report working longer hours than respondents working in state government organizations.*

While the extensive research and theory on sector difference provides a broad rationale suggesting possible difference in work time, it is worth remembering that many individuals do not spend all of their time in a single sector. This suggests several points. First, is it the sector that is different and, possibly, affects work time as well as other behaviors and attitudes or is it the individual and self-selection into sector? The fact that persons work in more than one sector permits at least a partial analysis of the nature-nurture question as it pertains to work time. Research indicates that the nonprofit sector is closely tied to the private sector as a source for management personnel (Odendahl *et al.* 1985) and that nonprofit and public sector managers are increasingly moving between the sectors (Ott 2001, 241; Ott & Dicke 2006). Recent studies (Author Reference; De Graaf and Van der Wal 2008) have focused on various aspects of sector switching careers, but none has investigated work time directly nor the effects of previous sector experience on current work time commitments. But in light of this previous, indirectly related work we expect that the amount of time spent working in a different sector be related to current work behavior and help to shape one's work time profile as compared to those who have worked primarily in only one sector.

*Hypothesis 2.A. All else equal, an increase in the amount of previous public sector work experience will be negatively related to time spent at work.*

*Hypothesis 2.B. All else equal, an increase in the amount of previous work experience in the private sector will be positively related to time spent at work.*

*Hypothesis 2.C. All else equal, an increase in the amount of previous nonprofit sector work experience will be positively related to time spent at work.*

Given the number of studies focusing on work hours as either an independent or dependent variable, it is perhaps surprising how few of these focus on the simple issues of how many hours managers work and why. The preponderance of studies directly

considering the question tends to focus on psychological attributes of the worker and on workaholic behaviors (e.g. Mudrack 2004; Burke 2001; Scott et al. 1997).

In considering the determinants of work, it is important to note distinctions between managers and professionals and other workers. Managers and professionals are likely to have at least some discretion about their work hours, but many production workers and unionized workers have very little discretion. In the latter case, the primary determinant of the number of work hours is the contract that has been negotiated. For unskilled and part-time workers the “choice” of work hours also is quite different and likely to relate to particular work flows, work seasonality and labor competition among other factors.

One obvious likely determinant of the amount of time that managers and professionals spend at work in addition to and related to job satisfaction is pride in their jobs. If a manager or professional takes pride in her organization and her role in it, then one would expect that might lead to additional work hours. It may make little difference just why she takes pride in their work, it could be enjoyment of the performance of the job, perceived social significance of the job, financial rewards, or an inculcated value for pride or work.

*Hypothesis 3. All else equal, those respondents who report greater pride in their job will report working longer hours than those who report less pride in their job.*

The literature on work hours consistently tests for relationships between job satisfaction and time spent working. Grosch and colleagues (2006) find that increased job satisfaction is related to reporting working overtime. While Peiperl and Jones (2001) find that individuals who over work are less satisfied with their level of compensation but not necessarily more or less satisfied with other aspects of their jobs such as use of skills and learning opportunities. Research indicates that job satisfaction has complex relationships with the amount of time spent at work. For example Naughton (1987) finds that job-involved workaholics generally are highly job satisfied and Scott and colleagues (1997) find that perfectionist workaholics report low job satisfaction while achievement-oriented workaholics report increased job satisfaction. Since we are testing for variation in time spent working, by sector, we expect that general job satisfaction will be related to time spent working. Although research indicates that job satisfaction is related to work hours

and that there is variation in job satisfaction between the public and nonprofit sectors (Borzaga & Tortia 2006), there is no study testing variation in work hours and the effects of job satisfaction on that variation. We expect that a manager who enjoys her job and finds it rewarding is likely to work longer hours and that job satisfaction will be positively associated with work hours.

*Hypothesis 4. All else equal (i.e. including controls), those respondents who report higher job satisfaction will report working longer hours than those who report lower job satisfaction.*

We expect that three determinants of number of hours worked are likely to interact. First, is the respondent a manager? The NASP-III study targeted managers and high-ranking employees with most of the respondents classifying themselves as managers (70%). Nineteen percent of the respondents report working as professionals (e.g. accountants or lawyers) and 6% as high-level technicians (e.g. engineers) (See Table 1 for a distribution of worker category, by sector). Because research indicates that managers are more likely than non-managers to work long hours (Harpaz & Snir 2003), we expect that being a manager will be positively related to the dependent variables. We expect that managers may work longer hours, compared to other well paid persons in similar status positions, because managers' work may be more general in the range of tasks and, since less discrete, the work may be less likely to have obvious, fixed completion points.

*Hypothesis 5. All else equal, managers will report working longer hours than professionals and technical workers of equivalent work status.*

Furthermore, if the manager is required to do the work of some of these subordinates (or perceives that she is required to do so), either because of shirking, poor quality work, or absenteeism, then the number of work hours is likely greater for the manager. We note that, in this case, it is the manager's perception that is most important. In some cases a manager may have competent subordinates who work hard and, nonetheless, the manager, acting out a sense of compulsion or insecurity, feels it necessary to do even more work or replicate the work that has already been done.

*Hypothesis 6. All else equal, respondents who report doing some of the subordinates work for them will report working longer hours compared to respondents who report that they do not have to do the work of subordinates.*

Because work behavior may be situation dependent (Machlowitz 1980), we expect that respondents who work in smaller organizations will tend to work longer hours than individuals in larger organizations. The logic being that larger organizations will provide less personal environments and more isolated tasks and, thus, workers more easily free ride or take unauthorized breaks. In smaller organizations there may be more personal relationships, increased pressure on employees to work more, and heightened commitment among employees. In addition, smaller organizations would most likely require larger work commitments from higher ranking employees compared to larger organizations with large bureaucratic structures are more people to do complete tasks.

*Hypothesis 7. All else equal, working in a smaller organization will be positively related to working longer hours*

Especially for managers, the amount of time worked each week may be related to the number of employees supervised which serves as an indicator of the extent of managerial responsibilities of the respondents. Furthermore, the amount of time worked each week may interact with both the size of the organization and the number of employees the manager supervises. Assuming that the size of the organization interacts with the number of subordinates supervised, it follows that supervising a high number of subordinates in a small organization signifies increased responsibilities, compared to supervising a large number of subordinates in a larger organization. We predict that the number of employees supervised will be related to a respondent's reported work hours.

*Hypothesis 8. All else equal, an increase in the number of employees supervised will be positively related to working longer hours.*

One of the factors that may well affect the amount of time an individual works is affiliation with outside organizations and engagement in nonwork activities. While it seems quite plausible that time invested in other activities and organizations would affect time invested in work, it is not abundantly clear that the effect of outside activities would be to suppress work time. Certainly that is possible; at some point involvement in other organizations and social networks would almost necessarily result in a diminution of work time. On the one hand, it is possible that multiple affiliations and activities outside work signifies that the individual is not stretched too thin but rather that the individual is energetic and generally engaged, including work. On the other hand, it is possible that

before the threshold is reached it is possible that multiple activities in multiple organizations would have an energizing effect on one's work, especially if the activities were complementary or resulted in shared (work/non-work) social capital. Thus, we hypothesize that the respondent's tendency to engage in extracurricular activities and seek out commitments outside the workplace will be related to working longer hours.

*Hypothesis 9. All else equal, respondents who have an increased number of outside (non-work) social and organizational affiliations will report working longer hours.*

## **Data and Methods**

We test our hypotheses using data developed from the NASP-III questionnaire, a survey of 1849 full-time public and 1307 nonprofit managers in Georgia and Illinois from organizations of numerous functions. The primary data gathering closed in January 2006 with 1220 respondents (790 public sector; 430 nonprofit sector). The overall response rate was 39% percent (43% response rate for the public sector sample and 33% from the nonprofit sector sample). Six hundred and eighty-one respondents (56%) work in Illinois. Fifty-five percent of the public sector respondents and one quarter of the nonprofit sector respondents work in Georgia. (See [Author Ref] for additional details about the study approach.)

The NASP-III survey focused on full-time public and nonprofit managers and professionals in Georgia and Illinois. The two states, taken together, provide a strong representation of the U.S. According to the Associated Press, which ranked Census data from each state and the District of Columbia on how closely it matched the national averages on 21 factors such as age, race, education, income, industrial mix, immigration, and proportion of people living in urban and rural areas, Illinois ranked first as the most representative of the nation and Georgia ranked sixth. Illinois and Georgia are similar in industrial mix, the education levels of the population, and migration (National Public Radio 2007). Although Georgia and Illinois both have large urban and rural communities and are similar in geographic area (Illinois is 55,583 square miles and Georgia is 57,906 square miles), they have strikingly different cultural, political, and bureaucratic environments. Nationwide, Georgia is one of the leading states for government human resources reform including the dissolution of civil service and the expansion of at-will-

employment, while Illinois has a history of strong unions and centralized human resource management.

Georgia and Illinois are distinct in their representation of nonprofit organizations. According to the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics (2007) summary of nonprofit organizations in the states, Illinois is a popular location for nonprofit organizations. For example, in 2006, there were 59,807 nonprofit organizations in Illinois, compared to 33,017 in Georgia. Nonprofit organizations in Illinois report total revenue of about 71 billion (ranked third of all 50 US states and the District of Columbia), a little more than twice as high as Georgia (ranked seventeenth) (National Center for Charitable Statistics 2007). The similarities of these two states and their relative representativeness of the US population in conjunction with their distinctiveness in state government and nonprofit organizations make them useful cases for comparing public sector and nonprofit sector managers.

### **Variables and Measurement**

**Dependent Variable:** The dependent variable, **Time at Work**, is the self-reported number of hours worked during a typical work week (including work done away from the office but as part of the job).<sup>2</sup> Respondents were asked: During a typical week, about how many hours do you work (including work done away from the office but as part of your job). This variable ranges from 20 to 90 for all respondents, with a mean of 47 and a mode of 50 hours.<sup>3</sup> Although it is possible that respondents exaggerate the number of hours spent at work each week, this is a common self-reported measure in social science research (Peiperl & Jones 2001).

Numerous studies assess self-reported work hours by simply instructing respondents to report the number of hours worked in a typical week (Burke 1999a, 339; Burke 2001, 118). Other studies ask respondents the number of hours normally worked in a week including overtime and excluding travel time (van Echtelt et al. 2006, 498) or to indicate "how many hours did you work last week, at all jobs?" (Grosch et al. 2006,

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<sup>2</sup> This sample includes full-time employees and does not include part-time workers. Those respondents who report working fewer than 40 hours are not part-time workers, but simply full-time employees who are reporting fewer work hours worked in a typical work week.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to testing the continuous variable, we tested hours worked per week as a categorical variable with the following five categories: part-time (1-34 hr/week), full-time (35-40 hr/week), lower overtime (41-48 hr/week), medium overtime (49-69 hr/week), and higher overtime (70+ hr/week) (Grosch et al. 2006).

944). Furthermore, national and international studies of time spent at work regularly rely on self-reported data. For example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development relies on self-reported data to measure changes in per capita work hours across nations (OECD 1998; 2004), the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes 2003 provides self-reported data on respondents' usual number of hours worked (van Echtelt *et al.* 2006), and the Bureau of Labor Statistics collects self-reported data on time dedicated to "working and work-related activities" including work at locations other than home or workplace (2008). Our measure, while not perfect, enables respondents to specify the amount of time dedicated to work and work-related activities, whether that work takes place at the office, at home, or at another location. Although it remains possible that there are reporting biases associated with these self-reported data, it is unlikely that individuals will be highly motivated to misrepresent hours worked on a confidential survey for which the individual data results will not be available to the employing organization. Furthermore, any tendency to over or under report working hours should be random and just as likely to occur among employees in both sectors.

**Independent Variables:** **Nonprofit** is a dummy variable coded one if the respondent works in the nonprofit sector<sup>4</sup> and zero if the respondent works in the public sector. Nonprofit is significantly correlated with the dependent variable measuring time spent at work (0.326).

**Duration in Public Sector, Duration in Private Sector, and Duration in Nonprofit Sector:** Continuous variables indicating the duration the respondent reported working in each sector, if at all.<sup>5</sup>

**Job Position: Manager** is a dummy variable coded one if the respondent is a manager, zero if not.

**Number Employees Supervised** is an ordinal variable indicated the number of employees the respondent currently supervises.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Respondents are considered nonprofit employees if they work in organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service as title holding corporations for exempt organizations 501(c)(2), public charities 501(c)(3), civic leagues and social welfare organizations 501(c)(4), labor, agricultural, and horticultural organizations 501(c)(5), business leagues and Chambers of Commerce 501(c)(6), and fraternal beneficiary societies and associations 501(c)(8).

<sup>5</sup> We also tested three dummy variables indicating is the respondent's previous job was in the private sector, the nonprofit sector, and the public sector, and a dummy variable for if the current job was a sector switch or not.

**Organization Size** is a continuous variable indicating the number of full time employees in each respondent's organization.

**Organizational Affiliations** is an additive index of responses to a series of dummy variables listing organizations or groups to which the respondent might belong. Organizational Affiliations is the sum of all memberships and is a rough indication of the respondent's external activities and involvement in non-work organizations.<sup>7</sup>

The following three items measure the respondent's perceptions of her organization, work, and colleagues. Response categories included strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree.

**Pride** measured by level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: I feel a sense of pride working for this organization.

**Job Satisfaction** measured by level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: All in all I am satisfied with my job.

**Work of Subordinates** measured by level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement: I often have to do work of my subordinates.

Control Variables: **Georgia** a dummy variable coded one if the respondent works in Georgia, zero if the respondents works in Illinois. This variable controls for possible variation due to state personnel restrictions. For example, according to Hays and Sowa (2006) while there is a decline in job security in both Georgia and Illinois, about 72% of Georgia state government employees are at-will-employees and Georgia offers a restricted number of issues open to grievances. In comparison, Illinois' public sector has not expanded its at-will-employment beyond its standard 20% and continues to offer a wide range of issues open to grievances. The state control will also be important for identifying variation in nonprofit organizations due to differences in state laws, tax codes, tort law, and regulations for nonprofit organizations (Harvard Law Review 1992, 1636) which may play a role in shaping employees' behavior and perceptions.

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<sup>6</sup> Responses to the number of employees supervised were skewed, ranging from zero to 1200, with the highest quintiles starting at less than 100. We created an ordinal variable with the following categories: zero employees supervised, 1-5, 6-10, 11-20, and more than 21 employees supervised.

<sup>7</sup> Group membership response categories included: Church, synagogue, mosque, or religious organization; Political club or political party committees; Professional societies, trade or business association, or labor union; service organizations such as Rotary or Lions; Youth support groups such as the Girl's and Boy's Club, Little League Parents Association; Neighborhood or homeowners' associations; PTA, PTO, or school support groups; Groups sports team or club (e.g. softball team, bowling league); Other.



**Female** is a dummy variable coded one if the respondent is a woman. This control is important because research has found that women report higher levels of job stress and other factors associated with lower levels of job satisfaction (Burke 1999) and, typically, work shorter hours than men (Harpaz & Snir 2003).

**Nonwhite** is a dummy variable coded one if the respondent is not white and zero if the respondent is white.

**Age** is a continuous variable, which controls for differences in work hours and organizational involvement due to generational values (Jurkiewicz *et al.* 1998) and job experience and tenure.

**Education** is measured using a categorical variable indicating the respondents education level and is coded as follows: 3= graduate degree, 2=college degree, and 1=less than a college education.

Descriptive statistics for each of the variables can be found in the Appendix. The model predicting time spent working is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Time spent at work} = & B_0 + B_1(\text{nonprofit}) + B_2(\text{Duration in public sector}) + \\ & B_3(\text{Duration in private sector}) + B_4(\text{Duration in nonprofit sector}) + B_5(\text{pride}) + \\ & B_6(\text{job satisfaction}) + B_7(\text{manager}) + B_8(\text{work of subordinates}) + B_9(\text{Number of} \\ & \text{employees supervised}) + B_{10}(\text{Organization Size}) + B_{11}(\text{Organizational} \\ & \text{Affiliations}) + B_{12}(\text{Georgia}) + B_{13}(\text{female}) + B_{14}(\text{age}) + B_{15}(\text{nonwhite}) + \\ & B_{16}(\text{education}) + E. \end{aligned}$$

## Results

Table 3 reports an ordinary least squares model regressing time spent at work on all the predictor variables. The model explains (Adjusted R-squared) 23% of the variance in work time. The results show that almost all the predictor variables are significant in relation to time spent at work. We consider the results with respect to the hypotheses provided above. The hypotheses and their results are summarized in Table 4.

First, do state government employees report working more or less hours per week than those in nonprofit organizations? As we can see from Table 2, the mean number of work hours for respondents in nonprofit organizations is 50.6 hours per week and for those working in government organizations it is 45.1 hours. This is a statistically significant difference according to a difference of means F test ( $p=0.000$ ). We confirm hypothesis 1, managers in nonprofit organizations report working longer hours than those

in state government. However, we do not know the causal implications. For example, the difference could be a function of work hour restrictions in the public sector, **the result of nonprofit managers scheduling evening and weekend events for clients and donors**, or it could be a result of larger organizational size.

The second set of hypotheses concerning the amount of work experience in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors indicate that longer job tenure is positively associated with increased time spent at work. The duration variables indicate time spent in each sector. Those who have had a longer duration in the public, nonprofit, and the private sectors all report spending more time working. This seems to imply at least two things: first, the sector of work duration seems unimportant; second duration itself is important.

We find support for the third hypothesis those managers who report greater pride in their job report working longer hours than those with lower pride. We do not find support for the fourth hypothesis that job satisfaction is positively associated with time spent on the job.

We confirm the fifth hypothesis; managers report working more hours than professionals and technical employees at the equivalent status. We find support for hypothesis six that those who report doing the work of others spend more time at work, but it is not entirely clear what one should make of this. In many instances a reliance on perceptual variables presents no problem because perceptions tell us much about behavior and clearly affect behavior. But in this case is the effect of perception on behavior is not patent. Possibly, the straightforward interpretation is the true one- that those who perceive they are doing the work of others are actually doing so and that this requires that they spend more time at work. But it is also possible that those who spend more time at work *feel* that they are doing the work of others because those others are not present or because the longer working individuals have a heightened sense of responsibility that does not correspond to actual work behaviors. More information is needed.

One of the most interesting findings was revealed earlier in the analysis of means: that those working in the nonprofit sector tend to spend more time at work. However, the relationship remains strong even when we control for a variety of known differences

between the public and nonprofit samples, including most importantly the size of the organization (Hypothesis 7) and the number of persons supervised (Hypothesis 8).

One set of findings seems to indicate that those who have “larger jobs” spend more time at work. Working in a large organization, having to do the work of others, and an increase in the number of employees under one’s supervision are both related to more time working. Thus, the notion that those working in smaller organizations have less help and fewer slack resources and thus work longer, perhaps equally “intuitive,” receives no support here. Finally, we find confirmation for the ninth hypothesis that managers with an increased number of non-work organizational affiliations report working longer hours.

### **Concluding Discussion**

It is easy to believe that the reasons why people spend more time at work are varied and complicated. This preliminary study is not sufficient to fully sort these complexities. This much seems, on the basis of our evidence, to be true: people in the nonprofit sector tend to spend more time at work than those in state government and people with “larger” jobs, especially managers, spend more time at work. But the various attitudinal and perceptual variables need more attention than we have provided in this preliminary model.

A particularly interesting question is “what does it mean to spend more time at work?” This is certainly not the same as “being more productive” or, we conclude from this study, “being more satisfied with the job.” Quite possibly the time spent working is a complex admixture of a sense of obligation and responsibility, particular features of the job, and the requirements for the scope of the job. Another issue that cannot be skirted is the veracity of reporting. While there is no reason to believe that the “time spent at job” variable is more subject to socially desirable response bias than are other variables examined via questionnaire, it is nonetheless worth some reflection. If one reports spending more time does this comport with time at the office, work time in general, energy expended, some combination, or something else altogether? Nor can these issues be easily resolved by work audits. If we start by acknowledging that “being there” is not the same as “time spent at work,” any method for gauging time spent at work has its own problems. But this is no less true for our study than it is for national work and productivity studies reported worldwide and used for policy making. Moreover, the

amount of time one reports spending at work seems of inherent interest, even if there is some inter-subjective difference in meaning in the reporting. Knowledge of (perceived) time working is especially interesting during a period of human work history during which it is not necessarily assumed that spending more time at work is noble or that, in a Calvinist sense, it is a sign that one is “of the elect.” Possibly more time working simply signifies that one has endured long enough to have a job that requires supervising many people, some of whom do not complete the work they have been assigned, necessitating even more work for the manager. Occam’s razor.

There are many limitations to this study. It is based on data from just two states and while these are in some respects representative it is not clearly the case than one can generalize beyond these states, especially given the distinctiveness of public sector personnel systems. There are also the usual limits of questionnaire-based studies, perhaps even more significant than usual given the social baggage that goes along with work time. A study employing multiple methods, using qualitative approaches to draw more meaning from work constructs, seems a useful next step.

**Table 1. Comparison of Job Position, by Sector**

	Public Sector	Nonprofit Sector	Total
Main Responsibility: Manager	505	333	838
Main Responsibility: Professional	187	43	230
Main Responsibility: Technical	64	3	67
Main Responsibility: Other	34	41	75
Total	790	420	

**Table 2. Independent Samples Test for hours worked per week**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Public sector</b>	776	45.06	6.492
<b>Nonprofit sector</b>	420	50.55	8.669

F=23.37 p< .0001 (Equal variances assumed)

Responses to the questionnaire item: During a typical work week, about how many hours do you work?

**Table 3. Results for OLS Regression Model Predicting Time Spent at Work**

Variable	Beta	Std Error	Significance
<b>Nonprofit</b>	<b>5.902***</b>	<b>0.689</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Duration in public sector</b>	<b>0.087**</b>	<b>0.037</b>	<b>0.021</b>
<b>Duration in private sector</b>	<b>0.146***</b>	<b>0.053</b>	<b>0.006</b>
<b>Duration in nonprofit sector</b>	<b>0.115**</b>	<b>0.057</b>	<b>0.043</b>
<b>Pride</b>	<b>1.278***</b>	<b>0.395</b>	<b>0.001</b>
Job satisfaction	-0.435	0.375	0.246
<b>Manager</b>	<b>2.252***</b>	<b>0.567</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Work of subordinates</b>	<b>0.769***</b>	<b>0.254</b>	<b>0.003</b>
<b>Organization Size</b>	<b>0.000***</b>	<b>0.162</b>	<b>0.003</b>
<b>Number of Employees Supervised</b>	<b>0.011***</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Organizational Affiliations</b>	<b>0.528***</b>	<b>0.162</b>	<b>0.001</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>2.58***</b>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Female	-0.768	0.479	0.109
<b>Age</b>	0.051*	0.03	0.091
Nonwhite	0.44	0.695	0.526
<b>Education</b>	<b>0.814**</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>0.017</b>
Constant	29.937	2.203	0.000

p <.10=\*, p <.05=\*\*, p <.01\*\*\* Two tailed test of significance

R<sup>2</sup>=0.239; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=0.225

F=17.288 Prob > F=0.0000

N=899

**Table 4. Summary of Hypotheses and Results**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Results</b>
<i>Hypothesis 1. All else equal, <b>managers in nonprofit organizations</b> will report working longer hours than managers working in state government organizations.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 2.A. All else equal, an increase in the amount of <b>previous public sector work experience</b> will be negatively related to time spent at work.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 2.B. All else equal, an increase in the amount of <b>previous private sector work experience</b> will be positively related to time spent at work.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 2.C. All else equal, an increase in the amount of <b>previous nonprofit sector work experience</b> will be positively related to time spent at work.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 3. All else equal, those managers who report <b>greater pride in their job</b> will report working longer hours than those who report less pride in their job.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 4. All else equal (i.e. including controls), those managers who report <b>higher job satisfaction</b> will report working longer hours than those who report lower job satisfaction.</i>	NOT CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 5. All else equal, <b>managers</b> will report working longer hours than will professionals and technical workers of equivalent work status.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 6. All else equal, respondents who report doing some of <b>the subordinates work for</b> them will report working longer hours compared to respondents who report that they do not have to do the work of subordinates.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 7. All else equal, working in a <b>smaller organization</b> will be positively related to working longer hours</i>	SIGNIFICANT NOT CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 8. All else equal, an increase in the <b>number of employees supervised</b> will be positively related to working longer hours.</i>	CONFIRMED
<i>Hypothesis 9. All else equal, managers who have an <b>increased number of outside (non-work) social and organizational affiliations</b> will report working longer hours.</i>	CONFIRMED

## Appendix: Descriptive Statistics and Frequencies

### Dependent Variable

**Number of Hours Worked:** The dependent variable of interest is the self-reported number of hours worked (including work done outside the office). Respondents were asked the following questionnaire item: "During a typical week, about how many hours do you work (including work done away from the office but as part of your job)": Mean 46.99; Standard Deviation 7.782; Minimum 20, Maximum 90; N=1196.

### Independent Variables

**Nonprofit:** 0=Public, 1=Nonprofit; Mean .352; Standard Deviation .478; N=1220

**Pride:** Mean 3.345; Standard Deviation .763; Minimum 1, Maximum 4; N=1189

**Job Satisfaction:** Mean 3.347; Standard Deviation .744; Minimum 1, Maximum 4; N=1209

**Manager:** 0=Technical, Professional, and Other; 1=Manager; Mean .7055; Standard Deviation .456; N=1219

**Number of Employees Supervised:** Mean 21.123; Standard Deviation 73.084; Minimum 0, Maximum 1200; N=1057

**Organization Size:** Mean 3525.7; Standard Deviation 5703.1; Minimum 1, Maximum 18700; N=1125

**Organization Affiliations:** Mean 2.666; Standard Deviation 1.457; Minimum 0, Maximum 8; N=1219

**Georgia:** 0=Illinois, 1=Georgia; Mean .442; Standard Deviation .497; N=1220

**Female:** 1=Female, 0=Male; Mean .454; Standard Deviation .498; N=1208

**Age:** Mean 49.44269; Standard Deviation 8.913; Minimum 23, Maximum 81; N=1204

**Nonwhite:** 1=nonwhite; 0=white; Mean .141; Standard Deviation .348; N=1171

**Education:** 1=less than college, 2=college degree, 3=graduate degree; Mean 2.138; Standard Deviation .699; N=1204

**Total Time in Private Sector:** Mean 2.40; Std. Error of Mean .148; Median .00; Mode 0; Standard Deviation 5.156; Variance 26.587; Minimum 0; Maximum 36; Valid 1220.

**Total Time in Public Sector:** Mean 6.06; Std. Error of Mean .218; Median 3.00; Mode 0; Standard Deviation 7.620; Variance 58.070; Minimum 0; Maximum 42; Valid 1220.

**Total Time in Nonprofit Sector:** Mean 2.21; Std. Error of Mean .141; Median .00; Mode 0; Standard Deviation 4.912; Variance 24.124; Minimum 0; Maximum 38; Valid 1220.



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## Appendix 1

### National Administrative Studies Project III

The National Administration Studies Project (NASP) aims to increase our empirical knowledge of public management and administration. NASP-III is an attempt to blend the goals of NASP-I and II while addressing a few new themes of its own. NASP-III collected data from a random sample of public and nonprofit managers in Georgia and Illinois. Unlike NASP-II, which focused on a single functional agency (health and human services), the NASP-III sample includes managers from agencies and organizations of numerous functions.

The population of managers in Georgia was drawn from the Georgia Department of Audits (DoA) comprehensive list of state employees who were on state agency payrolls during the 2003/2004 fiscal year. We removed employees at technical colleges, commissions, authorities, the office of the governor, and institutions from the judicial or legislative branch. In addition we removed employees at institutions with less than 20 employees. The population included any job titles coded as "director" "coordinator" "officials or manager" and "professionals" under the pay grade of 017 and all individuals with a pay grade of 017 or higher. The resulting population included 6,164 Georgia managers.

The population of managers in Illinois was developed through a Freedom of Information Act request for a list of all state employees designated as either "senior public service administrators" or "public service administrators." This list included information on 5,461 state employees, including name, agency, and county.

The population of nonprofit managers was purchased from Infocus Marketing, Inc. The list includes members of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) with the following job titles: administration manager; operations manager; marketing, personnel; public relations; public affairs; sales; marketing; executive director; vice president; financial or bookkeeping; company president or owner; development manager or director; education manager or director; information systems; communications; editors; publications; legal counsel-internal; chief executive officer; government; and government relations.

The list of included 1328 high-ranking managers and professionals working in nonprofit organizations in Georgia and Illinois. The Infocus Marketing list is updated monthly. We recognize that by purchasing the list from ASAE, we received a population of self-selected individuals. However, this is currently the best method for obtaining contact information for a large number of nonprofit managers. The list included a smaller number of nonprofit managers from Georgia (n=280) compared to Illinois (n=1048).

**Survey Administration:** The survey administration included a pre-contact letter, Wave I survey with letter, follow-up postcard mailing, Wave II mailing, follow-up contacts by

phone call and email, and a final Wave III mailing. The survey was closed January 1, 2006.

**Response Rates:** Though we began with a sample of 2000 public sector respondents our sample was reduced to 1849 (912 Georgia, 937 Illinois) because of respondents who had retired (16 cases) or were no longer working for the state (135 cases). The survey was closed with 432 responses from Georgia and 358 from Illinois. The respondents represent a random sample of the population of managers in Georgia and Illinois. Respondents and nonrespondents do not vary significantly by state, gender, job rank, salary (for Georgia), or agency of employment.