Introduction to the Issue

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This issue of Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs (JPNA) is filled with a number of articles that provide insights into how public and nonprofit organizations perform essential functions related to their roles. These articles should provide readers of JPNA with useful information in understanding more about the public and nonprofit sectors.

To begin the issue, Collins and Gerlach’s (2019) research article focuses on a fundamental question in understanding the relationship between nonprofit and public organizations: Why do local governments and nonprofits collaborate? Using original survey data collected from government and nonprofit managers in North Carolina, the authors examine the perceptions of public and nonprofit managers concerning their past inter-sectoral collaboration experiences and their willingness to engage in future inter-sectoral collaborations. Interestingly, they find that successful past collaboration experiences do not necessarily lead to a willingness to collaborate in the future.

In the next research article in this issue, Lim, Lee, and Bae (2019) investigate whether person-organization fit mediates the relationship between affect-based work antecedents—specifically, transformational leadership and role clarity—and public employee job satisfaction. The authors hypothesize that transformational leadership and role clarity can be used to trigger the effect of value congruence on job satisfaction in public organizations. To test this hypothesis, they rely on a viewpoint survey of South Korean government officials and estimate structural equation models. Although they find that person-organization fit does in fact mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, they find that it does not mediate the relationship between role clarity and job satisfaction.

Schafer and Zhang (2019) provide a test of the instrumental perspective of stakeholder engagement in the next research article in the issue. Focusing on the policy area of municipal contracting out, the authors explore whether stakeholder engagement provides public administrators with insights into how they can better evaluate innovative policy options that allow them to overcome limited administrative capacity. They also explore whether stakeholder engagement provides public administrators with opportunities to mobilize support in light of political opposition.

In the next research article in this issue, Mead (2019) undertakes a review of charitable solicitation laws in the largest cities in the United States (US). He finds that several cities in the US impose extensive registration requirements and other restrictions on charitable solicitation. Indeed,
rather than empowering donors, preventing fraud, or benefiting government, he finds that the purpose of these requirements and restrictions is usually to regulate traffic flow, avoid annoyances at people’s homes, and prevent in-person solicitation in certain areas.

The final research article in this issue is a cross-national examination of citizens’ perceptions of government policy success. In the article, Aitalieva and Morelock (2019) pose the question: What explains citizens’ perceptions of government policy success? To answer this question, the authors rely on multilevel modelling strategies to examine data gathered across 21 national samples from the 2006 International Social Survey Programme’s (ISSP) Role of Government IV module. Their findings indicate that citizens’ evaluations of the success of public policies vary within countries as well as between countries. Within country variation in perceptions, they find, is largely a function of individual sociodemographic attributes and political attitudes. In contrast, across country variation in perceptions, they find, is largely a function of the quality of public institutions within a country and (to a lesser extent) prevailing economic conditions.

In our sole Current Issues in Practice article in this issue, Schober, Bowers, and Posner (2019) examine how senior leaders of health foundations and nonprofit organizations perceive key health issues (such as violence, housing, and chronic disease) included in the Chicago Department of Public Health’s implementation plan. Through semistructured interviews, the authors explore what these leaders believe are the most important health challenges facing the city. They find that participants identify the importance of addressing broad conditions related to violence, economic development, and education across the lifespan using multisector collaboration strategies. This is a finding that helps to reemphasize the importance of the work of Collins and Gerlach (2019)—the very first research article in this issue.


References


