



The University of
Nottingham



Civil service management practices for a more motivated, committed and ethical public service in Uganda

EVIDENCE FROM A SURVEY WITH OVER 20,000 PUBLIC SERVANTS IN UGANDA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

Adam Harris (University College London)

Immaculate Apio Ayado (International Growth Research and Evaluation Center - IGREC)

Christian Schuster (University College London)

Jan Meyer-Sahling (University of Nottingham)

Kim Sass Mikkelsen (University of Southern Denmark)

Acknowledgments

This report draws on results from an international survey of more than 20,000 public servants in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The authors gratefully acknowledge financial support from a UK Department for International Development (DFID)-British Academy grant for this project (<http://www.britac.ac.uk/node/4662/>).

In Uganda, the survey was implemented with the authorization of the Ugandan Government's Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and the Ministry of Public Service. The authors would like to thank the over 1,500 public servants who took the time to complete the survey and share their experiences in public service. Without them, there would have been no report. The research would not have been possible without the excellent team of research assistants and enumerators: Faith Achan, Carol Asio, Richard Kalema, Justine Lubuga, Henry Muhairwe, Joshua Nabimanya, Sylvia Nabisusungu, Jenipher Nakabugo, Rebecca Nalinya, Christine Ndagire, Owen Owamani, Catherine Tabingwa, Pius Tibaingana, John Paul Wanambwa.

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of any government, funding agency or university.

Top Three Lessons from the Survey for Reforming Uganda's Public Service

#1: Institutions greatly vary in how they manage their public servants – civil service reforms thus need to be tailored to institutional-level realities.

In some institutions, for instance, almost all public servants are recruited through written examinations, while others hardly administer exams to recruit staff. In some institutions, poor performance evaluations matter for the careers of public servants, while in others performance evaluation results have little relevance. And in some institutions, most public servants with similar responsibilities get similar pay, while in others pay for public servants with similar responsibilities varies. This variation in civil service management practices suggests that civil service reforms need to be designed at the institutional level, adapted to the needs and particularities of a specific institution. Government-wide reform designs may not work in the varied civil service management realities across institutions.

#2: Most public servants intend to stay in the public sector and are motivated to serve the public – yet not necessarily satisfied with their jobs or always motivated to work hard on their jobs.

This puts a premium on management practices to enhance work motivation and job satisfaction in particular. The combination of seeking to remain in the public service despite low job satisfaction and work motivation is a key hurdle that must be overcome in order for Uganda's public service to become more effective.

#3: Several civil service management practices are systematically associated with greater work motivation and job satisfaction in the public sector – evidence-based reform designs would do well to focus on them.

Hiring public servants through formal selection procedures (written exams and interviews); safeguarding promotion and dismissal decisions from political interference; ensuring that public servants perceive a link between performance evaluation results and their career prospects; and paying public servants with private sector job options competitive salaries are all management practices which are statistically associated with greater work motivation or job satisfaction of public

Policy recommendations

servants. An evidence-based civil service reform program in Uganda would do well to take these findings as a starting point for reform designs.

Contents

Acknowledgments _____	iii
Top Three Lessons from the Survey for Reforming Uganda’s Public Service _____	iv
I. Introduction _____	2
II. Core attitudes and behaviors of Uganda’s public servants _____	7
III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective _____	17
IV. How do civil service management practices affect the core attitudes and behaviors of public servants? _____	32
V. Conclusions and Recommendations _____	36
Appendix _____	38

“This report draws on the largest original international survey of public servants to-date, with over 20,000 respondents in four regions.”

I. Introduction

Making Civil Services Work: An International Research Project

This report draws on results from the largest original international survey of public servants to-date, with responses from more than 20,000 public servants in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America, including Uganda. The cross-country project is led by Jan-Meyer Sahling (University of Nottingham) and Christian Schuster (University College London) and funded by a UK Department for International Development (DFID)-British Academy grant. In Uganda, the project was led by Adam Harris (University College London).

The international research project seeks to help governments across the world – including Uganda’s – to make evidence-based decisions about civil service management practices, including recruitment, pay, promotion, performance evaluation, career management and leadership. It does so by assessing the effects of civil service management practices in government institutions on the attitudes and behavior of public servants – their work motivation, job satisfaction, commitment to public service, performance, integrity and ethical conduct. Based on this assessment, governments can learn which of their civil service management practices have positive effects and which do not; and which management practices from other countries might be worthwhile adopting.

The data for this assessment stems from comparable civil service surveys. These surveys gather data on public servants’ experiences and perceptions of civil service management practices on the one hand, and public servants’ attitudes and behavior (such as their work motivation) on the other. Thanks to data on both management practices and attitudes and behavior, a statistical analysis can provide guidance on which management practices have positive (or negative) effects on the attitudes and behaviors of public servants, after controlling for a range of other factors.

We hope this analysis provides an evidence basis and starting point for governments hoping to design improvements in civil service management.¹

¹ This report is based on cross-sectional analyses of perception-based survey data, which can provide important insights, but is not without limitations. As such, we hope that its findings are

The Survey of Public Servants in Uganda

The survey in Uganda was conducted with 1,537 public servants from 31 government institutions, with authorization from UNCST, the Ministry of Public Service and each institution:

Institution	Acronym
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries	MAAIF
Ministry of Communication and Information Communication Technology	MICT
Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and Refugees	MODPAR
Ministry of Education and Sports	MoES
Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development	MOFPED
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	MFA
Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Affairs	MGLSD
Ministry of Health	MoH
Ministry of Internal Affairs	MIA
Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs	MoJ
Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development	MLHUD
Ministry of Local Government	MoLG
Ministry of Public Service	MPS
Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives	MTIC
Ministry of Water and Environment	MWE
Ministry of Works and Transport	MOWT
Office of the Prime Minister	OPM
Office of the President	OP
Office of the Vice President	OVP
Civil Aviation Authority	CAA

treated as a basis to discuss potential improvements to civil service management practices – rather than a be-all and end-all guide to civil service reform.

Institution	Acronym
Inspectorate of Government	IGG
National Agricultural Advisory Services	NAADS
National Council of Sports	NCS
Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Authority	PPDA
Public Service Commission	PSC
Office of the Auditor General	OAG
Uganda Electoral Commission	UEC
Uganda National Examinations Board	UNEB
Uganda National Roads Authority	UNRA
Uganda Registration Services Bureau	URSB
Uganda Revenue Authority	URA

The survey was conducted face-to-face using tablet computers, and was conducted by a team of 14 local enumerators from June 15 – August 9, 2017. The survey team was unable to obtain a sampling frame for Uganda’s public service; therefore, we recruited respondents through a convenience (largely snowball) sampling. We started with the largest ministries in terms of personal, prestige, and budget (education, health, finance, etc.) and then moved to other institutions. To invite participants, we first obtained approval from the Ministry of Public Service, which they sent a letter to each ministry, department, and agency. We then obtained permission from an official in each institution that we approached (e.g. the permanent secretary, the human resource manager, etc.). We then approached individual civil servants to participate (often times the official who granted us institution-level approval would go with the enumerators to invite participants, but s/he would not sit in on the interviews). Participants would then often refer us to their colleagues. We focused the survey on institutions that provided approval (31 in total) before the end of the survey implementation period. However, we ensured that we surveyed a number of bureaucrats across a number of ministries, agencies, and departments to obtain a diversity of perspectives.

Unfortunately, given the scarcity of systematic data and the convenience nature of the sample, we are unable to weight our sample in order to ensure the results account for differences between the sample and the civil servant population or to account for differences in sampling probabilities. However, given that this is the first large-scale survey of Uganda's public service, we are confident that the data nonetheless provide a detailed first glance into Uganda's public service.

Structure of the Report

After this introduction, part 2 of this report presents data on core attitudes and behaviors of public servants. These attitudes and behaviors are measured as they reflect what it takes to be a 'good public servant': motivation to work hard, performance, job satisfaction, and commitment to public service. To make this data meaningful, the report presents it in a comparative manner by comparing across institutions within Uganda and between Uganda and Ghana. To ensure relevance of the international comparison, the report compares Uganda to Ghana and Malawi, the other Africa countries included in the study.²

In part 3, the report then turns to presenting data on civil service management practices, as experienced and perceived by public servants. These practices range from recruitment to promotion, job stability, pay, and performance management. The data is, again, presented in a comparative manner.

After discussing both civil service management practices and attitudes and behaviors of public servants, part 4 assesses the effects of management practices on attitudes and behavior. Regression evidence is presented to assess the effects of each civil service management practice covered in the survey: recruitment, promotion, job stability (contract types), pay, and performance evaluations.

The report concludes in part 5 with an overview of results and policy recommendations for a more motivated, committed and ethical public service in Uganda. The recommendations bring together both the findings about what works (and what does

² The comparison should be interpreted with care as the survey samples in Uganda, Ghana and Malawi are not necessarily representative of civil service populations.

not) in civil service management in Uganda, and insights from the international research project about what works elsewhere.

“Public servants in Uganda are relatively motivated to serve the public.”

II. Core attitudes and behaviors of Uganda's public servants

This section presents comparative data on key attitudes and behaviors of Ugandan public servants. The data suggests that most public servants in Uganda are intend to stay in the public sector and are motivated to serve the public – yet not necessarily satisfied with their jobs or always motivated to work hard on their jobs.

Work Motivation

Work motivation – the willingness of public servants to work hard and work well – is a central driver of public sector performance (Wright, 2001). Work motivation is measured on a 0 to 4 scale, as the composite of three survey questions about work effort and motivation.³

Self-assessed work motivation of public servants in Uganda is at moderate levels. On average, work motivation stands at 3.5 in Uganda, relative to 3.7 in Malawi to 4.4 in Ghana in a 1-5 scale (figure 1).

Work motivation is moderate across all surveyed public sector institutions in Uganda, with average scores in the surveyed public sector institutions ranging from 2.3 to 3.5 in a 0-4 scale (figure 2). Among the surveyed institutions, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Auditor General score highest in work motivation

³ Work motivation is measured as a latent variable of the following three questions (seeking agreement with each of the following statements):

- (1) I start work early or stay late to finish a job.
- (2) I do extra work for my job that isn't really expected of me.
- (3) I put forth my best effort to get my job done regardless of the difficulties

Figure 1. Work motivation: comparison across countries

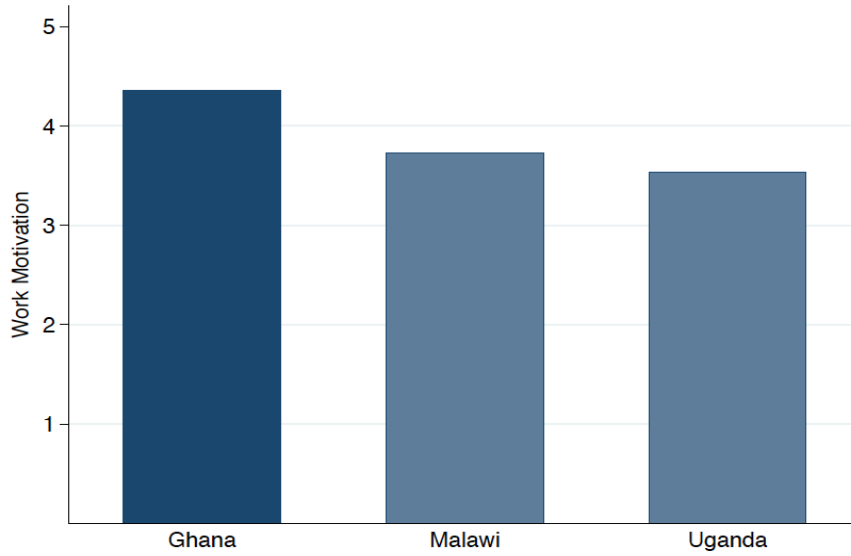
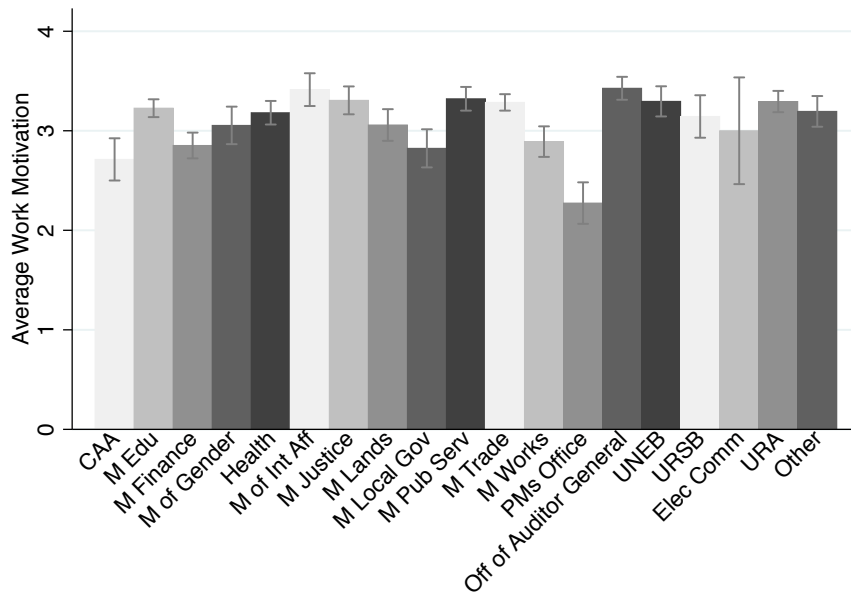


Figure 2. Work motivation: comparison across institutions



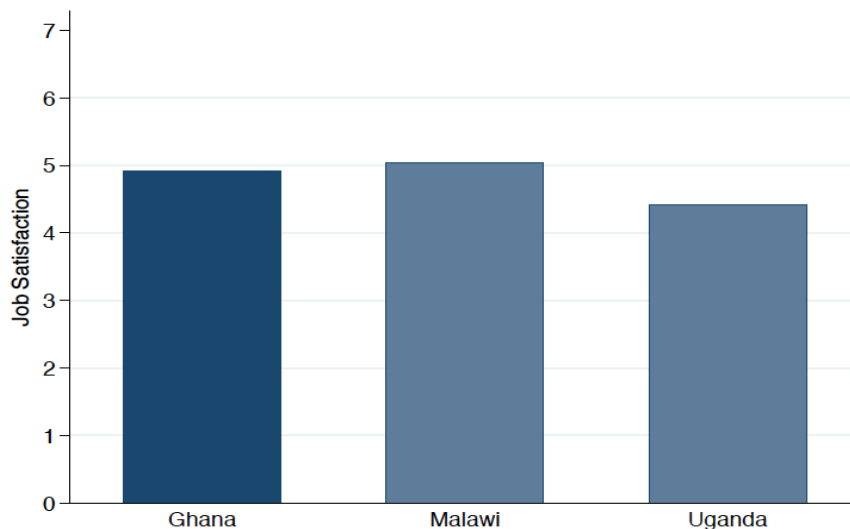
“Public servants in Uganda are comparatively less satisfied with their jobs.”

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction matters for public sector performance: more satisfied public servants tend to be more motivated to work hard and less likely to leave the public sector, among many (see, for instance, Cantarelli et al., 2015). Interestingly, in Uganda, job satisfaction is only weakly associated with work motivation ($r=0.28$) and not associated with self-assessed performance ($r=0.02$), among others.

How satisfied are Uganda public servants with their jobs?⁴ Comparative data suggests Ugandan public servants are less satisfied than those in Ghana and Malawi (figure 3).

Figure 3. Job satisfaction: comparison across countries

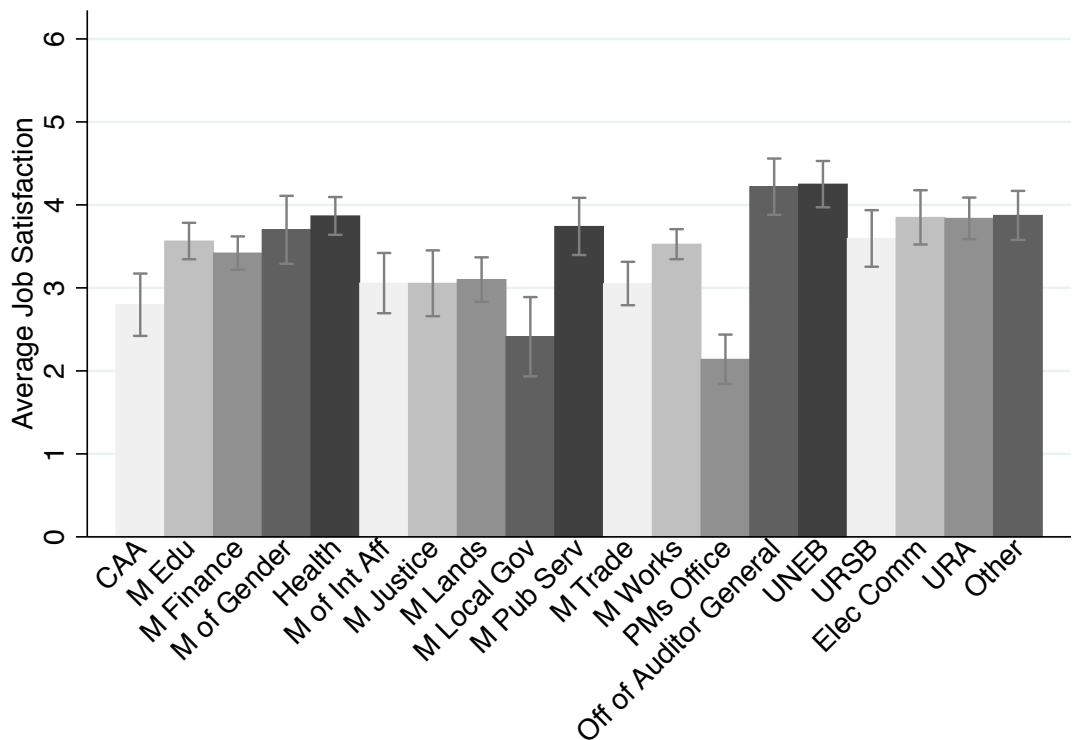


⁴ The survey measures job satisfaction with the following question: How satisfied are you with your job? (Scale: 1 = Totally Unsatisfied; 7 = Totally Satisfied). The 1-7 scale is used in the cross-national comparisons but in the Uganda institutional comparison (figure X) a 0-6 scale is used.

II. Core attitudes and behaviors of Uganda’s public servants

Job satisfaction is quite low across public sector institutions in Uganda, with average scores in the eleven public sector institutions ranging from 2.1 to 4.2 (figure 4), which indicate, at best that people are either more unsatisfied than satisfied or neither satisfied nor unsatisfied (at best). Among the surveyed institutions, The Office of the Auditor General and UNEB score highest in job satisfaction. While overall, job satisfaction is not highly correlated with work motivation, we do see that the institutions with the highest and lowest average satisfaction levels are also those with the highest and lowest average work motivation scores (the OPM is the lowest in both and the Office of the Auditor General is the highest in both).

Figure 4. Job satisfaction: comparison across institutions



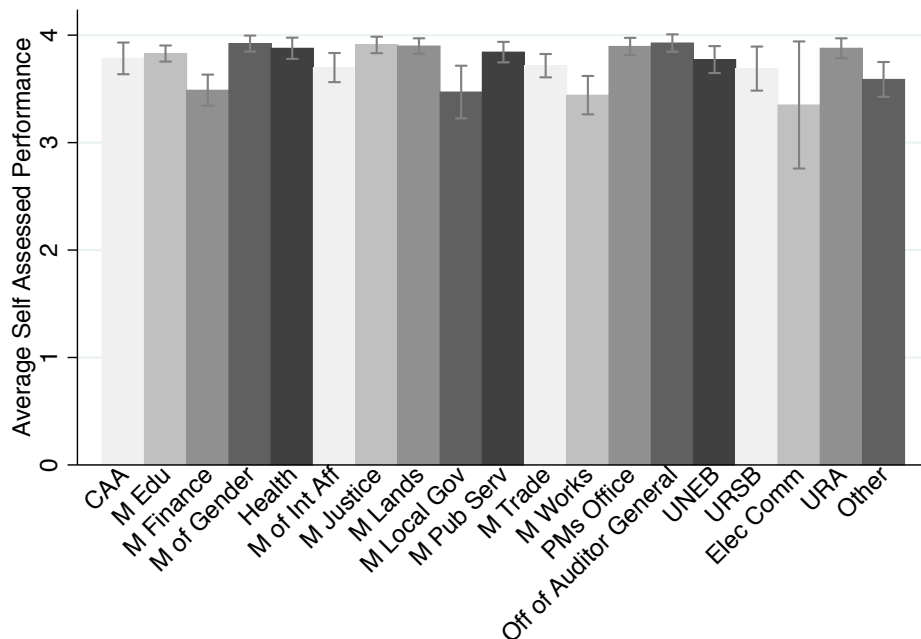
Performance

Performance may be measured only imperfectly in surveys: respondents often self-assess their performance higher than their actual performance is. With this caveat in mind, we surveyed respondents about performance indirectly, asking them to assess to what extent they contribute to the success of their organization.⁵

The overwhelming share (96%) of public servants in Uganda agree or strongly agree that they contribute to the success of the organization, with an average score of 3.7 out of 4 (the variable ranges from 0 to 4).

Self-assessed performance is consistently high across all surveyed public sector institutions in Uganda, with average scores in the surveyed public sector institutions ranging from 3.4 to 3.9 (figure 5).

Figure 5. Self-assessed performance: comparison across institutions



⁵ The corresponding survey question was: How frequently do the following statements apply to you: in my opinion, I contribute to the success of my institution.

Commitment to Public Service

Public servants, of course, should not only be committed to the success of their organization, but also to public service – in the sense of service to society. Commitment to public service has several dimensions, including public service motivation and an intent to remain working in the public sector.

Public service motivation

Public service motivation – the motivation public servants derive from serving society through their public sector work – is another important driver of public sector performance. In fact, it is associated with stronger job performance, less organizational turnover and a range of other positive outcomes in other countries (Ritz et al., 2016). However, in Uganda public service motivation is only moderately or weakly correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.2011$), work motivation ($r = 0.3766$), and self-assessed performance ($r = 0.1495$).

The public service motivation of Uganda's public servants is high relative to their peers in other countries.⁶ On a scale from 0 to 5, public servants in Uganda score 4.6 which is roughly equivalent to the public service motivation of bureaucrats in Ghana and Malawi (figure 6).

Public Service Motivation consists of four dimensions: attraction to serving the public, commitment to public values, compassion with the less privileged, and willingness to self-sacrifice for the good of the public. Public servants in Uganda score particularly high in attraction to public service, commitment to public values, and compassion. They score relatively lower in their willingness to self-sacrifice in favor of the common good (figure 7).

⁶ The four dimensions of public service motivation were measured with a standard, 16-item scale, which duplicates Kim et al. (2013).

Figure 6. Public service motivation: comparison across countries

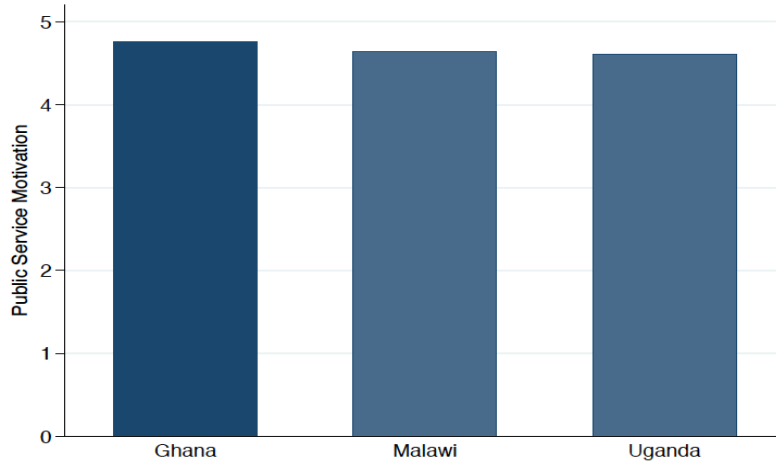
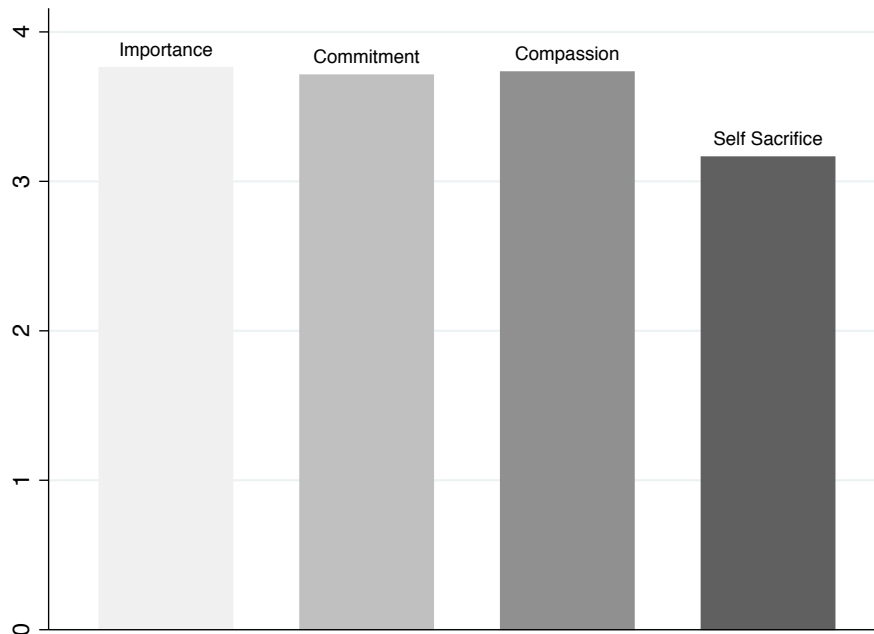


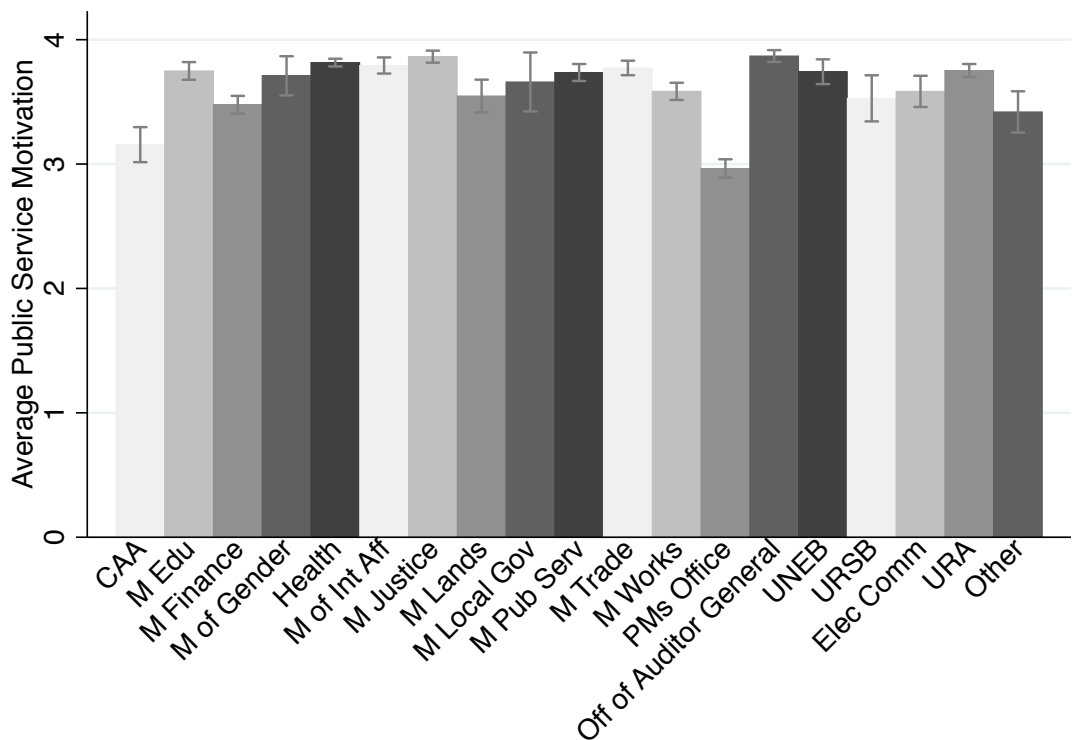
Figure 7. Dimensions of Public Service Motivation in Uganda



“Public servants in Uganda derive motivation from the importance for society of the work they do.”

Public service motivation is consistently high across all surveyed public sector institutions in Uganda (with the exceptions of the OPM and CAA), with average scores in the eleven public sector institutions ranging from 3 to 3.9 (figure 8).

Figure 8. Public service motivation: comparison across institutions

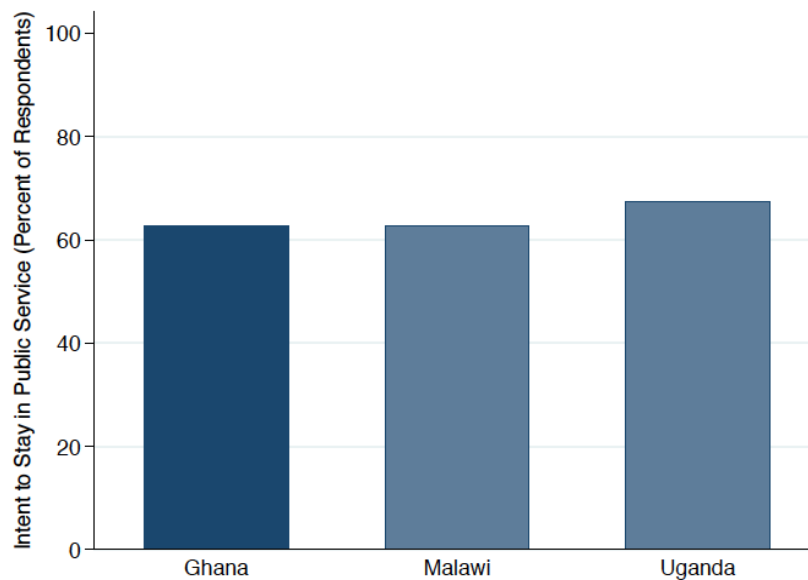


Intent to stay in public sector

Another component of a commitment to public service is the willingness to keep working in the public sector. This willingness matters not least as it relates to staff turnover in organizations, and staff departures from the public sector. This commitment was assessed by asking respondents whether they would prefer looking for a job in the public

sector if, hypothetically speaking, they had to look for a job in the next few months.⁷ 68 percent of public servants in Uganda would prefer searching for a job in the public sector – compared to 63 percent in both Ghana and Malawi (figure 9).

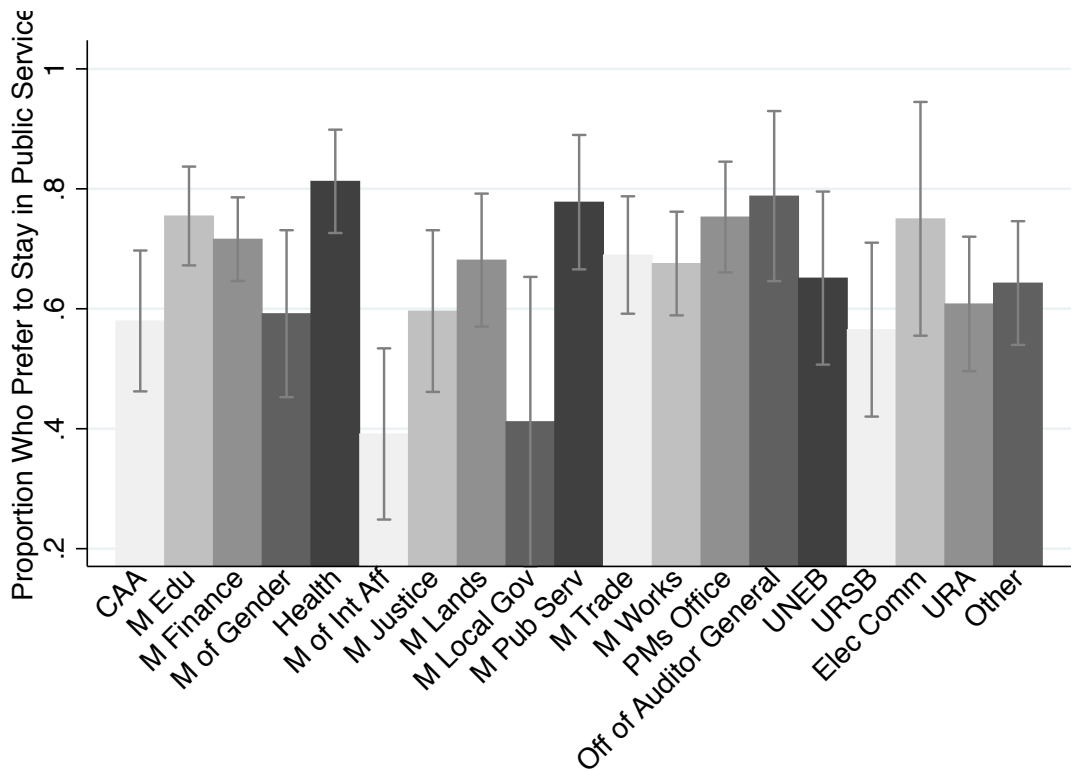
Figure 9. Intent to Stay in Public Sector: Comparison across Countries



There is significant variation across institutions, however, in terms of the share of public servants who would search in the public sector if needing to find a new job (figure 10). At the top end, in the Ministry of Education, Uganda Electoral Commission, OPM, Ministry of Public Service, Office of the Auditor General, Ministry of Health, 75% or more would search in the public sector. At the bottom end, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Local Government, less than 50 percent would search in the public sector.

⁷ The precise wording of this question was: “Imagine that, hypothetically speaking, you had to find a new job in the next few months, in which sector would you prefer to search for a job?”

Figure 10. Intent to Stay in Public Sector: Comparison Across Institutions



Conclusions

This chapter has presented survey results related to public servants’ attitudes and practices. The data presented illustrates that most public servants intend to stay in the public sector and are motivated to serve the public, but they are not necessarily satisfied with their jobs or always motivated to work hard on their jobs. Interestingly, we see the most variation across institutions in terms of work motivation and job satisfaction whereas the other indicators seem to be relatively more uniform across institutions.

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

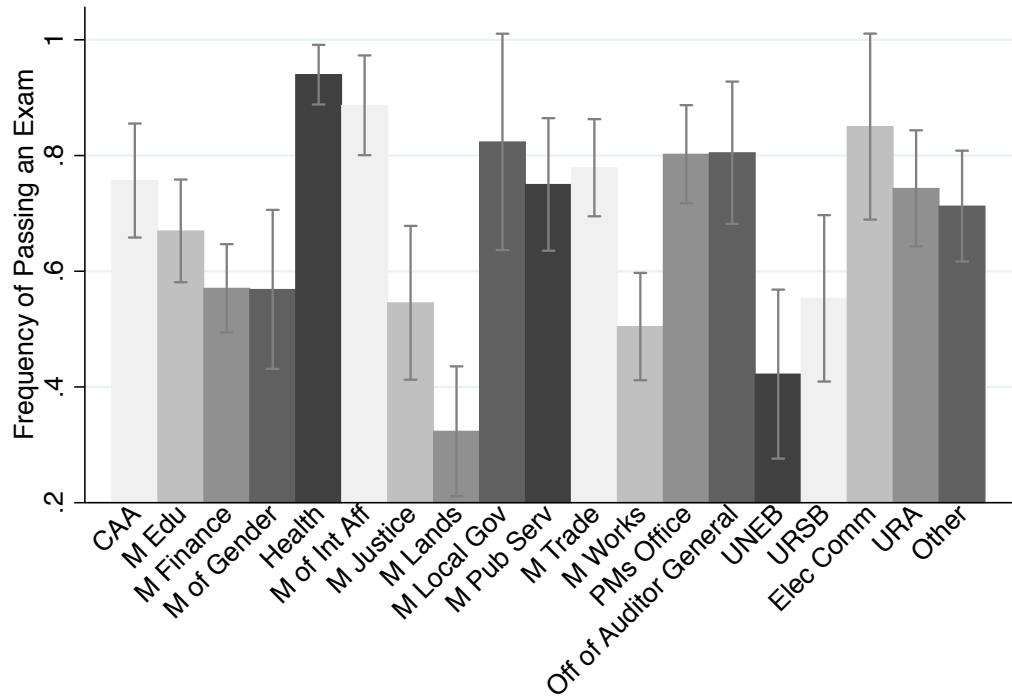
Recruitment

Recruitment into the public service also has important implications for the quality of its public servants. Those who enter based on merit are likely to be more professional and more closely approximate Weber's ideal civil servant. Civil servants who were required to pass an exam and an interview for their first job in the public service are more likely to be qualified for the position than those who are not. Although there is only limited suggestive evidence that this is the case: those who did pass an interview are no more likely to agree that they have the necessary skills for their job than those who did not. However, those who passed an exam are more likely to agree that they have the necessary skills for their position (48% agree compared to only 40% who did not pass an exam; this difference is significant at the 10% level).

Overall 67% of respondents had to pass an exam as part of the interview process to get their first job. However, there is a large amount of variation across institutions. Institutions range from 32% to 94% of public servants reporting passing an exam this variation is likely due, in part, to the fact that Public Service Commission (PSC), as per the Public Service Standing Order of 2010, have discretion over the type of examination (oral or written) that takes place during recruitment. Therefore, variation across institutions is due to variation in how the Public Service Commission recruits employees for each institution. However, parastatals and agencies have discretion over the type of examinations they employ during recruitment; therefore, variation in recruitment practices is a result of decisions made within the institution. Why the PSC makes certain decisions regarding recruitment across institutions and the consequences of these choices are important avenues for further investigation. The Ministries of Health, Internal Affairs, and Local Government and the Electoral Commission rely most frequently on exams, with more than 80% reporting that they had to pass an exam. However, on the low end, less than 50% of respondents from the Ministries of Lands and Works and the UNEB report passing an exam (figure 11).

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

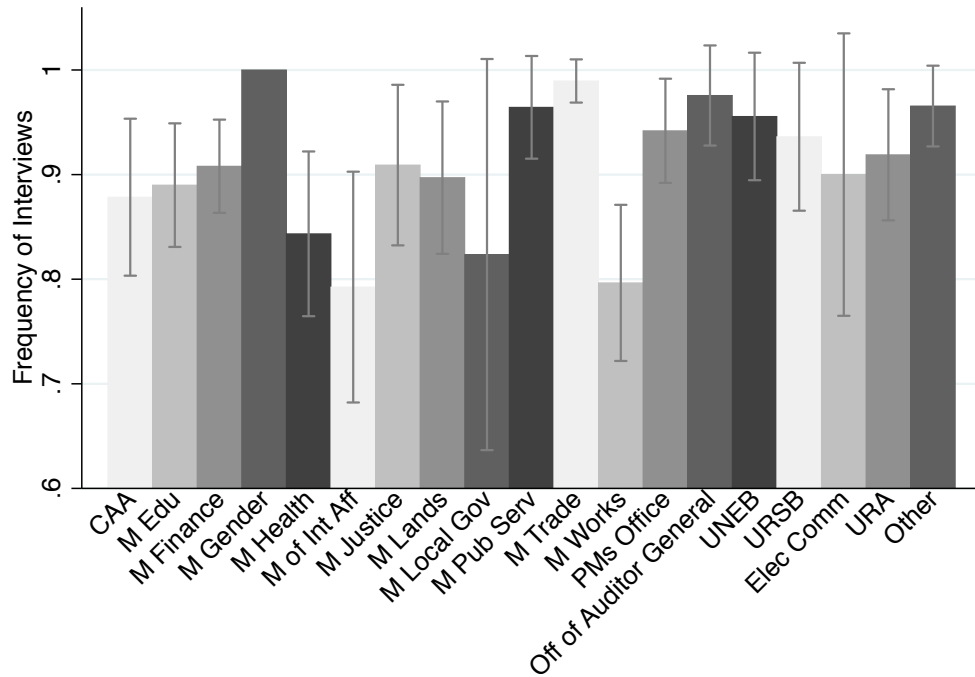
Figure 11. Percent of Public Servants who had to pass an exam for their first job



Exams are only one possible way to assess qualifications and interviews are another. From the survey, overall 91% of public servants were interviewed for their first job in the public service. Once again, the variation across institutions is quite high (although not as high as exams) with a range of 79% to 100% reporting participating in an interview. The Ministries of Gender and Trade top the list with 100% and 99%, respectively, while the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Works rely on interviews less frequently, with less than 80% of staff interviewed for their first job (figure 12).

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Figure 12. Percent of Public Servants who were interviewed for their first job in the public service



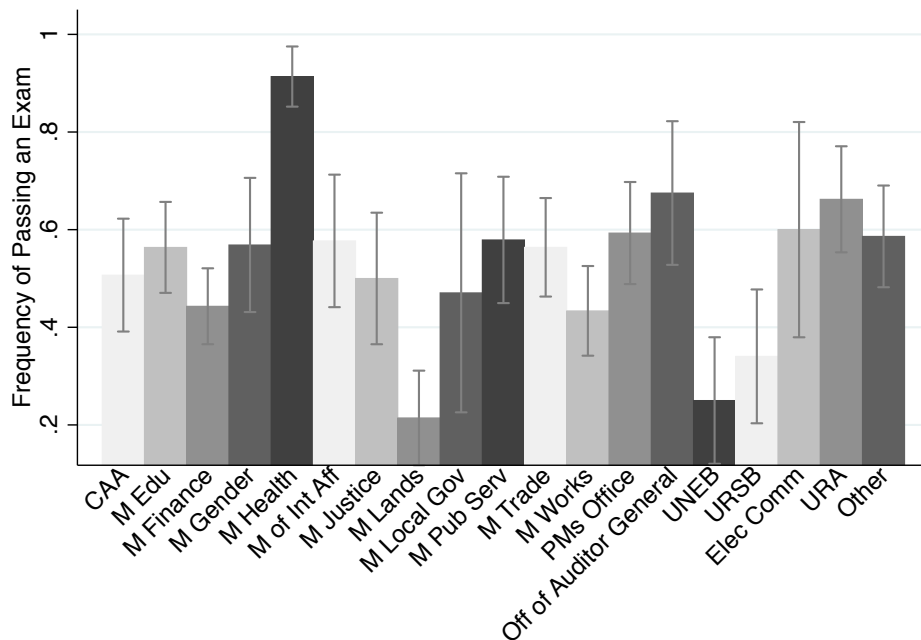
Promotion and Career Advancement

While merit-based entry into the public service is important, merit-based promotion is also key to an effective public service. Therefore, we investigated the frequency with which promotions within the public service involved interviews and exams, how often promotions were actually competitive, and how often connections are required to obtain a promotion. On average, Ugandan civil servants have held 1.87 positions with the mode being only one position, and 91% report holding 3 public service positions or less. Importantly, 48% report holding more than one position in the public service. Of those who have held more than one position, 39% remained in the same institution, another 39% held positions in two institutions, and on average people held positions in 2.13 institutions. Therefore, this a substantial amount of mobility in the Ugandan public

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

service. From the survey, overall, 52% had to pass an exam in order to obtain a promotion. Once again there is stark variation across institutions with 90% of civil servants in the Ministry of Health and 20% in the Ministry of Lands and the UNEB reporting taking an exam (figure 13).

Figure 13. Did you have to pass an exam to advance in the public service?



Now turning to interviews, we find that 84% of respondents report being interviewed in order to obtain a promotion. Much like interviews in order to obtain a job in the public service, there is some variation across institutions ranging from 98% (Office of the Auditor General) to just over 50% (Ministry of Local Government) (figure 14).

Overall, only 32% report a competitive hiring process when seeking promotion. Variation across institutions is stark, ranging from 9% to 76% reporting a competitive process. Institutions such as the Ministry of Health and to a lesser extent the Electoral

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Commission score relatively high in all areas suggest that some institutions are able to effectively implement formally competitive promotion procedures (figure 15).

Figure 14. Were you interviewed to advance in the public service?

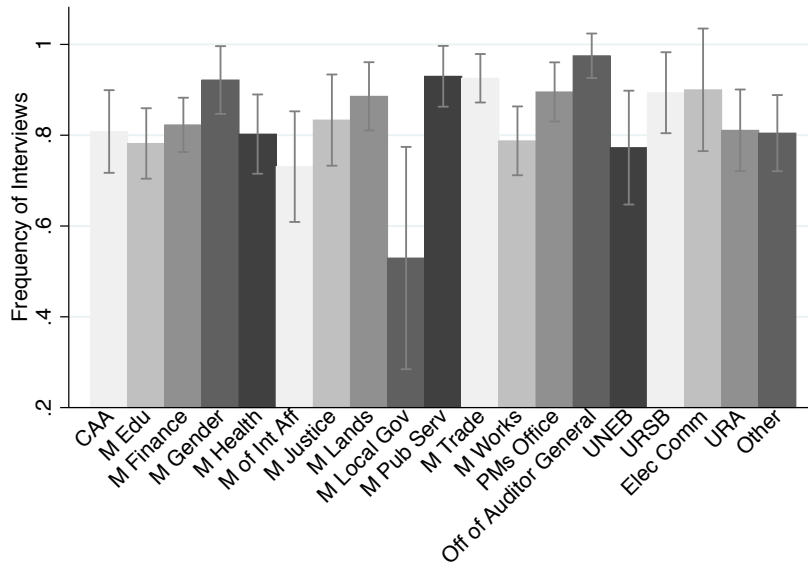
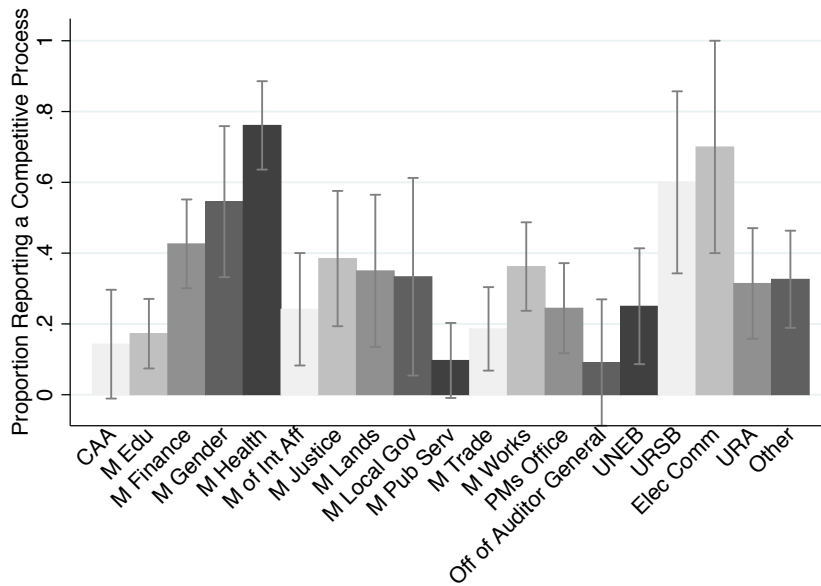


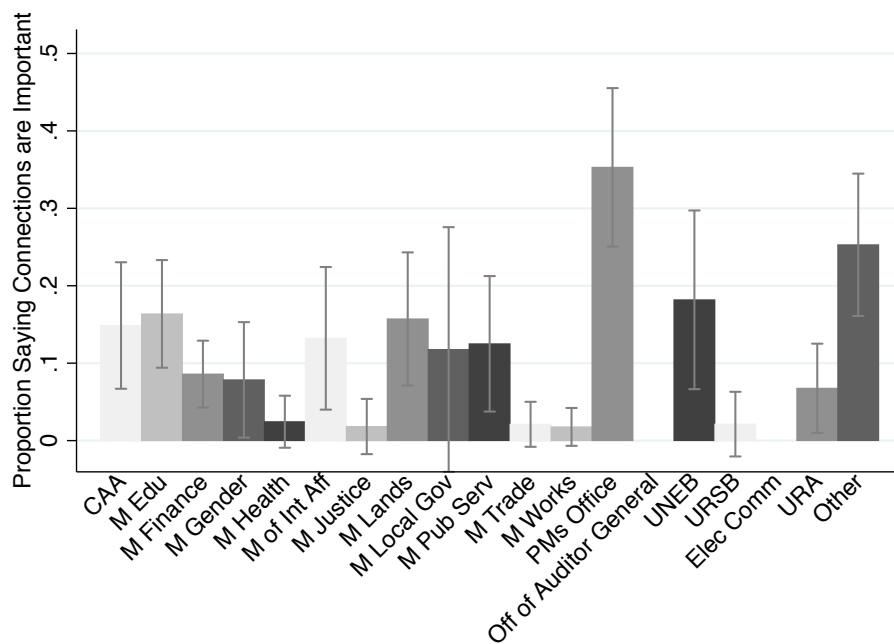
Figure 15. Did you have to go through a competitive process to obtain your current job?



III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

And finally, how important are political connections in obtaining a promotion in Uganda?⁸ Overall, only 11% needed a connection for a promotion, which is contrary to the common assumption that promotions and jobs in the public sector are given based on connections. However, the direct question used in the survey is likely subject to some degree of social desirability bias. Even considering the limitations of the question, it does suggest that connections are likely not as pervasive as we might expect. Across institutions, the OPM stands out as an institution in which connections are important for promotion (figure 16). As expected, given the above data regarding promotion, connections are virtually unimportant for promotion in the Ministry of Health and the Electoral Commission.

Figure 16. The importance of connections in order to get a promotion



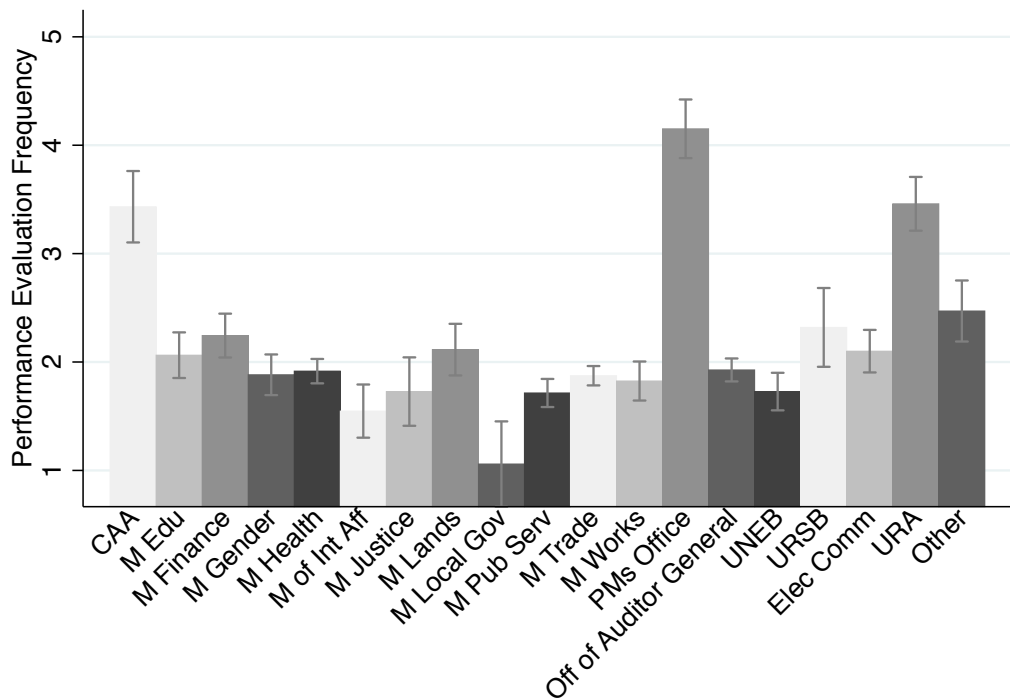
⁸ The question was worded as follows: Thinking about your future career in the public sector, in your opinion, how important do you expect the following criteria to be for your advancement to a better position? Support from a politician or someone with political links.

Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluations are also important for developing an effective and motivated civil service. More frequent performance evaluations that accurately evaluate performance and have professional consequences (for promotion or dismissal) are more likely to encourage better performance in the public service.

Legally, civil servants are to undergo a performance evaluation once a year. Overall, on average public servants report being evaluated 2.25 times in the past two years, which suggests that most public servants are evaluated about once a year in line with legal requirements. However, some institutions conduct evaluations at much less frequent intervals. While the OPM, CAA, and URA conduct more than three evaluations over the past two years, the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Local Government (and a number of others) performed less than two evaluations (figure 17).

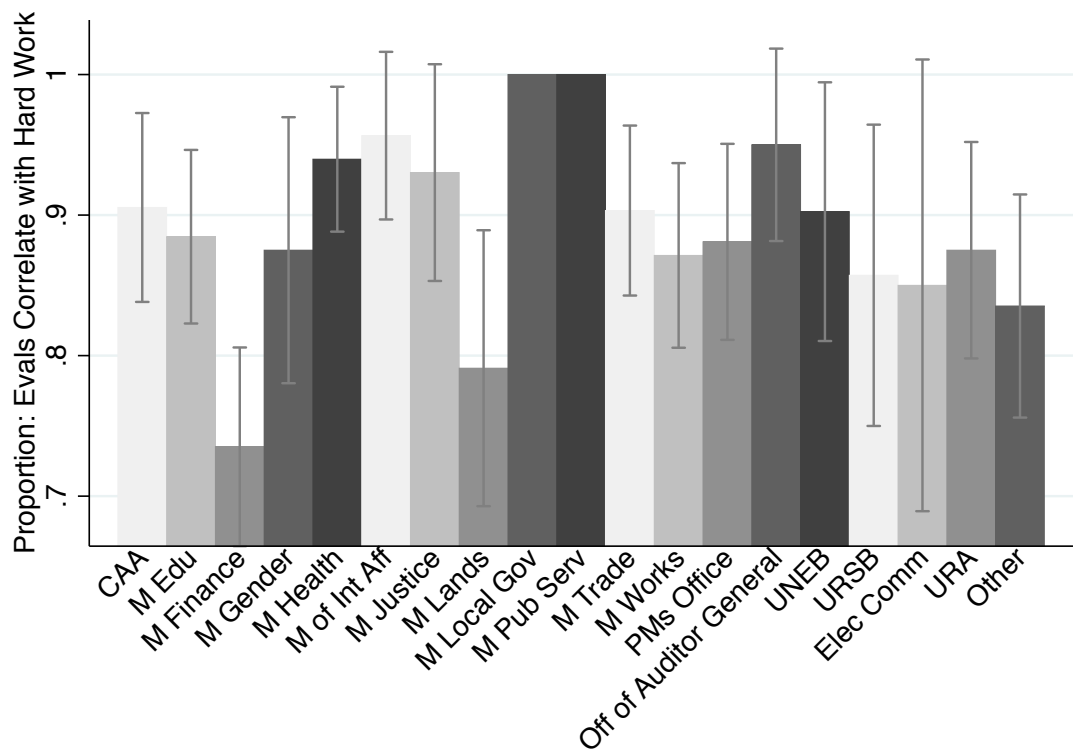
Figure 17. Frequency of Performance Evaluations in the Last Two Years



III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Performance evaluations are only likely to improve performance if they accurately reflect performance. Therefore, we investigate the degree to which public servant perceive that working harder will lead to better evaluations. Overall, public servants do believe that hard work leads to a better evaluation with 88% reporting that this is the case. The variation across institutions is slight with at least 70% of respondents from all institutions reporting that hard work is correlated with better performance evaluations (figure 18).

Figure 18. Does Working Hard Lead to Better Evaluations?



Do these evaluations have professional consequences? To answer this question, we investigate the degrees to which good and bad performance evaluations lead to promotion and dismissal, respectively. The relationship between evaluation and outcome is not particularly strong. Overall only 54% say that poor evaluations lead to dismissal and only 47% say that good evaluations lead to promotion. In both instances, the variation across institutions is stark (Figures 19 and 20). Importantly,

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

the connection between a poor performance evaluation and dismissal ranges from 80% to 20% of an institution’s respondents seeing this connection. The comparative range for the link between good evaluations and promotion is 10% to 100%. Therefore, while performance evaluations are quite common and seem to accurately evaluate performance, they do not seem to play a key role in the job stability or career advancement of many public servants.

Figure 19. Do Poor Evaluations Lead to Dismissals?

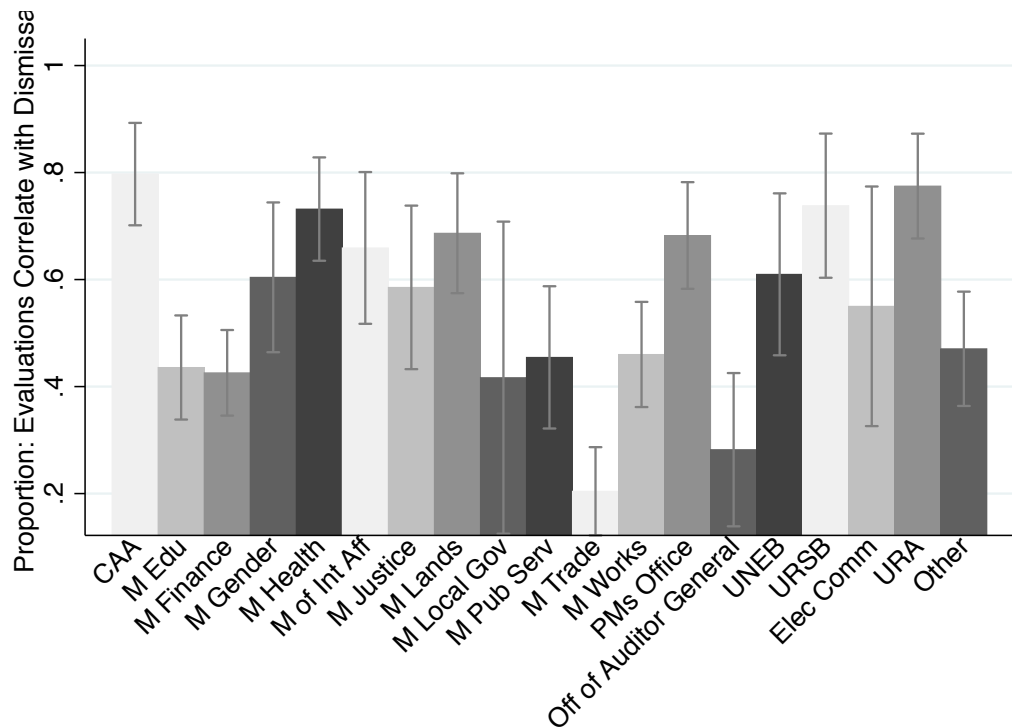
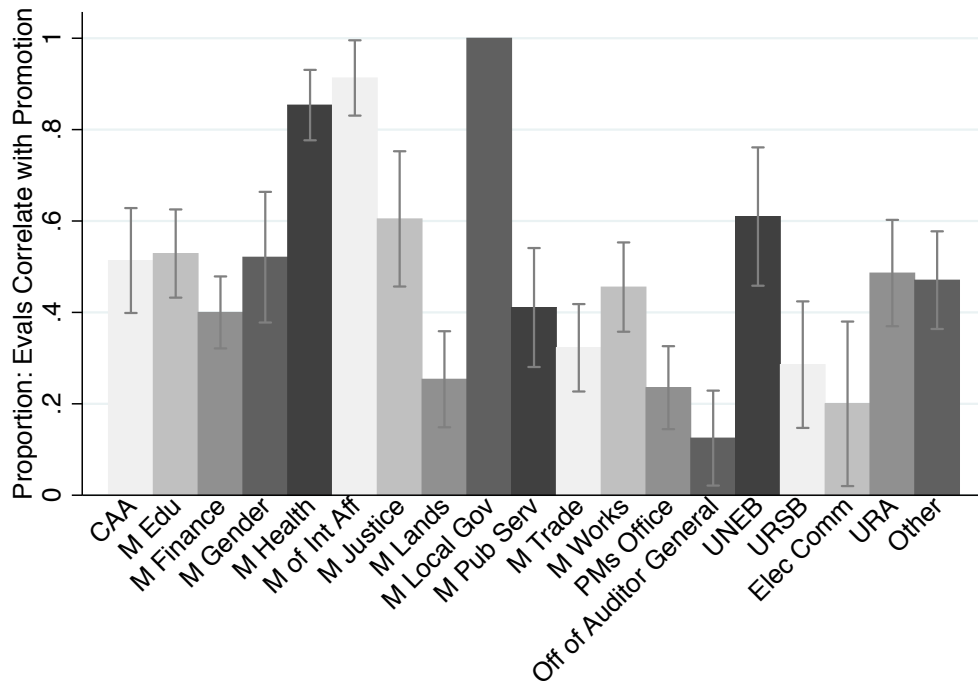


Figure 20. Do Good Evaluations Lead to Promotion?



Salary management

Overall, the average level of agreement with the statement that one’s salary is sufficient to support the person’s family is “somewhat disagree” (1.08 on the 0-4 scale; 0 is strongly disagree and 4 is strongly agree). Therefore, the vast majority of public servants in Uganda do not feel their salary is sufficient to support their standard of living. There is not a great deal of variation across institutions as no institution, on average, ever? believes that their salaries are sufficient (all institutions are at or below 2, which is “neither agree nor disagree” that their salary is sufficient; see figure 21).

On average, public servants see no relationship between their performance and their salary. The average score of 0.73 on the 0 to 4 scale indicates that public servants, at most, somewhat disagree that their performance influences their salary. There is little variation across institutions (figure 22).

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Figure 21. Is Your Salary Sufficient?

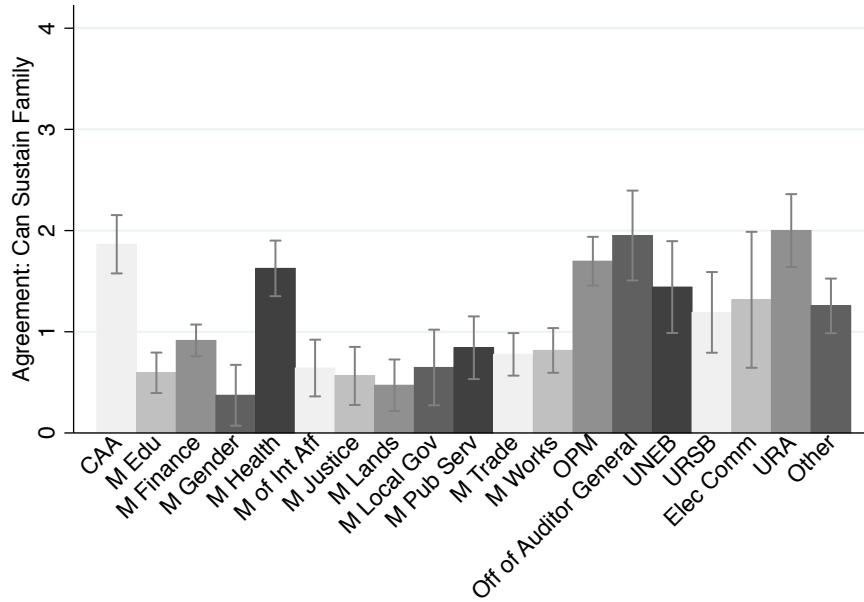
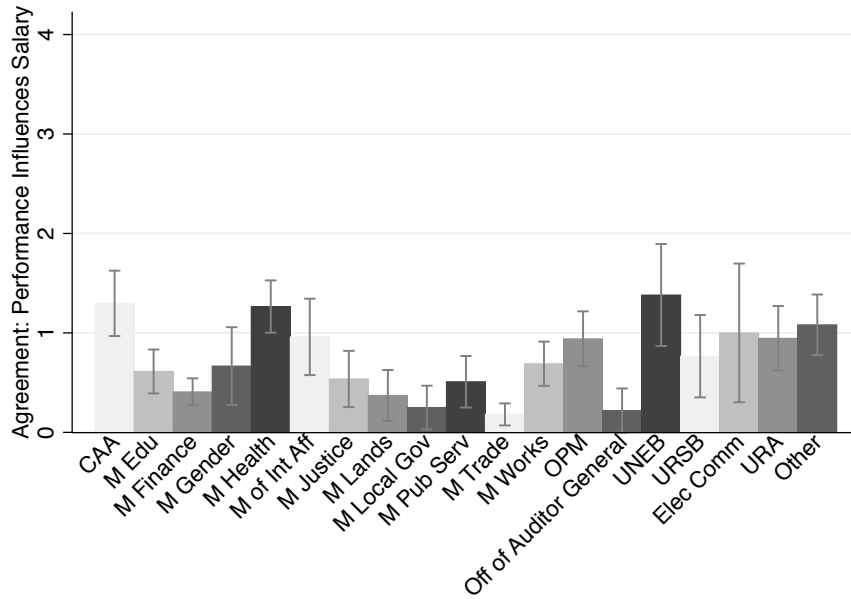


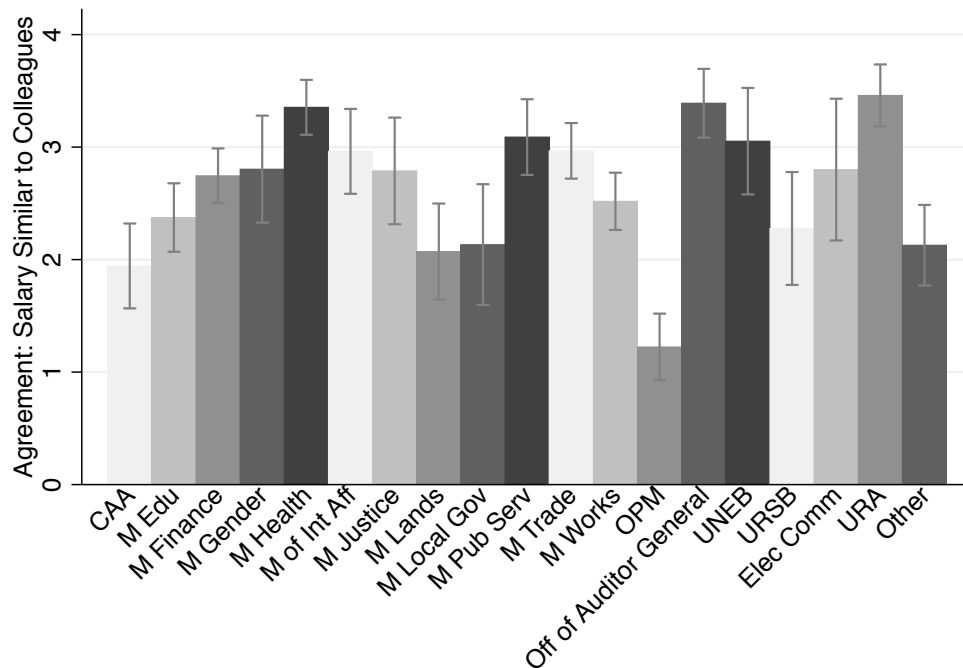
Figure 22. The Perceived Relation between Performance and Salary



III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

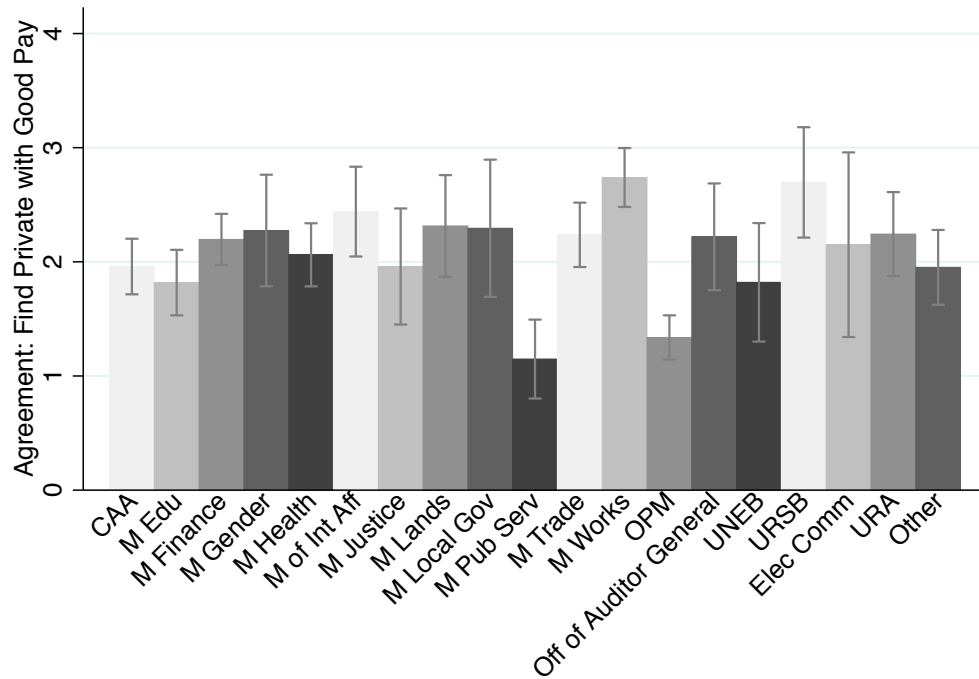
While salaries are not necessarily influenced by performance, most (albeit far from all) public servants do view their salaries as similar to their colleagues – and thus equitable. The average score of 2.6 indicates that public servants tend to agree somewhat (3 on the scale) that they are paid at least as well as colleagues with similar responsibilities. However, the variation is stark across institutions ranging from nearly 1 (somewhat disagree) to over 3 (between somewhat and strongly agree) (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Perceptions of Salary Equity



It seems that civil servants in Uganda are not likely to find well-paid jobs outside the public sector. An overall average score of 2.1 indicates that public servants are, at best, unsure (“neither agree nor disagree”) whether or not they can find a well-paid job outside the public service, which suggests that public sector salaries are quite competitive. There is a fair amount of variation across institutions with the employees of the Ministry of Public Service being the least and those in the Ministries of Works and the URSB being the most likely to find good paying jobs outside the public sector (figure 24).

Figure 24. Perceived Ability to Find a Good Paying Job Outside the Public Sector

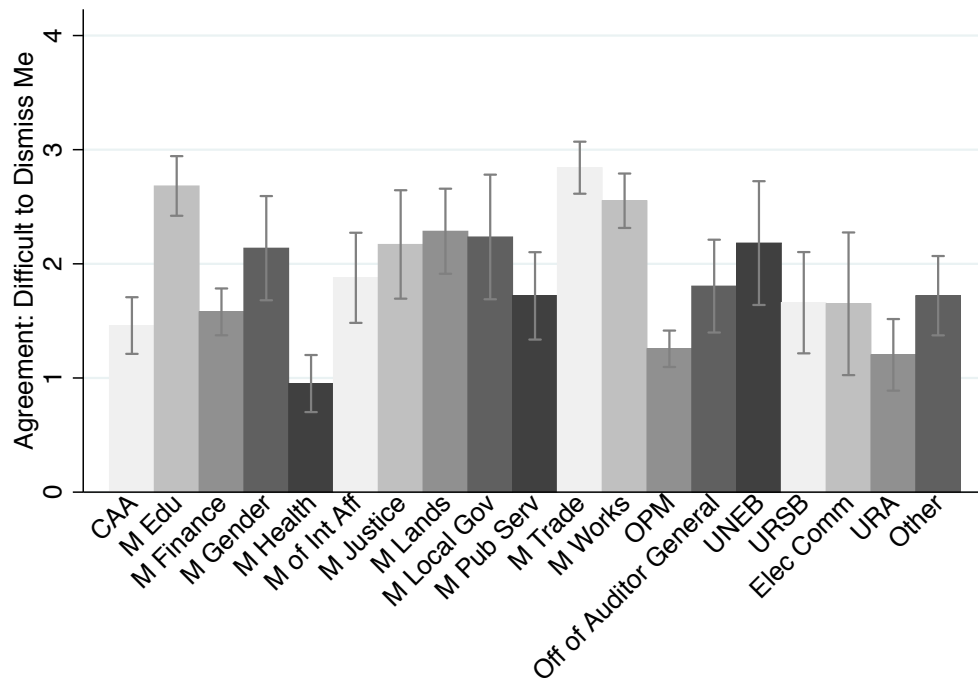


Job stability management

The survey reveals that Ugandan civil servants feel quite insecure in their jobs. With an average score of 1.9, civil servants somewhat disagree (2 on the scale) that it would be difficult to dismiss them from their position. Therefore, the average civil servant is likely worried that they could be easily dismissed. Across institutions, Civil servants in the Ministries of Trade, Works, and Education feel relative secure, while those in the Ministry of Health, the OPM, and the URA feel relatively insecure (figure 25).

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Figure 25. Perceptions that Civil Servants are Easily Dismissed from Their Positions



Interestingly enough, the average civil servant does not feel they will be dismissed either due to poor performance or for political reasons. The average scores of 2.2 and 1.6 suggest that, civil servants somewhat disagree that they will be dismissed for poor performance or for political reasons, respectively. However, there is key differences across institutions: employees in the Ministry of Gender and the URA are more likely to believe they can be dismissed because of poor performance, while the Ministry of Trade and the Office of the Auditor General are relatively unlikely to believe this (figure 26). In contrast, civil servants in the Ministry of Local Government and the OPM are more likely to believe that politics will lead to their dismissal, while those in the Office of the Auditor General and the Ministry of Public Service do not perceive politics to influence motives for dismissal (figure 27).

III. Civil service management practices in Uganda in comparative perspective

Figure 26. Dismissal Based on Poor Performance

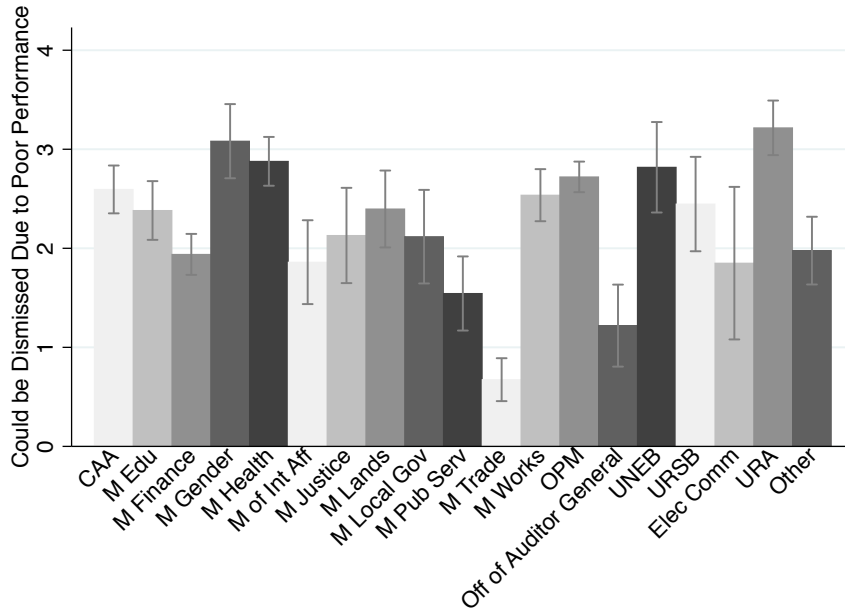
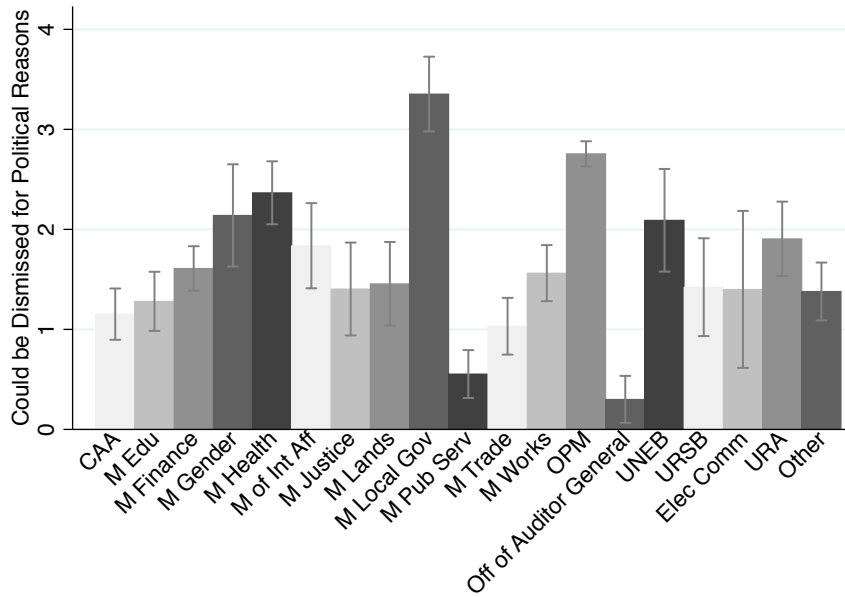


Figure 27. Dismissal Based on Political Motives



IV. How do civil service management practices affect the core attitudes and behaviors of public servants?

In order to determine the degree to which the above discussed civil service management practices influence civil servant attitudes and behaviors, we estimate multivariate regression analysis. Specifically, we use the above management practices: hiring (2 indicators), promotion (3 indicators), salary (4), performance evaluations (4), and job security (3)) to predict public service motivation, work motivation, job satisfaction, performance (self-assessed), and desire to stay in the public service. In our regression models, we include all of these practices (in order to control for the effects of the each when estimating the effect of each) as well as key control variables. The control variables include gender, age, education, contract type, salary, type of position (three dummy variables: administrative, political appointee, and technical with manager being the reference category), frequency of contact with citizens, and years in the public service. The models estimate robust standard errors. Table 1 below reports the results from the (all models are OLS except in the case of willingness to stay in the public service, for which we estimate a logit regression). The complete regression results are reported in Appendix A.

Effects of recruitment practices

The regression results illustrate that exams have a positive effect on public service motivation and interviews have a positive effect on work motivation; however hiring practices have no significant effect on the other outcomes.

Effects of promotion practices

Interestingly, the use of connections to gain a promotion have a negative effect on job satisfaction, but otherwise promotion practices have no effect on attitudes and behaviors.

IV. How do civil service management practices affect the core attitudes and behaviors of public servants?

Effects of salary management practices

We find that when civil servants perceive their salaries to be similar to their colleagues they have higher levels of public service and work motivation, job satisfaction, and willingness to stay in the public service (the only outcome not affected by colleague salary is self-assessed performance). A sufficient salary and a stronger correlation between salary and performance increase job satisfaction. And a sufficient salary increases one's willingness to stay in the public sector. The ability to find private employment with a good salary reduces work motivation, self-assessed performance, and willingness to stay in the public sector. Interestingly, when one's salary is sufficient for their needs, work motivation and self-assessed performance are lower. It seems that in Uganda, similar salaries across colleagues and the presence of outside employment options are important predictors of civil servant motivation and performance.

Effects of performance evaluation practices

More frequent evaluations have a negative effect on public service, work motivation, and job satisfaction but a positive effect on willingness to stay in the public sector. When evaluations are perceived to be based on job performance, they increase public service and work motivation and performance. When evaluations lead to dismissal, they have a positive effect on performance. And finally, when evaluations lead to promotion, they increase public service and work motivation and job satisfaction. These results suggest that effective evaluations are not too frequent, are correlated with performance and have professional consequences. While the latter two aspects are expected, the frequency of evaluations seems to be extremely important such that too frequent evaluations may undo any positive effects of performing evaluations.

IV. How do civil service management practices affect the core attitudes and behaviors of public servants?

Table 1. The Effects of Civil Service Management on Core Attitudes and Behaviors (summary of regression results)⁹

	Public Service Motivation	Work Motivation	Job Satisfaction	Performance	Stay in Public Sector
Hired through Exam	+	+	-	+	+
Hired through Interview	-	-	+	+	+
Promotion Exam	+	+	+	-	+
Promotion Interview	+	-	-	-	+
Promotion Connections	-	+	-	-	-
Salary Sufficient	-	-	+	-	+
Salary Performance	-	+	+	-	-
Salary Equity	+	+	+	-	+
Could find private sector job w/good Pay	-	-	-	-	-
Evaluation Frequency	-	-	-	+	+
Evaluation Corr w/Performance	-	+	-	+	+
Evaluations → Dismissal	-	-	+	+	-
Evaluations → Promotion	+	+	+	+	-
Ease of Dismissal	+	-	+	+	-
Dismissal Corr w/Performance	+	-	+	-	+
Political Dismissal	-	-	-	-	-

⁹ Red and green-coloured effects are statistically significant. The remaining effects are not statistically significant.

IV. How do civil service management practices affect the core attitudes and behaviors of public servants?

Effects of job stability

When civil servants believe that dismissals are easier their work motivation and performance are negatively affected. Likewise, when they fear political dismissals, their work motivation, job satisfaction, and performance suffer and their willingness to stay in the public sector is reduced. Interestingly, the degree to which dismissals are correlated with performance does not have a significant effect on any of the outcomes of interest.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

This report has presented a unique picture of the public service in Uganda by surveying public servants in order to better understand how they are managed and how such management influences attitudes and (reported) behaviors. As discussed above, we see a number of core lessons from this analysis.

First, understanding realities at the institutional-level matters for civil service reform. Institutions vary in the degree to which they implement performance evaluations and the ways in which they recruit and promote employees. With regards to performance evaluations, some institutions clearly fail to implement that legally mandated yearly evaluations. However, it is unclear whether this failure results in positive or negative outcomes. From our regression analysis, more frequent evaluations seem to actually reduce public service motivation, work motivation, and job satisfaction. Further investigation into the effects of performance evaluations is warranted: how many evaluations is too many? Is once a year ideal? What are the consequences (both positive and negative) of yearly evaluations?

Variation in recruitment across institutions is less clearly a failure to follow legal mandates: institutions are given the freedom to determine what types of evaluations potential employees must pass. Our regression results suggest that the use of exams and interviews in hiring (and promotion) have limited and inconsistent effects on core civil servant attitudes and behaviors. The effects of exams/interviews (and the various types; looking into content of these tools is also important) on Uganda's civil service and effects of variation across institutions is a key area for further investigation.

These findings illustrate the need to tailor any bureaucratic reforms to specific institutional contexts. A single uniform reform that does not account for institutional variation (in terms of recruitment, performance evaluations, and other aspects) will likely be less effective than one that accounts for this variation.

Second, while public servants are motivated to serve the public and have a desire to remain in the public sector, they are not motivated to work hard. This potentially paints a grim picture of well-meaning civil servants who are negatively impacted by the job they must perform. Further research is needed to understand why civil servants are both willing to remain in the civil service and motivated to serve the public and yet not motivated to work hard.

Third, the report has uncovered ways to increase work motivation and job satisfaction. Several civil service management practices are systematically associated with greater work motivation and job satisfaction in the public sector – evidence-based reform designs would do well to focus on them. Hiring public servants through formal selection procedures (written exams and interviews); safeguarding promotion and dismissal decisions from political interference; ensuring that public servants perceive a link between performance evaluation results and their career prospects; and paying public servants with private sector job options competitive salaries are all management practices which are statistically associated with greater work motivation or job satisfaction of public servants. An evidence-based civil service reform program in Uganda would do well to take these findings as a starting point for reform designs.

Appendix

Appendix A: Regression Tables

Table A1: Effects of Public Service Management on Public Service Motivation and Work Motivation

	Public Service Motivation	Work Motivation
Hire Exam	0.087** (0.035)	0.031 (0.058)
Hire Interview	-0.025 (0.049)	0.178** (0.074)
Promotion Exam	0.013 (0.026)	0.043 (0.052)
Pormotion Interview	0.009 (0.049)	-0.104 (0.065)
Promotion Connections	-0.056 (0.057)	0.003 (0.076)
Salary Sufficient	-0.005 (0.015)	-0.091*** (0.021)
Salary Performance	-0.005 (0.014)	0.011 (0.021)
Salary Similar	0.019** (0.009)	0.036** (0.014)
Private with Good Pay	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.034** (0.014)
Evaluation Frequency	-0.050** (0.020)	-0.091*** (0.024)
Evaluation Corr w/Performance	0.125*** (0.043)	0.114* (0.068)
Evaluations → Dismissal	-0.020 (0.024)	-0.008 (0.046)
Evaluations → Promotion	0.088*** (0.030)	0.166*** (0.047)
Ease of Dismissal	0.015 (0.009)	-0.048*** (0.015)
Dismissal Corr w/Performance	0.007 (0.012)	-0.025 (0.016)
Political Dismissal	-0.001 (0.010)	-0.059*** (0.015)
Constant	2.959*** (0.196)	2.918*** (0.257)
R^2	0.40	0.27
N	1018	1037

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Table A2: Effects of Public Service Management on Public Service Motivation and Work Motivation (control variables)

	Public Service Motivation	Work Motivation
Female	-0.012 (0.025)	-0.027 (0.044)
Age	0.003 (0.003)	-0.006 (0.005)
Bachelor's Degree	0.071 (0.050)	-0.110* (0.066)
Permanent Contract	-0.051 (0.043)	0.046 (0.068)
Salary	-0.047* (0.028)	0.087** (0.035)
Administrative	-0.138*** (0.045)	-0.085 (0.070)
Political Appointee	-0.274*** (0.070)	-0.064 (0.120)
Technical	-0.059 (0.040)	-0.142** (0.066)
Citizen Contact	0.154*** (0.046)	0.097 (0.074)
Years in Public Service	0.004 (0.003)	0.014*** (0.005)

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Table A3: Effects of Public Service Management on Job Satisfaction and Performance

	Job Satisfaction	Performance
Hire Exam	-0.151 (0.103)	0.059 (0.058)
Hire Interview	0.220 (0.161)	0.073 (0.077)
Promotion Exam	0.110 (0.092)	-0.016 (0.050)
Pormotion Interview	-0.077 (0.134)	-0.041 (0.058)
Promotion Connections	-0.313** (0.134)	-0.066 (0.059)
Salary Sufficient	0.210*** (0.033)	-0.073*** (0.020)
Salary Performance	0.099*** (0.037)	-0.022 (0.018)
Salary Similar	0.107*** (0.028)	-0.003 (0.011)
Private with Good Pay	-0.003 (0.025)	-0.021* (0.011)
Evaluation Frequency	-0.103** (0.042)	0.004 (0.022)
Evaluation Corr w/Performance	-0.049 (0.112)	0.141** (0.065)
Evaluations → Dismissal	0.002 (0.085)	0.078* (0.043)
Evaluations → Promotion	0.236*** (0.091)	0.044 (0.041)
Ease of Dismissal	0.028 (0.030)	-0.026* (0.014)
Dismissal Corr w/Performance	0.020 (0.032)	-0.021 (0.014)
Political Dismissal	-0.098*** (0.028)	-0.046*** (0.014)
Constant	2.157*** (0.444)	3.528*** (0.251)
R^2	0.29	0.18
N	1045	1048

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Table A4 Effects of Public Service Management on Job Satisfaction and Performance (control variables)

	Job Satisfaction	Performance
Female	-0.038 (0.077)	0.009 (0.039)
Age	-0.002 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.004)
Bachelor's Degree	-0.055 (0.133)	0.032 (0.059)
Permanent Contract	0.102 (0.105)	0.042 (0.071)
Salary	0.137** (0.065)	0.076** (0.035)
Administrative	-0.083 (0.131)	-0.037 (0.054)
Political Appointee	2.279*** (0.271)	-0.060 (0.104)
Technical	-0.085 (0.123)	-0.148*** (0.049)
Citizen Contact	-0.205* (0.110)	0.283*** (0.072)
Years in Public Service	0.010 (0.011)	0.009* (0.004)

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Table A5: Effects of Public Service Management on Willingness to Stay in the Public Sector

	Stay in Public Sector
Hire Exam	0.226 (0.200)
Hire Interview	0.174 (0.288)
Promotion Exam	0.028 (0.183)
Pormotion Interview	0.326 (0.226)
Promotion Connections	-0.231 (0.264)
Salary Sufficient	0.310*** (0.076)
Salary Performance	-0.022 (0.071)
Salary Similar	0.103** (0.051)
Private with Good Pay	-0.185*** (0.052)
Evaluation Frequency	0.396*** (0.091)
Evaluation Corr w/Performance	0.077 (0.249)
Evaluations → Dismissal	-0.076 (0.166)
Evaluations → Promotion	-0.179 (0.179)
Ease of Dismissal	-0.006 (0.055)
Dismissal Corr w/Performance	0.025 (0.059)
Political Dismissal	-0.123** (0.052)
N	1016

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Table A6: Effects of Public Service Management on Willingness to Stay in the Public Sector (control variables)

	Stay in Public Sector
Female	0.209 (0.155)
Age	0.022 (0.017)
Bachelor's Degree	-0.007 (0.247)
Permanent Contract	-0.198 (0.235)
Salary	-0.035 (0.123)
Administrative	0.208 (0.275)
o.Political Appointee	0.000 (.)
Technical	0.101 (0.243)
Citizen Contact	-0.618*** (0.233)
Years in Public Service	-0.020 (0.018)
Constant	-2.160** (0.900)

Significance levels: *: 10% **: 5% ***: 1%

Bibliography

Brown et al. (2015) Employee Trust and workplace performance. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*. Vol. 116, p. 361-378

Cantarelli, Paola, Belardinelli, Paolo and Nicola Belle (2016) A Meta-Analysis of Job Satisfaction Correlates in the Public Administration Literature. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, Vol. 36(2), p. 115-144

Kim, Sangmook et al. (2013) Investigating the Structure and Meaning of Public Service Motivation across Populations: Developing an International Instrument and Addressing Issues of Measurement Invariance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Vol.23(1), p. 79-102.

Schultz, David and Khachick Harutyunyan (2015) Combating Corruption: The Development of Whistleblowing Laws in the United States, Europe and Armenia. *International Comparative Jurisprudence*, Vol. 1(2), p. 87-97

Ritz, Adrian et al. (2016) Public Service Motivation: A Systematic Literature Review and Outlook. *Public Administration Review*, early view online

Wright, Bradley (2001) Public Sector Work Motivation: A Review of the Literature and a Revised Conceptual Model. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Vol. 11(4), p. 559-586.