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## Innovating Public Administration through the Behavioral Influence of Psychological Insights

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study explores the integration of psychological insights into public administration to enhance understanding of human behavior and improve administrative practices. The focus is on examining how transparency and bureaucratic representation influence public trust and organizational performance.**Method:** A quantitative survey with purposive sampling collected data from Indonesian government employees and the public, analyzed using regression and ANOVA.**Findings:** The results reveal significant effects of transparency and bureaucratic representation on public trust. Specifically, higher levels of transparency and diverse bureaucratic representation positively impact public trust in government institutions. Demographic factors such as gender, age, and employment status also showed significant differences in public trust levels.**Novelty:** This study provides new insights into the application of psychological theories, such as cognitive biases and public service motivation, to public administration. It highlights the practical implications of integrating psychological insights to address the gap between theory and practice in administrative contexts.**Implications:** The findings suggest that incorporating psychological perspectives can improve policy and public administration practices. By addressing cognitive biases and enhancing bureaucratic diversity, policymakers can foster greater public trust and improve organizational performance.

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### 1. Introduction

Public administration and psychology intersection becomes more relevant recently, especially in Indonesia governance landscape (Abdurrahim et al. 2023). The ever-more dynamic character of administrative processes, alongside increasingly prevalent calls for transparency and accountability, have stoked demand in the need to further understand the psychological layers underlying public sector behavior (Rana and Hoque 2020). The Government of Indonesia is implementing various reform programs aimed at improving delivery, ensuring freedom from corruption and promoting public confidence (Setiyono and McLeod 2010). But the success of these initiatives is largely contingent on public servants and, even more so citizens. Recent studies have suggested that psychological factors such as cognitive biases, motivation and social identity are crucial in the implementation process (Barrutia 2021). One good case is the application of behavioral insights, which plays an important role in understanding how public servants respond to pressure and on changing citizens

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perceptions or reactions against government actions (Al-Hujran et al. 2015). In its endeavour to modernize public administration further, Indonesia increasingly need bureaucratic strategies that take into account psychological insights in order to truly match policy objectives with human hearts and minds (Alaerts 2020; Mcleod 2005; Setiyono and McLeod 2010).

While the benefits of integrating psychological knowledge in public administration are clear, such interdisciplinary engagement has been under-realized throughout Indonesia (Steger et al. 2021). Subsequently explained above, public administration scholars and practitioners have concentrated largely on organizational structures, legalistic frameworks, policy analysis leaving behind what role human behavior in shaping administrative outcomes plays (Durant and Rosenbloom 2016). The gap is especially clear in the usage of experimental methods and psychological theories, which rather have been used scarcely in public administration research within its country (Fletcher et al. 2020). Moreover, the typical command-and-control culture in Indonesia that delegitimizes nudge-style approaches also prevents many behaviorally informed practices from being widely adopted. The resistance to change, lack of awareness and scarcity in local behavioral science expertise are the top three barriers which prevent psychology fully integrated into public administration (Rickards, Wiseman, and Kashima 2014). In addition to these shortfalls, the opportunities for interdisciplinary training are limited and there is also trapped body literature which join between public and psychology administration in Indonesia (Adisaputri and Ungar 2023). Therefore, too many public policies do not take into account how psychology works in reality and manage only to achieve less favorable results while though wasting the potential for more governance (Battaglio Jr. et al. 2019).

The theoretical base of public administration drawing from the field of psychology is related to a well-known idea in organizational behavior known as bounded rationality, which was pioneered by Simon (1947). Bounded Rationality is opposed to the concept of Homo Economics emphasizing how limited cognitive rationalities and available information determine human judgement as well as decisions. Within the field of public administration, bounded rationality refers to how did into thinking that decision makers in government and citizens make decisions based on limited information with cognitive biases instead of as completely rational beings (Simon 1947). A behavioral theory of organization While not directly related to racism, this certain theoretical lens explains how psychological components influence administrative behavior and policy outcomes. It also highlights the need for policy and administrative designs to adhere to these constraints so as to enhance both, the efficiency, and effectiveness of public governance (Waldo 1965).

It is suggested here that the need to incorporate psychological knowledge into public administration in Indonesia becomes even stronger considering past reform failures yielded only so-so results. On the one hand, some cases of behaviorally informed interventions that have led to large gains in public service delivery. A study by Kurniawan as example. In 2019, Abduh (2019) also showed that nudging approach based on behavioral economics could improve self-assessment tax compliance rate of small business owners in Jakarta (Youde and Lim 2019). This intervention, in turn likely through the use of social norms and peer comparisons increased voluntary tax payments by 15%. In a same vein, another study conducted Wahyuhadi (2023) evidenced that the motivational psychology bases of performance-based incentives led to increased productivity levels yet not significant on job satisfaction among Surabaya civil servants. These examples not only show what behavioural public administration could do for remedying long-standing governance issues in Indonesia.

Yet the innovation in this approach is its systematic use across different tiers of government and policy fields. We have many of the success stores here already but we are still missing holistic implementations schemes based on psychological knowledge into all fields under public administration as well. In addition,

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other studies came out with diverging results which brings light to the complexities and context-specific nature of behavioral interventions. For example, Rahardjo et al. Similarly, Ferry De Bakker and Gebreselassie (2021) found that a nudges-inspired intervention did not reduce household waste levels in the rural district of Meket due to regional cultural factors as well as social dynamics playing a larger part than presumed. That there was no effect of the intervention in rural settings which is at odds with urban results suggests that behavioral interventions must be refined to match individual knowledge and preferences. These disparities in research outcomes reflect the necessity for more holistic approach to how psychological variables combine with institutional, cultural and environmental dimensions of public administration. Although some studies show that behavioral interventions can increase policy effects, equally deserving attention are the key limitations and perverse implications of these strategies. For example, a study conducted by Sari and Putri (2022) has shown that performance-based incentives can increase stress levels among employees in government organizations leading to high burnout rates consequently targeting job dissatisfaction. This result implies not only that the use of such interventions may lead to short-term gains, but also that they potentially revert back in the longer run when left unattended. Hence, what makes this study unique is not merely the application of psychological insights to public administration but developing a more nuanced understanding about when and how such insights can be used at their optimum.

Based on this background, the first concern of our research is to examine and advance behavioral public administration–industry by taking into account its needs toward integration with psychological theories as well as approachment in studying-and practicing-public-sector-management-in Indonesia. It's through this vantage point–the relationship between individual behavior, organizational dynamics and policy outcomes that my research will be able to offer practical insights for making public governance as effective/ efficient/ legitimating of the diverse populations we are trying to serve. However, to the extent of our knowledge, no study has previously explored this for public administration in Indonesia and as such should contribute significantly towards broader debates about interdisciplinary approaches within public administration with a model grounded on psychological research systematically being integrated into administrative practices and policy designs.

## 2. Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development

### 2.1 Introduction

In this vein, the integration of psychological understandings into public administration has been rising in popularity and leading to "behavioral public administrations." The psychological underpinnings of administrative process are one target in this approach (PWSIA). The present chapter lays out the theoretical underpinnings of this integration and articulates some key hypotheses that shape our inquiry.

### 2.2 The Intersection of Public Administration and Psychology

Public administration is grounded in the rational choice tradition, which has often sidelined human behavior premised on qualitative research. In fact, some of the early scholarship by people like Herbert Simon and Dwight Waldo mentioned earlier were focused on demonstrating how inadequate a model rationality was for explaining human behavior in administrative contexts. According to Simon's idea of bounded rationality, when faced with making decisions people experience limitations in their cognitive capabilities, which leads public administrators to frequently use the so-called satisficing strategies instead (Simon 1947). This idea is consistent with psychological principles, which suggest that attending to emotions and social-contextual details can influence cognitive outcomes in administrative decision making.

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### 2.3 Behavioral Insights from Neighboring Disciplines

Political psychology and behavioral economics seamlessly deconstructed human action in the paradigms of political science and economics by borrowing insights from psychological theory. Political psychology, for example, explain individual political behavior by incorporating cognitive and social psychological theory to study how beliefs, emotions and motivations impact the decision making in politics (Lau & Redlawsk 2006). Led by figures like Daniel Kahneman, behavioral economics documented the cognitive biases and decision-making constraints that differed from conventional economic models (Kahneman & Tversky 1979). These areas of research illustrate the utility in adding psychological insight to theoretical models and empirical investigations.

### 2.4 Implications for Public Administration

Integrating psychology into public administration can bring several answers to different phenomena, such as public service motivation or leadership and organizational behavior. Understand the interaction between behaviour by individuals and administrative processes will aid researchers and practitioners in improving governance structures to make better collective decisions. This necessitates moving towards a pluralistic framework that engages multiple theoretical and empirical traditions, as has been the case for political psychology.

### 2.5 Hypothesis Development

Based on the theoretical foundations outlined above, we propose the following hypotheses to guide our research:

*H1a: Research articles that integrate psychological theories will yield more comprehensive insights into public administration phenomena compared to those that do not.*

*H1b: The application of psychological theories will lead to the identification of novel factors influencing public administration processes, such as decision-making, motivation, and leadership.*

*H2: Higher levels of intrinsic motivation, as informed by psychological theories, will correlate positively with public service motivation among public administrators.*

The underlying hypothesis of our study is anchored on existing literature which indeed suggests that intrinsic motivations are crucial for shaping public sector performance (Perry & Wise, 1990). We hope to identify further factors that could be influencing public service motivation, by incorporating psychological theories.

*H3: The effectiveness of leadership in public administration will be mediated by psychological factors, such as emotional intelligence and cognitive biases.*

In other words, the Theory Z opposing hypothesis is that leaders with higher emotional intelligence and cognitive distortions are more apt in driving positive organizational outputs (Sayegh, 2004). Exploring these psychological dimensions can help deepen what we know about leadership dynamics in public administration. The expansion of the integration with psychology in public administration research promises to enhance theoretical and empirical understanding about administrative processes. When we take lessons from both psychology and public administration, our understanding of how people behave in governance becomes more textured. This chapter proposes a set of hypotheses (Table 2) that will provide guidance in our inquiry to

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empirically learn the virtues from this interdisciplinary work, leading ultimately to an evidence-based platform for sustainable evolution of behavioral public administration as its own field.

### 3. Sample and research design

#### 3.1 Desain Penelitian

Qualitative Comparative Design was employed to investigate the impact of government transparency and bureaucratic representation on public trust and organizational performance through survey (Harrison and Sayogo 2014). We chose this method to be able to create generalizable data from a larger population and go into the detail of statistical analysis (Polit and Beck 2010).

#### 3.2 Sampel dan Teknik Pengambilan Sampel

This study obtained a purposive sampling sample of the target population, Indonesian government employees and general public from several provinces on Indonesia (Napitupulu et al. 2017). The data were gathered in a survey designed to measure perceived transparency, bureaucratic responsiveness and its influence on public trust. This can easily be seen in the sample table below, which shows relevant demographic characteristics of participants disaggregated by region from 2019 – 2023:

**Table 1.** Respondent Demographics by Region

No.	Region	Number of Respondents	Gender Distribution	Age Distribution	Education Level	Employment Status
1	Jakarta	100	Male: 50, Female: 50	20-30: 30, 31-40: 40, >40: 30	Bachelor's: 60, Master's: 30, Doctorate: 10	Civil Servant: 50, Private Sector: 50
2	Surabaya	80	Male: 40, Female: 40	20-30: 25, 31-40: 35, >40: 20	Bachelor's: 50, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 10	Civil Servant: 40, Private Sector: 40
3	Bandung	90	Male: 45, Female: 45	20-30: 35, 31-40: 40, >40: 15	Bachelor's: 55, Master's: 25, Doctorate: 10	Civil Servant: 45, Private Sector: 45
4	Medan	70	Male: 35, Female: 35	20-30: 20, 31-40: 30, >40: 20	Bachelor's: 40, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 10	Civil Servant: 35, Private Sector: 35
5	Makassar	60	Male: 30, Female: 30	20-30: 15, 31-40: 30, >40: 15	Bachelor's: 35, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 5	Civil Servant: 30, Private Sector: 30

Table 1 presents respondent demographics by region. \*\* Of 100 respondents in Jakarta (50 Male and Female each) | B. Age : 20-30thn = 30%,;31 – 40 thn= %, > Educationally, 60% were bachelors graduates; %30 masters degrees; and only %10 Postgraduates. Although the employment figure was not available during this time, 50% of Chiefs held a senior role within Civil Service and another 50%, Private Sector. In Surabaya, there were 80 respondents with as well a balanced gender distribution and an age group of between 20-30 (31%), 31-40 (44%) and over the age of forty amounting to around one fourth. Consisted of 50% Bachelor's, 25% Master's, and (oddly) only a single individual who was at the Doctorate level. Half of the working population was in either civil service or private sector. The 90 Bandung residents mostly had expenditures and incomes similar to those of the Tangerang respondents, again split by gender but otherwise at rates fairly equal across

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three age brackets: Income-group-wise their sub-\$5000 income demographic is quite high (though somewhat higher) than in @americanadian case pic.twitter.com/UdO3XU9Adg Educational qualifications: Bachelor 61%, Master 28%, Doctorate, employment::Civil Servant(50%), Private Sector (50%). Grand Medan total sample 70 sex age group female proportion (%) male ages: 20–30 (n =12) %31-40(n=13)% over %(29%) 57% Bachelor's, 29% Master's and 14 % Doctorate on Education There was a 50:50 split between Civil Servants and Private Sector employees for employment The last, was in Makassar with a sample of 60 young men and women -- equally sharing the numbers- who were all aged between period among those listed above. Educationally, 58% held a Bachelor's degree, 33% a Master's and only an additional 8% with Doctorates paralleled the employment equalization of both Civil Servants and Private Sector employees..

### 3.3 Instrumen Penelitian

The survey instrument used in this research is operationalized based on the following constructs. Humans Work Whole writes: "The survey breaks out into Government Transparency (questions which ask respondents about their perception of how open the government is with information, and whether or not this openness impacts on trust), Bureaucratic Representation (to gauge if a diverse bureaucracy influences views pertaining to performance, among other salient questions) [and] Public Trust an assessment that measures level confidence in public institutions based between transparency and representation." They each seek to provide subtler angles on the dimensions of trustworthiness, hopefully leading us into a rounder contractual scene of how these aspects mesh and consequently fuel judgements about governance competence..

### 3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The collected data will then be analysed with descriptive and inferential methods. Descriptive statistics will show key characteristics and trends, such as the average (mean), cumulative distribution and variance of our data. Multiple regression analysis will be employed to investigate the relationships of two independent variables (transparency and bureaucratic representation) with the dependent variable (public trust). The test should control for other attributes of transparency and bureaucratic representation, so it tracks the effect of differences in degree. Then, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) will be used to profile significant differences in public trust by different demographic attributes such as age, gender and education level. Through the use of these methods, our analysis will provide a general understanding on how transparency and advancement in bureaucratic representation influence public trust toward government institutions.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Sample Demographics

The study included a total of 400 respondents, distributed across five major Indonesian cities: Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Medan, and Makassar. Table 2. presents the detailed demographics of the sample population, including gender, age, education level, and employment status.

Table 2. Demographic Distribution of Respondents

City	Number of Respondents	Gender	Age (Years)	Education Level	Employment Status
Jakarta	100	Male: 50, Female: 50	20-30: 30, 31-40: 40, >40: 30	Bachelor's: 60, Master's: 30, Doctorate: 10	Government: 50, Private: 50
Surabaya	80	Male: 40, Female: 40	20-30: 25, 31-40: 35, >40: 20	Bachelor's: 50, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 10	Government: 40, Private: 40

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Bandung	90	Male: 45, Female: 45	20-30: 35, 31-40: 40, >40: 15	Bachelor's: 55, Master's: 25, Doctorate: 10	Government: 45, Private: 45
Medan	70	Male: 35, Female: 35	20-30: 20, 31-40: 30, >40: 20	Bachelor's: 40, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 10	Government: 35, Private: 35
Makassar	60	Male: 30, Female: 30	20-30: 15, 31-40: 30, >40: 15	Bachelor's: 35, Master's: 20, Doctorate: 5	Government: 30, Private: 30

The table summarizes the distribution of respondents based on gender, age, education level, and employment status across different cities in Indonesia.

#### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for the key variables, including government transparency, bureaucratic representation, and public trust, are presented in Table 3. Mean scores, standard deviations, and ranges are reported to provide an overview of the respondents' perceptions.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Government Transparency	3.85	0.72	1.5 - 5.0
Bureaucratic Representation	3.62	0.65	2.0 - 4.8
Public Trust	3.78	0.70	2.0 - 5.0

The mean scores indicate the average level of perception for each variable on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree."

#### 4.3 Inferential Statistics

Multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the impact of government transparency and bureaucratic representation on public trust. The results, as shown in Table 4, indicate significant relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.23	-	4.56	<0.01
Government Transparency	0.45	0.32	5.14	<0.01
Bureaucratic Representation	0.37	0.28	4.95	<0.01

The regression analysis shows that both government transparency and bureaucratic representation have a significant positive effect on public trust. The p-values indicate that these effects are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

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#### 4.4 Differences by Demographic Groups

ANOVA was used to explore differences in public trust based on gender, age, and employment status. The findings are summarized in Table 5. The ANOVA results reveal significant variations in public trust across different demographic groups. Gender differences show a significant effect with an F-value of 5.78 and a p-value of 0.016, indicating that public trust levels differ between males and females. Age also plays a crucial role, with an F-value of 7.12 and a p-value of 0.001, suggesting that trust in public institutions varies significantly among different age groups. Additionally, employment status impacts public trust, with an F-value of 4.56 and a p-value of 0.034, highlighting that whether individuals work in the public or private sector affects their trust levels. These findings collectively emphasize the importance of demographic factors in understanding public trust.

**Table 5.** ANOVA Results for Public Trust by Demographic Groups

Demographic Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Gender	3.24	1	3.24	5.78	0.016
Age	6.78	2	3.39	7.12	0.001
Employment Status	2.15	1	2.15	4.56	0.034

The ANOVA results for public trust across different demographic groups indicate statistically significant differences based on gender, age, and employment.

The combination of psychology with public administration could provide a richer account for how humans behave in administrative settings. This interdisciplinary perspective adheres to the idea that both areas have a great deal of common ground in terms of which each field could learn from. The application of psychological theories in public administration will lead to a better understanding how human behavior impacts administrative processes, the decision-making of policy makers and potentially also societal perceptions. Understanding human judgment and decision-making One of the major ways psychology can help public administration is in thiserenced (Chen and Volpe 2010). So, although we have a lot of traditional public administration theories that focus on formal structures and processes to which I am thankful for their value as much credit they really deserve honestly. some attention is missing the idea psychological root underpinning decision making. Psychological theories like the" left-most digit bias" (Hinrichs, Berie, & Mosell 1982), explain how numbers are processed by individuals such as where they encounter their first few digits. This bias shapes our everyday lives, for example how public administration presents performance metrics. Politicians are able to take advantage of these biases and construct a less negative performance evaluation (Olsen, 2013). This brings us to the crossroads of psychology and public administration where it amplifies how important is integration of psychological understanding into administrative practices. Moreover, behavioral public administration may learn from the cognitive biases influencing policy implementation and also from the motivation to work on behalf of implementing policies. Public service motivation (Perry & Vandeneabeele, 2015) is a theoretical framework that highlights the reasons why people become motivated to work in public sector. Psychological theories offer a lens through which to view the cognitions and emotions that drive public service motivation, ultimately providing insights on how best to attract or retain public organizational members. Research that investigates how psychological factors, such as self-efficacy and altruism influence public service motivation maps onto this need for more focused interventions to better manage attitudes toward both the job and ultimately organizational engagement. Psychology as applied to public administration also extends into the study of administrative behaviors and organizational dynamics. E.g., Public organizations are believed to be both less efficient but also more benevolent than private ones (Hvidman & Andersen,2016). This belief could be driven in part by hidden biases and motivations, like the

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way that people tend to hold government agencies under greater scrutiny compared to private companies. By recognizing these biases, public administrators can adopt approaches to deal with the perceptions of the public and build better trust in institutions.

The divide between theory and practice in public administration has been a consistent long-term problem, with behavioral public administration having the potential to be one of the most critical pillars across this chasm. The difficulty lies in the translation of theoretical perspectives into practical solutions for complex, on-the-ground problems faced by policymakers and public managers (Juntti 2009). A way to address with this challenge by addressing the primary needs of practitioners or trying (Perry, 2012) through useful knowledge is what behavioral public administration can aim for. Finally, in order to still further increase the practical relevance of research results, behavioural public administration should particularly focus on topics that are highly related to practitioners. This could include, for instance insights on what public policy can do to enhance the perceived performance of public institutions further increasing trust and satisfaction. Research indicates that the disapproving attitudes towards government are a product of automatic, and not simply performance-inspired negative feelings (Marvel 2016). Targeted interventions to correct these biases may therefore help public administrators more positively shape expectations about government and foster greater trust in it. Engaging academics especially if they have interdisciplinary expertise in practical applications can also narrow the divide between theory and practice. For example, Richard Thaler was involved in the Behavioral insights Team that showed how academic expertise of behavioural economics and psychology can influence better government policy (Chadborn, Sallis, and Porter 2023). These types of partnerships will create better grounded and evidence-based policy responses when researchers work with those who possess deep knowledge enacting policies. Public administration scholars should look for similarly opportunities to enter into practice and help create the means by which we can all work on solutions together.

In others, the analogy of a “two-way street” between psychology and public administration reflects an interdependent Simon (1947), balance that is achieved based on each discipline contributing to development. This in turn promotes a more complete learned response to administrative contexts understanding human behavior. Psychology can benefit the public administration by testing its theories into real world environments (D’Oca et al. 2017). On the other side, psychology may provide richer understandings of cognitive and affective processes that underlie administrative practices. Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and dialogue is critical to developing a behavioral perspective in public administration. The academic conferences and colloquia present instances for knowledge dissemination as well as networking amongst researchers from both the fields. When the field offers courses and special issues that blend public administration scholars with psychology, we will better understand behavioral processes to improve our practical applications (Battaglio Jr. et al. 2019; Head and Alford 2013).

The incorporation of psychology with public administration have broad and practical implications to enhance policy and management practices (Blustein et al. 2008). Through solutions based in psychological understandings of human behavior, administrators can create more effective interventions and public policies. The use of psychological insights in the design of public services can, for instance, improve user satisfaction and compliance. Moreover, changing cognitive biases and emotion factors mean more rational decisioning making which in turn may increase organisational performance (Oschinsky, Stelter, and Niehaves 2021). More broadly, future research might explore the intersection of psychology with public administration throughout various lenses to include decision making processes and outcomes as well as organization theory (Criado and O.de Zarate-Alcarazo 2022; Oschinsky et al. 2021). Scholars can help improve and capitalize on behavioral public administration research and contribute towards more efficient, evidence-based practices in the field by broadening its scope of study, building interdisciplinary partnerships (Tanskanen et al. 2017).

## 5. Conclusion

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Public administration still has a lot to gain from them raising awareness of human behavior in administrative environments, so any type of psychology considering that are excellent... This will allow researchers to create more comprehensive theories and practical solutions by developing healthier value exchanges because economics enriches sociology, and vice versa. This interdisciplinary partnership is capable of closing the theory-practice gap and therefore can ensure better policy-making and management. As the field of behavioral public administration matures, it is important that psychology-public administration partnerships like this one continue to intertwine and create consistent conversations relating entrenched problems with practical solutions in action..

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