




Mapping Dominant Managerial Profiles in Public Sector Organizations Using the Quinn Competing Values Framework

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the dominant managerial profiles within public sector institutions through the application of the Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF). The research adopts a quantitative approach to identify prevalent managerial competencies and leadership orientations among civil servants. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The findings reveal a predominance of hierarchical and rational goal-oriented managerial profiles, reflecting the bureaucratic and performance-driven nature of public organizations. The study contributes to the literature on managerial competencies in the public sector by integrating competency-based management theories with the CVF model. Implications for human resource development and public administration reforms are discussed.

Keywords: Managerial Competencies, Public Sector, Quinn Model, Competing Values Framework, Leadership Profiles, Organizational Performance

INTRODUCTION

Public sector organizations operate within highly complex and dynamic environments characterized by formalized bureaucratic structures, strict accountability mechanisms, and an increasing societal demand for efficiency, transparency, and innovation. These institutions are expected not only to deliver public services effectively but also to respond to emerging challenges such as digital transformation, policy reforms, and citizen-centric governance. Within this context, the role of managers becomes critical, as their competencies and leadership styles directly influence organizational outcomes and public value creation. Competency-based management has therefore gained prominence as a strategic approach to improving organizational performance and ensuring alignment between individual capabilities and institutional objectives [3][26].

Managerial competencies are broadly defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that enable individuals to perform their roles effectively and contribute to organizational success. According to foundational studies, competent managers are those who can integrate technical expertise with interpersonal and conceptual abilities to navigate complex organizational environments [15][31]. In the public sector, these competencies

acquire additional significance due to the necessity of balancing administrative efficiency with ethical considerations, public accountability, and adherence to legal frameworks such as the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil [16]. This legal and institutional context often shapes managerial behavior, reinforcing the importance of rule compliance, procedural rigor, and transparency in decision-making processes.

In recent decades, public administration has increasingly adopted competency-based frameworks to enhance managerial effectiveness and support organizational development. These frameworks emphasize the identification, development, and evaluation of key competencies required for effective performance in managerial roles. By aligning competencies with strategic objectives, organizations can improve workforce capabilities, foster innovation, and achieve better service delivery outcomes [24][26]. However, understanding how these competencies translate into actual managerial behaviors and leadership profiles remains a critical area of inquiry.

One of the most influential models for analyzing managerial roles and organizational effectiveness is the Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF). This framework conceptualizes organizational effectiveness along two key dimensions: flexibility versus control and internal versus external orientation. These dimensions give rise to four distinct quadrants—Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy—each representing a unique set of managerial values, competencies, and leadership behaviors [15]. The Clan model emphasizes collaboration, teamwork, and employee development; the Adhocracy model focuses on innovation, creativity, and adaptability; the Market model prioritizes competitiveness, productivity, and goal achievement; while the Hierarchy model underscores stability, control, and formalized procedures.

The CVF has been widely applied in both private and public sector contexts to assess leadership styles, organizational culture, and managerial effectiveness. In public organizations, the framework is particularly relevant because it captures the inherent tensions between competing values such as flexibility versus control and innovation versus stability. These tensions are often more pronounced in government institutions, where managers must simultaneously ensure compliance with regulations and respond to evolving societal needs.

Despite the growing body of literature on managerial competencies and leadership frameworks, there remains a limited understanding of how these competencies are distributed across different managerial profiles within public sector institutions. Empirical studies focusing on the application of the CVF in public administration are relatively scarce, particularly in developing and transitional contexts. This gap highlights the need for systematic investigation into the dominant managerial profiles of civil servants and their implications for organizational performance.

In response to this gap, the present study aims to identify and analyze the predominant managerial profiles in public sector organizations using the Quinn Competing Values Framework. By adopting a quantitative approach, the study seeks to provide empirical insights into how managerial competencies are manifested in practice and how they influence organizational effectiveness. The findings are expected to contribute to both academic literature and practical policy-making by offering a deeper understanding of leadership dynamics in the public sector and informing strategies for competency development and organizational reform.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Managerial Competencies in the Public Sector

Managerial competencies have long been recognized as a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly within public sector institutions where performance is closely tied to governance quality and service delivery. Foundational research suggests that effective managers possess a balanced combination of technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills that enable them to navigate complex organizational environments and make informed decisions [15]. These competencies are not static; rather, they evolve in response to organizational demands, policy changes, and socio-political dynamics.

In public organizations, managerial competencies are shaped by institutional norms, regulatory frameworks, and societal expectations. Unlike private sector entities, public institutions operate under strict legal and procedural constraints, which significantly influence managerial behavior and decision-making processes [28]. Managers must therefore demonstrate not only efficiency and effectiveness but also accountability, transparency, and ethical responsibility. This dual expectation often creates tension between achieving performance outcomes and adhering to formalized rules and procedures.

Empirical studies have consistently highlighted the relationship between managerial competencies and organizational performance. For instance, research indicates that competencies such as leadership, communication, and strategic decision-making play a vital role in enhancing the effectiveness of public managers [6]. These competencies enable managers to coordinate teams, allocate resources efficiently, and respond to emerging challenges in dynamic environments. Additionally, experiential learning has been identified as a key mechanism for developing managerial capabilities. Studies emphasize that hands-on experience, reflective practice, and continuous learning opportunities contribute significantly to competency development in federal institutions [4].

The adoption of competency-based management models in public administration has further reinforced the importance of managerial competencies. These models focus on identifying the specific skills and behaviors required for effective performance and aligning them with organizational goals and strategies [3][26]. By doing so, organizations can enhance workforce capabilities, improve performance evaluation systems, and foster a culture of continuous development. Moreover, competency-based approaches facilitate better human resource planning by ensuring that the right individuals are placed in roles that match their capabilities [24].

Despite these advancements, challenges remain in operationalizing competency frameworks within public sector contexts. Variations in organizational structures, resource availability, and institutional priorities often lead to inconsistencies in the implementation of competency-based practices. This highlights the need for more context-specific approaches to competency development that consider the unique characteristics of public organizations.

2.2 Quinn Competing Values Framework

The Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF) is one of the most widely used models for analyzing organizational effectiveness, leadership styles, and managerial roles. The framework is based on two fundamental dimensions: flexibility versus control and internal versus external focus. These dimensions intersect to form four distinct quadrants, each representing a different set of organizational values and managerial orientations.

The first quadrant, the Clan (Collaborative) model, emphasizes internal focus and flexibility.

Managers operating within this profile prioritize teamwork, employee development, and participative decision-making. The second quadrant, the Adhocracy (Innovative) model, is characterized by external focus and flexibility, where managers encourage creativity, risk-taking, and adaptability to changing environments. The third quadrant, the Market (Competitive) model, combines external focus with control, emphasizing productivity, goal achievement, and competitiveness. Finally, the Hierarchy (Control-oriented) model reflects internal focus and control, prioritizing stability, formal procedures, and efficient coordination.

Each of these profiles represents a unique combination of managerial competencies and leadership behaviors. The strength of the CVF lies in its ability to capture the inherent tensions between competing organizational values, such as stability versus change and control versus flexibility. This makes it particularly useful for analyzing complex organizational settings, including public sector institutions.

The framework has been extensively applied across various organizational contexts to assess leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, and performance outcomes. Studies have shown that organizations with a balanced representation of all four quadrants tend to achieve higher levels of effectiveness, as they are better equipped to respond to diverse challenges [25]. However, in practice, organizations often exhibit a dominance of one or two profiles, depending on their structure, mission, and external environment.

2.3 Managerial Profiles in Public Organizations

Public sector organizations are traditionally characterized by hierarchical structures and a strong emphasis on control, standardization, and accountability. As a result, managerial profiles within these institutions often align with the Hierarchy quadrant of the CVF, where adherence to rules, procedures, and formal authority is prioritized [17]. This orientation is largely driven by the need to ensure compliance with legal frameworks, maintain transparency, and minimize risks associated with public service delivery.

However, the evolving landscape of public administration has led to significant shifts in managerial expectations. Contemporary reforms emphasize the need for greater flexibility, innovation, and responsiveness to citizen needs. This has encouraged the adoption of managerial profiles associated with the Clan and Adhocracy quadrants, which focus on collaboration, adaptability, and creative problem-solving [18]. Such shifts are particularly important in the context of digital governance and policy innovation, where traditional bureaucratic approaches may be insufficient.

Empirical studies further demonstrate that managerial competencies and profiles vary across different roles and institutional contexts. For example, research indicates that managers in educational and health institutions often require a broader set of competencies, including interpersonal skills and adaptability, compared to those in more rigid administrative roles [5][7]. This variation underscores the importance of developing tailored competency frameworks that address the specific needs of different public sector domains.

Moreover, innovation in public organizations is closely linked to leadership styles that promote collaboration and adaptability. Managers who encourage knowledge sharing, team engagement, and continuous learning are more likely to foster innovative practices and improve organizational performance [23]. This highlights the growing importance of balancing traditional hierarchical competencies with more flexible and dynamic managerial approaches.

In summary, the literature suggests that while public sector organizations continue to rely

heavily on hierarchical managerial profiles, there is an increasing recognition of the need for more diverse and balanced competency frameworks. The integration of different managerial profiles, as conceptualized by the Quinn Competing Values Framework, offers a promising approach to enhancing organizational effectiveness and addressing the complex challenges faced by modern public institutions.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to systematically examine managerial competencies and identify dominant leadership profiles within public sector institutions. Quantitative approaches are particularly suitable for studies that aim to measure variables objectively, test relationships, and generalize findings across populations. The research design follows well-established methodological guidelines in administrative and management research, ensuring reliability, validity, and replicability of results [22][29].

3.1 Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was employed to collect data from civil servants at a single point in time. This design is widely used in public administration research due to its efficiency in capturing perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors across a large sample. The cross-sectional approach allows for the identification of prevailing managerial profiles without the need for longitudinal tracking, making it appropriate for exploratory and descriptive studies.

The study is grounded in the Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF), which serves as the theoretical basis for assessing managerial roles and competencies. A structured questionnaire was developed to operationalize the constructs of the CVF, ensuring that each of the four managerial profiles—Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy—was adequately represented. The questionnaire design was informed by existing competency models and empirical studies in the field of public management, enhancing its content validity.

3.2 Data Collection

Data were collected from a sample of public sector employees working across multiple departments and administrative levels. The sampling strategy aimed to ensure diversity in terms of job roles, experience levels, and functional areas, thereby providing a comprehensive view of managerial competencies within the organization. Respondents included mid-level and senior-level managers, as well as professionals involved in administrative and decision-making functions.

The primary data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended items. These items were designed to measure key managerial competencies such as leadership, communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and innovation. A Likert scale format (e.g., ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) was used to capture respondents’ perceptions and self-assessments of their competencies and managerial behaviors.

To ensure clarity and reliability, the questionnaire underwent a pre-testing phase with a small group of respondents. Feedback from this pilot test was used to refine the wording of questions and improve the overall structure of the instrument. Data collection was conducted either electronically or through printed forms, depending on accessibility and organizational preferences. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were

strictly maintained throughout the data collection process.

3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques to identify patterns and relationships among variables. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize the data and provide an overview of the respondents' characteristics and competency levels.

To further explore the underlying structure of managerial competencies, factor analysis was conducted. This technique helps in identifying clusters of related variables and determining how they align with the four quadrants of the Quinn CVF. By grouping related competencies, factor analysis facilitates the identification of dominant managerial profiles within the sample.

Additionally, comparative analysis was performed to examine differences in competencies across demographic variables such as job level, experience, and departmental affiliation. The use of these statistical methods ensures a rigorous and systematic analysis of the data, consistent with established practices in management research [21].

Overall, the methodological approach provides a robust framework for understanding managerial competencies and their distribution across different profiles in public sector organizations.

4. Results

The analysis of the collected data provides important insights into the distribution of managerial competencies and the dominant leadership profiles within public sector institutions. Using descriptive statistics and factor analysis, the study identified clear patterns aligned with the four quadrants of the Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF). The findings highlight the prevalence of certain managerial orientations while revealing gaps in others, offering a comprehensive understanding of leadership dynamics in the public sector.

1. Predominance of Hierarchical Profiles

The results indicate a strong predominance of hierarchical managerial profiles among respondents. A majority of civil servants demonstrated high scores in competencies associated with control, coordination, and adherence to formal procedures. These behaviors reflect a preference for stability, predictability, and structured work environments. Managers operating within this profile tend to prioritize compliance with rules, efficient resource utilization, and risk minimization.

This finding is consistent with the traditional nature of public sector organizations, which are often governed by strict regulations and accountability requirements. The emphasis on hierarchy ensures consistency in decision-making and helps maintain institutional integrity. However, excessive reliance on hierarchical control may limit flexibility and responsiveness to change.

2. Significant Presence of Market-Oriented Profiles

In addition to hierarchical tendencies, the analysis revealed a significant presence of market-oriented managerial profiles. Respondents exhibited strong competencies related to

performance management, goal achievement, and productivity. Managers with this orientation focus on delivering measurable outcomes, improving efficiency, and meeting organizational targets.

This trend suggests that public sector institutions are increasingly adopting performance-driven approaches, possibly influenced by modern public management reforms. The integration of market-oriented practices indicates a shift toward results-based management, where efficiency and effectiveness are key priorities. While this orientation enhances accountability and output, it may also create pressure on employees and reduce emphasis on collaborative processes.

3. Limited Representation of Adhocracy Profiles

The findings show a relatively low representation of adhocracy-oriented managerial profiles. Competencies related to innovation, creativity, and risk-taking received lower scores compared to other dimensions. This suggests that public sector managers are less inclined to engage in experimental or unconventional approaches to problem-solving.

The limited presence of this profile can be attributed to the inherent risk-averse nature of public organizations, where adherence to established procedures is often prioritized over innovation. While this approach ensures stability, it may hinder the organization's ability to adapt to rapidly changing environments and emerging challenges. The lack of innovative leadership could also impact the development and implementation of new policies, technologies, and service delivery models.

4. Moderate Clan Orientation

The analysis also identified a moderate presence of clan-oriented managerial profiles. Respondents demonstrated some level of emphasis on teamwork, collaboration, and interpersonal relationships. Managers within this profile value employee engagement, participative decision-making, and a supportive work environment.

Although these competencies were evident, they were not as dominant as hierarchical or market-oriented behaviors. This suggests that while collaboration is recognized as important, it is not yet a central focus in public sector management practices. Strengthening clan-oriented competencies could enhance organizational cohesion, employee satisfaction, and overall performance.

Overall Interpretation of Findings

Collectively, these findings indicate that public sector organizations tend to prioritize stability, control, and performance over flexibility, innovation, and collaboration. The dominance of hierarchical and market-oriented profiles reflects the institutional emphasis on accountability, efficiency, and goal achievement. However, the relatively lower presence of adhocracy and clan profiles highlights potential areas for development, particularly in fostering innovation and teamwork.

The results underscore the need for a more balanced distribution of managerial competencies, as suggested by the Quinn Competing Values Framework. Achieving such balance can enable public sector organizations to respond more effectively to contemporary challenges while maintaining operational efficiency and institutional stability.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide meaningful insights into the prevailing managerial orientations within public sector institutions and their implications for organizational effectiveness. The observed dominance of hierarchical and market-oriented profiles strongly reflects the traditional bureaucratic structure that characterizes most public organizations. These institutions are inherently designed to ensure stability, consistency, and accountability in service delivery, which explains the emphasis on control-oriented and performance-driven managerial behaviors. This observation is consistent with prior research indicating that public organizations prioritize formal procedures, regulatory compliance, and performance measurement as core elements of governance [17][28].

The prominence of hierarchical profiles suggests that managers rely heavily on established rules, standardized processes, and formal authority to guide their actions. Such an approach is essential for maintaining transparency and minimizing risks in environments where accountability to the public is paramount. Similarly, the significant presence of market-oriented profiles indicates a growing focus on efficiency, productivity, and results-based management. This shift can be linked to contemporary public management reforms that encourage performance evaluation, benchmarking, and outcome-oriented governance.

However, while these dominant profiles contribute to organizational stability and efficiency, they may also create limitations. The relatively low representation of adhocracy (innovative) profiles raises important concerns regarding the adaptability of public institutions. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, policy complexity, and evolving citizen expectations, the ability to innovate has become increasingly critical. Innovation enables organizations to develop new solutions, improve service delivery, and respond effectively to emerging challenges. The lack of strong innovation-oriented competencies may therefore hinder the capacity of public sector organizations to remain responsive and competitive in a changing environment [19].

The limited presence of adhocracy-oriented behaviors can be attributed to the risk-averse culture commonly found in public institutions. Managers often operate within strict regulatory frameworks that discourage experimentation and emphasize error avoidance. While this approach reduces uncertainty, it may also suppress creativity and limit opportunities for organizational learning. As a result, there is a growing need to create an environment that balances control with flexibility, allowing managers to explore innovative practices without compromising accountability.

In addition to innovation, the findings also highlight the role of competency development programs in enhancing managerial effectiveness. The moderate presence of clan-oriented profiles suggests that collaborative and people-focused competencies are present but not fully developed. Strengthening these competencies through targeted training and development initiatives can significantly improve leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, and organizational performance. Training programs that incorporate experiential learning, practical application, and continuous feedback have been shown to be particularly effective in developing managerial skills [1].

Furthermore, competency development initiatives can serve as a strategic tool for organizational transformation. By aligning training programs with desired managerial profiles, public institutions can gradually shift toward a more balanced competency framework. This includes fostering innovation, encouraging collaboration, and enhancing adaptability while maintaining necessary levels of control and performance orientation.

Overall, the discussion underscores the importance of achieving a balanced integration of all four managerial profiles proposed by the Quinn Competing Values Framework. While hierarchical and market-oriented competencies remain essential for ensuring stability and efficiency, greater emphasis on innovation and collaboration is necessary to address the complex challenges facing modern public sector organizations. Such balance can ultimately lead to improved organizational effectiveness, better service delivery, and enhanced public value creation.

6. Conclusion

This study provides significant insights into the managerial profiles of civil servants through the application of the Quinn Competing Values Framework (CVF). The findings reveal a clear predominance of hierarchical and market-oriented management styles, indicating that public sector organizations continue to prioritize control, stability, efficiency, and performance. These orientations reflect the traditional bureaucratic nature of public institutions, where adherence to rules, accountability, and goal achievement are central to organizational functioning.

At the same time, the study highlights a comparatively limited emphasis on innovation and collaboration, as reflected in the lower presence of adhocracy and clan-oriented profiles. This imbalance suggests that while public organizations are effective in maintaining order and achieving targets, they may face challenges in adapting to rapidly changing environments and fostering innovative practices. In an era where public institutions are expected to be more responsive, flexible, and citizen-centric, the development of such competencies becomes increasingly important.

The study makes a meaningful contribution to the existing body of knowledge by integrating competency-based management approaches with the CVF model in the context of public administration. By doing so, it offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how managerial competencies are distributed and how they influence organizational effectiveness.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide valuable guidance for policymakers and human resource managers. There is a clear need to design and implement targeted competency development programs that not only reinforce existing strengths in control and performance but also promote innovation, adaptability, and teamwork. Encouraging a more balanced managerial profile can enhance organizational resilience, improve service delivery, and support sustainable public sector reforms.

In conclusion, achieving an optimal balance among competing managerial values is essential for the long-term effectiveness of public sector organizations.

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