

Labor competencies and their impact on the performance of the personnel of the parochial GADS of the province of Santa Elena.

Competencias laborales y su incidencia en el desempeño del personal de los GADS parroquiales de la provincia de Santa Elena

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to evaluate the incidence of labor competencies play a fundamental role in the performance of personnel in the parish Autonomous Decentralized Governments (GAD) of the province of Santa Elena. Several techniques and tools were used to analyze how technical, social and personal skills influence the quality and efficiency of the services offered by these institutions. The study used descriptive research through the desegregation of variables, which also allowed for a situational diagnosis, and correlational research through the analysis of indicators to analyze the variables of interest. Data collection was carried out through a survey of parish government officials to identify gaps in competencies and their relationship with the fulfillment of organizational objectives. Significant deficiencies were identified in the design of training programs and in the periodic evaluation of performance, which limits the integral development of personnel and negatively affects productivity levels. Consequently, it is proposed to implement a management model based on competencies, including continuous training processes and evaluation mechanisms.

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Keywords: Training and education, labor competencies, sustainable development, organizational performance, Decentralized Autonomous Governments.

RESUMEN

El presente artículo tiene como objetivo evaluar la incidencia de las competencias laborales desempeñan un papel fundamental en el desempeño del personal en los Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados (GAD) parroquiales de la provincia de Santa Elena. Se emplearon varias técnicas y herramientas para analizar cómo las habilidades técnicas, sociales y personales influyen en la calidad y eficiencia de los servicios ofrecidos por estas instituciones. En el estudio se empleó una investigación de tipo descriptiva mediante la desegregación de variables, además permitió realizar el diagnóstico situacional, por otro lado, se empleó la investigación correlacional mediante el análisis de indicadores para analizar las variables de interés. La recolección de los datos se realizó a través de una encuesta dirigida a funcionarios de los GAD parroquiales, para identificar brechas en las competencias y su relación con el cumplimiento de objetivos organizacionales. Se identificaron deficiencias significativas en el diseño de programas de capacitación y en la evaluación periódica del desempeño, lo que limita el desarrollo integral del personal y afecta negativamente los niveles de productividad. En consecuencia, se propone implementar un modelo de gestión basado en competencias, que contemple procesos continuos de formación y mecanismos de evaluación.

Palabras clave : Capacitación y formación, competencias laborales, desarrollo sostenible, desempeño organizacional, Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados Parroquiales

INTRODUCTION

Labor competencies have become a crucial aspect for the development of public institutions and the fulfillment of their organizational objectives, since they allow improving the performance and quality of the services they offer. In the context of parish Autonomous Decentralized Governments (GAD) in Ecuador, these competencies are essential to respond to citizen demands and promote sustainable development in their communities.

The concept of labor competencies includes a set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that employees must possess to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently. In the public sector, these competencies go beyond the technical, as they include interpersonal and leadership skills that facilitate collaborative work and decision-making for the benefit of citizens.

Competency-based management allows organizations to evaluate and improve the performance of their personnel on a continuous basis. In parish GADs, this management model contributes to aligning the capabilities of employees with institutional objectives, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and efficiency. Recent research has shown that a correct application of competency-based management in the Ecuadorian public sector contributes significantly to the efficiency of services and local development. However, there are significant challenges related to staff training and evaluation, which limits the positive impact of these competencies in the GADs.

According to Quiroz, (2019) the relationship between labor competencies and organizational performance has been widely explored in several studies, where it is highlighted that those institutions that invest in the development of their human talent achieve higher levels of effectiveness and satisfaction among their beneficiaries. In the context of parish governments, the lack of specific competencies in their personnel can lead to inefficient performance, which directly affects the community that benefits from their services. This highlights the importance of having a continuous training system that strengthens the necessary competencies.

Competency-based management models are a strategic tool for GADs, as they identify the key skills that staff must develop to achieve optimal performance. This includes technical as well as social and personal competencies, which together contribute to community well-being and institutional efficiency.

The province of Santa Elena presents a particular context in terms of public management, where parish governments must face challenges such as the scarcity of resources and the high demand for basic services. This makes investment in labor competencies even more relevant to achieve efficient management.

One of the main benefits of developing work competencies in the GADs is the possibility of improving communication and collaboration between areas, thus facilitating the execution of projects and the fulfillment of the objectives set forth.

According to Delgado (2023), competencies in the public sector are determinant not only for the achievement of institutional objectives, but also for the sustainability of projects over time. This is especially true for parish GADs in Santa Elena, where staff stability and continuous training are essential for community development. In Ecuador, parish GADs face the responsibility of implementing local development policies that require highly trained personnel. The development of competencies in areas such as project management and citizen service is fundamental to fulfill this mission .

Several studies suggest that personal competencies, such as adaptability and commitment, are especially relevant in the public sector, as they enable employees to face challenges in high-pressure and resource-constrained environments . The incorporation of technology in public management has also highlighted the need for digital competencies in the staff of GADs. This facilitates a more agile and transparent administration, thus improving the relationship between the institution and the community .

Finally, it should be noted that training in job skills not only benefits organizational performance, but also strengthens the sense of belonging of the personnel, which has a positive impact on the retention of talent within the parish GADs .

According to Díaz, (2020) labor competencies are the combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that an individual must possess to efficiently perform a specific role in the workplace. On the other hand, , these competencies not only imply the technical capacity to perform tasks, but also the ability to adapt to changes, work in teams and solve problems autonomously. This conceptualization highlights that labor competencies are dynamic and contextual, as they develop and adapt according to the demands of the market and the organizational environment. In this sense, training and certification in labor competencies have become key tools to promote employability and ensure quality performance.

Labor competencies are essential in the strategic management of human talent, as they allow the identification and development of employees' potential. As points out, this approach not only improves organizational productivity, but also promotes continuous learning, strengthening competitiveness and innovation in companies. The adoption of competency-based management models responds to the need to build more resilient and sustainable organizations, capable of facing the challenges of a constantly changing labor market. This underlines the importance of training aligned with the current and future demands of the world of work.

Job competencies encompass various dimensions that integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for efficient professional performance. Among these, the cognitive dimension focuses on the technical and theoretical knowledge essential for the position, while the functional dimension refers to the ability to perform specific tasks with precision and efficiency . On the other hand, the personal dimension involves the attitudes, values and behaviors that contribute to success in the work environment, such

as adaptability, responsibility and proactivity. These dimensions do not operate in isolation; instead, they are interconnected, allowing workers to respond to work demands in a comprehensive and contextual manner.

In addition, job competencies include a social dimension, which emphasizes the interpersonal skills needed to collaborate effectively in teams and communicate with diverse stakeholders. This dimension is especially relevant in the current context, where organizations value the ability of employees to work in multicultural and highly interconnected environments. Likewise, the strategic dimension highlights the importance of contributing to the fulfillment of organizational objectives through informed decision making and the ability to lead projects effectively. These dimensions, combined, not only strengthen employability, but also drive innovation and organizational growth.

The strengthening of labor competencies is a strategic process that allows workers to acquire and develop skills, knowledge and attitudes that improve their professional performance. According to , this strengthening is essential in a changing work environment, as it fosters adaptability, innovation and effective problem solving. Continuous training, both in technical and transversal competencies, is a key tool for improving individual and organizational productivity. In this context, competency-based training ensures that workers can respond to market demands and contribute to the achievement of their organizations' strategic objectives.

In addition, the strengthening of labor competencies not only benefits companies, but also workers by increasing their employability and facilitating their professional development. As stated by , empowerment initiatives, such as training programs, mentoring and the use of technology for learning, are essential to face the challenges of automation and globalization. They also promote a more inclusive and equitable work environment by closing skills gaps and providing equal development opportunities. In short, strengthening labor competencies is a strategic investment for both the individual and the organization, in line with the demands of today's market.

Labor competencies are classified into different categories according to their nature and purpose, allowing the identification and development of those that are essential for professional performance. One of the most common classifications distinguishes between basic, generic and specific competencies. According to , basic competencies include fundamental skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic, which are necessary for any work environment. Generic competencies include transversal skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving, which are applicable to various professional contexts. Finally, specific competencies are directly related to the technical and specialized tasks of a particular position.

Another relevant classification is that which differentiates between technical and behavioral competencies. Technical competencies refer to the knowledge and practical skills needed to perform specific tasks, such as the use of tools or specialized software.

In contrast, behavioral competencies are related to the attitudes and values that employees bring to the work environment, such as ethics, adaptability and leadership skills. This division allows organizations to design development programs that address both technical and human needs, which are essential for comprehensive performance. In addition, job competencies can be classified according to their level of complexity and applicability, from operational competencies to strategic competencies. According to , operational competencies are those that are used in the direct execution of tasks and are usually applied at basic levels of the organization. On the other hand, strategic competencies involve advanced skills such as planning, decision making and change management, which are essential for managerial levels. This classification allows companies to identify the levels of competencies required for each position, facilitating the design of more efficient organizational structures.

Technical competencies are fundamental in project execution, as they represent the specific knowledge and skills that professionals need to perform tasks related to their area of expertise. These competencies range from the handling of specialized tools and software to the application of specific methodologies such as agile or traditional project management. According to , having a team with solid technical skills improves the quality and efficiency of projects, reducing the risks associated with the execution and ensuring the achievement of the objectives set. In this sense, the continuous updating of these skills is key in a dynamic and technologically advanced environment.

The impact of technical skills on project execution is not only reflected in tangible results, but also in the team's ability to adapt to unforeseen challenges. As noted by , combining technical skills with a continuous learning approach enables teams to tackle complex problems and develop innovative solutions. This is particularly relevant in sectors such as engineering, technology and construction, where technical advances require a constant level of updating and specialization.

Training and competency development in the public sector are essential to ensure efficiency, transparency and quality in the provision of services to citizens. According to Zamora & Silva, (2019), these processes strengthen both technical competencies and transversal skills of public servants, allowing them to adapt to the changing demands of the socio-political and technological environments. The implementation of continuous training programs, oriented to innovation and the development of strategic capabilities, is key to improve decision making, planning and public management.

In addition, training in the public sector fosters the professionalization of public officials and improves citizen perception of government effectiveness. As pointed out by , the development of competencies not only has a direct impact on institutional productivity, but also contributes to the strengthening of ethical values and integrity in public performance. This is especially relevant in the context of the 2030 Agenda, where governments must be able to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through effective policies and skilled teams. Thus, investing in training and skills

development becomes an essential pillar for the modernization of the public sector and the creation of a more efficient and trustworthy government.

According to Romero, (2022) employee performance refers to the ability of employees to fulfill their job responsibilities efficiently and in alignment with organizational objectives. This performance is influenced by factors such as technical competencies, work commitment, and the work environment. High performance not only improves the organization's productivity, but also contributes to the individual's professional development, strengthening his or her motivation and sense of belonging. In this context, it is essential to have performance evaluation systems in place to identify areas for improvement and to design training and development strategies tailored to employees' needs.

Staff performance is closely linked to human resource management and leadership within the organization. emphasizes that effective leadership can inspire employees, promoting a collaborative and results-focused work environment. In addition, the incorporation of technological tools for performance monitoring and evaluation facilitates constant feedback, which is key to fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

The evaluation of job competencies is an essential process to ensure that employees possess the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to contribute to organizational success. This type of assessment allows the identification of competency gaps and the design of training strategies aimed at improving individual and collective performance. According to Londoño & Ramírez, (2022) the implementation of assessment tools such as technical tests, simulations and competency-based interviews strengthens the alignment between the capabilities of personnel and the strategic objectives of the organization.

The impact of competency assessment on organizational performance translates into greater productivity, efficiency and quality in internal processes. According to , by integrating competency assessment with performance management systems, organizations can identify key success indicators and make more informed decisions about promotions, assignment of responsibilities and career development. This approach not only optimizes operational performance, but also contributes to employee satisfaction and engagement, creating a more motivating work environment aligned with corporate objectives.

Personnel performance is influenced by multiple factors, including working conditions, individual competencies and leadership style. According to Martínez & Rojas, (2021), a favorable work environment, including adequate resources, a positive organizational climate and safe physical conditions, has a significant impact on employee productivity and motivation. In addition, the level of technical and transversal competencies of workers is a key determinant of performance, as it directly influences their ability to accomplish assigned tasks efficiently. Alignment between individual skills and job demands is essential to optimize results at both the personal and organizational levels.

Another critical factor is leadership within the organization, which can shape employees' commitment and attitude towards their responsibilities. As Gómez and López (2020) point out, a participative leadership style oriented to the development of human talent fosters trust, a sense of belonging and a willingness to change. Likewise, recognition and constant feedback play an important role in strengthening workers' motivation and commitment. Factors such as organizational culture, access to continuous training opportunities and clarity in roles and objectives also influence performance, highlighting the importance of comprehensive management to maximize the potential of personnel. The parish Autonomous Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GAD), as local management entities, require performance evaluation methodologies that are adapted to their operational scale and the specific characteristics of their communities. Among the most commonly applied methodologies are the system of management indicators and competency-based evaluation. According to Martínez and López (2021), management indicators make it possible to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the projects and programs implemented, ensuring that the results are aligned with the needs of the local population. On the other hand, competency-based evaluation focuses on analyzing the skills, knowledge and attitudes of personnel, ensuring that these are aligned with the strategic objectives of the parish government. These methodologies not only allow monitoring performance, but also identify opportunities for improvement to optimize public management.

According to Ríos & Macías, (2019) the incorporation of technological tools and participatory methods has strengthened evaluation methodologies in parish GADs. According to Gómez & Ramírez (2020), the use of digital platforms for data collection and analysis facilitates the implementation of real-time monitoring systems, promoting transparency and accountability. In addition, participatory approaches, such as community surveys and consultation workshops, allow the integration of citizen perception into the evaluation process, ensuring that decisions are based on community priorities. These mixed methodologies, that combine qualitative and quantitative elements, are essential to improve the management of parish governments and strengthen their capacity to respond to local challenges.

Labor competencies have a direct impact on organizational performance, as they are the basis on which employees perform their functions and contribute to the achievement of the institution's strategic objectives. According to Gómez and Ramírez (2020), well-developed technical and transversal competencies allow workers to perform effectively in their roles, reducing errors, improving productivity and favoring innovation. In addition, the alignment between individual competencies and organizational needs generates a more efficient work environment, where each employee contributes value through his or her specialization and unique skills.

On the other hand, work competencies also influence organizational culture, fostering collaboration, adaptability and resilience in work teams. According to Navarro &

Alarcón, (2019) highlight that organizations that invest in the development of labor competencies not only increase individual performance, but also strengthen the cohesion and commitment of employees towards institutional objectives. The constant evaluation of competencies and the implementation of training programs guarantee a workforce prepared to respond to current challenges, improving both organizational performance and employee satisfaction. In this sense, labor competencies become a strategic factor for the success and sustainability of organizations.

The performance of public servants is a determining factor in the quality of services offered to citizens. Efficient and results-oriented management ensures that services are accessible, effective and timely. According to Chacón, (2020), quality in the provision of public services is also linked to the development of competencies and the continuous training of civil servants. On the other hand, Ramírez & Torres, (2021) highlight that strengthening technical, social and digital skills in public personnel not only improves their performance, but also fosters innovation and adaptability in a changing environment. The implementation of quality management models, such as the focus on continuous improvement and citizen feedback, helps public institutions to maintain high levels of efficiency and credibility.

The improvement of labor performance in Decentralized Autonomous Governments (GADs) faces several challenges related to planning, training and resource management. One of the main challenges is the lack of efficient tools and systems to evaluate and monitor employee performance. According to Ríos & Macías, (2019), the absence of clear and objective indicators makes it difficult to identify areas for improvement and limits the capacity of the GADs to implement strategies to strengthen human talent. In addition, the scarcity of financial resources and technological resources represents a significant obstacle, especially in rural GADs, where working conditions may be more limited.

Another key challenge is the need to foster an organizational culture oriented towards continuous improvement and the development of labor competencies. According to Romero (2022), insufficient training and lack of refresher programs limit employees' ability to adapt to the demands of a constantly changing environment. Likewise, resistance to change, both at the hierarchical levels and among employees, can slow down modernization efforts. Overcoming these challenges requires strategic management that combines investment in technology, inclusive policy design and comprehensive training, promoting an environment that favors efficiency and employee commitment to local development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article applies a descriptive research approach, based on the need to analyze labor competencies and their impact on the performance of the personnel of the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena. The descriptive research allowed detailing the

characteristics of labor competencies present in the personnel, classifying them into technical, interpersonal and adaptive, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in their management. In turn, the explanatory approach was oriented towards establishing causal relationships between job competencies and performance level, exploring how these variables are interconnected and affect organizational results.

In this project, correlational research was also used through the analysis of indicators to analyze the variables of interest. In this way, the results obtained in the data collection surveys were examined with the purpose of evaluating the incidence of labor competencies in the performance of the personnel of the parochial GADs of the province of Santa Elena.

In this study, a qualitative approach was adopted to understand the factors associated with the labor competencies of the staff of the parish GADs in the province of Santa Elena and their impact on organizational performance. This approach allowed for a detailed exploration of the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of employees and managers, which facilitated an in-depth understanding of labor dynamics. The exhaustive bibliographic review of previous studies and normative frameworks related to competencies and organizational performance was fundamental to identify the key elements that structure the analyzed problem.

On the other hand, a quantitative approach was used with the objective of measuring the relationship between labor competencies and the performance of the personnel of the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena. This approach included the application of structured surveys directed to administrative and operational personnel, as well as the collection of quantitative data related to performance indicators. The results obtained allowed the identification of critical elements related to technical, interpersonal and adaptive competencies, providing empirical evidence that supports the conclusions of the study and the recommendations to strengthen the management of human talent in these institutions.

This approach facilitated the collection of key information on the work competencies of the staff of the parish GADs in the province of Santa Elena and their impact on organizational performance. Through direct observation of work dynamics and interaction in institutional environments, together with interviews with the main actors in the process, tools and strategies adjusted to the local context were identified. This process provided a comprehensive view of existing competencies and areas requiring strengthening, contributing to the development of specific proposals to improve the performance of personnel in these institutions.

This approach facilitated the formulation of conclusions based on the study variables, making it possible to identify the critical aspects associated with labor competencies and their impact on the performance of the personnel of the parochial GADs of the province of Santa Elena. By analyzing technical, interpersonal and adaptive competencies, their influence on the quality of public services and institutional capacity to meet local

development objectives was highlighted. This integrative analysis provided a solid basis for proposing strengthening strategies that fit the territorial context.

The study population is composed of the administrative and operational personnel working in the different parish GADs of the province, as well as the spokespersons, which allows the evaluation of labor competencies from an integral perspective that includes both technical management and social interactions in the organizational environment.

Table I. *Population*

Canton	PARISH GAD	NUMBER OF WORKERS
St. Helena	San José de Ancón	11
St. Helena	Atahualpa	21
St. Helena	Chanduy	14
St. Helena	Colonche	12
St. Helena	Manglaralto	7
St. Helena	Simon Bolivar	12
Salinas	Anconcito	12
Salinas	José Luis Tamayo	13
TOTAL		102

Source: Database of the GADPs of the province of Santa Elena.

Prepared by: Author

Table I shows the distribution of the population studied in the article "Labor competencies and their impact on the performance of the personnel of the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena". Due to the small size of the population, a census was conducted in order to meet the objective of this research.

In the development of the research on labor competencies and their incidence on the performance of the personnel of the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena, various sources and methods were used to gather key information that allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The main techniques used are described below:

Expert interviews: This technique was applied to obtain an in-depth view of the labor competencies required in the context of parish GADs. Interviews were conducted with professionals with experience in public management and human resources, using a structured questionnaire to identify critical factors affecting organizational performance and training needs in the public sector.

Indirect observation: This was used to analyze the work environment and operational dynamics within the parish GADs. This method made it possible to identify patterns and

problems related to the development and application of labor competencies, as well as their impact on the provision of services to the community.

Surveys: Surveys were conducted among the administrative and operational personnel of the parish GADs of St. Helena. The surveys consisted of identification questions and research questions aimed at evaluating the level of labor competencies and their relationship with key organizational performance indicators.

These methods provided essential qualitative and quantitative data to analyze the study variables and formulate conclusions that contribute to improving human talent management in the GADs of the province of Santa Elena.

Documentary and virtual review: An exhaustive review of secondary sources was carried out, including books, scientific articles, theses and official documents related to labor competencies and performance in public management. This review provided a theoretical basis for the research and established a solid frame of reference on labor and organizational dynamics in the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena. In addition, the consultation of digital resources complemented the analysis by incorporating updated perspectives and recent studies, which strengthened the design of proposals to improve the performance of personnel in these institutions.

RESULTS

The results of the study reveal that technical knowledge is a determining factor for the efficient performance of tasks in the parish governments of the province of Santa Elena. This knowledge includes specific skills in areas such as project management, public resource management, and information technology management, all of which are essential for meeting institutional objectives. The lack of adequate technical training directly affects staff capacity to execute key processes, resulting in delays, errors and a negative perception by beneficiary communities.

Likewise, the data suggest that there is a significant gap in the technical knowledge of the GADs' personnel, especially in the use of digital tools and updated regulations. The implementation of continuous and specific training programs for the functions performed by the staff would close this gap and substantially improve organizational performance. This finding highlights the need to align the technical knowledge of staff with the current demands of public management, which not only increases internal efficiency, but also strengthens the capacity of the GADs to face local challenges and achieve sustainable development goals.

The perceptions of the employees of the parish GADs of St. Helena province as to whether they have the technical knowledge necessary to perform their tasks efficiently. Thirty-six percent of the respondents stated that they "Strongly Agree" with this statement, which reflects that a significant portion of the personnel consider that they

have the technical competencies required for their work. Likewise, 26% "Agree", consolidating a majority (62%) who perceive themselves as technically competent, which is positive for the operability and quality of the services offered.

On the other hand, 10% of respondents take a "Neutral" position, while 15% "Disagree" and 13% "Strongly Disagree". These responses indicate that there is a significant gap in the technical training of a portion of the staff, which could be leading to inefficiencies or delays in the execution of key tasks. These findings highlight the need to design technical training programs aimed at strengthening specific employee competencies, especially in critical areas such as the use of technological tools, administrative management and project execution. Strengthening these technical competencies would significantly contribute to improving the overall performance of the GADs, aligning them with the demands of efficient public management and the fulfillment of community objectives.

The results of the study highlight that the adequate use of the tools and technologies available in the parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena is crucial to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of tasks. However, limited training of personnel in the use of basic and specialized technologies was identified, which generates underutilization of available technological resources. This situation has a negative impact on process automation, access to real-time information and data-driven decision making. The adoption of modern technologies such as administrative management systems or collaborative digital tools could significantly optimize staff performance, aligning with the demands of an increasingly digitized public environment.

The results of Illustration No.-2 describe the perception of the personnel of the parochial GADs of the province of Santa Elena regarding the frequency with which they make adequate use of the tools and technologies available. Forty-one percent of the respondents indicated that they "Almost always" use these tools effectively, which evidences a good level of technological use by a significant portion of the personnel. On the other hand, 22% indicated that they "Always" use them correctly, consolidating a total of 63% of positive responses, which is encouraging for the implementation of more efficient processes and the improvement of organizational performance.

However, 20% report that they "Sometimes" use technology appropriately, and 17% (11% "Very seldom" and 6% "Never") report a low frequency of effective use of technology. These data point to the need to strengthen digital competencies through specific training to enable staff to understand and optimally use the available technological tools. In addition, this could be related to the lack of adequate access to technological resources or insufficient familiarity with their use. Addressing these gaps would improve the internal efficiency of the GADs and optimize the quality of the services they provide to the communities.

Interpersonal skills, such as effective communication, empathy, and conflict resolution skills, play a key role in strengthening teamwork within parish-level GADs in the province of Santa Elena. These skills foster a collaborative work environment, where

teams can coordinate more efficiently and achieve organizational goals more effectively. However, it was detected that the development of these skills is insufficient among personnel, which sometimes leads to misunderstandings, lack of cohesion and difficulties in integrating ideas. Strengthening these competencies is essential to create teams that work harmoniously and productively, as highlighted by previous research in the field of public management.

The graph shows the perceptions of the staff of the parochial DAGs of the province of Santa Elena on the importance of interpersonal skills to strengthen teamwork. Forty-four percent of respondents indicated that they "Strongly agree" with this statement, while 28% indicated that they "Agree". This reflects a significant consensus (72%) on the crucial role of skills such as effective communication, empathy and conflict resolution in improving team dynamics and performance.

On the other hand, 8% adopted a "Neutral" position, while 17% and 3% indicated "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree", respectively. These minority responses could reflect the lack of formal training programs in interpersonal skills within the GADs or the perception that these skills are not adequately valued in organizational practices. Strengthening interpersonal skills through specific workshops and integration strategies could improve not only team cohesion, but also the overall effectiveness of organizational performance, aligning with local needs and institutional objectives.

The lack of interpersonal skills affects not only the relationships between team members, but also the relationship between the GADs and the communities they serve. Improving these skills would allow for greater trust and cooperation both within the organization and with community stakeholders, facilitating the achievement of common objectives and the fulfillment of local needs. The implementation of training programs in leadership, assertive communication and collaborative work is a key strategy to overcome these deficiencies. This approach would not only increase organizational productivity, but would also strengthen the capacity of the parish GADs to generate a positive impact in the communities of St. Helena.

Training-oriented actions are essential to strengthen the performance of the staff in the parish GADs of St. Helena province. Training allows staff to update their knowledge, acquire new technical competencies and develop interpersonal and adaptive skills essential for the public management context. However, the data reveal that training initiatives in many GADs are sporadic and not aligned with the specific needs of each job. This generates uneven performance among teams and affects the quality of services offered to communities. Investing in continuous training programs is essential to overcome these limitations and ensure that personnel are prepared to respond to the current demands of public management.

The perceptions of the staff of the parochial subdistrict governments of St. Helena province on the importance of training as a means to strengthen their performance. A 40.51% of the respondents indicated that they "Strongly Agree", and 22.78% expressed

"Agree", which constitutes a 63.29% positive consensus on the need for training programs to improve their job skills and competencies. This underscores the relevance of designing and implementing continuous training initiatives that respond to the specific needs of personnel in key areas such as technical management, interpersonal skills and use of technologies.

However, 13.92% were "Neutral", while 16.46% and 6.33% indicated "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree", respectively. These results evidence that, although the majority recognizes the importance of training, a significant portion of staff may not be experiencing the direct benefits of these activities, either due to a lack of adequate programs, a poorly customized approach, or a low perception of the applicability of the knowledge acquired. To address this disparity, GADs should structure training plans based on specific competencies, accompanied by evaluation indicators that allow measuring their impact on organizational performance and the quality of public services. This will not only optimize individual performance, but will also contribute to the integral development of the communities served.

Training not only improves individual competencies, but also fosters an organizational culture of learning and continuous improvement. Parish governments that implement strategic training plans have shown higher levels of efficiency and organizational cohesion, which has a direct impact on citizens' perception of the effectiveness of public services. Therefore, it is crucial to establish regular training programs focused on key areas such as the use of technologies, project management and citizen attention. These actions will not only strengthen the individual and collective performance of personnel, but will also contribute to the fulfillment of institutional objectives and the sustainable development of Santa Elena's communities.

Internal processes are a determining factor in strengthening efficiency and minimizing the waste of time and resources in the parish governments of the province of Santa Elena. Adequate planning, standardization and optimization of these processes allows tasks to be carried out in a more agile manner and with less margin for error, which increases organizational productivity. However, deficiencies were identified in the structure of some key processes, such as the management of administrative procedures and interdepartmental coordination, which generates delays and cost overruns. Implementing continuous improvement methodologies, such as the Lean approach or process management, would contribute significantly to maximizing efficiency and optimizing the use of resources.

Staff training in the management of internal processes and the use of modern technological tools is crucial to ensure their effectiveness. The GADs that have implemented digital systems for process automation have reported a notable reduction in response times and an improvement in organizational transparency. These advances not only strengthen citizen confidence in public management, but also create a more structured and efficient work environment. Therefore, it is essential to design and

implement process improvement strategies that involve all levels of the organization, aligning internal objectives with community needs and sustainable development goals. The graph shows that 52.05% of respondents "Strongly Agree" and 32.88% "Agree" that well-managed internal processes are a key factor in strengthening efficiency and minimizing waste of time and resources in the parish governments of the province of Santa Elena. This represents a majority consensus (84.93%) on the importance of improving the structuring and execution of internal processes to optimize organizational performance. These results highlight that by implementing tools and methodologies that standardize operations, productivity can be maximized and a more efficient use of available resources can be ensured.

On the other hand, 8.22% expressed a "Neutral" position, while 4.11% and 2.74% expressed "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree", respectively. These percentages, although lower, reflect some employees' perceptions of possible shortcomings in the implementation of internal processes or a lack of direct connection between procedural improvements and their daily functions. To address these concerns, GADs should invest in training for staff in process management and promote an organizational culture oriented toward continuous improvement. This will not only increase internal efficiency, but also allow for more agile public service delivery aligned with the needs of communities.

A culture of innovation and adaptation among employees is a critical factor in strengthening the performance of parish GADs in St. Helena Province. This approach fosters a dynamic work environment, where employees are willing to experiment with new strategies, adopt emerging technologies and respond proactively to changing challenges. However, it was identified that, in many cases, the current organizational culture lacks incentives for innovation and does not sufficiently promote adaptability in the face of regulatory and social changes. The implementation of programs that value and reward innovative initiatives would contribute to create a more flexible and resilient organization, capable of facing the demands of contemporary public management.

According to the surveys conducted, 49.32% of the respondents "Strongly Agree" and 26.03% "Agree" that the culture of innovation and adaptation is a key factor to strengthen the performance of personnel in the parochial GADs of the province of Santa Elena. Overall, 75.35% of the responses reflect a strong consensus on the importance of fostering these practices to address organizational challenges and respond efficiently to community needs. This suggests that most employees perceive that an innovative and adaptive work environment is essential to improve the quality of public services and promote continuous learning within the institution.

On the other hand, 10.96% adopted a "Neutral" position, while 5.48% and 8.22% expressed "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree", respectively. These figures indicate that while the majority values innovation and adaptability, a minority may not experience these practices in their current work environment or perceive their direct relevance.

To address this gap, GADs should implement strategies that foster creativity, flexibility, and collaborative decision-making, such as change management training programs, innovation workshops, and dialogue spaces to develop joint solutions to community problems. This would not only strengthen individual and collective performance, but also align institutional operations with sustainable development goals.

A culture of innovation and adaptation not only positively impacts operational efficiency, but also improves employee motivation and commitment. Employees who feel empowered to propose and lead innovative initiatives experience greater job satisfaction, which reinforces organizational cohesion. To strengthen this culture, parish GADs could integrate training focused on creativity, problem solving and change management, as well as encourage co-creation spaces where employees work together to develop solutions to community problems.

The proposed model MGCGPSE - 2024, is a metamodel of its own authorship that has the name by its acronym identified as: Competency-Based Management Model for Parish GADs of the province of Santa Elena, developed in the year 2024. The purpose of the competency-based management model is to strengthen the capacities of personnel in parish GADs, ensuring that their competencies are aligned with local needs and strategic objectives. This model integrates seven key factors that promote continuous training, periodic evaluation and sustained improvement, adapting to the particularities of each parish.

The MGCGPSE - 2024 Model is conceived as a strategic tool to strengthen institutional capacity and improve the quality of public services offered to citizens. This model aims to align the labor competencies of personnel with the strategic objectives of each parish GAD, considering the socioeconomic and cultural particularities of the region. To this end, the model proposes a comprehensive approach that combines the identification of key competencies, continuous training, systematic evaluation and constant feedback to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in public management.

The design of the MGCGPSE - 2024 is based on the identification of core competencies covering three main categories: basic competencies, necessary for general functions such as effective communication and digital literacy; generic competencies, related to cross-cutting skills such as leadership, teamwork and problem solving; and specific competencies, which vary according to the roles and technical functions of each area within the parish GAD. This approach allows customizing development and training plans, ensuring that staff are prepared to face local challenges and actively contribute to community development.

The MGCGPSE 2024 is a comprehensive and flexible model that recognizes the particularities of St. Helena's parish governments. Its implementation will strengthen institutional capacity to face complex challenges, ensuring efficient and sustainable public management. This model can be replicated in other local contexts to maximize its impact.

The key factors of the model are described below:

1. **Identification of Competencies:** This process involves determining the basic, generic and specific competencies required for each position, considering the particularities of the local environment and the strategic objectives of the institution. Through participatory diagnostics, interviews and analysis of functions, the skills, knowledge and attitudes that personnel need to perform their roles efficiently and respond to the needs of the community are defined.

2. **Design of Competency Profiles:** The design of competency profiles is essential to ensure orderly and effective personnel management. These profiles specify the technical, cross-cutting and attitudinal skills needed for each position, ensuring alignment between individual capabilities and the requirements of the parish government.

3. **Continuous Training:** This is a key component of MGCGPSE 2024, designed to keep personnel updated and prepared to face the challenges of the work environment and community demands. Through the design of customized programs, practical workshops and the use of technological tools, constant learning is fostered that strengthens both technical and cross-cutting competencies. This approach ensures that civil servants can adapt to the changing needs of the parish government, promoting efficiency and innovation in public management.

4. **Performance Evaluation:** It allows measuring the impact of personnel competencies on the fulfillment of institutional objectives. In the MGCGPSE 2024 model, this process is carried out using tools such as key performance indicators (KPIs), 360-degree evaluations and self-evaluations, which provide a comprehensive view of individual and collective performance. This evaluation not only identifies strengths and areas for improvement, but also becomes a solid basis for making decisions about training and professional development.

5. **Individual Improvement Plans:** Individual improvement plans are personalized strategies designed based on the results of the performance evaluation. These plans aim to close competency gaps, establishing clear goals and specific actions for the professional development of personnel. Through these plans, the team's commitment to their own growth is encouraged, aligning their performance with the parish government's strategic goals and strengthening their capacity to face local challenges.

6. **Use of Management Technologies:** The use of management technologies is an indispensable pillar of the MGCGPSE 2024 model, as it allows optimizing training, monitoring and evaluation processes. Learning management platforms (LMS) and online tracking systems facilitate access to training resources, real-time performance monitoring and data-driven decision making. This digital approach promotes efficiency, transparency and adaptability in the management of human talent in parish GADs.

7. **Feedback and Continuous Improvement:** Feedback and continuous improvement ensure that the MGCGPSE 2024 model is dynamic and adaptive. This factor includes the

implementation of regular feedback cycles with staff and the community, promoting timely adjustments to training plans, competency profiles and evaluation methods. Incorporating suggestions and experiences allows the model to evolve, ensuring that it responds effectively to emerging challenges and strengthens the capacity of the GADs to meet their local development objectives.

The Competency-Based Management Model for Parish Councils of St. Helena Province (MGCGPSE 2024) represents a strategic and comprehensive tool to strengthen institutional capacity and the quality of public services offered to the community. Its focus on the precise identification of competencies, the design of clear profiles, the implementation of continuous training, rigorous performance evaluation, and the use of management technologies, ensures that parish administration staff are prepared to face the specific challenges of their local environment.

In addition, the incorporation of individual improvement plans and a constant cycle of feedback and continuous improvement ensures that this model is dynamic, adaptable and sustainable over time. The MGCGPSE 2024 not only contributes to the professional development of civil servants, but also strengthens transparency, efficiency and citizen confidence in public management, positioning itself as a fundamental pillar for the progress and sustainable development of the parishes of St. Helena.

The results of the study show that technical competencies are fundamental to guarantee operational efficiency in the parish governments of the province of Santa Elena. These competencies, related to project management, resource management and the execution of administrative processes, were highlighted as determining factors in the quality of the public services offered. However, significant gaps were identified in the technical training of personnel, which limits effectiveness in key areas such as territorial planning and citizen services. These findings coincide with previous studies that highlight the need to strengthen technical skills in the public sector to improve organizational performance (Fernández & Gómez, 2023; Cruz, 2021).

The analysis also highlights the importance of interpersonal skills, such as effective communication, leadership and teamwork. These skills are essential to strengthen relationships internally among work teams and externally with the communities that parish GADs serve. However, the data revealed a lack of formal programs to develop these competencies, which affects organizational cohesion and the capacity of parish GADs to respond to the demands of the population. Studies such as those by Tapia (2022) and Bravo and Torres (2019) highlight that interpersonal competencies are pillars in efficient public management.

The study shows that adaptive competencies, such as problem solving and innovative capacity, are critical in a context characterized by budgetary constraints and frequent regulatory changes. However, it was observed that these competencies are not actively promoted in most parish governments. This lack limits institutional flexibility and the capacity to implement improvements in public management. The findings are consistent

with research that emphasizes adaptability as a key competency to face the complexities of the public sector (Londoño & Ramírez, 2022; Ortega & Benítez, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Both technical and transversal labor competencies have a direct impact on the performance of the personnel of the parochial subdistrict governments of the province of Santa Elena. These competencies not only facilitate the effective execution of assigned tasks, but also promote alignment between the skills of employees and the strategic needs of the institutions, improving efficiency in the provision of public services.

One of the main challenges in the parish GADs is the lack of structured training programs and evaluation of labor competencies. This situation limits the professional development of personnel and reduces their capacity to adapt to the demands of a constantly changing local environment. Strengthening these areas is essential to optimize performance and achieve more effective and transparent public management.

It is necessary to implement comprehensive strategies that include the identification, evaluation and development of labor competencies in parish GADs. These strategies should be based on a participatory diagnosis and the use of technological tools that allow for continuous performance monitoring. In addition, the importance of promoting an organizational culture focused on continuous improvement as a basis for achieving local development objectives and strengthening citizen confidence in public management is emphasized.

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