

## CHARACTERIZATION OF SOFT SKILLS IN THE BRAZILIAN JUDICIARY: PROFILE OF JUSTICE SERVERS

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## Abstract

The Judiciary acts strictly according to norms and principles in compliance with a set of rules and principles aimed at ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and the maintenance of the Rule of Law. Thus, the demand for specific technical knowledge of its professionals, the Hard Skills, predominates. On the other hand, there is evidence that other competencies interfere with performance, associated with intangible personal and behavioral attributes, the Soft Skills, such as critical thinking and leadership. The present study aimed to verify the profile of Soft Skills in Justice servers based on fourteen variables that make up the conceptual model chosen. To reach the research goal, 97 servers participated in the investigation and the information collected was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results generated an understanding of the Soft Skills profile in the researched organization. The study showed that the respondents consider themselves to be reliable professionals, organized, with appropriate attitudes, and zealous in complying with the institution's rules. However, they declared that they end up doing activities that interfere with their work, because they have difficulty saying "no", besides declaring problems in controlling the important parts of their life. It was concluded in this work that the Justice servers consulted have a high level of Situational Awareness and Responsibility, at the same time that they recognized difficulties with Time Management and Management and stress resistance.

**Keywords:** Soft Skills. Judiciary. Public Organization.

## 1 Introduction

Organizations are social elements and are embedded in people's lives, as noted by Etzioni (1989) when he states that one is born and dies within organizations, whether public or private. Thus, the functioning of organizations depends on organizational performance, which works aligned with the organizations' objectives. Within this context, Meyer Jr. (2007) notes that for progress in management and operating methods to occur, there is a need for the development of organizational expertise, particularly considering individuals.

It is worth noting that the judiciary has different goals and processes for commercial firms, which are focused on increasing productivity and reducing bottom lines. Still, there is a connection between what are inherently inefficient open justice processes and the institutional legitimacy of the judiciary means that notions of efficiency relevant to market activities are inappropriate when applied to judicial administration (Blackham, 2019).

Marras (2016) comments that in today's world, promoting only the technical skills of organizations' employees is no longer a strategy that works, which seems to lead organizations to seek investments in intellectual capital and human resources as a way to improve performance, with the valorization of Soft Skills being pertinent in these strategies.

According to Etzioni (1989), modern society always seeks efficiency and rationality in the execution of services, even though there are non-objective factors for organizations to develop, as indicated by Deming (2017), who refers to this as "non-cognitive skills" imputing to them the driving character of success in adulthood.

However, the term social skills itself reveals a lack of understanding of what these skills are, how to measure them, and whether, and how, they can be developed. And the term "non-cognitive" is used simply to mean "not objectively predicted" (Deming, 2017).

Silva, Neto, and Gritti (2020), in turn, understand in these "non-cognitive skills", which in this study are called Soft Skills, have a major impact concerning the use of employees within work teams, generating positive impacts on all hierarchical levels. When such understanding is observed together with the reality of the judiciary and its extensive hierarchical chain and several sectors that have a relationship to perform work together, this positive impact becomes even more expressive and necessary to favor the work in the sectors.

In this sense, the relevance of deepening the understanding of Soft Skills from an approach still little addressed in specialized literature, therefore in the Judiciary, is verified. In addition to offering conceptual and empirical contributions to this research gap, this work aims to offer relevant information to researchers and those interested in the area.

## 2 Review Of The Literature

This section covers the theoretical background that underlies this study, addressing: the origin of the term "competence" and its meanings, characterization of Soft Skills and Soft Skills and the Judiciary.

### 2.1 The origin of the term "competence" and its meanings

The origin of the term "competence" comes from Latin and means "capacity", proportion, suitability, and also the ability one has to appreciate or solve problems. Historical records mention that its use first occurred in the fifteenth century, referring to the legitimacy and authority of bodies, such as courts, to deal with certain legal issues (Sousa, 2020).

In this way, the term "competence" for Judicial matters was bound, initially, to refer to authorities and their acts, implying that a certain court, tribunal, or individual was competent to execute a certain sentence (Ramos & Bento, 2016).

Assunção and Goulart (2016) comment that the concept of competence in the organizational parameter was much more related to technical skills, systematic knowledge, and certificates of vocational courses, all important factors at the time to ensure a qualified human resource and ability to perform the tasks assigned by the organization, a reality that is amplified considering the context to which this concept of competence was inserted, where professionals performed repetitive processes in large industries, and where productivity was based on speed and accuracy of mechanical work, not intellectual.

Still, in the 70s and 80s, competence seems to have started a transformation where the understanding that other personal characteristics of individuals, in addition to formal qualifications, could be responsible for enabling work above the expected standard, and, in this concept, although technical competence was still summarily valued, the skills directly linked to the personality of employees began to be considered as essential to expand results of certain tasks (Andrade, 2016).

Martins (2017) evaluates that, nowadays, organizations seek to compose differentials through their employees' skills, which are not always technical, since only technical skills do not guarantee the best performance in performing tasks, but also coordination, ethics, communication, and even group work skills, which can be considered personal skills and inherent to the individual's professional and personal development, also called Soft Skills.

Dutra (2002) complements indicating that, currently, professional competencies can be summarized as the capabilities that a person has to devote himself entirely to the development of a task, added to the technical qualification that this person has to perform the same. The author also considers that these competencies are not limited to technical knowledge, but are merged with the set of skills acquired and developed throughout the employee's professional life.

Carbone et al. (2009) also consider that when assessing professional competencies it is important to consider the behavioral patterns that are desired and expected from employees so that this behavioral aspect also generates a certain influence on the organizational environment, and they also emphasize the importance of considering different contexts for performing the tasks assigned to employees, to assess whether their skills and attitudes in various situations will correspond to what the organization needs, and whether these personal characteristics will hinder or enhance the application of their technical skills in a particular function.

Santos and Primi (2014) further consider an organizational theory that involves five independent factors in the personal competencies of an organization's employees, called the Big Five Theory, the authors describe this as follows

The Big Five are latent constructs obtained by factor analysis performed on responses to large questionnaires with diversified questions about behaviors representative of all the personality traits an individual might have. When applied to people from different cultures and at different points in time, these questionnaires were shown to have the same latent factor structure, giving rise to the hypothesis that the personality traits of human beings would effectively group around five big domains (Santos & Primi, 2014, p. 16).

When the authors refer to the five major domains, these can be understood as a set of factors related to the individual's personality and personal development, along with characteristics of these factors, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1 - Big Five Theory Domains and their characteristics

| Domains of the <i>Big Five</i> theory | Features  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Openness to new experiences           | Tendency to be available to new experiences, whether of an aesthetic, intellectual, or cultural nature. Characteristics that define an individual with this dimension: artistic, imaginative, curious, and sensorially sensitive.         |
| Kindness                              | Willingness to act cooperatively. Characteristics that define an individual with this dimension: friendly, altruistic, tolerant, modest, and empathetic.  |
| Awareness                             | Tendency to be organized, hardworking, and responsible. Characteristics that define an individual with this dimension: autonomous, disciplined, efficient, ambitious, work ethic, and persevering.  |
| Emotional Stability                   | Tendency to be more emotionally balanced and consistency of emotional reactions. Characteristics that define an individual with this dimension: balanced, sociable, "light", empathic, self-evaluation, self-esteem, and optimistic.      |
| Extroversion                          | Tendency to be a person with interests in the external world, available for people. Characteristics that define an individual with this dimension: self-confident, energetic, enthusiastic, adventurous, friendly, and positive attitude. |

Source: adapted from Santos and Primi (2014).

Considering what Assunção and Goulart (2016) comment about technological development, and the inherent instability situations of today, demanding increasingly fast and precise actions from an organization's employees, Soft Skills, also known as transversal competencies, seem to be more and more necessary so that employees can have not only the technical ability to perform established functions, but that they can perform these functions even in unfavorable situations, in a stable manner, both in relation to their social and behavioral aspects within the organization, and this influences from the hiring of the employee, to the appreciation of this by the organization.

Andrade (2016) further concludes on the importance of Soft Skills when, in a study interviewing managers of various organizations, he found that, in most cases, employees are dismissed not for their technical skills in performing the assigned functions, but for their behavioral characteristics, when these do not reflect the values and ethical aspects of the organization to which this employee belongs.

## 2.2 Soft Skills Characterization

Camelo et al. (2022) indicate that there is a divergence in the understanding of what would be Soft Skills, although there is acceptance for its origin, the definition of skills (Skills). Therefore, the "prerequisites of having and accessing certain knowledge, processes or behavior sequences that lead to a specific performance. However, for something to be considered a skill, it must contain an element of action." (Matteson, Anderson, & Doyden, 2016, p. 73)

In this context, Soft Skills are competencies related to the behavior and personality of each individual (World Bank, 2018). These skills include social, emotional, and mental abilities that can be improved with the development of the individual, being these skills directly connected with social interaction and how this person is extreme in the work environment, but also how he or she reacts to the different situations to which he or she is exposed. These skills are learned throughout the individual's life, coming from the family, school, academic, professional, and personal environment (World Bank, 2018; Camelo et al., 2022).

Andrade (2016), in turn, suggests that the concept of Soft Skills refers to the set of behaviors arising from the personality traits of individuals and whether these behaviors are stimulated, or not, by the context in which each individual is inserted in their professional activities, and with the stimuli they may receive during the development of their activities. The author, however, also considers that professional training also directly influences the formation of the personality of individuals, but not in a technical way, but in a way that the experiences during their training can bring relevant personal aspects to the set of Soft Skills.

While Viana (2015) characterizes Soft Skills as a set of characteristics that represent a differential in interpersonal communication and assertiveness in decisions that generates satisfaction for the employees of an organization and decreases their turnover rate. In parallel, Silva, Neto, and Gritti (2020) consider that these Soft Skills generate good use of employees within a work team in the organization, since Soft Skills improve interpersonal relationships, which in turn improve communication in the sectors, and generate positive impacts on all hierarchical levels since it also involves the ability to resolve conflicts and the potential for intelligent leadership.

Silva and Nakano (2011) also consider the importance of Soft Skills because they are skills directly related to the personality traits of individuals, which modify their behavior in various scenarios that arise within an organization and, in this context, are the main condition for defining the competence of a professional who performs well in the workplace, and can be considered a valuable resource for the organization.

After delimiting what Soft Skills are, it is also important to understand the contrast, and also the complementary characteristic between Soft Skills, which, as already presented, are personal skills and concern the experiences and behaviors of individuals, and Hard Skills, which can be considered the technical skills that are the basic requirement necessary for the professional to act in the position to which he/she is making himself/herself available, and that deal directly with the operational and formal aspects of the job, which are usually improved through formal academic courses and experiences (Robles, 2012).

Costa (2015) further indicates that Soft Skills represent characteristics and skills that can be enhanced over time, which indicates that individuals can develop their soft skills during their experience as employees in an organization. Although characteristics such as communication and interpersonal skills constitute the individual's character, which are natural characteristics, they can still be enhanced through personal development (Costa, 2015, p. 14).

Goleman (1995) already indicated that there is a need to adapt to the constant developments and changes observed in the organizational context, and, for this, the author observes emotional intelligence as the key to adaptation, since he considers that people with more developed emotional skills end up excelling in the professional environment, because they feel more efficient and satisfied with their respective functions, and, consequently, increase their productivity in the assigned functions.

### 2.3 Soft Skills and the Judiciary

Andrade (2016) describes the Judiciary as one of the three main classical powers, which has an autonomous power and independence of fundamental importance for the Rule of Law in Brazilian society, and which has as its main functions not only the administration of justice, but also to protect, and foster the Brazilian Constitution.

Liedke (2006) observes the work environment in organs of the judiciary as an organizational structure that can be understood as an "arena of struggles". A constant and intense hierarchical context, and the lack of access of civil servants to the highest ranks of the hierarchy, generate a serious restriction with regard to the valorization of civil servants as individuals, a factor that, even if it is appeased by the proximity that can be observed between civil servants and their immediate bosses, in the general picture contributes little to the improvement of working conditions and the valorization of the civil servant as an essential resource for the maintenance of justice in the organs of the Judiciary.

Andrade (2016) still indicates, even so, that even the work relations in the labor context of the Judiciary are still guided by plenty of bureaucracy, authoritarianism, rigidity, and control inherent to a system rooted in an almost overly hierarchical context, and this reality generates the intense work environment, of uncomfortable relationships, and little individualization and valuation of the Soft Skills of the server as a whole.

In this context, the employees seem to face a work environment that urgently needs changes, because it represents an environment of constant pressure, and an increasing volume of tasks and overloads in an environment where communication, social interaction, and valorization of ideas, opinions, and Soft Skills of the employees occur in an extremely bureaucratic and uncomfortable way. And to deal with this context, the servers still seek a communication of resistance, a kind of solidarity bond for the critical situation, which is based mainly on communication and empathy skills but only softens a problem that still needs a solution (Maia, 2014).

Mattos (2021) further complements with the understanding that the constant growth of judicial demands has generated a saturated Judiciary, with very limited efficiency, and promotion of a litigation culture that ends up generating not only distrust by the population, but also a work environment that is not very productive for the servers, and not very motivating. The author believes that part of this problem may be related to the lack of appreciation of Soft Skills related to conflict resolution and communication, which could be used to make the Judiciary faster and more efficient, and less bureaucratic.

Still following a pessimistic line of reasoning, Severino et al. (2016) also attribute the lack of appreciation of Soft Skills to difficulties even in the implementation of new projects and processes, such as the example of the electronic process, which is often used inappropriately generating serious problems and significant delays in the development of this innovation, often due to a lack of incentive that servers can often feel about Soft Skills such as the ability to adapt.

In the same way, the soft skills related to leadership and conflict resolution could be of extreme help in the context of the employees, because if Liedke (2006) indicates that employees, in general, have easy access to their immediate supervisors, it would be of great importance that these supervisors could lead the employees and assume responsibilities concerning the search for more favorable working conditions, including taking advantage of the easier access to their superiors and developing their conflict resolution skills to improve the efficiency and operational routine of the sector.

It is important to emphasize again that, according to the perspective observed, it is possible to seek ways to solve a series of problems experienced by the Judiciary's servers through the encouragement and valorization of Soft Skills, which can very easily represent an improvement factor not only deserved, but necessary to guarantee a more adequate work environment for the servers.

### 3 Methodological Procedures

To achieve the research objective, which is to examine the soft skills profile of justice system employees based on the conceptual model proposed by Souza (2020), Table 2. This study employs a combined qualitative and quantitative approach. The qualitative aspect aims to explain an event from the participant's perspective, while the quantitative aspect allows for the objective measurement of data collected through the research instruments (Creswell, 2007).

Table 2 - Questions that compose the dimensions of the research instrument

| Dimension                    | Explanation (ability/capacity to)  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Assertiveness                | Express opinions, desires and needs in an appropriate and timely manner, without aggressiveness or passivity.  |
| Oral communication           | Express oneself fluently and effectively through spoken words in various contexts and audiences.   |
| Confidence                   | Belief in oneself, in one's abilities and potential, as well as in one's values and principles, without being arrogant or excessively self-critical. |
| Situational awareness        | Perceive and understand the environment and the circumstances in which one operates, anticipating changes and adapting to new situations.            |
| Flexibility and adaptability | Adapt to changing situations, be open to new ideas and experiences, and remain effective despite stress, ambiguity, or uncertainty.                  |
| Time management              | Organize and prioritize tasks and activities in order to maximize productivity and meet deadlines.   |
| Stress management            | Cope with stress, pressure, and adversities in a healthy and constructive way, without compromising one's well-being or performance.                 |
| Leadership                   | Guide, inspire, and influence others towards common goals, promoting their development and engagement.   |
| Critical thinking            | Analyze and evaluate information, ideas, and arguments objectively and logically, to form well-supported conclusions and make sound decisions.       |
| Interpersonal relations      | Interact effectively and respectfully with others, building relationships based on trust, empathy, and collaboration.                                |
| Problem-solving capability   | Identify, analyze, and solve complex problems, applying creativity, logical reasoning, and systematic approaches.                                    |
| Responsibility               | Willingness to take ownership of one's actions, decisions, and their consequences, being accountable and reliable.                                   |
| Decision-making capability   | Make informed and rational decisions, based on accurate information and objective criteria, taking into account the consequences and risks.          |
| Teamwork capability          | Collaborate and contribute effectively to the achievement of shared goals, communicating, cooperating, and respecting others.                        |

Source: Sousa (2020).

After the gathering of bibliographic content about the theme and the methodological definitions, a field study was conducted with the approach of servers of the Judiciary of Pernambuco, who answered an individual questionnaire, shared electronically. Regarding the temporal context of

the work, a sectional context was delimited, comprising the reality observed at the time of the research.

The chosen model involved 52 questions, which represent fourteen dimensions of Soft Skills: Assertiveness, Oral communication, Confidence, Situational awareness, Flexibility and adaptability, Time management, Stress management and resistance, Leadership, Critical thinking, Interpersonal relations, Problem-solving ability, Responsibility, Decision-making ability, and Teamwork. The questions were collected using a survey instrument, sent electronically. The measurement scale involved a Likert scale, with the possibility of a response ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree").

The sample was chosen by convenience and a deadline was set for answering the questionnaires, between November 1st and 30th, 2021, and 104 answered the questionnaire within the proposed deadline. The 97 instruments were considered valid, therefore, only the professionals working at the Forum Desembargador Rodolfo Aureliano - Recife PE, who identified themselves as such at the beginning of the research.

The data collected was analyzed descriptively, also considering centrality measures, in particular, Mean, Correlation Coefficient, dispersion and standard deviation. Model reliability was checked with Cronbach's Alpha.

#### 4 Analysis And Discussion Of The Results

To increase the understanding of the issues investigated in this paper, in this subitem the demographic information of the respondents is presented.

Among the respondents there was a predominance of the biological sex Female, 59.8% of the sample. This level is lower than what occurs in the total number of servers in the national Judiciary, according to the Judiciary Census (2019, p.112), which mentions that, of the 8,406 servers working in the judiciary, 5,137 are women (61.1% of the total).

Complementing the previous information, the study sought to identify whether there were among the respondents who identify with a gender different from their birth, and one of the respondents declared to be a trans woman, according to Table 3.

Table 3 - Gender of the respondents

| Identification Sex | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Female             | 59        | 60,8       |
| Female (trans)     | 1         | 1,0        |
| Male               | 37        | 38,2       |
| Total              | 97        | 100%       |

Source: survey data (2022).

Regarding the age range of the respondents, there was a concentration of frequency between 45 and 64 years old (73.2%), Table 4.



Table 4 - Respondents' age range

| Age (years) | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| 18-24       | 1         | 1,0        |
| 25-34       | 4         | 4,1        |
| 35-44       | 15        | 15,5       |
| 45-54       | 28        | 28,9       |
| 55-64       | 43        | 44,3       |
| 65-74       | 6         | 6,2        |
| 75 or more  | 0         | 0,9        |
| Total       | 97        | 100%       |

Source: survey data (2022).

Among the respondents, 81.4% are civil servants, according to Table 5. Although the magistrates (judges) were invited to participate in the survey, none responded to the instrument.

Table 5 - Professional category of respondents in the Judiciary

| Age (years)         | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Servidor concursado | 79        | 81,4       |
| Third-Party Server  | 18        | 18,6       |
| Magistrate          | 0         | 0,0        |
| Total               | 97        | 100%       |

Source: survey data (2022).

Considering the data collected, and the identification of transversal competencies, Soft Skills, predominant in servers of the Judiciary, we verified the prevalence of respondents who are permanent employees, women, aged between 45 and 64 years old, married, and who have completed college education. Predominantly the public employees consulted had studied Administration and Law, although the list includes other 21 higher education courses. It is worth pointing out that, still regarding education, 44% of the respondents not only completed higher education but also advanced their studies and specialized (*lato sensu*). Another 19.6% of the sample concluded post-graduate studies at the master's level (*stricto sensu*). Regarding the respondents' length of service, more than half have 26 or more years.

It is also worth noting that, out of the 52 questions in the model, 45 had responses concentrated within the agreed-upon range, accounting for 86.5% of the total. In terms of agreement, the highest frequencies were found in question 32 - "I see myself as a reliable professional," with 97.9%, which is part of the "Situational Awareness" dimension; questions 12 - "I strive to perform tasks in accordance with the organization's precepts," with 94.8%, and 40 - "I endeavor to act appropriately in my organization," with 94.8%, both belonging to the "Responsibility" dimension.

Among the seven questions with a concentration of disagreement, the highest proportion of respondents was found in question 43 - "I feel like a person who tends to be disorganized," which is a component of the "Situational Awareness" dimension.

In other words, the respondents perceive themselves as reliable professionals who are organized, demonstrate appropriate attitudes, and are diligent in adhering to the institution's rules.

#### 4.1 Reliability Test per Investigated Model

The reliability test presented in Table 6 demonstrates that, when dividing the questions by the investigated dimensions, reliability remains significant. In thirteen of the dimensions, the consistency of the questions is "very good," and in the one that stands out, "Management and Stress Resistance," the consistency is "excellent."

Therefore, the questions in the research instrument possess a high capacity to address the objectives of the study, both collectively and by individual dimensions. It was not necessary to eliminate any questions to achieve a high level of construct reliability, although this was a possibility suggested by Loesch and Hoetgebaum (2012).

Table 6 - Reliability test of the investigated model

| Soft Skills - Researcher Model   | Questions - Existing Models                                       | Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Assertiveness                    | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,896                         |
| Oral Communication               | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,897                         |
| Trust                            | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,898                         |
| Situational Awareness            | Oliver et al. (1999); Sousa (2020)                                | 0,896                         |
| Flexibility and adaptability     | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,895                         |
| Time Management                  | García-ros, Pérez-González and Hinojosa (2016); Sousa (2020)      | 0,895                         |
| Stress management and resilience | Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein (1983); Cohen (1994); Sousa (2020) | 0,902                         |
| Leadership                       | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,896                         |
| Critical Thinking                | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,895                         |
| Interpersonal relationships      | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,896                         |
| Problem solving ability          | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,893                         |
| Responsibility                   | Sousa (2020)  | 0,895                         |
| Decision-making ability          | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,894                         |
| Teamwork                         | Rouco (2012); Sousa (2020)  | 0,895                         |

Source: Own elaboration (2022).

## 5 Final Considerations

The present study examined the soft skills present among employees of the Judiciary, focusing on the self-perceptions of staff members at the Forum Desembargador Rodolfo Aureliano in Pernambuco, Brazil. The collected sample showed a predominance of female respondents aged between 45 and 64, married, and with completed college education. Most respondents had studied Business Administration and Law.

It is worth noting that, of the 52 questions surveyed, 45 had a concentration of responses within the agreement range. In this aspect of agreement, the highest frequencies occurred in three distinct variables: (1) respondents' self-perception of being "a professionally reliable person," which is part of the "Situational Awareness" dimension; (2) discipline in performing tasks according to the organization's precepts; and (3) personal pursuit of acting appropriately within the organization, both components of the "Responsibility" dimension.

Regarding the concentration of disagreement, the highest incidence of responses occurred in the statement "I feel like a person who tends to be disorganized," a component of the "Situational Awareness" dimension. Consequently, respondents consider themselves to be organized, which is appropriate for their professional roles.

In summary, respondents perceive themselves as reliable professionals who are organized, demonstrate appropriate attitudes, and are diligent in adhering to the institution's rules.

On the other hand, the sample reported limited autonomy, which constrains their problem-solving abilities, particularly in situations with ambiguous interpretations or those not covered by existing norms. Thus, even if there is legal support for potential non-compliance or delays in deliberation, this variable emerges as a significant limiting factor within the "Problem-Solving Capacity" dimension.

Another notable aspect identified in the study pertains to the "Stress Management and Resistance" dimension, particularly the self-perception of lacking control over essential aspects of personal life. For every ten respondents, one feels in control of their own life. This finding merits further exploration in future research, especially given that the "Time Management" dimension had lower average performance than the others in the model. Due to the possibility of a relationship between variables, it is appropriate to investigate them further.

Concerning the academic and managerial contributions of this study, the findings offer insights for researchers interested in the topics addressed and inform managerial actions related to leadership and functional training, whether for Justice employees or others.

For future research, it is suggested to delve deeper into understanding personal autonomy in resolving ambiguous situations or those not accounted for in the current normative order. Another relevant aspect concerns the absence of magistrates in the sample. Although invited, judges did not participate in this study. Investigating the soft skills profile among magistrates could yield valuable information. Lastly, it is important to further examine the control civil servants have over their own lives, given the low results for this variable in the present study.

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