

Professional qualifications and working competence of Vietnamese civil servants

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Abstract: The local authorities are divided into different levels in each country, of which the authorities at the lowest level are often called the grassroots authorities or defined in Vietnam as commune-level authorities. At the grassroots level, civil servants keep the role as direct implementers of state management tasks in localities and directly resolve people's requests. Therefore, the public duty performance results of civil servants are not only meaningful to the civil servants themselves in the sense that their professional qualifications and duty performance competence are clearly demonstrated, but also confirm their state agencies' efficiency and reputation. In this study, the theoretical framework on the influence of professional qualifications and duty performance competence on civil servants' duty performance results has been developed; Practical assessment of professional qualifications, duty performance competence and duty performance results of local commune-level civil servants in Vietnam are carried out through a survey of the opinions of 300 managers at commune-level authorities in 5 major provinces representing 3 regions of Vietnam: Thai Nguyen province, Thai Binh province (Northern region), Quang Ngai province (Central region), Tien Giang province, Hau Giang province (Southern region). Results from the survey show that duty performance competence of commune-level civil servants are not highly appreciated by their managers, even though they meet requirements of professional qualifications in terms of rank and position standards regulated by laws. The findings suggest policy adjustments to promote civil servants' professional qualifications in practice so that Vietnamese local civil servants are capable of meeting the requirements of serving the people.

Keywords: Commune – level civil servants, Duty performance competence, Duty performance results, Local authorities, Professional qualifications,

1. Introduction

Local authorities are organized in 3-level local administrative units in Vietnam: provincial level (63 provincial-level administrative units), district level (705 district-level administrative units), and commune level (10.599 commune-level administrative units) [GSO, 2023]. Vietnam's three-level local authorities are organized and operated with The People's Council (the state power agency, established by electors for a 5-year term) and The People's Committee (the state administrative agency, established by the People's Council at the same level with the corresponding term) [VNA, 2015].

The commune-level civil servants working for belonging to The People's Committee in communes, wards, commune – level towns are categorized into 6 job titles in accordance with 6 sectors they take in charge of: Commander of the commune military command; Clerical – statistics civil servants; Cadastre - construction - urban and environment civil servants (for wards and, towns)/or Cadastre - agriculture - construction - urban and environment civil servants (for communes); Finance and accounting civil servants; Judicial - civil status public servants; Social and cultural civil servants [VG, 2023]. Due to differences in topographical, cultural, economic and social characteristics among regions, there are

certain differences in the level of professional qualifications and working competence of commune-level civil servants across the country. Public duty performance appraisal is carried out annually in accordance with the provisions of law, relating to 4 levels of working performance: (1) Successfully complete the assigned task; (2) Well complete the assigned task; (3) Complete the assigned task; (4) Fail to complete the assigned tasks [VG, 2020].

According to general assessment, the majority of local civil servants have professional qualifications as required by their ranks and job positions; The majority of civil servants are annually evaluated for completing and well completing their assigned tasks. However, there is still a large difference between the professional qualifications and the duty performance competence of commune – level civil servants in practice. This issue is not only much of concern to sectoral managers and local leaders but also of interest to the author in this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Civil Servants' Professional Qualifications and Working Competence

The professional qualifications of civil servants, having been studied in different researches, refer to the knowledge, skills, and expertise that each individual are taught and trained before being recruited as a civil servant [Anh, K.Q., 2022]; continues to be updated and supplemented by civil servants during their practical work [Thang, N.T. et al., 2023]. According to this approach, before each individual becomes a civil servant, they must undergo training and retraining to achieve appropriate professional qualifications, meeting the standards of civil servant ranks and job positions according to law. At the same time, when individuals become civil servants, they have the obligation to self-study to update and supplement knowledge and skills to improve their professional qualifications and meet the requirements of public service activities.

In terms of theoretical research, this study is in line with the previous approaches of civil servants' professional qualifications. Considerably, this study emphasizes that in addition to the knowledge and skills accumulated during their training process, it is necessary for civil servants to skillfully and creatively apply their learned knowledge and skills into practice to demonstrate their professional competence in public service activities. In fact, public service activities have their own characteristics that are both political and administrative in nature and specialized in each sector and field of state management. That poses a requirement that when individuals become civil servants, in addition to their professional qualifications in accordance with their training level, they have the obligation to study and update relevant knowledge about politics, administration, and state management to meet civil servant rank standards and job position requirements in public service activities. These learning activities are proactive and also considered as a pre-service training policy implemented by civil servant management agencies to recognize standards for civil servants. Prescribed by Vietnamese law, this training process includes: Training to meet state management qualifications according to civil servant ranks; training specialized knowledge and skills to meet the job position requirements of civil servants [VG, 2017]. Hence, the professional qualifications of civil servants generally refer to specialized training levels that meet civil servant rank standards and job position requirements; Knowledge and skills to meet civil servant rank standards and job position requirements by law. On that basis, the study generalizes the scale "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), expressed through a number of basic observed contents/variables, including: Civil servants have professional qualifications (training level, training major) meeting the standards for their ranks and job positions as required by law (PQ1); Civil servants have knowledge of public service/have been trained in public service knowledge (politics, administration, state management) to meet the civil servant rank standards according to the law (PQ2); Civil servants have knowledge and expertise/have been trained in knowledge and expertise to meet job position requirements according to law (PQ3).

The term "Competence" is explained as "an individual's characteristics that demonstrate the level of proficiency, that is, being able to competently and reliably perform one or another form of activity" [EPH, 2002]. This is a rather – broad approach that individuals rely on their characteristics to be able

to perform a certain job/activity competently; It also means that they can be trained at school or don't receive any training from school but still have capability of self-study and practice to reach a level of proficiency when performing a specific job/activity. This research perspective can be applied in human resource management in both the public and private sectors. The reason is that the public sector often sets standards for professional qualifications – human resource having taken part in training courses; however, in the private sector, it may not be so strict about qualifications but may just focus on the individual's level of proficiency when performing a professional job in the organization.

This study focus on duty performance competence of civil servants - public sector human resources, so competence of civil servants to perform their duties based on the knowledge and skills that civil servants having acquired from formal training and retraining is addressed on. Accordingly, civil servants need to demonstrate their duty performance competence with the knowledge and skills acquired through the learning/training process (professional qualifications), and should be creative in applying the knowledge and skills in their working process effectively perform assigned tasks and achieve expected work results; At the same time, they are required to have ethical qualities appropriate to each job and position in public service activities. This also confirmed by many studies, that is, duty performance competence of civil servants should be reflected in the application of knowledge and skills in practice to achieve results; the ability to work independently as well as work in team; and job performance results which are a measure to evaluate the practical working competence of civil servants [Son, N.V. et al., 2023]. In other words, Hoi, D.X. (2023) affirms moral qualities and professional qualifications are the basis of civil servants' duty performance competence, but only when they can be demonstrated in work results, then can civil servants confirm their duty performance competence in practice.

In terms of management, Vietnamese law stipulates the competence – based appraisal of civil servants. Accordingly, the duty performance competence of civil servants is a criterion for annually evaluating the quality of civil servants in state agencies and organizations; The assessment of civil servants' duty performance competence is reflected in a number of key contents, including advisory capacity; task implementation; work control capacity [VG, 2020]. Advisory capacity and task implementation capacity are important factors needed for civil servants to be able to transform ideas in professional work into specific products serving management and administration activities of state agencies and organizations [Hung, L.D. et al., 2023]. Work control capacity helps civil servants always proactively orient their work; analyse and evaluate work; summarize and appropriately adjust their work [Son, N.V. et al., 2023]. Therefore, the scale "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) can be generalized with a number of main features, including: Civil servants demonstrate good advisory capacity - the ability to identify work situations, the ability to analyse and synthesize and the creativity to transform ideas into specific products in professional work serving the management and administration activities of agencies and organizations (PC1); Civil servants demonstrate the capacity to make general and in-depth assessments to promptly understand the work situation and develop a reasonable and feasible plan to implement tasks (PC2); Civil servants proactively update information and proactively review work to control the implementation process and results of assigned tasks (PC3).

2.2. Influences of Civil Servants' Professional Qualifications and Duty Performance Competence on Their Duty Performance Results

From a theoretical perspective, work results of civil servants are the main job – completion – based evaluation criteria for the quality of civil servants, which is set by state agencies and organizations and required to be applied consistently and strictly in the management process based on the scientific human resource management principle – management based on work results [Ha, L.T., 2011; Hung, L.D., 2023]. In terms of management practices in Vietnam, the results of performing tasks achieved by civil servants are regulated in compliance with work progress, requirements for work quality, awareness and serving attitude to the people; are evaluated annually to classify civil servants with 4 levels: Excellent completion of tasks; well complete the task; Complete tasks; Failure to complete tasks [VG, 2020]. For

further explanation, Anh, K.Q. (2022) states that civil servants' duty performance results are reflected in keeping work progress, the quality of work performance and satisfaction of the people.

Similarities in research perspectives of Anh, K.Q. (2022) and the provisions of current law [VG, 2020] clearly show the scientific principles in results-based human resource management. This means, with reference to assigned responsibilities and tasks, civil servants, in addition to strictly complying with internal rules and being responsible to the professional tasks assigned by their organization, also have the obligation to serve the people's demands and ensure the people's legitimate rights and interests. Accordingly, civil servants receive and resolve people's requests (administrative records) named by Vietnamese administrative procedures prescribed as "promissory note to return documents" on time (on schedule); Receive and resolve people's requests in accordance with content and regulations (quality); Having appropriate working attitude to the people, respect and guide the people to resolve documents efficiently and accurately (service). With that meaning, the scale "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR) for this study has been developed with key features, including: Civil servants perform their duties and keep work progress; Receive, handle with dossiers, and return the dossier processing results to people according to the appointment letter (DPR1); Civil servants perform their duties and ensure work; Receive and handle with dossiers from the people fully and in accordance with regulations (DPR2); Civil servants respect and serve the people; are willing to listen, share information, and guide the people thoughtfully and enthusiastically so that the people feel satisfied and trust in civil servants and government agencies (DPR3).

In fact, requirements regarding completion time, content/expected objectives, responsibilities during task performance are all shown in each task assigned to a civil servant. The successful performance of tasks clearly reflects the professional qualifications and duty performance competence to perform duties of civil servants. According to Trung, N.S. et al. (2022) and Son, N.V. et al. (2023), professional qualifications (knowledge, skills) and duty performance competence to perform duties (ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve work goals; proactively updating knowledge and skills to develop personal capacity) are two subjective factors that greatly affect the duty performance results of civil servants. Among different factors that affect the duty performance results of civil servants, such as policy factors that create work motivation of agencies and organizations; Technical factors and technology to support the duty performance of civil servants, etc., this study addresses on two subjective factors - the professional qualifications and duty performance competence of civil servants to emphasize the proactive learning, training, and efforts of the subject (civil servant) to be able to work independently and creatively achieve duty performance results. The impact of professional qualifications and duty performance competence on the duty performance results of civil servants can be explained as follows:

- Firstly, professional qualifications are a necessary condition for civil servants to gain practical skills in profession, practice and achieve proficiency, then develop duty performance competence, meeting the standards of civil servant ranks and job positions. When individuals become civil servants, they perform tasks based on the knowledge and skills they have learned to achieve task performance results at certain levels. Therefore, in terms of the overall process, professional qualifications become a fundamental factor for civil servants to perform their duties and achieve task performance results as set goals; Civil servants with high and specialized qualifications will be one of the criteria for evaluating high-quality human resources in public service activities. The research hypothesis is: *Professional qualifications are a fundamental factor that forms duty performance competence of civil servants and have a positive impact on the duty performance results of - Hypothesis 1 (H1).*
- Secondly, duty performance competence of civil servants is developed from the foundation of professional qualifications - knowledge and skills; is a tool for civil servants to perform their duties and achieve results of the assigned tasks, realize consulting ideas into specific products used for public service activities in practice; directly affect the achievement of goals - the duty performance results of civil servants. In the process of implementing public duties, civil servants can promote

professional knowledge and skills through their creative application to achieve optimal work results, then they are highly appreciated for their duty performance competence and become human resources to meet the development requirements of state agencies and organizations; Public service activities will be conducted smoothly, achieving results according to the set progress and quality goals. Hence, along with their existing professional qualifications, civil servants can promote their duty performance competence for themselves, become an important factor in carrying out professional activities to achieve the desired results. The research hypothesis is: *Duty performance competence to perform duties is formed and developed from professional qualifications; is a fundamental factor for civil servants to perform assigned tasks; has a positive impact on the duty performance results of civil servants - Hypothesis 2 (H2).*

Based on the literature review, a theoretical research framework on professional qualifications, duty performance competence and duty performance results of civil servants has been developed. The research model includes 3 scales: Scale "Professional qualifications of civil servants"; scale "duty performance competence of civil servants" (02 independent variables) and scale "duty performance results of civil servants" (01 dependent variable). The scales in the model have a total of 9 observed variables. The survey was designed according to the 9 observed variables mentioned above and measured using a 5-level Likert scale: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 - No opinion; 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly agree (Table 1, Figure 1).

Table 1.
Theoretical framework.

No	Scales	Encode	Rating levels				
I	Professional qualifications of civil servants	PQ					
1	Civil servants have professional qualifications (training level, training major) meeting the standards for their ranks and job positions as required by law.	PQ1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2	Civil servants have knowledge of public service/have been trained in public service knowledge (politics, administration, state management) to meet the civil servant rank standards according to the law.	PQ2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3	Civil servants have knowledge and expertise/have been trained in knowledge and expertise to meet job position requirements according to law.	PQ3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
II	Duty performance competence of civil servants	PC					
4	Civil servants demonstrate good advisory capacity - the ability to identify work situations, the ability to analyse and synthesize and the creativity to transform ideas into specific products in professional work serving the management and administration activities of agencies and organizations.	PC1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
5	Civil servants demonstrate the capacity to make general and in-depth assessments to promptly understand the work situation and develop a reasonable and feasible plan to implement tasks.	PC2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
6	Civil servants proactively update information and proactively review work to control the implementation process and results of assigned tasks.	PC3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
III	Duty performance results of civil servants	DPR					
7	Civil servants perform their duties and keep work	DPR1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

No	Scales	Encode	Rating levels				
	progress; Receive, handle with dossiers, and return the dossier processing results to people according to the appointment letter.						
8	Civil servants perform their duties and ensure work; Receive and handle with dossiers from the people fully and in accordance with regulations.	DPR2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
9	Civil servants respect and serve the people; are willing to listen, share information, and guide the people thoughtfully and enthusiastically so that the people feel satisfied and trust in civil servants and government agencies.	DPR3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

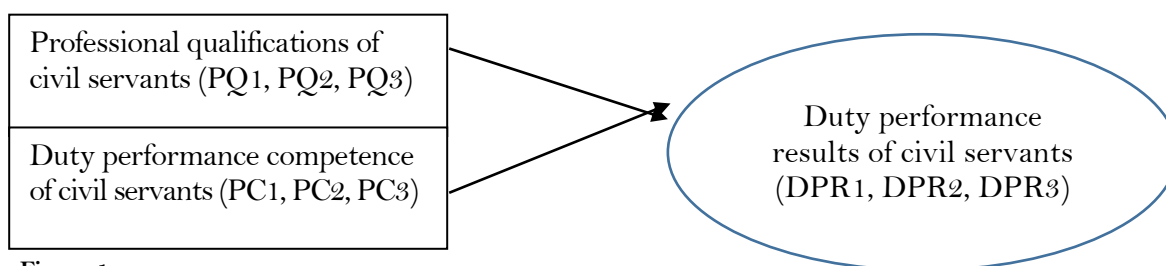


Figure 1.
Research model.

3. Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative methods are both used in this study to collect and analyze secondary and primary data and draw research conclusions.

3.1. Qualitative Method

Qualitative method has been used for the literature review. Based on the analysis of related research results and synthesis of legal documents, theoretical research framework and research model have been drawn with three scales: Professional qualifications of civil servants; duty performance competence of civil servants; duty performance results of civil servants (Table 1, Figure 1).

3.2. Quantitative Method

Quantitative method is used in collecting and analyzing the primary data. The primary data were collected from a direct survey of the opinions of 300 local managers at the commune level. The survey was conducted in two steps: Preliminary survey and official survey.

- Preliminary survey: In quantitative research, according to Hai, D.H., et al. (2018), the minimum sample size needed for exploratory factor analysis and regression analysis for a model with 3 scales and 9 observed variables is $N = 9 \times 5 = 45$. The preliminary survey was conducted in a research area (Thai Nguyen province) with sample size $N = 60$ managers of commune-level authorities ($N > 45$). Preliminary survey results in Thai Nguyen province show that the measurement scales and observed variables are reliable enough to be used in official surveys on a wider scope.
- Official survey: An official survey was conducted with a sample size of $N = 300$ commune-level managers in 5 provinces representing 3 regions of Vietnam: Thai Nguyen Province, Thai Binh Province (Northern region), Quang Ngai province (Central region), Tien Giang province, Hau Giang province (Southern region). The survey was conducted selectively with survey respondents who have been managers of commune-level managers for at least 3 years. The preliminary

interviews were performed to collect information about the participants, then the survey questionnaires were distributed based on their agreement to answer. The survey results received 300/300 valid votes, achieving a 100% response rate.

With the collected data, the reliability of the scale and observed variables were tested; Analyze exploratory factor analysis and regression analysis were performed to test research hypotheses and draw research conclusions.

4. Findings

Cronbach' to alpha test is carried out to determine the reliability of the scales and observed variables in the research model. According to Hai, D.H., et al. (2018), conditions for scales to ensure reliability: Cronbach' alpha > 0.6 ; Conditions for observed variables to ensure reliability: Corrected Item-Total Correlation > 0.3 . The test results show that all 3 scales and 9 observed variables are reliable to perform further analysis (Table 2).

Table 2.
Statistical results and testing results of the scales.

Scales	Observed variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. deviation	Cronbach' alpha	Corrected item-total correlation
1. Professional qualifications of civil servants (PQ)	PQ1	300	3	5	4.26	0.517	0.675	PQ1 = 0.522
	PQ2	300	3	5	4.28	0.535		PQ2 = 0.494
	PQ3	300	3	5	4.32	0.540		PQ3 = 0.516
2. Duty performance competence of civil servants (PC)	PC1	300	2	5	3.88	0.634	0.652	PC1 = 0.518
	PC2	300	2	5	3.85	0.636		PC2 = 0.522
	PC3	300	2	5	3.78	0.641		PC3 = 0.493
3. Duty performance results of civil servants (DPR)	DPR1	300	2	5	3.93	0.534	0.639	DPR1 = 0.495
	DPR2	300	2	5	4.02	0.536		DPR2 = 0.508
	DPR3	300	2	5	3.98	0.551		DPR3 = 0.512
Valid N (listwise)		300						

Data in Table 2 shows observations on the scale "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC), "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR) are all evaluated at an average level of Mean > 3.78 , which is statistically significant according to the defined Likert scale (1-5).

However, the observed variables of the scale "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) are evaluated at a lower level than "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ): Mean (PC1) = 3.88, Mean (PC2) = 3.85, Mean (PC3) = 3.78, revealing that local managers at the commune level authorities do not show high appreciation to the practical competence of civil servants to perform their duties. Noticeably, the lowest is Mean (PC3) = 3.78, confirming that many civil servants are not proactive in performing their assigned work, which generally affects the implementation and performance results of assigned tasks.

Table 3.
Total variance explained.

KMO and Bartlett's test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.		0.833
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	2447.073
	df	45
	Sig.	0.000

Total variance explained

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.117	51.175	51.175	5.117	51.175	51.175	5.117	51.175	51.175
2	1.520	15.205	66.380	1.520	15.205	66.380	1.520	15.205	66.380
3	1.025	10.251	76.631	1.025	10.251	76.631	1.025	10.251	76.631
4	0.862	8.618	85.249						
5	0.418	4.181	89.430						
6	0.301	3.012	96.432						
7	0.248	2.483	98.914						
8	0.061	.612	99.527						
9	0.047	.473	100.000						

Extraction method: Principal component analysis.

The survey data from Table 2 also contributes to pointing out the current situation of duty performance competence of local commune-level civil servants in Vietnam; that is, there is a gap between civil servants' knowledge, skills obtained from learning process (professional qualifications) and their application of the knowledge and skills (duty performance competence) in practice. This situation poses a need to innovate evaluation policies so that civil servants can promote their knowledge, professional skills and expertise to develop their working competence to serve public service activities.

With the standard value confirmed through the Cronbach' alpha test, the exploratory factor analysis was conducted with Varimax rotation to preliminarily evaluate the unidimensionality, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the scales to have more basis for drawing research conclusions. The results of exploratory factor analysis are shown in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 4.
Rotated component matrix.

Rotated component matrix^a				
Scales	Observed variables	Component		
		1	2	3
Professional qualifications of civil servants (PQ)	PQ1	0.887		
	PQ2	0.864		
	PQ3	0.838		
Duty performance competence of civil servants (PC)	PC1		0.855	
	PC2		0.854	
	PC3		0.837	
Duty performance results of civil servants (DPR)	DPR1			0.831
	DPR2			0.827
	DPR3			0.825

Note: Extraction method: Principal component analysis.
Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

In terms of quantitative research, according to Hai, D.H., et al. (2018), exploratory factor analysis was performed in accordance with the data set through the following values: $0.5 \leq \text{KMO} \leq 1$; The Bartlett test has an observed significance level Sig. < 0.05 ; Eigenvalue ≥ 1 ; Total Variance Explained $\geq 50\%$; Factor Loading ≥ 0.5 .

The data in Table 3 and Table 4 show: Exploratory factor analysis confirms the appropriateness of the data set, shown by the KMO coefficient = $0.833 > 0.5$; The observed variables have a linear correlation with the representative factor, shown through the Bartlett's Test with the observed significance level Sig. = $0.000 < 0.05$; Observed variables explain 76,631% of the variation of representative factors, shown by Total Variance Explained with Cumulative % = $76,631\% > 50\%$; The observed variables show good statistical significance and a close relationship with the representative factor, with Factor Loading > 0.5 . The observed variables were compacted into 03 factors corresponding to 03 original factors with Eigenvalues > 1 , showing that the research theoretical framework was built appropriately; The original research model is maintained, including: 02 independent variables "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) and 01 dependent variable "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR) with a total of 9 observed variables with good statistical significance, allowing multivariate linear regression analysis to be performed to consider the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable on the research model. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5.
Results of multivariate regression.

Coefficients^a							
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
		B	Std. error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.127	0.105		9.983	0.000	
	Professional qualifications of civil servants (PQ)	0.648	0.034	0.687	19.773	0.000	1.820
	Duty performance competence of civil servants (PC)	0.352	0.041	0.342	6.618	0.000	1.820

a. Dependent variable: Duty performance results of civil servants (DPR)
R Square = 0.671; Durbin-Watson = 2.002

Table 5 data shows that R Square = .671, confirming that the scales "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) explain 67.1% of the variation in the scale "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR). VIF = 1.820 ($1 < \text{VIF} < 2$), showing that the regression model does not have multicollinearity; Durbin-Watson = 2.002 ($1 < d < 3$), showing that the regression model has no autocorrelation phenomenon, confirming the scales "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) are independent in nature and have the same impact on the scale "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR).

The regression coefficients of the two independent variables "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) are both statistically significant with Sig. = 0.000 (Sig. < 0.05) and has a positive value: B(PQ) = 0.648, B(PC) = 0.352, confirming the positive relationship between the two independent variables "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC) and 01 dependent variable "Duty performance results of civil servants" (DPR). Hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted. The multivariable regression model of this study is: $\text{DPR} = 1.127 + 0.648 \cdot \text{PQ} + 0.352 \cdot \text{PC}$.

In the above regression model, the regression coefficient B(PQ) = 0.648, B(PC) = 0.352 shows that the degree of correlation of the independent and dependent variables in descending order is: "Professional qualifications of civil servants" (PQ), "Duty performance competence of civil servants" (PC). This means that the competence of civil servants to perform their duties in practice is rated at a low level than expected by local managers, even though they meet the standards of professional qualifications.

5. Conclusion

From the results of statistical analysis (Table 2), exploratory factor analysis (Table 3, table 4) and regression analysis (Table 5), there is a practical basis to draw research conclusions. Accordingly, commune – level managers at the commune level underestimated the duty performance competence of civil servants in practice does not satisfy their commune – level managers' expectation; Many civil servants are not proactive in their assigned work, which generally affects the duty implementation process as well as the duty performance results.

These findings also contribute to demonstrating the current duty perform competence of commune - level civil servants in Vietnam; that is, there is a gap between civil servants' knowledge, skills obtained from learning process (professional qualifications) and their application of the knowledge and skills (duty performance competence) in practice. This, at the same time, reveals that there is certain weakness in civil servant governance at the local level; Civil servants have not either shown the creative application of knowledge and skills to achieve high results at work in practice or take the initiate in promoting their

working competence considered by scientific theories about Human resource management by Ha, L.T. (2011) and Hung, L.D. (2023).

This situation poses a need of innovation in evaluation policies so that civil servants can promote their knowledge, professional skills and expertise to develop working competence to serve public service activities; Commune-level civil servants are necessary to proactively update and supplement knowledge and skills and creatively apply them in practice to improve their duty performance competence, aiming at achieving the optimal results of assigned tasks and meeting the people's needs. To overcome these existing difficulties, it is essential for managers to discuss and complete the competence framework for each job position of commune-level civil servants; Standardize the evaluation of commune-level civil servants based on the competence framework of each job position so that the annual appraisal of civil servants is accurate and objective.

From a legal perspective, the appraisal of civil servants in Vietnam is carried out according to the Government's regulations [VG 2020] with the traditional method: Civil servants self-evaluate with the criteria/content prescribed by law; State agencies review, evaluate and recognize the evaluation results of civil servants. Because there are no unified and specific regulations, localities have not been able to complete the competence framework and the competence - based evaluation framework of each job title and position. This also stems from the fact that ministries, local state management agencies have not yet completed their job position projects or the job position projects have not been approved as the issued roadmap. This also leads to the fact that evaluation results of civil servants in localities have not objectively shown the practical working competence of civil servants.

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