

Summary

The Value(s) of Civil Leaders. A Study into the Influence of Governance Context on Public Value Orientation

Importance of Civil Leaders

The importance of civil leaders can hardly be overestimated. They contribute to a better society, they mobilize people and resources for good causes or focus attention on urgent problems. They appeal to the public, politicians and societal organizations to come to the aid of downtrodden target groups. They start or innovate public services and support for the vulnerable in society. In short, they cure or expose social ills.

Civil leaders do not work for the government, but endeavor to solve social problems and realize public results from the private domain. For that purpose they use their entrepreneurial, organizational and/or political skills. They do so voluntarily, moved by personal motives: *beyond the call of duty*, so over and above the formal requirements of their position. Civil leaders feature actively and visibly in the public domain. In doing so, they exercise public leadership, but - and this is where civil leadership differs from political leadership or statesmanship - they operate from the private domain.

Civil leaders can be found in various places. They include famous and lesserknown philanthropists, celebrities supporting charitable causes, and volunteers standing up for vulnerable citizens. But they may also be committed directors of non-profit and public organizations in sectors like education, social housing and healthcare. And there are certainly also business entrepreneurs tackling social needs as a business venture.

Public and academic attention to the phenomenon of civil leadership has long focused mainly on particular sections of the field. Studies have been done into philanthropy, volunteer work, the role and management of non-profit organizations, the nature of and motives behind corporate social responsibility, social entrepreneurship and social innovation. Other studies have focused on the many aspects of leadership within specific sectors like culture, healthcare and social work.

Currently, there is a growing broad interest in 'civil leaders', inspired by a number of developments. Firstly, there is the debate on the reduction of government, inspired by the decline of public resources and a renewed awareness that the government's powers to change society are limited. Furthermore, the debate rages on about the best demarcation of the roles and contributions of the state, market parties, non-profit and civil society organizations. Finally, we are seeing increased attention to the roles that individuals and individual leadership play in the public domain. Nowadays, directors in both the semi-public and public sectors and in the private sector are expected to have an explicit value orientation ('moral compass') and vision on the public cause.

This study aims to contribute to the advancement of academic knowledge on civil leadership, in particular on the influence of differing environments (contexts) on the values of such leadership. In the academic debate, a number of questions have so far not been answered or not been answered sufficiently:

- a) What does the practice of civil leaders look like, in particular their contribution to society? What idiosyncratic and what common forms of civil leadership do we encounter in this variety of contexts?
- b) Is it a special kind of leadership? Is there a common denominator in terms of leadership style, values and tactics across the diverse contexts?
- c) Can we distil a specific personal orientation? What are the underlying motives and values in civil leaders' focus on society?
- d) How can we foster civil leadership, both in individuals and through the various influencing contexts?

The societal goal of this study is to better understand, appraise and re-appraise the phenomenon of civil leadership in the political, social and institutional context of modern developed Western countries.

Research Question

The research question is:

What values motivate and direct civil leaders and to what extent are the values shaped by the institutional context in which these leaders operate?

This central question is divided into three research questions.

1. Do civil leaders have a common value pattern that explains their focus on the public interest and the way in which they pursue their activities?
2. Do key governance contexts within society typically conduce towards distinct value patterns?
3. To what extent can the observed value patterns of civil leaders be explained by the location of these leaders in particular institutional contexts (governance context)?

These *values* are interesting for a number of reasons. They may explain why civil leaders focus on social issues. Private social initiatives traditionally stem from strongly value-charged religious and ideological movements. One of the questions in this study is which values underpin the actions of present-day civil leaders.

The *institutional context* (or 'governance context') is relevant because it may influence value orientations and correspondingly the focus on social issues. It is not self-evident that leaders who operate outside the state strive for public impact. Different governance contexts (for-profit, non-profit and active citizen) may influence values in different ways.

The research question fits in with a long academic tradition of searching for the right values and character of civil leaders ('*virtuous men*'). General studies on leadership also increasingly display an awareness of the importance of values and of the morally uplifting influence of leaders on their followers.

Research Design

This study comprises a theoretical section and an empirical section.

The theoretical section discusses the core concepts of the study and establishes a conceptual framework for the empirical part of the study. In the empirical section this conceptual framework is tested, and data are collected and analyzed. The empirical section includes an analysis of leadership roles and styles. It also addresses tactics in dealing with resistance and public attention and the nature and influence of values and ambitions, as reported by civil leaders themselves. In this way, the empirical research allows for reflection on the theoretical framework, but also offers new -

theoretical and practical - insights. The empirical section comprises a comparative case study and a comparative survey using a standard questionnaire.

The comparative case study, which mainly focuses on research question 1, involves 30 civil leaders. They all meet the definition used in this study, also in terms of their realized public value. The cases are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 The 30 Civil Leadership Case Studies

Nr	Name	Organization (and Sector)	Societal Case
1	Jeroen Ankersmit	ROC Amsterdam College Hotel (<i>vocational education</i>)	Innovating vocational education by running a hotel
2	Paul Baan	Noaber Foundation (<i>philanthropy</i>)	Pioneering venture philanthropy
3	Jos van Balveren	De Twern (<i>welfare</i>)	Developing methodical (evidence-based) welfare services
4	Hans Becker	Humanitas (<i>elderly care</i>)	Creating elderly care 'homes for happiness'
5	Leon Bobbe	DudokWonen (<i>social housing</i>)	Empowerment of tenants through (soft) purchase constructions
6	Piet Boekhoud (& Els Lubbers)	Albeda College (<i>vocational education</i>)	Developing streetwise vocational education
7	Ruurd de Boer	ADO Den Haag (<i>professional soccer club</i>)	Creating a socially responsible soccer club
8	Marco Bunge	Hospice Hilversum (<i>palliative care</i>)	Pioneering hospice care
9	Fons Catau	De Woonplaats (<i>social housing</i>)	Emancipating tenants through the housing market
10	Riet van Denderen	G.O.U.D. (<i>care for drug addicts</i>)	Giving drug addicts a public voice
11	Yolanda Eijgenstein	Iederwijs (<i>education</i>)	Innovating primary education based on a new educational philosophy
12	Jan van de Graaf	Trix (<i>sheltered employment</i>)	Teaching workmanship and work discipline to give youths a new future
13	Herman Hazewinkel	VolkerWessels (<i>construction</i>)	Industry leader publicly endorsing corporate responsibility
14	Jan Hoefsloot	DOCK (<i>welfare</i>)	Developing entrepreneurial welfare services
15	Esther Hofstede	Samen voor Zeist (<i>entrepreneurship in volunteer work</i>)	Pioneering an exchange in voluntary work Together for Zeist

16	Cees Hovenkamp†	Philadelphia (<i>care for the disabled</i>)	Pioneering small-scale care for the mentally disabled
17	Foeke de Jong	SkewielTrynwalden (<i>elderly care</i>)	Developing and introducing elderly care provided at home, in and by the community
18	Wim van der Meeren	Elizabeth Hospital (<i>hospital care</i>)	Creating the kindest hospital
19	Hans Nieukerke	Hoenderloo Groep (<i>youth care</i>)	Introducing Glen Mills method (strict regime to teach discipline to problematic youths)
20	Camille Oostwegel	Oostwegel Hotels (<i>hotel and catering business</i>)	Renovating, maintaining and revitalizing dilapidated monuments
21	Jan Post	Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce (<i>branch organizations/platform for business</i>)	Locally promoting corporate socially responsible activities
22	Tom Rodrigues	Ordina/Samenleving&Bedrijf (<i>ICT service industry and platform promoting corporate social responsibility</i>)	Promoting and creating awareness of socially responsible business
23	Louise Schaapveld	Vensterscholen (<i>education</i>)	Building and organizing primary schools with community functions
24	Arie Schagen (& Esseline Schieven)	Buurt Ontwikkelings Maatschappij RegentesseValkenbosch (<i>neighborhood and community development</i>)	Community development in the broadest sense, proactive, including services and campaigns
25	Clara and Sjaak Sies	Food Banks Netherlands (<i>poor relief</i>)	Pioneering and organizing food banks
26	Mohammed Sini	Islam and Citizen (<i>intercultural work; platforms</i>)	Bridging the gap between Islam and Dutch society
27	Reverend Hans Visser	St. Paul's Church Rotterdam (<i>church; providing shelter and care for addicts and homeless people</i>)	Using his church as a refuge and shelter for the weaker in society.
28	Mei Li Vos	Alternative Trade Union (<i>trade union</i>)	Initiating, organizing and promoting an Alternative Trade Union to represent the interests of flexible workers and young people
29	Bas Westdijk	Well Water (<i>bottled water industry</i>)	Pioneering corporate socially responsible business model by selling bottled water and using the profits to build wells in the third world

30	Sister Giuseppa Witlox	Order of the Sisters of St. Augustine (<i>nuns; care for the homeless</i>)	Pioneering and organizing street advertising by and for homeless people
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Thirteen of these individuals are portrayed in more detail in Appendix 2. Subsequently, the public debate about the societal cases of three of these civil leaders is analyzed further (Appendix 3).

The comparative value survey was based on a value scorecard set out in Appendices 5, 6 and 7. This scorecard was used in the case studies and in an online survey of 230 respondents. The respondents were found among people who had moved from one governance context to another, so they had personal experience of the influence of values in those different contexts. The online survey therefore intended to answer the research question about the potential normative/socializing influence of governance contexts in general (research question 2). The findings in terms of the value patterns of different governance contexts have subsequently been compared to those of the 30 civil leaders in their specific governance context (research question 3).

The details and findings of the empirical part of the study are set out in Chapters 6 and 7.

The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework defines the core concepts, leading to a conceptual model that underpins the empirical research.

Civil Leaders

In this study, civil leaders are defined as 'persons not operating in any governmental capacity (whether elected or appointed), who step up and try to solve social problems and seek to create public impact by making use of their entrepreneurial, organization building and/or political skills'.

Societal Position

Civil leaders operate amongst the forces underneath the well-known three-way division into the domains of state, market and civil society. They do not confine themselves to one domain. Their natural 'habitat' can be described as the

environment in which societal, political and economic processes of institutionalization and reorientation on values take place, both in existing institutions (revitalization, reordering) and in new institutionalizations. Civil leaders, then, can appear in a variety of roles throughout the entire private (non-state) domain. The received view in academia is that civil leaders are active as volunteers in informal civil society ('associational life'); this is referred to as 'civic leadership'. This study uses the - broader - term 'civil leadership', which also covers closely related terms like 'societal business leader' and 'social entrepreneur'.

Leaders

Civil leaders are *leaders* on account of their visible public contribution, the resistance they often encounter, the personal nature of their efforts and social innovations and the fact that they attract followers, often also from outside their own circles. They make unique contributions that are distinct from those of market parties and the state. This makes them leading citizens, as neo-republicans see it.

Values

Values are defined as:

- a) concepts or beliefs
- b) about desirable end-states or behavior
- c) that transcend concrete situations,
- d) provide guidance in selecting or evaluating behavior and events, and
- e) are ordered by relative importance.

This study opted to use Klamer's value set (2003). This set provides a theoretical prediction of the value patterns to be found in the three domains.

Governance Contexts

The governance context is the influencing environment in which (or from which) the civil leaders operate. This study defines governance contexts as *meso-governance* contexts, as distinct from *public governance* and *corporate governance*. A *meso-governance* context is situated between the macro and micro level. It concerns the organizational level, including informal, networking and start-up connections and forms of organization.

The study offers a typology of governance contexts based on three defining axes:

- for-profit/non-profit,
- formal/informal, and
- public/private.

These axes also feature in the division into three domains of state, market and civil society, linking this typology of governance contexts to the three domains and their specific value orientations (according to Klamer's theory). By definition, civil leaders only operate in private (non-state) contexts. This means that on the public/private axis, leaders in the state domain are excluded.

The typology of (private) *meso-governance* contexts then becomes:

- for-profit (formal; for-profit),
- non-profit (formal; non-profit) and
- active citizen (informal; non-profit).

The following links to the domains (and their value sets) were chosen:

- for-profit/market,
- non-profit/civil society (bearing in mind that a partial positioning in other domains is possible), and
- active citizen/civil society.

Public value

How do we define societal orientation and societal results? In order to answer this question, this study offers a new definition of 'public value'. Public value is defined here as a combined result on three levels:

- the public service level itself (output),
- the realized societal effect (outcome), and
- the result at the institutional level (legitimization and trust).

The concept of public value thus defined fits in with the current search for a broader, publicly and societally oriented definition of the objectives of major companies (which may also be seen as a reinstitutionalization process) and also with the typical meso-governance context of 'active citizen'.

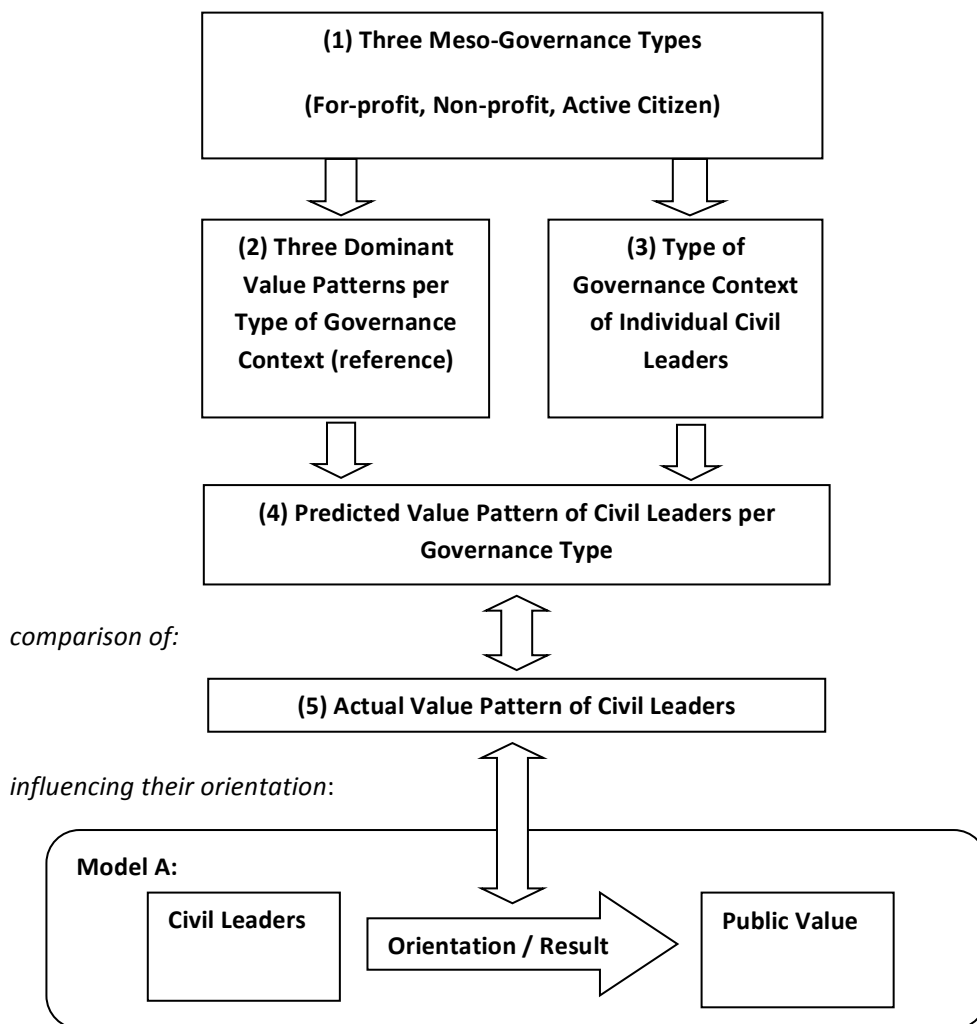
In this study, public value is mostly used as an academic-technical yardstick. The evaluation of the societal result will always take place in a political-societal arena

where different convictions and trends exist. The concept as it is used here cannot replace this political-ideological evaluation, but can only structure it.

Conceptual model

The theoretical research yields a conceptual model that underlies the empirical research:

Figure 1 The Conceptual Model



Explanation:

1: We distinguish three *meso-governance* types.

2: We investigate whether any, and if so, which value pattern is specific to each *meso-governance* type. This establishes a benchmark for the research into civil leaders' values. The chosen division into three *meso-governance* types, their connection to the three domains and the assumed values per domain yield a theoretical prediction of the values each *meso-governance* type is likely to involve.

3: Before we can draw conclusions about the values of *meso-governance* types, we must determine the positioning of each civil leader in one of the *meso-governance* types.

4: Eventually, the analyses in steps 2 and 3 result in a predicted value pattern per civil leader, related to their positioning in one of the *meso-governance* types.

5: This result must be compared to the value pattern reported in the survey by each civil leader and related to their positioning in one of the *meso-governance* types.

Ultimately, all this is based on the basic model as presented at the bottom of figure 1, to define and find civil leaders who have an orientation towards public value and obtain visible results in this respect.

Empirical Findings

Types of Civil Leaders (in Relation to Values)

Not all civil leaders acknowledge or publicly endorse the major importance of values. Four types of leaders in terms of 'inner value orientation and public expression' emerged:

The *value-driven* type (type 1): strongly motivated by values, expressing and using them explicitly in their civil leadership.

The *instrumental* type (type 2): weakly motivated by personal values, but using them explicitly to further their cause as a civil leader, mainly because they feel it is effective in attracting followers for their societal case. The instrumental type has to derive its

values from other sources than inner conviction. Some of these civil leaders derive their values from principals (bosses, supervisors, contractors, politicians) and others derive them from 'listening carefully to the market', e.g. customers or end users.

The *decoupled* type (type 3): strongly motivated by a set of personal values, but not using them publicly and expressly to motivate and influence others. There can be many reasons for this; one of them is the wish to be taken seriously in public debate.

The *rational* type (type 4): weakly or not motivated by an inner conviction based on values and as a consequence not expressing or using values in their civil leadership actions. This rationality may even bring about negative perceptions of or doubts about the type 1 leader (and vice versa).

Key leadership style dimensions

In order to determine styles of civil leadership, this study distinguishes a number of 'key dimensions'. Key dimensions are those leadership style variables that are crucial for civil leadership and that are clearly expressed by civil leaders. In addition to the typology relating to 'value orientation and expression', we distinguish the following key dimensions:

- 'supportive in the background/backstage *versus* taking the public stage',
- 'associated with the elite' *versus* 'common touch' and
- 'legitimization *versus* innovation'.

Institutional roles

Civil leaders play diverse institutional roles. The following can be distinguished:

- *Directors*
Civil leaders with an executive role in formal organizations, for-profit and non-profit, who endeavor to increase the *public value* delivered by their organization.
- *Societal pioneers*
Civil leaders who realize a new service or provide concrete aid for certain target groups or tackle problems they feel are not being addressed.
- *Challengers of institutions*
Civil leaders who use their value orientation to appeal to existing institutions for change.

Personal motivation

The personal motivations of civil leaders also vary. We found differences between civil leaders in terms of being driven by:

- *Values*: the type that most explicitly fits this study;
- *Character*: leaders with a propensity to search for solutions for societal problems, but also to go against prevailing opinion, and
- *Social esteem*: leaders who want to tackle societal issues in an innovative way, but also want to obtain public recognition for their efforts.

Values and Meso-governance Context

The study demonstrates that governance contexts do indeed differ in how they influence value patterns. Certain values belong to certain contexts. The theoretically predicted distribution of values over governance contexts is empirically confirmed for the 'state' (a category added specifically to the online survey) and 'for-profit' governance contexts; the values found here matched the predictions based on the theoretical framework. The prediction was confirmed to a lesser extent for the 'active citizen' context and least for 'non-profit'.

The dominance of certain values appears to be a new factor. Value patterns may be narrow: a few values are extremely dominant. Others are very flat: many values, but little dominance. It would seem as if 'less is more': the more dominant a limited number of values are, the greater their influence on the leadership.

The 'for-profit' context yields the narrowest value pattern. Only two values are highly dominant: 'performance-based' and 'entrepreneurial spirit'. Other governance contexts have far flatter patterns. The flattest profile was found in the non-profit governance context.

The value pattern found for non-profit was also the least specific and featured in equal measure the predicted values from all three domains: state, market and civil society. One possible explanation for this is a 'Dutch' bias in the study. In the Dutch context, non-profit organizations have for many decades occupied a position in between state, market and civil society. The influence of all three domains was reinforced by a host of policy experiments and incentives based on the value patterns of the three domains.

Value Patterns of Civil Leaders

Clearly, there are major differences between the public and institutional roles and the motives of civil leaders, and different relationships between values and governance contexts are found. Yet this study also clearly shows a common value pattern among

civil leaders. They make up a kind of 'breed of their own', diverging from the value patterns we found for the various governance contexts.

In that common value pattern we see a dominant combination of entrepreneurial values (related to the market domain in the value set) and societal values (related to the civil society domain). The five highest scoring values for civil leaders were: 'freedom of choice', 'entrepreneurship', 'sustainability', 'respect' and '(social) justice'. The lower scoring categories demonstrate the same combination of entrepreneurial and societal values: 'solidarity' and 'self-realization', 'independence' and 'bonding and bridging'.

The typical value pattern of civil leaders therefore is a combination of values from the market and civil society domains. The aid philosophy they share also reflects this combination, which can be summed up as: helping others to help themselves.

The value pattern of civil leaders therefore deviates from the values of the distinct governance contexts, based on the perception of values from others in the same contexts. This can also be explained from a different perspective. It is because 'entrepreneurship', 'independence' and 'self-realization' are so prominent among their preferred values, that civil leaders are less susceptible to governance context influence. The context provides values, but they also have their own values.

Critical Reflections on the Study

The study concludes with some critical reflections on the research carried out and in particular the question is raised whether the governance context typology is in fact most relevant.

In this study, different types of structures have been investigated based on the assumption that they influence the prioritization of values and that this specific value orientation leads to an orientation on society. The assumed relationship with value prioritization has been demonstrated in this study for these governance context types. At the same time, however, it has been demonstrated that the governance context does not influence the value orientation of the civil leader to the same extent; after all, they turn out to be a 'breed of their own' in terms of value orientation. This is partly because their values and leadership styles stress 'independence' and 'self-realization'.

That raises the question of whether other variables in the governance context might not be more relevant. Perhaps variables that determine whether the governance context promotes leadership and a drive based on values are more important than a focus on *particular* values? So instead of focusing on types of governance structure which by means of their influence on values either promote or hinder an orientation on society and public value, it might be more relevant to look at whether and how these governance structures promote leadership and value-drivenness. Some findings may be better explained in that light. The distinction between 'narrow' versus 'flat' value patterns may be more conducive to variables like leadership and value-drivenness. In this study, that proves to apply to the for-profit context, although in terms of formal focus it is not the most societally oriented type.

Recommendations for Society

The study recommends promoting and strengthening civil leadership in the Netherlands. This can be achieved by creating the right conditions for civil leadership and entrepreneurship in the family sphere and primary education, by creating a public climate of promoting citizenship and a reliable state, and by searching out people with the right character and moral compass, both in civil society and in administration. The latter might be referred to as promoting citizenship in the boardroom.