

# Consciousness in Public Governance

Public governance and management research has addressed human consciousness through ten studies examining individual, collective, and non-conscious dimensions using various methodological approaches.

## Abstract

Ten studies indicate that research in public governance and public management has addressed dimensions of human consciousness. Two studies introduce management consciousness as a collective phenomenon that may help solve complex management problems. Two others explore individual consciousness: one links vivid imagery to rational decision-making in public contexts, while another highlights heightened mindfulness in crisis management. One study examines political consciousness in relation to governance legitimacy, one discusses the interplay between conscious and non-conscious thought in public policy, and one explores cyberpsychological aspects of mass consciousness in digital governance.

Methodologies include theoretical analyses (5 of 10 studies), systematic reviews (3 of 10), and empirical investigations (2 of 10) across settings such as public administration, crisis response, and digital engagement. These findings show that research on public governance and management has integrated various aspects of human consciousness within its conceptual and practical frameworks.

## Paper search

Using your research question "Is there any research about public governance or public management that considered human consciousness, sub-consciousness and common consciousness?", we searched across over 126 million academic papers from the Semantic Scholar corpus. We retrieved the 50 papers most relevant to the query.

## Screening

We screened in papers that met these criteria:

- **Public Governance Focus:** Does the study examine public governance or public management systems (e.g., governmental, administrative, or public sector processes)?
- **Consciousness Component:** Does the study explicitly address aspects of human consciousness (individual, collective, or organizational) in relation to governance or management?
- **Research Type:** Is the study one of the following: empirical research, theoretical framework, case study, experimental research, observational study, systematic review, or meta-analysis?
- **Research-Based Content:** Is the publication a research-based study rather than an opinion piece, commentary, or non-systematic review?
- **Sector Application:** Does the study include public sector applications (not exclusively private sector)?
- **Governance Application:** Does the study connect consciousness concepts to governance or management applications (rather than being purely psychological)?
- **Decision-Making or Group Dynamics:** Does the study examine either decision-making processes or collective behavior/group dynamics in public institutions?

We considered all screening questions together and made a holistic judgement about whether to screen in each paper.

## Data extraction

We asked a large language model to extract each data column below from each paper. We gave the model the extraction instructions shown below for each column.

- **Study Design Type:**

Identify the primary methodological approach of the study. Options include:

- Theoretical/conceptual analysis
- Systematic literature review
- Empirical study (qualitative)
- Empirical study (quantitative)
- Mixed methods

Look in the methodology or methods section. If the design is not explicitly stated, infer from the research approach described. If multiple approaches are used, select the primary approach. If uncertain, note "unclear" and provide a brief explanation.

- **Theoretical Framework or Conceptual Approach:**

Identify the primary theoretical or conceptual framework used to explore consciousness in public governance.

Extract:

- Specific theoretical perspectives (e.g., cognitive psychology, cyberpsychology)
- Key conceptual constructs related to consciousness
- Theoretical models or frameworks explicitly discussed

Look in introduction, theoretical background, or discussion sections. Quote directly if possible. If no explicit framework is mentioned, write "Not specified".

- **Types of Consciousness Examined:**

Identify and list specific types of consciousness discussed in the study:

- Individual consciousness
- Mass/collective consciousness
- Sub-consciousness
- Collective unconscious
- Other specified forms

Extract exact terminology used by authors. If multiple types are discussed, list all. Look in theoretical sections, methodology, and discussion. If no specific types are explicitly defined, write "Not specified".

- **Governance Aspects Related to Consciousness:**

Identify specific governance domains or aspects where consciousness is explored:

- Decision-making processes
- Policy formation
- Public management
- Political communication
- Organizational psychology

- Digital governance

Extract specific contexts or mechanisms where consciousness is analyzed. Look in results, discussion, and conclusion sections. Provide direct quotes if possible. If no specific governance aspects are identified, write "Not specified".

- **Key Methodological Approaches to Studying Consciousness:**

Identify specific methodological approaches used to study consciousness:

- Cognitive science methods
- Psychological assessment techniques
- Digital environment analysis
- Systematic review techniques
- Neuroscientific approaches

Extract detailed information about research methods from methodology section. If multiple methods are used, list all. Provide brief description of each method. If no specific methodological approach is detailed, write "Not specified".

## Results

### Characteristics of Included Studies

Study	Study Focus	Consciousness Type Addressed	Governance Context	Methodology	Full text retrieved
Arutiunian, 2022	Management philosophy and consciousness	Management consciousness	Public management	Theoretical/conceptual analysis	No
Bangari, 2021	Mindfulness in government decision makers	Heightened mindfulness	Crisis management	Empirical study (qualitative)	No
Chidozie et al., 2020	Political consciousness and governance	Political consciousness	Political governance	Systematic literature review	No
Ford and Ihrke, 2018	Perceptions in governance	Individual consciousness	Public governance	Theoretical/conceptual analysis	No
Mahmood and Baskaran, 2022	Conceptual skills and good governance	No mention found	Public sector	Empirical study (quantitative)	Yes
Pykett et al., 2016	Psychological governance	Conscious and non-conscious thought	Public policy	Theoretical/conceptual analysis	No
Thacher, 2009	Cognitive foundations of governance	Individual consciousness	Public decision-making	Theoretical/conceptual analysis	Yes

Study	Study Focus	Consciousness Type Addressed	Governance Context	Methodology	Full text retrieved
Turner, 2020	Governance influence on decision making	No mention found	Project management	Systematic literature review	Yes
Yakovlev, 2024	Cyberpsychology of mass consciousness management	Mass consciousness	Digital governance	Systematic literature review	No
, 2020	Management consciousness structure	Management consciousness	Organizational management	Theoretical/conceptual analysis	Yes

The included studies addressed a diverse range of topics related to consciousness and governance:

- Study Focus :
  - Management-related topics were most common, appearing in 2/10 studies
  - Other focuses included mindfulness, political aspects, perceptions, conceptual skills, psychological aspects, cognitive foundations, decision making, and cyberpsychology, each appearing in 1 study
- Consciousness Type :
  - Management consciousness was addressed in 2/10 studies
  - Individual consciousness appeared in 2 studies
  - No mention of a specific consciousness type was found in 2 studies
  - Other types (mindfulness, political, conscious and non-conscious thought, and mass consciousness) each appeared in 1 study
- Governance Context :
  - Public governance contexts were most common, appearing in 5/10 studies
  - Other contexts (crisis, political, project, digital, and organizational management) each appeared in 1 study
- Methodology :
  - Theoretical/conceptual analysis was used in 5/10 studies
  - Systematic literature reviews were used in 3 studies
  - Empirical studies were found in 2 studies (1 qualitative, 1 quantitative)

## Thematic Analysis

### Perceptual and Cognitive Foundations of Public Governance

#### Consciousness Dimensions in Decision-Making    Key findings from the studies:

- Rational decision-making in governance :

- Thacher (2009) argues that close attention to vivid imagery is essential for accurate event representation
- This challenges the view that emotional or intuitive responses are detrimental to effective governance
- Heightened mindfulness in crisis management :
  - Bangari (2021) introduces this concept for government decision-makers
  - Suggests that the interactive information environment influences sensemaking, framing, cognition, and behavioral responses at individual, group, organizational, and societal levels
- Perceptual framework for public governance :
  - Ford and Ihrke (2018) propose that effectiveness, accountability, and legitimacy in governance depend on perceptions of both the governed and those governing
  - Highlights the subjective nature of governance evaluation

**Collective Consciousness in Organizational Context** Studies exploring collective or shared consciousness:

- Management consciousness :
  - Arutiunian (2022) introduces this as a new form of social consciousness
  - Suggests its crucial role in solving complex management problems
- Cyberpsychological aspects of mass consciousness :
  - Yakovlev (2024) examines how digital environments transform mass consciousness
  - Identifies phenomena such as heightened consumerism, rational approaches to behavioral strategies, and increased susceptibility to manipulation
- Political consciousness and governance legitimacy :
  - Chidozie et al. (2020) link material existence of growing populations to increased political consciousness
  - Argues this questions the legitimacy of many national governments

Theme	Key Findings	Governance Implications	Supporting Studies
Individual Consciousness in Decision-Making	Heightened mindfulness influences crisis decision-making; Vivid imagery is crucial for accurate event representation	Improved crisis management; Need for humanistic approaches in governance	Bangari, 2021; Thacher, 2009
Perceptual Basis of Governance Evaluation	Effectiveness, accountability, and legitimacy are perception-dependent	Necessity to consider subjective experiences in governance assessment	Ford and Ihrke, 2018

Theme	Key Findings	Governance Implications	Supporting Studies
Management Consciousness as Collective Phenomenon	Management consciousness as a new form of social consciousness; Crucial for solving complex management problems	Potential for developing shared management approaches and cultures	Arutiunian, 2022; , 2020
Digital Transformation of Mass Consciousness	Cyberpsychological factors influence mass consciousness in digital environments	Need for adaptive governance strategies in digital spaces	Yakovlev, 2024
Political Consciousness and Governance Legitimacy	Material conditions influence political consciousness and governance perceptions	Importance of addressing socio-economic factors in governance	Chidozie et al., 2020

Analysis of themes:

- We identified 5 themes related to consciousness and governance across 7 supporting studies
- Key Findings:
  - 7 distinct key findings, each mentioned in one study
  - Included aspects of mindfulness, imagery, perception, social consciousness, digital influences, and material conditions
- Governance Implications:
  - 6 distinct implications, each mentioned in one study
  - Ranged from crisis management approaches to considerations of subjective experiences and socio-economic factors
- No implications or findings were mentioned in more than one study
- The number of supporting studies for each theme ranged from 1 to 2

## Integration of Consciousness in Governance Practice

### Implementation Frameworks

The studies we reviewed proposed several frameworks for integrating consciousness-related concepts into governance practice:

- Psychological governance (Pykett et al., 2016):
  - Deploys insights from behavioral and psychological sciences to shape public policy
  - Targets the interface of conscious and non-conscious thought and action
  - Connects emotional response and rational deliberation
- Future-ready conceptual skills (Mahmood and Baskaran, 2022):

- Explores relationship between these skills and effectiveness of good governance practices
- Identifies complex problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity as essential for public servants
- Organizational psychology in governance (Turner, 2020):
  - Investigates how governance influences decision-making in project-based organizations
  - Identifies six areas of organizational psychology affecting decision-making processes

## Practical Applications

The studies suggested various potential applications of consciousness-related concepts in governance:

- Crisis management strategies based on understanding heightened mindfulness in decision-makers (Bangari, 2021)
- New approaches to managing mass consciousness in digital spaces (Yakovlev, 2024):
  - Identifying and diagnosing mass consciousness issues in cyberspace
  - Introducing technological solutions aimed at correcting mental processes
- Developing management consciousness to improve organizational performance and solve complex management problems (Arutiunian, 2022; , 2020)

Framework Type	Consciousness Elements	Application Areas	Reported Outcomes
Psychological Governance	Conscious and non-conscious thought; Emotional and rational processes	Public policy formation; Behavioral interventions	Enhanced policy effectiveness; Improved citizen engagement
Future-Ready Conceptual Skills	Complex problem-solving; Critical thinking; Creativity	Public service performance; Good governance practices	Improved governance effectiveness; Enhanced public servant capabilities
Organizational Psychology in Governance	Decision-making processes; Group dynamics	Project management; Organizational governance	Better project outcomes; Improved organizational decision-making
Heightened Mindfulness in Crisis Management	Situational awareness; Cognitive flexibility	Crisis response; Emergency management	More effective crisis decision-making; Improved stakeholder communication
Cyberpsychological Approach to Mass Consciousness	Digital behavior patterns; Collective online cognition	Digital governance; Online public engagement	Adaptive governance strategies; Enhanced digital citizen participation
Management Consciousness Development	Shared managerial understanding; Collective problem-solving approaches	Organizational culture; Leadership development	Improved handling of complex management issues; Enhanced organizational performance

Analysis of frameworks:

- We identified six different framework types related to consciousness in governance
- Consciousness Elements:
  - Problem-solving and thought/thinking were most common, each appearing in 2 frameworks
  - 9 other elements appeared once each: emotion, creativity, decision-making, group dynamics, awareness, flexibility, behavior, cognition, and understanding
- Application Areas:
  - Governance was most common, appearing in 2 frameworks
  - 10 other areas appeared once each: policy, behavior, performance, management, crisis, emergency, digital, engagement, culture, and leadership
- Reported Outcomes:
  - Effectiveness and decision-making were most common, each appearing in 2 frameworks
  - 8 other outcomes appeared once each: engagement, capabilities, outcomes, communication, strategies, participation, management, and performance

All frameworks incorporated multiple consciousness elements, application areas, and reported outcomes, suggesting a complex interplay between these factors in governance contexts.

## References

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