



The Citizens' Perception on the Quality of Public Services

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Abstract

It is said that it is useless to stop the flow of time and it is best to learn to go in the same direction with it. Full success is not assured when you look at yourself from what is around you, but when you look from the environment in which you exist and act towards yourself. In a similar way, the system of public services, with all its components, functions and, in order to ensure its success, it needs a vision of its activity oriented from the outside to the inside. If local governments can understand the changes that interfere permanently in the environment in which they operate, then they will be able to take full advantage of any favorable market opportunities provided they focus on the reaction on time. The purpose of this article is to see how public services are perceived by citizens as their beneficiaries and the measures required improving the functionality of local services.

Key words

Accounting, Budget, Public Services, Administration, Social Policies, Outsourcing

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1. Introduction

For a long time, the importance of service activities has not been recognized, services being neglected by economists and framed, seemed once and for all, in the unproductive sphere.

The experience of developed countries shows that the service sector is common, as well as a premise and a result of economic development. In this respect, the experience of an efficient banking system, a correspondingly developed transport, telecommunications, insurance and efficient public administration sector are essential for the process of internal economic growth and for participation in international trade.

In our country, the growth of services for the paid-out population or from the social welfare funds responds to an objective dynamics of the new demands on the labor breeding process. The service sphere needs to flexibly adapt to the progress made in the field of consumption in line with the differentiation of needs at different stages of the development of society.

A phenomenon present in all countries is the increase in the share of the labor force employed in services, a phenomenon manifested in greater intensity in developed countries. Thus, in the countries like the USA, Germany, Great Britain, France, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden, the share of the employed population in services exceeds 70%. Even in countries with an average or below-average level of development - Spain, Portugal, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia and Poland, the share of the employed population in services exceeds 60%.

In Romania, the distribution of the employed population by activities of the national economy shows that 30.1% of all employed persons were concentrated in the agricultural sector, 28.7% in industry and construction and 41.2% in services. Non-agricultural activities were occupied by 6460 thousand people,

with significant shares being held by those operating in the manufacturing (25.5%), trade (17.6%) and construction (10.9%).

Therefore, services are important for the growth and development of any state. Further, they will be diversified; their quality will be increased as they are involved both in meeting material, spiritual and social needs, entering into this process in complex relationships with material goods, relationships that can be competition (substitution) or stimulation (complementarity).

Modern economic theories have reverted to the role of services in economic growth, recognizing their prime role in achieving economic and social progress.

2. Literature review

The notion of public service has emerged and gradually developed in the context of increasing the general needs of human society. The term "public service" appeared for the first time in the French legal doctrine, in the first edition of the Public and Administrative Law Compendium, which appeared under the editing of Professor Maurice Haurion (1893). Since its birth, the term public service has been met in various aspects, such as "public interest", "public utility", "general interest".

Mircea Djuvara (1930) considers the notion of public service as a relatively recent notion in administrative law, which appeared to meet the requirements of members of a human community.

It should be made clear that the interest of a person or a small group of people for the appearance of a public service is not sufficient, as the interests of a community are needed for certain requirements.

The development of the role of public administration in the provision of social welfare has forced the decentralization of public services to allow better access for the citizen to the services offered. Public service is the service that is subordinated to the central authorities and is organized autonomously, with a patrimony and self-management in the administrative-territorial unit.

The French doctrine supports the two concepts of the concept of public service. The concept of a public service must first be seen as an activity carried out by public authorities in order to satisfy general interests, since the public service only occurs when the collectivity reveals a particular general need. Starting from this doctrine, we find a series of definitions given to public services. By highlighting the material content of the public service, the great professor Antonie Iorgovan (2001) defines the public service as the form of administrative action whereby a public person assumes satisfying a need in the general interest.

Another way of defining the public service is made by Rodica Narcisa Petrescu (2009), which shows that we are in the presence of a public service if:

- an activity of general or public interest is carried out by a public administration authority or a public legal entity organized by it;
- if a private legal person is authorized by the public administration to perform certain activities of general interest.

Professor Paul Negulescu (1925) emphasizes the formal character of the public service, defining it as an administrative body created by state, county or commune, with a certain competence and powers, with financial means procured from the general patrimony of the creative public administration, to the public in order to meet on a regular and continuous basis a general need, which the private initiative could only give incomplete and intermittent satisfaction.

Other definitions seek to highlight that public service is primarily an activity. Not all activities undertaken to meet the needs of the population are a public service activity, but only those activities that are necessary to meet the social needs of the public interest as being of public interest.

Professor Ioan Alexandru (2008) defined the public service as that state organization or local authorities established by the competent authorities in order to ensure the satisfaction of the requirements of the members of the society, in administrative or civil law, in the execution process of the law.

Thus, the activity of a private agent can not be regarded as a public service activity, since even if the pursuit of a general interest is pursued, it is done with a certain benefit for the investments and the work done, unlike the services of the public administration, which are not aimed at profitability.

Mircea Preda (2006) defines the public service as an organizational structure established by law or on its basis, by state, county, city, city and commune, or by individuals, with attributions (powers) (civil

servants and /or contract officers) exercising these powers (powers) endowed with material and monetary means in order to satisfy continuously and permanently common interests of a community.

Decentralization of public services consists of transferring services from the center to local communities, in order to adequately meet social needs.

Jean Rivero (2006) attributes three concepts to the concept of public service:

- In a material or functional sense, the public service refers to an activity of general interest that the administration is called upon to carry out;
- Organically, the public service designates a set of agents and means that a public law person uses to perform a task;
- The third concept attributes an activity that represents a public service to a particular legal regime, derogating from the common law.

In an administrative decentralization regime, better local interests can be solved, local public services being better managed by local authorities, as they have no obligation to comply with the orders and instructions from the center. It was considered that through decentralization the service activity will be improved, their management being adapted to the specifics of the respective tasks.

Public service can be organized either at national level, for the whole country (public air transport, rail), or at the local level (public transport within a locality). The decentralization of services is also linked to the level of economic and social development of the locality, as the community is more developed, so its inhabitants will need more, more diversified and high-quality services.

So for the emergence of a public service we need first and foremost the general interest and then an act of will of the legislative authority. For example, ministries are set up by law; specialized bodies subordinated to the Government are established by Government Decision etc.

According to the opinion of the authors Ioan Alexandru and L. Matei (2002) a reform of the administrative system must start with a reform of the central administration and not with the permanentization of the local public administration reform, and the decentralization of the public services is precisely that part of the central administration reform, distribution of competencies. That is why the public service *can be defined as being the state organization or local authority set up by the competent authorities in order to satisfy the requirements of the members of society in administrative or civil law in the process of law enforcement.*

Regardless of what it would be called, the public service is the middle of the administration that provides citizens with services of general interest under the regime of political power.

3. Methodology of research

The main objective of the study aims to identify the quality of public services offered to citizens within local communities in Romania. From the methodological point of view, we have the theoretical documentation based on the specialized literature, supplemented with the practical documentation at the level of the public administrations and their structures, the institutions and the social bodies in order to identify the real problems they are facing, the consultations of the specialists in the field, and the selection of the data necessary for the analysis, in order to ensure their correctness and veracity.

Qualitative research is done through a top-down deductive approach, starting with concepts, theoretical notions and regulations specific to the study area.

As for the quantitative methods, we have used: questionnaire surveys, statistical indexes, correlations and factorial analyzes.

To achieve the primary objective, the research started from the following two hypotheses:

- H1: *Citizens are involved in the management of public services;*
- H2: *Citizens are pleased with the public services they are offered.*

4. Results

4.1. Involving citizens in managing public services

Citizens of a community are in contact with public administration authorities, as citizenship highlights the competence of public administration authorities in meeting their interests.

The relations established between public administration authorities and citizens can be:

- cooperation relations (collaboration),
- relationships of use of public services (ie, administration benefits to citizens)
- Relationship of authority (or subordination of citizens to public administration bodies).

Analyzing these categories of relations, we will highlight the necessity of permanent democratization of public administration in the idea of establishing a systematic link between the citizens and the administration (Plumb *et al.*, 2003).

It is important for citizens to be involved in the management of public services. This can be done through the following modalities (Parlagi and Iftimoaie, 2002):

- citizens' right to be informed,
- representative democracy,
- pre-decision making,
- participation in the management of public services,
- taking over management,
- handling complaints and complaints.

Citizens' right to be informed is established by law.

The Treaty on European Union, signed in Maastricht in 1992, provides for the rights, obligations and participation in the political life of citizens, and aims to enhance the image and identity of the European Union and to involve the citizen more deeply in the process of European integration.

The Treaty of Amsterdam specifies that any European citizen and any natural or legal person residing in a Member State has the right of access to documents of the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, within the limits of public or private interests. Informing the citizen is considered a priority by the European institutions. The Constitution of Romania in Article 31 makes it imperative:

- Paragraph (1) "The right of the person to have access to any information of public interest can not be restricted".

- paragraph (2) "The public authorities, in accordance with their competencies, shall be responsible for the proper information of the public on public affairs and problems of personal interest".

On the basis of this right established by law, local public administrations have the obligation to provide citizens with the necessary documents to know how to organize and operate local public services.

Representative democracy is that citizens are represented in local councils by elected councilors by vote and forming the deliberative authority called the local council. This form of manifestation has the disadvantage that it does not automatically provide the necessary competence for the functioning of public services.

Prior decision-making presupposes that citizens are consulted before a decision is taken.

The law on the organization and conduct of the referendum states that the mayor "may propose to the local council the consultation of the population by referendum on local issues of particular interest".

The principle of consulting citizens in local issues of particular interest through local referendum is a component of local autonomy.

In order to consult its citizens on certain issues of local interest, the administrative-territorial unit can organize with these citizens' consultations, public hearings and public debates, according to the law.

Consultation of citizens regarding the adoption of important decisions for the local community aims at:

- increasing the responsibility of the local public administration towards the citizen;
- active involvement of citizens in the administrative decision-making process.

Participation in the management of public services is not regulated in Romanian legislation. Sporadic participation in more or less regulated forms is not a form of participation in management (Parlagi and Iftimoaie, 2002).

Taking over the management. Early forms of taking over public service management have existed before; thus Law no. 10/1974 took over the public sanitation service from the mayor's offices and transferred it to the citizens who were obliged, under the sanction of the fine, to carry out the sweeping, snow clearance, cleanliness of the green spaces etc., in front of the dwellings. Today, we can not talk about taking over public service management by citizens only as regards the participation of ushers in a trading company as shareholders of that public service; although the law allows for the establishment of public services by local public administration authorities in practice, it has not been confirmed.

Managing complaints. The right of citizens - complainants to complain about the quantity and quality of public services has been a modern principle of running the local administration. Citizens can file complaints either at the mayoralty or where the service provider is based. In the first case, due to bureaucracy, the complaint will go through a long, but possible solution; in the second case, the request is analyzed faster, but without any chance of solving it.

Key factors in promoting citizens' interests

To show the balance of power in favor of consumers, those who represent their interests have identified five key factors that provide structural support to promote consumer interests. These are the principles of: access, choice, information, correction and representation, principles that are part of the theory of promoting consumer interests (Matei, 2006). First of all, citizens must have access to the benefits of a service without access they can not enter. Their choice of services must be as broad as possible to establish measures for consumer sovereignty and they need as much information as possible to enable them to make rational choices and to make the most of their search their. They also need the means to convey their complaints, their complaints, when things go wrong, and get the right corrections. Finally, they need some means to ensure that their interests are properly represented before those who make decisions that affect their well-being. These five principles were first developed in relation to the goods and services developed on the market. Consumer choice plays a key role here. Citizens have different requirements and preferences, different capacities to pay, and different views on what constitutes the value of money. Wherever there is a choice, individuals can influence the producer's profits and behavior by selecting the products and services with the most appropriate price-quality ratio for them.

4.2. The degree of citizens' satisfaction with the quality of public services

It is important for the public service to be viewed from the point of view of the citizen as his main beneficiary, the quality of a service being appreciated according to the degree of satisfaction expressed by the citizens. The degree of civilization and well-being of a local community depends on the diversity and quality of public services. Local public authorities are faced with new responsibilities that they have to deal with, so the local public administration must respond to requests from its citizens to ensure their social well-being. In order to assess the extent to which the local government manages to satisfy its own citizens it needs to consider issues related to:

- the image of the local public authority regarding aspects such as: performance, fairness, courtesy, reaction speed, flexibility and adaptability in addressing punctual issues, openness to change, citizens' appreciation;
- the degree of involvement of the local public authority in engaging citizens in making the necessary decision-making proposals;
- the degree of accessibility to public services;

In order to measure the degree of satisfaction offered by public services, public authorities can define their own internal indicators such as:

- number of complaints;
- the number of complaints resolved;
- Average time to resolve a complaint
- receptiveness of civil servants to citizens' requests,
- implementation of new methods of relations with citizens;
- the time for issuing opinions and agreements, etc .;
- the degree of public service coverage.

The public satisfaction survey on public services provided by public authorities is an important part of quality management. Since an organization attributes a priority to the client's point of view, it is essential to look at the elements of customer expectations and satisfaction. Satisfaction can be defined as the customer's opinion resulting from the gap between his perception and his expectations regarding the services offered. From this definition it follows that public services are between expectation and satisfaction according to the following scheme:

Expectations > services > perceiving a gap between services and expectations > satisfaction

Customer satisfaction surveys are conducted using questionnaires. For this purpose, on December 28, 2016, using the Drive application, we launched a questionnaire called *"Your Local Government Satisfaction"* in the online environment, consisting of 10 questions containing: checkboxes; multiple responses; grid with several variants; grid selection box. Being posted on the Internet, access was free for 30 days to all those who wanted to get involved and respond, with 282 participations across the country being counted (the answers were found on

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xOz7nJeqRr2OxQ8EooHMkXKNvU3KwqIEogistgXy4kE/edit#responses>

Of the 282 responses that can be viewed by accessing the link, 29 responses received by mail from various collaborators from the Southwest of the country were added.

In order to assess the validity of the seriousness with which the questionnaires were filled, we asked for information that would allow us to structure the sample on age, gender and education variables, the answers being centralized in table 1.

Table 1. Sample Structure by age, gender and education variables

	Frequency (No of answers)	Percent
Sex		
Male	115	36,98
Female	196	63,02
Total	311	100,0
Age		
18-29 years old	90	28,94
30-44 years old	117	37,62
45-59 years old	90	28,94
60 and over	14	4,50
Total	311	100,0

	Frequency (No of answers)	Percent
Education		
Little, less than secondary school	-	-
Secondary school	-	-
Highschool not completed	-	-
Vocational school	8	2,57
Graduated highschool	29	9,34
College	16	5,14
University	258	82,95
Total	311	100,0

Source: author's processing based on questionnaire replies, questions no. 2, 3 and 4

The elaborated questionnaire started from outlining the sources of information. To the question *what is the main means of informing you about the daily events in your locality?*, The answer in table no. 2. and which, schematically, is shown in Figure 1.

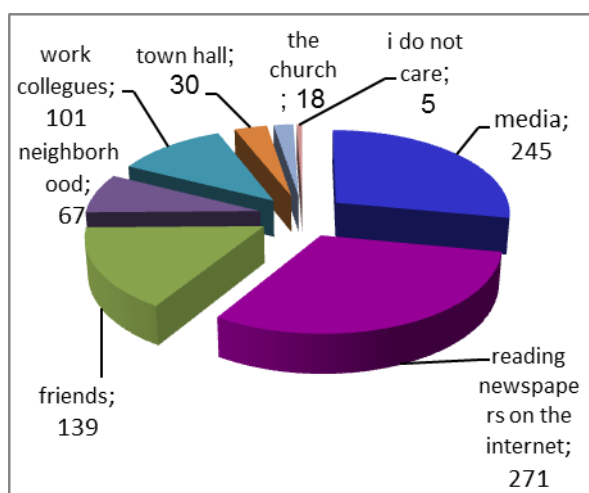


Figure 1. Means of information

Table 2. Means of information*

	Frequency (No of answers)	Percent %
Media	245	27,97
Internet	271	30,94
Friends	139	15,87
neighborhood	67	7,65
Service colleagues	101	11,53
town hall	30	3,42
The church	18	2,05
I do not care	5	0,57
Total	876	100,00

* the question was conceived as Multiple choices, the total exceeds the number of respondents

Source: Author's processing based on the answers received to question 5 of the questionnaire

As can be seen, the mass media, which, as M.Coman (1999) states, mass media have become, in the modern world, a kind of gravitational center in relation to which all the other segments of society and to

which the internet is associated through which, today, any organization builds a web page where it publishes the information the audience is interested in.

To disseminate citizens' satisfaction with the quality of public services, the study was also based on the following answers to the questions asked in the questionnaire:

Table 3. Public services benefiting participating respondent to the questionnaire (question 6 of the questionnaire)

	Frequency (No of answers)	Percent
Water supply and sewerage	290	13.23%
Thermal energy (hot water and heat)	177	8.07%
Sanitation	291	13.28%
Public passenger transport	224	10.22%
Natural gases	249	11.36%
Public lighting	296	13.50%
Parking lot	156	7.12%
Repair and maintenance of roads	182	8.30%
Green spaces	193	8.80%
Playgrounds for children	134	6.11%
none	0	0.00%
Total	2192	100.00%

Source: author's processing based on questionnaire answers, question no.6

We can conclude that, in general, services enjoyed by residents in different parts of the country are somewhat balanced. To a lesser extent, respondents consider that services related to heat supply, car parking, repair and maintenance of roads and, in particular, playgrounds for children are sufficient.

The question based on the selection boxes shows that there are respondents who have not stated that they have water supply and sewerage, thermal energy and natural gas, the reason being found in the answer to question no.7.

Table 4. The reasons for which some respondents do not benefit some public service (Question 7 of the questionnaire)

	Frequency (No of answers)
Water supply and sewerage	
There is no water and sewerage network in the area	21
I'm not connected	
The service is inoperable/can not be used	
others	
Total	21
Thermal energy (hot water and heat)	
There is no network in the area	47
I can not connect, the cost of energy is too high	5
I use my own plant	82
The service is inoperable/can not be used	
Total	134
Supply of natural gas	
There is no network in the area	39
I'm not connected	12
I use stove/cylinder	11
I was discharged for not paying the debts	
Total	62

Source: Author's processing based on the answers to question 7 of the questionnaire

The lack of utilities is due both to objective factors (inexistence of networks in the area), but also to objective factors such as the use of own power stations, the use of cylinders or, as is the case for 17 respondents, the failure to connect to existing networks.

Except for respondents who motivated the lack of the three utilities mentioned above, on a scale of 1 to 5, they appreciated the importance of public services (Table 5), placing water and sewage on the first place, secondly repairing and maintaining roads and further natural gas and public lighting, are very important.

Table 5. The importance of public services on a scale of 1 to 5 by questionnaire participants (%) (question 8 of the questionnaire)

	1 Not at all important	2 To a small degree	3 Enough	4 Important	5 Very important
Water supply and sewerage	0.00%	0.32%	4.82%	3.54%	91.32%
Thermal energy (hot water and heat)	22.51%	4.82%	7.72%	6.11%	58.84%
Sanitation	2.25%	1.29%	7.07%	10.29%	79.10%
Public passenger transport	7.07%	3.54%	13.18%	14.79%	61.41%
Natural gases	1.29%	1.93%	7.07%	8.36%	81.35%
Public lighting	0.64%	0.96%	6.43%	11.58%	80.39%
Parking lot	9.65%	4.50%	11.58%	16.72%	57.56%
Repair and maintenance of roads	1.61%	2.57%	3.86%	9.32%	82.64%
Green spaces	1.61%	3.54%	9.97%	15.11%	69.77%
Playgrounds for children	9.00%	6.75%	8.68%	11.58%	63.99%

Source: Author's processing based on the answers to question 8 of the questionnaire

The importance given to repairing and maintenance of roads, in the study by V.Alistar (2007), ranks 7th in the Craiova municipality, in our study we observe that it goes on the second place which shows that the infrastructure is a requirement and a national need.

When it comes to the satisfaction of public services provided by local authorities, we note that respondents' assessments (Table 6) do not exceed 50% of the maximum satisfaction.

Table 6. Respondents' satisfaction rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, on the public services they receive (%) (question 9 of the questionnaire)

	1 Not at all	2 To a lesser extent	3 Enough	4 To a great extent	5 To a high extent
Water supply and sewerage	7.72%	3.22%	14.15%	38.26%	36.66%
Thermal energy (hot water and heat)	29.58%	8.04%	12.22%	20.90%	29.26%
Sanitation	4.18%	7.40%	25.40%	32.80%	30.23%
Public passenger transport	10.29%	10.29%	38.59%	28.62%	12.22%
Natural gases	10.93%	7.07%	11.58%	20.58%	49.84%
Public lighting	1.29%	4.82%	21.22%	35.05%	37.62%
Parking lot	27.01%	21.22%	27.33%	13.18%	11.25%
Repair and maintenance of roads	27.01%	21.22%	29.58%	14.47%	7.72%
Green spaces	17.68%	17.04%	25.08%	26.05%	14.15%
Playgrounds for children	19.29%	18.65%	27.65%	23.15%	11.25%

Source: Author's processing based on the answers to question 9 of the questionnaire

Speaking of an average at the level of the country's areas, we consider that this characterizes some inertia of local administrations regarding the provision of high-quality services available to citizens, generally the technical support of the services being very old and generating frequent failures, or (as is in the case of gas networks) accidents in some catastrophic situations.

Using a grid based on 13 questions with multiple responses, the answer to the question as to the extent to which our statements about the conduct and work of local government employees respond to citizens' demands (Table 7), allowed grouping of the population according to the image that people they have about the public administration.

Table 7. The extent to which respondents appreciate conduct and activity employees of local governments (question 10 of the questionnaire)

Statements	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 To a small extent	4 To a great extent	5 Highly agree
1. Local government permanently monitors the quality of public services	17.36%	15.76%	38.26%	21.22%	7.40%
2. The public administration responds promptly to the complaints of the citizens	10.29%	31.19%	32.15%	22.19%	4.18%
3. Local government employees are specialists in the areas in which they work	11.25%	28.94%	35.05%	21.54%	3.22%
4. The local government monitors the provision of public services through private sector providers	14.15%	42.12%	24.76%	14.47%	4.50%
5. The budget of the local government is judiciously managed	15.43%	21.22%	40.19%	16.40%	6.75%
6. Local public administration is flexible and adapts to the conditions of change	18.01%	24.76%	37.62%	14.15%	5.47%
7. The local government takes into account the development priorities of the locality based on a long-term strategy	14.15%	30.87%	33.44%	16.08%	5.47%
8. Relations between citizens and local government are based on mutual respect	14.47%	27.65%	28.30%	23.47%	6.11%
9. There are direct means of communication between citizens and the local government (green telephone, mail addresses, web pages)	7.07%	20.58%	24.76%	32.48%	15.11%
10. Local government is bureaucratic in relations with citizens	6.11%	11.90%	18.01%	19.61%	44.37%
11. Local government is bureaucratic in relations with other institutions	7.07%	21.22%	25.72%	23.47%	22.51%
12. City Hall employees are corrupt	8.36%	17.68%	24.44%	18.65%	30.87%
13. Public service employees are corrupt	9.32%	24.76%	31.19%	15.76%	18.97%

Source: Author's processing based on the answers to question 10 of the questionnaire

In order to better understand how these assertions are associated with the creation of an overview of the local administration perception, the common variation of the 13 statements was analyzed by the factorial analysis which allowed to highlight some "latent variables" (factors) that determine the common variation of measurable variables, or the extent to which the respondents agree or disagree with certain assertions about the local governments to which they belong. By definition, the highlighted factors are independent of each other.

The application of factorial analysis was performed using SPSS 18 using the Factor Analysis dialog for processing the information in Table 8. The analysis parameters were fixed using the Descriptives, Rotation, Scores, and Options buttons.

After processing the data, the eigenvalues table will contain, besides the actual value, the calculation by which the variance of the respective components can be identified.

We consider that it is more representative the display of the value diagram (Figure 3) with which some components can be retained, with the statement that the final decision is still based on the cumulative proportion of the variance.

Table 8. Table of Own Values

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8,106	62,353	62,353
2	3,105	23,881	86,234
3	,969	7,454	93,688
4	,821	6,312	100,000
5	3,666E-16	2,820E-15	100,000
6	2,277E-16	1,752E-15	100,000
7	2,015E-16	1,550E-15	100,000
8	1,386E-16	1,066E-15	100,000
9	-1,841E-17	-1,416E-16	100,000
10	-1,321E-16	-1,016E-15	100,000
11	-2,231E-16	-1,716E-15	100,000
12	-2,750E-16	-2,115E-15	100,000
13	-5,483E-16	-4,218E-15	100,000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: processing belongs to the author

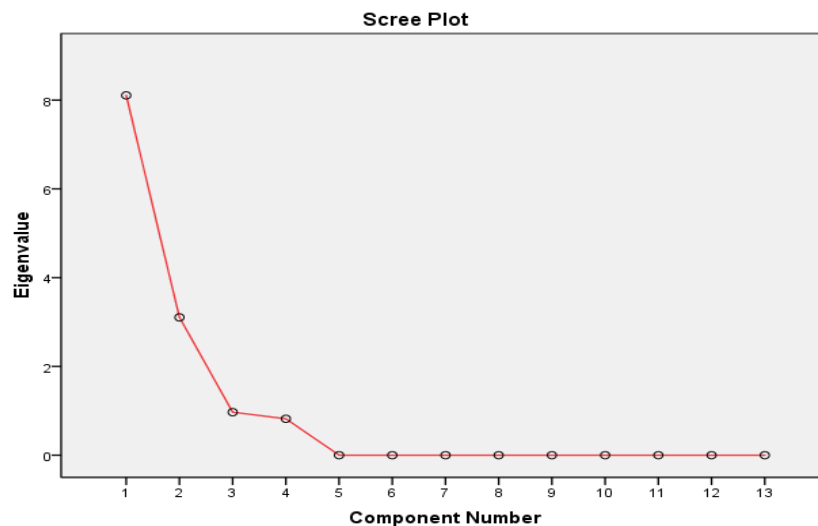


Figure 2. Value Chart

In the case of the study, there were two significant factors (explaining at most 62.38% of the total variation of the 13 assertions included in the analysis).

Table 9 shows the matrix of correlation¹ coefficients between each statement and factors:

Table 9. Matrix of correlation coefficients

	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. Local administration permanently monitors the quality of public services	0,822	-0,003
2. The public administration responds promptly to citizens' complaints	0,978	-0,005
3. Local government employees are specialists in the areas in which they work	0,997	-0,018
4. The local government monitors the provision of public services through	0,767	-0,254

¹ Coefficients vary between -1 and +1. The closer the absolute value is to 1, the more the link between the factor and the measured variable is stronger. A value close to 0 indicates the absence of a link between the variable and the factor. The negative values indicate a negative correlation (the factor determines the disagreement with that statement). Coefficients were calculated using the Varimax method.

	Factor 1	Factor 2
private sector providers		
5. The budget of the local government is judiciously managed	0,917	0,001
6. Local public administration is flexible and adapts to changing conditions	0,925	-0,169
7. The local government takes into account the development priorities of the locality based on a long-term strategy	0,973	-0,117
8. Relations between citizens and local government are based on mutual respect	0,955	-0,127
9. There are direct means of communication between citizens and the local government (green telephone, mail addresses, web pages)	0,546	0,507
10. Local government is bureaucratic in relations with citizens	-0,492	0,859
11. Local government is bureaucratic in relations with other institutions	0,456	0,871
12. City Hall employees are corrupt	-0,050	0,972
13. Public service employees are corrupt	0,765	0,532

The two factors can be characterized, depending on the stronger correlation (variables), as follows:

factor 1 - City Hall is an institution that works efficiently

- Local government employees are specialists in the areas in which they work;
- The public administration responds promptly to the complaints of the citizens;
- Local government considers the development priorities of the locality based on a long-term strategy;

- Relations between citizens and local government are based on mutual respect;
- Local public administration is flexible and adapts to changing conditions;
- The budget of the local administration is judiciously managed;
- The local government continuously monitors the quality of public services

factor 2 - City Hall is an institution whose efficiency is affected by a number of negative aspects

- Local administration is bureaucratic in relations with citizens;
- Local administration is bureaucratic in relations with other institutions;
- City Hall employees are corrupt;

We find the existence of two statements whose value is somewhat balanced, especially after the second rotation (Table 10) and which is difficult to fit into one factor or another, showing a correlation almost equal to both factors.

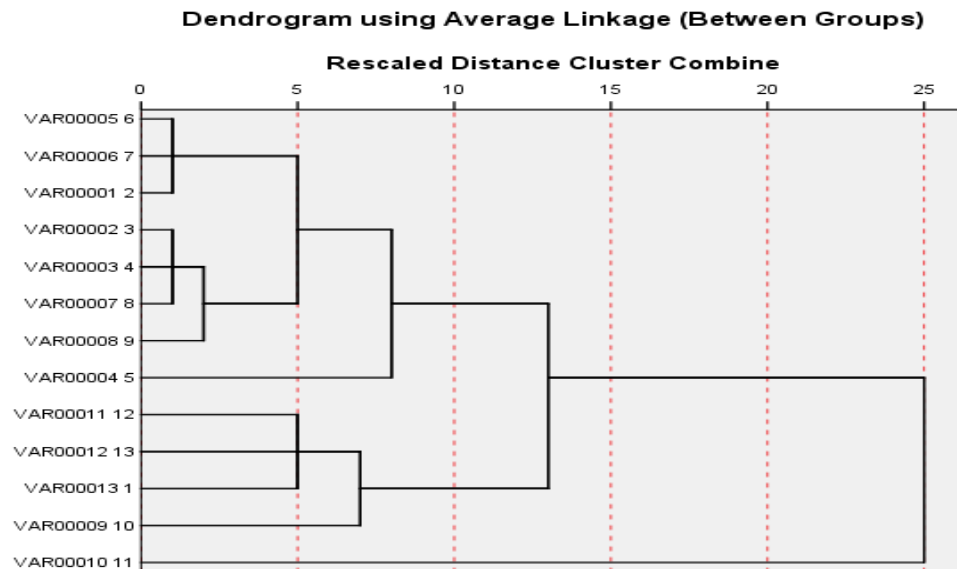
Table 10. The value of balanced statements in first and second rotation

	Initial component matrix		Rotated component matrix	
9. There are direct means of communication between citizens and the local government (green telephone, mail addresses, web pages)	0,546	0,507	0,449	0,595
13. Public service employees are corrupt	0,765	0,532	0,660	0,658
a. 2 components extracted				

If the no. 9 statement can be ignored (the value of the components is less than 0.6, not the same can be said about affirmation No. 13 in relation to which we still find the perception regarding the behavior of the employees providing the public services.

For each individual, each of these factors is of variable importance, giving him a particular general perception of local government.

An individual can be influenced in his/her perceptions and attitudes by one factor, several (to the same or different), or by none of the factors. The dendrogram or classification tree (Figure 3) allows the classification of the previous statements, depending on the distance between them.



Source: generated by SPSS18 based on the information in Tables 7 and 9.

Figure 3. Rank classification tree

By proceeding to the *cluster analysis*² that determined the existence of 5 types of population in the sample, we can see that these differ according to the relevance of the two factors, expressed in terms of the Euclidean distances between them.

Taking into account all the information obtained by processing the data with SPSS18, following their systematization, table 11 was made on the basis of which the following can be made:

Table 11. Classes determined by cluster analysis

Class	Ratio of sample population	Factor 1	Factor 2
1	11,77%	neuter	Strong rejection
2	24,51%	Strong attraction	Weak attraction
3	30,30%	Strong rejection	Strong attraction
4	19,96%	Strong rejection	Strong rejection
Class	Ratio of sample population	Factor 1	Factor 2
5	13,46%	Strong attraction	Weak attraction

Source: processing belongs to the author

Class 1 includes those people who think the city hall is an institution with corrupt officials. They reject the idea of bureaucracy. I am especially people aged 45 to 59, with higher education, medium or high social status, intellectuals. We will name people for whom the local government is just an institution with corrupt officials.

Class 2 includes those who consider the local government to be an efficient, bureaucratic institution, but with corrupt officials. I am mostly women, or very young, or 50 years old and over, with medium education, active people are workers or clerks with low status. We will name them for whom the City Hall is an efficient, bureaucratic institution that favors corruption.

Class 3 includes those people who think the city hall is an inefficient bureaucracy with corrupt officials. In particular, people aged between 30 and 44 are men with medium to upper secondary education and active and inactive, and active people are managers or intellectuals. We will call them people for whom the city hall is an inefficient bureaucracy.

² Cluster analysis groups individuals into exclusive categories, depending on the similarity of responses to a set of questions (in our case, the degree of agreement/disagreement with the 13 statements). We used the K-mean method with 10 iterations.

Class 4 includes those who believe that the city hall is inefficient, bureaucratic, has no corrupt officials. These are people who are indifferent to local government activities. They are people with low education and extreme age (or very young, or 50 years of age and over). We will call them people who do not give any interest to the City Hall's activity.

Class 5 includes those who believe that the local government is an efficient, bureaucratic institution, but whose officials are uncorrupted. There are people in all social categories. We will name them for whom the City Hall is an efficient, bureaucratic institution that has nothing to do with corruption.

5. Conclusions

In the attempt to clarify some theoretical aspects related to the definition and evolution of the concept of public services, to the social need as a factor for the emergence and diversification of services, to the characteristics and typology of public services, to the principles of organizing and functioning of public services, the services have a series of features and traits that allow their identification and on the other hand they can be delimited in relation to other areas of economic and social activity.

Services are in fact a human activity with a specialized content that results in useful, intangible and immaterial effects that serve to meet a social need. They are autonomous in the process of deepening the social division of labor alongside the primary and secondary sectors, being distinctly organized in a sector tertiary sector. From the point of view of the citizen, the public services bring to the fore the relations established between the citizens of the electorate - public service consumers on the one hand and on the other side with the service providers (civil servants or private/public operators).

Within these relationships can be measured the degree of satisfaction of the citizen with the public services he benefits from, the aspect made in the questionnaire work, the conclusion being that, in general, the services that benefit the inhabitants of the different parts of the country are somewhat balanced, but in terms of quality, respondents appreciate some inertia of local governments for providing high-quality services at the disposal of citizens, generally technical service support being very old and generating frequent failures, or (as is in the case of gas networks) accidents in some catastrophic situations.

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