

Transposing the customer model of perceived service quality to public services: a theoretical analysis

Transposition du modèle client de la qualité perçue du service aux services publics : Analyse théorique

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Résumé : L'objectif clé et ultime de toute organisation est d'assurer sa pérennité et sa survie, qui dépendent à leur tour de la qualité perçue du service. Pour cela, les organisations doivent concevoir et réaliser des systèmes de marketing afin de répondre aux besoins des gens, conquérir plus de position sur le marché et de résister durablement à la concurrence. Concernant le secteur public est désormais obligé de s'adapter aux changements fréquents qui lui sont associés. Elle fait évoluer ces procédés de travail, ses règles d'organisation, et son objectif principal est de mieux servir et satisfaire les usagers avec efficacité et efficience. Par conséquent le marketing public vise donc à évaluer et fournir des solutions liées à la communication et à la relation entre les organismes publics et les individus, groupes d'individus, organisations ou collectivités. Dans ce cadre, Les chercheurs en domaine du service public ont développé plusieurs modèles susceptibles d'expliquer le rôle de l'Etat dans l'amélioration la qualité de service afin de répondre à la finalité de l'intérêt générale. L'objectif de cet article est d'apprécier dans quelle mesure les mesures et pratiques du modèle de la qualité perçue du service privé peut être transposé dans le secteur public avec la prise en considérations des spécificités du secteur public.

Mots-clés : Qualité de service perçue ; Modèle client de la qualité de service ; Modèle légal du service public ; Usagers ; Marketing ; Service public.

Abstract: The key and ultimate objective of any organisation is to ensure its longevity and survival, which in turn depend on the perceived quality of the service. To achieve this, organisations need to design and implement marketing systems to meet people's needs, gain market position and sustainably withstand competition. The public sector is now obliged to adapt to the frequent changes associated with it. It is evolving its work processes and organisational rules, and its main objective is to serve and satisfy users more effectively and efficiently. Public marketing, therefore, aims to evaluate and



provide solutions related to communication and the relationship between public bodies and individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities. In this context, researchers in the field of public service have developed several models to explain the role of the state in improving service quality to meet the general interest objective. The aim of this article is to assess the extent to which the measures and practices of the private sector model of perceived service quality can be transposed to the public sector, taking into account the specific characteristics of the public sector.

Keywords: Perceived quality of service; Customer model of service quality; Legal model of public service; Users; Marketing, Public services.

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1. Introduction

Service quality has become a major area of focus for practitioners, managers, and researchers due to its strong impact on business performance, cost reduction, customer satisfaction, and profitability. A considerable literature of research has accentuated on defining the concept of perceived quality, modelling its determinants, measuring it, and on data collection and analysis procedures, and so on. This research, given its contribution to the updating of knowledge, forms a solid basis for the research community.

Although perceived service quality is at the heart of marketing practices in the public sector, little attention has been paid to its conceptualization. And yet, to properly guide public decisions and actions, the tools and practices for measuring and managing the perceived quality of public services must be based on a conceptualization that enables them to reflect the reality they are intended to represent. In this article, we consider that the conceptualization of public service quality raises questions about the transposition or adaptation of private sector models to the public sector.

In this context, public service researchers have developed a number of models to explain the role of the state in improving services to meet the general interest. As a result, public services are presented as service providers who must maintain social relations, coherence and homogeneity. Its basic legitimacy is founded on the satisfaction of the general interest (Sabadie, 2021).

An analysis of public service quality measurement practices reveals more nuanced positions than theoretical debates would suggest. In this context, we have chosen to analyze how the main tool for measuring service quality in the private sector (customer) has been treated (adapted or transposed) in the literature on measuring service quality in the public sector. Through a survey of publications on the customer model in the public sector, we analyze the extent to which these applications are passive transpositions or adaptations of a marketing tool to the specificities of the public sector.

The aim of this research is to assess the extent to which measures and practices of perceived quality in the private sector can be transposed to the public sector, taking into account the specificities of the public sector.

In this context, a fundamental question arises as follows: **To what extent can the customer (private sector) model of service quality be transposed to the public sector?**

We will address this main concern by framing the first point of the article on the perceived quality of a commercial service, so as to develop in the second point the transition to the perceived quality of a public service.

2. Perceived quality of a commercial service: the customer model

2.1. Dimensions of perceived service quality

Understanding the nature of the measures used to evaluate service offerings and their use by consumers is one way of gaining a competitive edge (Engel and al, 2006).

Assessing service quality usually comes up against a number of obstacles. Robert Fey and Jean-Marie Gogue (1991) differentiate between:

The multi-dimensionality of the notion of quality, the lack of collective evaluation units for all products, the plurality of evaluation techniques and the correlation of measurement scales. A review of the literature shows that attempts to clarify consumers' perceptions of service quality have not yielded any concrete results. Despite the general tendency to consider service quality perception as a multidimensional structure, to date there is no consensus on the number of dimensions. While some studies limit this figure to two measures, others specify three, five (or even ten dimensions). The initial conceptualizations of perceived service quality were associated with specialists: A. Parasuraman et al. 1985 Christian Grönroos, inspired by the dereliction paradigm widely used in the literature on physical products (André et Nefzi ,2009).

As far as service quality modelling is concerned, the breakdown of the three most important models identified in the theoretical analysis shows that specialists try to clearly describe the substances that make up the concept of perceived quality.

2.1.1. The Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff model

The model developed by Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff (1978) argues that consumers first translate their needs into a set of desired service attributes, before assessing service quality through a process of reconciling these expected attributes with the actual attributes observed during the service. According to these authors, the attributes that consumers use as evaluation criteria concern both primary and peripheral services (Nguyen et Marchesnay ,1990)..

These include safety, consistency, availability and typologies of services provided, as well as the modalities and "duration" of service provision. Despite the lack of empirical results, the strength of the model is that it attempts to describe the nature of the attributes used by consumers and the methods followed by consumers to evaluate them (Nguyen et Marchesnay ,1990).

The authors summarize the desired attributes in 7 levels (Boyer et Nefzi , 2009).

- Customer safety.
- Easy access to the service.
- Consistency in credibility and standardization of services.
- The attitude of staff during provider-customer interference.
- Different types of offered services.
- The atmosphere in which the performance takes place.
- The "calendar": this is the expected date and duration of the service.

To assess the quality of the service, the customer can choose between one of the following approaches (Boyer and Nefzi, 2009):

- It can only consider a single attribute as being decisive in the evaluation of service quality. The impact of other attributes on quality is considered negligible.
- It can reserve a single attribute as a determinant of perceived quality. Other attributes commit to minimum performance levels.
- S/he can build a scale that takes all attributes into account.

This model has not been empirically validated. However, it has the advantage of describing the nature of the attributes used to evaluate the quality of a consumer's service and the methodology followed by the consumer.

2.1.2. The Grönroos 1982 model

The model provided by Grönroos (1984) proposes three groupings of factors that can explain customer-perceived quality, namely service characteristics, delivery method and corporate image. The model also emphasizes the perpetual nature of an organization's quality aspects throughout the evaluation process. This means that consumers constantly have an idea of a company's reputation, even if they have no personal experience of it.

Grönroos' 1984 model only briefly describes the components of the notion of perceptual quality and their explanatory factors. Moreover, it does not provide sufficient accuracy on the nature and order of importance of the correlations between these components.

Christian Grönroos' studies have identified three measures of perceived quality (Grönroos, 1984):

- **Technical quality of results:** This refers to the results of staff meetings. It relates to the content of the services provided and can be objectively assessed by the consumer thanks to the many specific features of the services provided.
- **Functional quality, also known as "process functional quality":** This refers to the service delivery process. Represents the way in which service is rendered (politeness, speed, professionalism, etc.). This aspect concerns both behavioral and psychological aspects. Ratings are subjective, based on customer perceptions.
- **Company reputation:** This is the image of a service company as seen by the customer. This is determined by the functional and technical quality of the service. Despite the interesting points of this model, it seems fair to point out that the results of the empirical study presented by Grönroos represent the point of view of the service provider, and not the point of view of the consumer.

Moreover, this model never describes precisely what constitutes the notion of perceived quality. Moreover, few details have been provided on the characteristics of the relationships between these components and the order of importance.

2.1.3. The Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry model

In the model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985), he highlights a group of factors, called determinants of perceived service quality, such as inaccessibility, speed, safety, communication, service tangibility, courtesy, competence, credibility, staff reliability and customer understanding. These factors are mainly associated with the service delivery process (Saidi and El abbadi, 2016).

These models have been improved with a rather fragmentary approach, failing to see the dynamics of the interactions between the components of the "service" and that these interactions play an important role in shaping the customer's cognition.

Only the models by Grönroos in 1984 and Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry in 1985 are based on several empirical tests carried out on company managers rather than on the customers themselves (Boyer et Nefzi, 2009). However, our analysis of these models has highlighted a number of factors

that can influence perceived service quality. In 1985, these researchers noted that there was a gap between consumer expectations and service perception. Four types of gap were identified (Perron, 1996):

- The difference between consumers' expectations and company managers' perception of these future needs. These differences indicate a lack of understanding of expectations, which can lead to dissatisfaction.
- Gap between the manager's perception and the characterization of quality rules. This may be due to resource constraints, market conditions or managerial detachment.
- The gap between quality rule accuracy and service allocation. This gap can be traced back to fluctuating human resources performance.
- The gap between service delivery and service commitments. It is the result of exaggerated oaths or misinformation on the offer, which can simulate not only consumers' expectations but also their perception of the service provided.

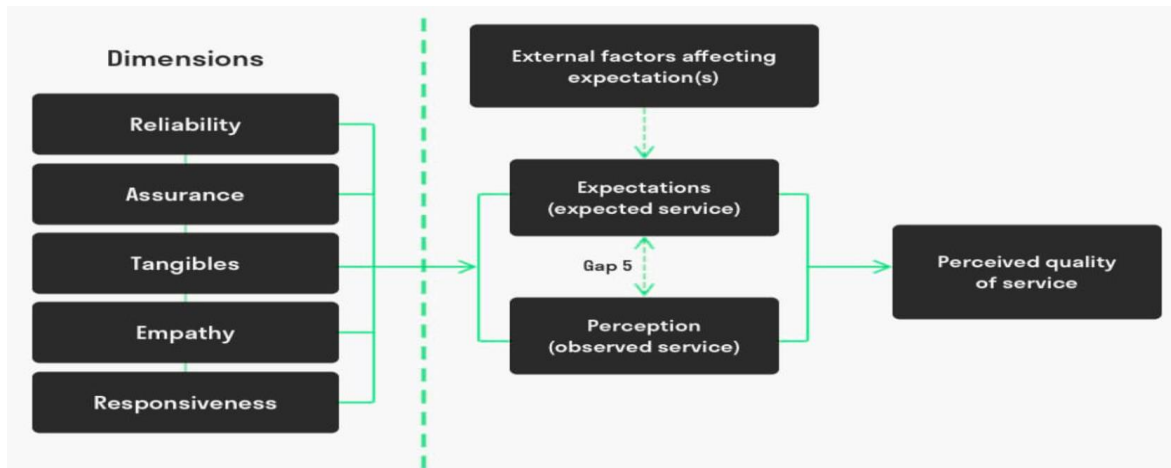
These discrepancies simulate the perception of quality, i.e. the overall gap between consumer expectations and the perception of the services provided. After a qualitative study, the researchers conclude that the gaps depend on the specific characteristics of each company.

In 1985, the researcher Parasuraman et al. presented a model to help companies better identify the root causes of discrepancies that may exist between customer perceptions and expectations. They identify five differences (Sabadie, 2003):

- The first gap arises from the difference between what the customer perceives and what the management system perceives as consumer expectations. The problem is to know to what extent the evaluation and perception of the management system accurately represent consumer expectations.
- The management system must then interpret its perception in terms of a few service characteristics. The second gap concerns the difference between what the management system perceives and the theoretical notion of service.
- The third gap stems from the difference between the theoretical service process and its operationalization.
- The fourth gap concerns the differences between the service it certainly provides, and the company's communication. It helps shape consumer expectations.
- The result of these four sources of non-quality would explain the difference between customer expectations and perceptions. The quality of service perceived by a consumer would be the result of a gap that corresponds to the aggregation of four sub-gaps.

After purifying their measurement instrument, Parasuraman et al (1988) obtained a scale comprising 22 items representing 5 dimensions measured in terms of expectations and perceived performance.

From the outset of their research, Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988) set out to build a "universal" service quality measurement tool. SERVQUAL is thus presented as a scale that can be used in a wide range of service situations. The authors defend this point of view, emphasizing the rigor of the creation procedure and the scale's psychometric qualities of the scale (Saidi and El Abbadi, 2016).

Figure 1: customer model of service quality

Source : adapté de Parasuraman and *al.* (1988)

3. Towards perceived quality of public service

3.1. Marketing private services

The birth of marketing is based on the concept of putting the consumer at the center of a company's concerns. The concept of marketing originated in the USA in the 1950s, and while marketing may seem essential to the success of any business today, this has not always been the case.

The first steps in the Marketing phase date back to the 1950s. After the Second World War, purchasing power and demand for goods and services increased dramatically. Purchasing habits changed, product life-cycles shortened, markets segmented, expanded and confused.

This phase is distinguished by the transition from combative sales methods to a focus on satisfying customer expectations. The customer is at the heart of the company's economic concerns (Ait Oukazzamane & al, 2019). Consequently, marketing can be defined as a managerial aspect specifying the tasks an organization must perform to ensure the long-term success of the target group.

In other words, a company's key and ultimate objective is to ensure its longevity and survival, which in turn depends on customer satisfaction. To achieve this, organizations need to design and implement marketing systems to meet people's needs, win more market position and sustainably withstand competition (Ait Oukazzamane & al, 2019).

It is also a series of actions in market economics aimed at anticipating or observing and, if necessary, stimulating, arousing or renewing consumer desire for such products, and ensuring adaptive continuity of a company's production and marketing facilities to the aspirations thus determined (Dubois & Jolibert, 2007).

3.2. Utility Marketing

When a municipal authority decides to review the planning of its public transport routes because of development or the need to compete for the corresponding concessions, it can send out questionnaires to users to find out about their transport habits, encourage dialogue with citizens and implement information sessions such as suggestion boxes, internet forums, etc.

In this context, and contrary to what most researchers think about the relevance of the concept of "marketing" solely for the private sector and consumer goods, the marketing approach has gradually attracted other fields: services and even public services, public non-profit organizations.

In this context, the public sector is now obliged to adapt to the frequent changes associated with it (Ait Oukazzamane & al, 2019). It is evolving its work processes, its organizational rules, and its main objective is to better serve and satisfy users effectively and efficiently. Public marketing therefore aims to evaluate and provide solutions linked to communication and the relationship between public bodies and individuals, groups of individuals, organizations or communities.

The new challenge for the public sector is to meet the ever-increasing demands of users. They expect a level of professionalism and quality of service from the public administration equivalent to what they can obtain in the private sector, because the citizen-user increasingly sees himself as a real consumer of public services, whether in the field of education, social services, health, employment... etc (Sauret, 2004).

With this in mind, public organizations need to better adapt their offer and target their actions to meet users' expectations, with a view to improving the efficiency and quality of the services they provide. As such, their role should be to focus as closely as possible on the real needs of users. The latter want the administration to deal with their personal affairs and provide them with comprehensive responses to different life events. In these situations, users mainly need access to the list of procedures that concern them, and to identify the appropriate administrative structure.

3.3. The specific nature of the relationship between public services and users

The aim of this section is to show the specific nature of the relationship between public services and their beneficiaries. In particular, the notion of perceived service quality will be placed in the context of a citizen's judgement of public services. The quality of service perceived by users concerns the legitimacy of public authorities, who implement their conception of the general interest through the actions of public services (Jeannot, 1998).

Citizenship enables the beneficiaries of public services to appreciate and value public actions, and to legitimize or delegitimize the exercise of power held by the State.

Corcuff and Lafaye (1996) propose a form of "citizen legitimacy", added to the law and the term "user", insofar as assessing the appropriateness and effectiveness of public action is an obvious political issue.

3.3.1. Essential elements of public service: status of users and citizens

Modernization initiatives are part of the public services' drive to take better account of users' expectations. This perspective is consistent with the etymology of the term "user". According to Larroque (1933), the user "is the one whose satisfaction is the very object of the service. Beneficiary and end of the service, the user can not only exercise control over the general organization of the service, but also demand that it be operated to his benefit: he has a right to the service", in other words, the collective demands of users must guide the action of public services. It is precisely this relationship with the public sphere that defines the user (Jeannot, 1998).

- **The user:**

In the 14th century, the term "usager" referred to a member of a community who collectively owned woods and pastures. Usager refers to a collective system of appropriation (Bezançon, 1995).. This reference was gradually called into question. The public institution has become a legal entity distinct from its members, i.e. from civil society. Representative democracy introduced a distance between users and public affairs. In this system, public authorities have a monopoly on defining the general interest (Sabadié, 2001). Public services are the instruments of the State, which implements political objectives in the general interest, and the user is the one who makes use of a service.

- **Citizen status :**

The status of citizen makes it possible to reintegrate the collective measure in the appreciation of public attitude. It raises the question of causality in the city, and the link between the individual and the public good. Citizens are those who, as members of society, assess the legitimacy of the powers exercised by those who govern. Chauvière and Godbout (1992) develop the coexistence of the customer and citizenship through the dual origins of democracy: community and market.

Unlike direct democracy, whose counterpart is that all members belong to the community, representative democracy integrates a gap between creators and individuals (citizens), the ability to assess the production system from the outside. The model of representative democracy is similar to the market in that it relies on the citizen's right of opposition, and the citizen has the right to judge it from the outside. But, unlike a market, it retains members belonging to the same group, symbolized by citizenship. Citizens are never entirely external, like consumers. Based on the ease of defection from markets, representative democracy should function by making itself heard. On the one hand, the citizen's right of opposition and, on the other, the citizen's status as co-creator of a political system that will be based on market and community principles (Sabadie, 2001). Users are both customers who assess the performance of service providers in relation to their personal expectations, and citizens who oppose their own perception of the general interest to that of public authorities.

3.4. The legal model of perceived public service quality

Public services are considered to be at the service of the public, and are concerned solely with satisfying the desires of individuals. Etymologically, a user is entitled to a service (Laufer et Burlaud, 1980).

Activities of a "public service" nature, whether carried out by the public or private sector, and whatever their administrative or commercial nature, are subject to the same regulations. In the reality of public service theory, this regulation is an instrument for protecting the beneficiaries of public services from abuse of power by service providers. These regulations provide answers to concerns that people are constrained by very vigorous bureaucracies. They "enable the beneficiary to control the administration required to notify him/her, and to comply with procedural regulations"(Jeannot, 1998). The classic foundations of equality, continuity and variability have been developed and extended to other "foundations of action". The legal model for public services makes use of the rules governing users' rights to equality, participation, transparency, accessibility and recourse (Guglielmi et Koubi , 2000).

3.4.1. The right to participate

Citizen participation is understood as the right to take part in public decision-making. It is a means of indirectly controlling public service activities, based on user consultation or the participation of representatives of user associations on certain boards, committees and administrative panels.

Bauby and Boual (1993) and Stoffaës (1995) differentiate between two levels of participation (Perron Frédérique):

- In terms of the operationalization of public action, users will formulate new demands concerning the satisfaction of their diversity requirements, the satisfaction of their specific needs, local services, expression and recognition. Thus, the law on citizens' rights vis-à-vis the administration aims to meet users' expectations by making services more practical, transparent, close, efficient and straightforward.
- In terms of decision-making, they will be demanding greater democratization of services of general interest, with regulation of the beneficiaries. This is not only a challenge for

consumers who want to be seen as customers, but also a proposal linked to choices that affect everyday life.

The issue of users' right to have their say has long been restricted to the participation of user representatives in the various decision-making bodies. Criticism of representational models is based as much on theoretical reflection as on observation. The right to participation is deeply linked to the right to information and transparency. Participation presupposes that users or their representatives have access to all the information they need to assess a public decision, and that their voice is involved in shaping it (Sabadie, 2003). In the opposite case, the participation process is set up not to serve the interests of beneficiaries, but to make the service work. Participation is seen as a tool for promoting public action and avoiding conflict. Chevallerier (1981) observes that user associations are often consulted in an advisory capacity, but not necessarily as a reflective voice.

3.4.2. The right to transparency

The right to transparency relates to the information provided to the beneficiaries of public services. This information concerns both the specific relationship between each user and the public service concerned, and the reasonableness of the public service's behavior towards all citizens.

The right to transparency is based on a number of legislative texts governing relations between public services and the beneficiaries of public services. The Public Service Charter of July 14, 2021 specifies that beneficiaries have a right of access to administrative documentation concerning them. The July 14, 2021 public service charter specifies the purposes of unfavorable administrative decisions, so that beneficiaries can understand them and possibly set up instructions for appeal. The grounds for administrative action must include a "statement of the legal and factual considerations which gave rise to the principle of the decision".

Transparency and access to information are seen as formalities for securing rights, as a tool for promoting communication and understanding, and as tools for realizing the constitutional rights granted to citizens and enabling them to verify the activities of public services (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013). Transparency is also fundamental to assessing the aims and behavior of the state and its public services. Public authorities must constantly be bound by the requirement of legitimacy, which corresponds to citizens' right to control. The right to transparency is deeply linked to the law of accessibility, as it relates to the quality of information received and understood by beneficiaries.

3.4.3. The right to accessibility and simplicity

The concept of accessibility is one of Morocco's universal service measures, based on the principle that fundamental services must be accessible to all. Many focus on the modernization of premises and respect for the rules of politeness and friendliness, others on the accompaniment of beneficiaries, others also on the occupation of reception areas by beneficiaries, the personalized servant/user relationship, social orientation, arbitration, and even the concept of a service contract with the beneficiaries of public service (Sabadie, 2001).

Constitutional law requires that citizens have the right to the widest possible access to information, but only in the cases provided for by law. Laws governing citizens' access to administrative documentation and public databases should rationalize this access. It will set out the rules and commitments of the administration, and clear cases for derogating from these same rules. In order to safeguard this right, the procedures for accessing public services will be clearly formalized and grouped together in a repository facilitating citizens' access to services. Where necessary, the means of

access must be diversified and, above all, categorically adapted to meet the conditions and aptitudes of the individual citizens and users benefiting. In addition, uniform modalities will be demonstrated, especially where services are concerned, and these will benefit from confrontation with executive agents by force of law (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013).

The organization of reception events must comply with standardized norms and conditions. For example: dedicated spaces, easy and clear access, signposted and structured; automatic ticket dispensers to manage queues, compulsory wearing of badges, following the principle of equality; appointment times to limit the size of queues (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013).

Clarifying the way in which public services are delivered and regulating the framework within which public services are presented limit excessive clientelism, privileges and corruption.

Accessibility is therefore a very broad concept, linked to the principles of equality (equal access to services) and continuity. It covers tariff formalities, as well as temporal and spatial issues such as opening hours, coverage of public services and the distances required to access them, physical barriers that may be encountered by disabled or elderly users, and signage. Plus the simplicity of user journeys.

The concept of accessibility similarly refers to the acquisition and quality of information, including relevance, reliability, accuracy and readability. On the one hand, beneficiaries of public services need to be aware of the legal measures governing their relationship with public service organizations.

3.4.4. The right of recourse

The service provided to the beneficiary is in itself the objective of administrative activity (it must be carried out within the strict confines of the law, efficiently and rapidly). Thus, constraints relating to the administration itself must not be allowed to weigh heavily on the beneficiaries of the service, and public services must constantly seek ways and means of simplifying the steps and procedures that service beneficiaries have to complete in order to benefit from services or advantages. Administrative simplification and clarification are indeed important keys to improving the relationship between public services and their beneficiaries (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013).

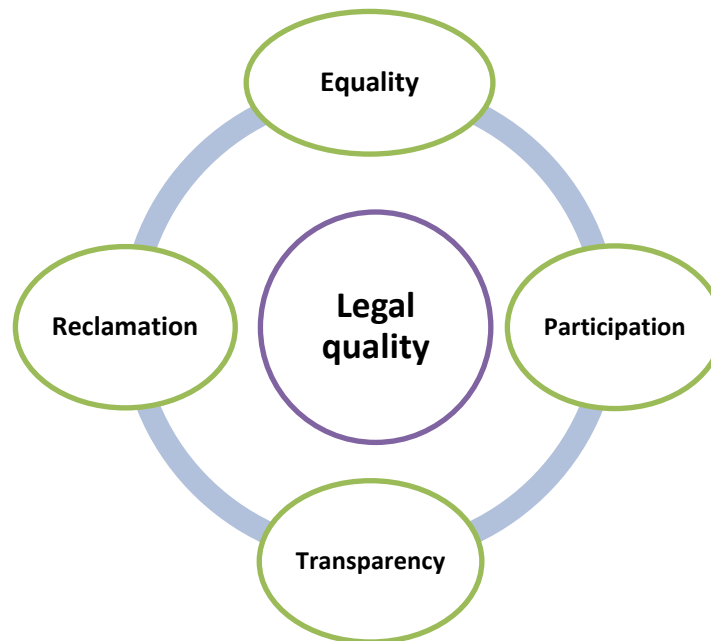
Guglielmi and Koubi (2000), argue that the particularity of the situation of users of public services is that they are more likely to exercise recourse than customers of private service providers in similar situations. The possibility of recourse was originally intended to compensate for the unequal situation between private individuals and public authorities (Sabadie, 2021). In particular, public authorities wish to encourage non-adversarial remedies such as mediation, conciliation or arbitration. The means chosen by the public authority must allow the beneficiary to know the progress of the procedure initiated by him. The public authority must also inform the beneficiary of the reasons for the decision, the possibility of lodging a complaint and the remedies available.

Response times and appropriate sanctions in the event of non-compliance and/or abuse must be clearly defined. Consequently, there must be a clearly identified appeal office on the premises where the service is provided, staffed full-time and empowered to deal with complaints and take the necessary decisions (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013). Similarly, it is necessary to systematically establish a register of complaints or suggestions, for example in several forms (paper, electronic portals, ballot boxes, etc.), the processing and consideration of which will undoubtedly contribute to improving services. To increase the effectiveness and visibility of ombudsman institutions, their powers can be strengthened, especially by empowering them to challenge public services and make recommendations where appropriate. Objection to civil servants who fail to respect the norms and rules established for the management of public services in

accordance with the principles set out in the Constitution and current laws (Report by the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, 2013).

Accessibility for service beneficiaries can be improved by creating decentralized levels of mediation. In all situations, whatever the mediation institution, the administration must provide victims who feel they have been wronged or have abused their power with a response and reasons for their decisions that are as precise and reasonable as possible. The legal quality model of perceived service quality is presented as follows:

Figure 2 : The legal model of perceived service quality



Source: Sabadie W. (2003)

3.5. Public service quality: the result of combining the customer model and the legal model

Service quality is one of the cornerstones of the renewal or modernization of public administration. However, public service quality refers to a broader notion of service quality. In addition to private-sector aspects, aspects specific to the public sector also have a significant impact on how recipients of public services perceive them (Goudarzi et Guenoun , 2010).

Public organizations now make extensive use of marketing methods and concepts to plan, operationalize, monitor and evaluate the services they provide to users. Quality of service is at the heart of their concerns. Marketing in the public sector requires context-specific management tools.

The main contribution of our research is to present the configuration of an explanatory model for the perceived quality of public services, integrating public and private factors by combining the legal model with the customer model. The diagnosis of methods for measuring and evaluating the quality of public services reveals more nuanced locations than theoretical debates would suggest. Within this framework, we choose to analyze how the main instruments for measuring service quality in the private sector "customers" are treated "adapted or transformed" in the theory of service quality measurement in the public sector(Goudarzi et Guenoun , 2010).

Based on a list of publications on public sector customer models, we analyze the extent to which these applications are part of a passive transformation or adaptation of marketing tools to the specificities of the public sector.

There are three ways of applying Servqual's customer model: Some studies use it without adjusting it, such as the study by researchers Wisniewski in 2001 and Ier and Munch in 2004. With the exception of the study by Orwig et al in 1997, these studies do not deal with the adaptation of models from the private domain to public contexts, so they state that further studies are essential to bring out whether the deficiencies of customer models in public places are specific to the domain studied (Orwig et al, 1997).

Other studies suggest adapting customer models to specific research domains: Mc Alexander et al, 1994; Wisniewski and Donnelly, 1996; Donnelly and Shaw, 1999; Nielsen and Host, 2000; Gowan et al, 2001; Roshnee and Murrow, 2002; Roshnee R. Ramsa-ran-Fowdar, 2005; Sanchez-Perez et al, 2007.

Instead of integrating the specificity of the general public sector, they integrate the precise context of application and then treat the specificity as sector-specific: for example, Nielsen and Host (2000) developed a model for measuring service quality in municipalities in terms of agents' perceptions (excluding users' perceptions). As a result, they decided to forego the tangible, assured dimension to which employees could not respond (Nielsen et Host, 2000).

Only two studies by Sabadie 2003 and Goudarzi and Gue - noun, 2010 are deeply rooted in the customer model, adding values specific to the public sector and proposing to conceptualize and measure the perceived quality of public services by considering them in terms of satisfaction and perceived justice. As a result, the SERVQUAL model, known as the customer model, contains the following elements (Bouhafs and Filali, 2015):

- **Relationships:** Measured using items from the SERVQUAL model's helpfulness and empathy factors. This factor refers to the relationship between users and public managers.
- **Tangible:** Tangible elements of a service include all the material elements (physical facilities, equipment and physical appearance of personnel) associated with the service or its supplier.
- **Reliability:** Service provider reliability is the ability of a service provider to deliver the promised service accurately, precisely and reliably.
- **Accessibility:** Accessibility of public services is not limited to the layout of premises and opening hours. Firstly, it means adapting services to the different social and geographical situations of beneficiaries, in order to re-establish equal access to services. Secondly, it means improving the accessibility of activities by providing more information and simplifying administrative procedures.

There is also a legal model that takes into account the particularities of public conduct. This authentic article is available in four factors (Goudarzi and Guenoun, 2010):

- **Equal treatment:** beneficiaries in similar situations must be treated in the same way.
- **Complaints management:** Provide a complaints procedure and how complaints are handled.
- **Transparency:** information presented to beneficiaries on the activities of public services in general and on the analysis of their requests in particular.

Sabadie (2003) empirically develops the use of these two models to assess the service quality of the Caisse d'Allocations Familiales. He then combines the customer model and the legal model to propose a citizen model for measuring the quality of public services.

The Sabadie researcher's 2003 approach represents a major advance in the conceptualization and measurement of public service quality. It is the first conceptual model to include a measure of public service principles, making it possible to understand whether these principles are important to users.

Sabadie's empirical research confirms the importance of these foundations for beneficiary satisfaction. But Sabadie's approach aims to confront the two paradigms while maintaining a private-public logic. The researchers assume that no determinant or constituent of the private model can be reconciled with the legal model. He also acknowledged the use of a "layered concept of perceived service quality" (Goudarzi et Guenoun, 2010).

In each public service, measures are developed for each determinant of two models of perceived quality (customer and legal) (Sabadie, 2003). Sabadie's 2003 model of citizenship is limited to an additive approach to the two models of which it is composed, and therefore does not allow us to improve conceptualizations and models for evaluating the quality of public services. This is one of its main limitations.

In 2010, researchers Goudarzi and Guenoun presented a mixed model for systematising public service quality. Consequently, they consider that the customer model and the legal model are not dissociated. While this study represents the first step towards proposing a mixed model, it is bounded by significant methodological limitations, as the reliability, convergence and discriminant validity of the model have not been tested, and the sample size is limited (Goudarzi et Guenoun, 2010).

The aim of this research work is to overcome some of the limitations of these works, without starting from an a priori point of view, and to guide us in distinguishing between the legal and public elements of service quality, and to adopt a completed approach to the formation and verification of measurement tools.

4. Conclusion

This article, on the borderline between public service management and marketing, looks at the possibility of transposing the customer service model to public services. This research enriches the work on the perceived quality of public services. From a managerial point of view, it informs managers and researchers to understand the different determining factors (customer model and legal model) of public service quality contributing to the achievement of objectives relating to the general interest. The aim of this research work is to overcome some of the limitations of several works, without starting from an a priori point of view, and to guide us in distinguishing between the legal and public elements of service quality, and to adopt a completed approach to the formation and verification of measurement tools. However, the verification and validation of these legal and public elements of service quality in the specific context of the Moroccan public sector led us to carry out empirical research of a quantitative nature. The results obtained from this research will be published shortly.

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