

## **THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS CRITERIA OF MANAGEMENT OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The paper presents the priority aspects related to the concept of quality of public services, quality being the foundation of ensuring and increasing the satisfaction of citizens as consumers of public services. In this context, we have identified the main desired ones, embodied in performance indicators, necessary vis-à-vis quality management in the field of public administration. I also presented in the paper the main indicators that can be used to achieve a constant and continuous improvement of the quality of public services offered to citizens.*

**KEY WORDS:** *public services, public institution, ciliates, quality management, qualitative analysis criteria, performance*

**JEL CLASSIFICATION:** *M16, H83*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

*Quality* is a concept that is used in all areas of economic and social life, but which is subjective and has particular meanings for different areas, sectors, services or products.

Quality in Public Administration is important for ensuring the well-being of society. In the context of increasing demands and decreasing resources, public sector organizations must become more effective and efficient.

In this context, public sector organizations must consider mobilizing all resources to continuously improve all aspects of the organization, the quality of products and services delivered, the satisfaction of stakeholders and their integration into the organizational environment.

For many years, public administration was treated in a totally different way to the private sector and modern management methods, methods of increasing organizational effectiveness and efficiency and customer service standards that apply

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in the private sector were not applied. In addition, due to the "monopoly" nature of the services offered by public administration organizations, the motivation for improving the quality of services is reduced in these organizations.

Even though quality management is a relatively new approach to public administration, this does not mean that public administration has not been quality oriented in the past.

Thus, **3 phases of the evolution of quality in the public sector**, of quality in the sense of compliance with norms and procedures, effectiveness and customer satisfaction, can be identified, namely:

1. Quality in the sense of compliance with rules and procedures;
2. Quality in the sense of effectiveness;
3. Quality in the sense of customer satisfaction.

Currently, the purpose of public institutions is to provide **quality public services**, services that, through the high level of quality, lead to a high degree of satisfaction of the needs of citizens or consumers of public services.

Therefore, for public institutions, **quality**, respectively quality management, can be considered **the foundation and basis for ensuring or increasing the satisfaction of citizens or consumers of public services**.

Another importance that quality and quality management have for public administration concerns the control and evaluation of the internal processes of the activities of public institutions.

## **2. THE ROLE OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AREA**

According to several specialists, the importance of quality management resides in the following:

### **1. The incidence in the economy**

Public institutions that act according to the principles of quality management will constitute a reference model, emphasizing values and methods that contribute or lead to the increase of effectiveness and quality in environments other than strictly public ones.

### **2. Limited resources**

Public institutions that act according to the principles of quality management will seek a reduction of public resources, imposing a better management of them (maximizing the results/expenses ratio). The pressures of the citizens, increasingly aware of the importance of how money is spent, will determine a better management of financial, material and human resources, respectively they will ensure an optimal quality/resources spent ratio.

### **3. Reaffirmation of democratic values**

In the current concept of quality, the citizen who uses public services is the protagonist (the one who evaluates) and every action must take into account his expectations, requirements and needs. In this sense, according to our conception, the quality of different public services must be evaluated by him (citizen as client), who in the last instance must become the authentic evaluator of the quality of services.

At the same time, society, the citizens, are the ones who really impose the standards of public services, evaluate their performance, and thus democratic values are reaffirmed.

#### **4. Legitimation of the public area**

Currently, it tends to be affirmed, by more and more specialists as well as by different categories of the population, that the public domain is intrinsically inefficient, consequently losing acceptance from society. Also, an ineffective administrative activity has an important repercussion, disturbing the public opinion regarding the administrative field to a greater extent than the reaction that an equivalent situation would cause to a private organization. This thing is, in our opinion, largely justified taking into account the fact that the administrations are supported by citizens' taxes and, therefore, the demands on them are greater and of a different nature.

One of the effective solutions for changing the critical and negative public opinion that exists in society regarding public administration organizations, is to increase productivity and quality in public services.

#### **5. Pressure from citizens (consumers of public services)**

Lately, along with the increase in the number of the population, the relationship that the citizen (client or consumer of public services) has with public administration institutions has also evolved. In this sense, the citizen changed his status, moving from the status of beneficiary to that of "judge" who has rights and privileges to receive some services.

In general, public service customers are increasingly informed, enjoy a higher cultural level and are more aware of the fact that they support the state, public institutions and administrations with its taxes (indirect or direct) and therefore expect a response to his demands.

Society, in general, is putting pressure on administrations to manage their resources more rationally and to direct their activity towards satisfying its requirements. Sometimes these requirements are not explicit, but this could be due to the lack of mechanisms that facilitate citizen-administration participation and communication.

It is essential for public administration institutions to determine the needs, requirements and expectations of customers in order to establish strategies and policies in the field of quality that allow satisfaction.

According to the definition in the ISO 9000:2015 standard, service is an "output element of an organization with at least one activity necessarily carried out between the organization and the customer".

There are four distinct characteristics that make the management of service organizations different from that of goods-producing organizations. These characteristics of services are as follows: intangible, perishable, provide heterogeneous results, involve simultaneity and consumption.

**Public services** are the main element that the citizen refers to when evaluating the results and/or performances of the public administration.

**The quality of organizational** documents is an **important qualitative** parameter in the assessment of the organizational system. This presupposes that the organization and operation regulation, the organizational chart, job descriptions and job

descriptions faithfully reflect, procedurally and structurally, the organization, departments, functions and management and execution positions.

The opportunity to substantiate, adopt and apply decisions based on documents or decision-making processes. The premise of such a qualitative parameter is the typological framing of the adopted decisions. Only current decisions are the consequence of decision-making acts, in their adoption, the experience, flair, talent, intuition of the manager (the decision-maker) are necessary, with priority.

The quality of the parameters of the documents and decision-making processes, ensured by:

- the competence of decision-makers, individual and group; with reference to their knowledge, qualities and skills (personal authority);
- the realism of the decision-making objectives;
- the accuracy of the decision criteria;
- substantiating the decision-making options;
- the realism of decision-making consequences/results.

The achievement of objectives is always linked to the achievement of indicators. The indicators are those quantifiable elements by reaching which we demonstrate the fulfillment of the proposed objectives.

Indicators measure objectives, effects, quality and context. By definition, an indicator is used to measure an objective to be achieved, a resource to be mobilized, an effect to be achieved, a qualitative level or a contextual variable. An indicator provides quantitative information, with the role of helping the actors involved in the management of the institution to communicate, negotiate and make decisions.

Performance indicators - performance indicators are established at the level of the organization (the number of resolved requests, the number of public services offered, the number of beneficiaries, the speed of response), and they are divided at the level of subunit, department, and finally at the level of each employed. The indicator represents a quantitative, qualitative or other criterion measurement by which the performance of a process is evaluated, often by comparison with a standard or objective, agreed in advance.

The use of indicators will become much more effective if their quality is constantly improved. Evaluation has an important role in analyzing the quality of indicator systems and in indicating ways to improve them. Although there is no standard method for this type of quality control, an approach based on the following criteria is proposed, which are divided into two groups:

1. *the quality criteria that apply to each indicator and*
2. *the quality criteria that apply to the entire system.*

### ***1. Quality criteria applicable to each indicator***

The usefulness and quality of an indicator depends on:

- data availability;
- solidity and credibility;
- comparability; normativity;
- meaning and validity.

➤ DATA AVAILABILITY

The first quality criterion for an indicator is its ability to be determined quantitatively at regular intervals. Sometimes one or more indicators mentioned in programming documents have never been quantified and, as a consequence, they cannot provide information for evaluation. First of all, access to data that makes quantification possible must be considered. Indicators should be quantified at each monitoring meeting, or whenever is necessary.

➤ CREDIBILITY

The results achieved by applying the indicators must be solid and credible. The fidelity of indicators tends to apply to facts and figures and can be defined by the fact that the same measurement, made by two different individuals under identical conditions, will lead to the same value of the indicator. In cases where indicators are quantified based on questions posed by one person to another, fidelity can no longer be defined so mechanically, even if the investigations must be credible.

Credibility tends to depend on the soundness of the method applied, although the independence and reputation of an assessment team can also be important.

➤ COMPARABILITY

The usefulness of an indicator depends very much on the extent to which it allows internal comparisons to be made, between different program measures, or external, inter-regional comparisons. The comparability of an indicator is therefore a criterion of quality.

➤ NORMATIVITY

Normativity is another quality criterion of an indicator. Indicators must refer to effects that can be considered satisfactory or not. Indicators must avoid ambiguity. Any value of an indicator must therefore be compared with a standard, such as: objectives that are required to be achieved; norms to be broken; the European average to be obtained.

➤ VALIDITY

A good indicator must be understood by everyone who uses it. The meaning of the indicator must be the same, both from the perspective of decision-makers and the public, and from that of program managers. It must accurately reflect the concept to be measured. This property is sometimes referred to as validity.

## ***2. The quality criteria applicable to the entire system of indicators***

The system of indicators must provide coverage, balance, selectivity and relevance. The following criteria are recommended for the analysis of the indicator system:

- The selected indicators must cover a large part of the institution's services;
- The system must present a stable balance between indicators belonging to different categories;
- The indicator system must be simple. The selection criterion requires that the ability of managers to absorb information be respected. As a consequence, the information must be limited to only a few indicators;

- The relevance of the system implies that the indicators are developed primarily for those measures and themes that have significant implications in the decision-making process. For example, measures for which a large budget is allocated; innovative measures; themes considered strategic. Very often, setting indicators will not start from scratch, and where possible, systems and indicators should be aligned with those already operational;
- Improving systemic productivity, by increasing the quality of relationships and collaboration;
- Strengthening multi-level governance, including the use of functional mapping and assessments to clarify responsibilities and reduce overlap; ensuring the correlation of competences/responsibilities with resources at all administrative levels;
- Encouraging inter-municipal cooperation, including the pooling of resources and the creation of networks between and within levels of public administration;
- Streamlining and simplifying processes and promoting the concept and practice of interoperability within and between administrations;
- The use of holistically designed ICT solutions that can transform inter- and intra-institutional interaction and communication and thus improve the performance of public administrations.
- Workforce planning in order to improve performance, which requires the existence of the right people, with the necessary skills, at the right time;
- Attracting new employees to public administrations, by creating a better image of employers and by managing talent;
- Ensuring mobility within and between institutions, the exchange of know-how and the development of flexibility and responsiveness; because stability and reliability are also important, it is necessary to proceed with caution;
- Facilitating the evolution from the role of manager to that of facilitator and supporter of the team, rather than controller and decision-maker;
- Using quality management systems for self-improvement;
- Promoting teamwork and collaboration, knowledge management, including learning networks and intergenerational learning;
- Implementation of competency-based recruitment, promotion and development that recognize merit and encourage continuous learning and development;
- Creating stimulating workplaces and building confidence in staff to motivate and empower employees and fully capitalize on the diversity of the workforce;
- Conducting surveys and evaluations regarding the level of staff satisfaction;
- Creating a broader framework for performance management that reflects the reality of a constantly changing environment, the need for flexibility as well as accountability, achieving results and consequently the importance of continuous learning.

***Examples of indicators and their relationship with organizational performance dimensions are presented below:***

### The performance dimension and types of indicators

The financial performance	The service quality	Flexibility	Using the resources
The degree of income collection The degree of tax debt collection The collection of budget receivables The degree of fulfillment of financial and accounting strategies The degree of dependence on the central budget	The speed response Citizen perceptions The communication Courtesy The competence The availability The transparency	The flexibility regarding the volume of requests The flexibility regarding the delivery time	Productivity Efficiency

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

The quality in public administration depends to a very large extent on the efficient use of resources and design functions of systems and procedures, the involvement of competent and motivated personnel and the interaction of the institution with citizens, organizations, civil society and other public institutions.

Quality does not include only the cost of purchasing a public service or product. Quality is the value that the citizen, as a customer, appreciates in a service or product.

In search of the quality of public services, citizens, like entitled consumers, establish the norms of their acceptance (products or services), "voting" with their money and thus rewarding the effectiveness, performances and satisfactions provided by the best products.

The internal/managerial control standards define a minimum of management rules, which all public entities must follow. The objective of the standards is to create a uniform and coherent internal/managerial control model. Also, the standards constitute a reference system, in relation to which the internal/managerial control systems are evaluated, the areas and directions of change are identified.

The development program of the internal managerial control system, called the Development Programme, is updated annually at the level of each public entity. The development program includes the objectives of the public entity in the field of internal managerial control, depending on the stage of its implementation and development, and for each standard of internal managerial control, activities, responsibilities and deadlines are established, as well as other relevant elements in the implementation and development of the internal managerial control system.

In the Development Programme, professional improvement actions in the field of the internal managerial control system are highlighted, both for people with management positions and for those with executive positions, through courses organized in accordance with the legislative regulations in the field.

Based on the results obtained from the analysis process, public entities thus have the opportunity to align their objectives specific to the implementation process of the Managerial Internal Control System with legal provisions, thus designing a well-structured work plan adapted to their own needs, which will positively influence the general management style of the entity, moving from correction to prevention.

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