

Chapter 23

The Satisfaction of the Citizens With the Place and the Impact of This Evaluation on Local Government Management: A Comparative Study in Argentinian Cities

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ABSTRACT

Sometimes, the satisfaction of the citizens with the city in which they live is high, but local and municipal governments do not get much credit for it. It is important for local and municipal authorities to understand what they can control and what they cannot. Then, they can focus on the most important factors that can affect citizens. A causal model based on partial least squares structural equation will be proposed. The Citizen Satisfaction Index (CSI) model developed by Zenker, Petersen, and Aholt (2013) is taken as reference. This model discusses that overall satisfaction with a place is mainly described by four different basic factors: Urbanity and Diversity, Nature and Recreation, Job Opportunities and Cost-efficiency. The aim of this work was the presentation of our model of Citizen Satisfaction with local Government Management and the comparison between our results and the Duffy et al. (2010) model.

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes, the satisfaction of the citizens with the city in which they live is high, but local and municipal governments do not get much credit for it. It is important for local and municipal authorities to understand what they can control and what they cannot. Then, they can focus on the most important factors that can affect citizens.

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A simple way that local and municipal government can perform to improve the quality of life is asking people what they care about. It is essential to identify those aspects of service quality perceived as important by citizens. The main objectives are to measure the variables of service quality and meet the most influential in the satisfaction of the citizens towards local government intangibles. These are taken as a measurement tool to get data from the survey and construct a theoretical – empirical model that fits the local government level.

We will propose a causal model based on partial least squares structural equation (PLS-SEM). We will try to interpret and explain the satisfaction of the citizens with regard to their city and the impact of this satisfaction on local governments. Comparatively, few priorities are similar throughout the world: good job prospects, clean streets, low crime and good management of public transport, among others. They also differ from place to place, which shows that the regional variation and its impact on cause-effect diagram are vital, either in the type of relations or in the strength of the same.

A flexible model shows that the quality of service in general, job opportunities and ‘livability’ services (clean communities, esthetic, order and carefully green public spaces), especially with diversity of consumptions and services, that are very important in influencing perceptions of local governments. By asking people what they want, bringing results and keeping them informed, citizens and municipal authorities are able to improve the quality of life and increase the perception of the own performance of citizens. This expression can be theorized as *social efficiency*.

The aim of this work was the presentation of our model of Citizen Satisfaction with local Government Management and the comparison between our results and the Duffy et al. (2010) model.

The chapter has been organized as follows, first the background with similar works; second the main section with issues, problems and controversies, the data model and a cause-effect proposed model; third, a solutions and recommendations section in which the comparison between our model and the Duffy et al. one is performed; fourth, the future research section; and finally, the conclusion, references and key terms with their definition.

BACKGROUND

The Tiebout Model of Local Governments (Tiebout, 1956) postulates that individuals who do not agree with all goods and services provided in a locality can improve their welfare by moving to a city that offers a satisfactory set of goods and services. This option has been called “people can vote with their feet”. By voting with their feet, individuals reveal their preferences and promote an efficient allocation of resources in the public sector. Theoretically all those who choose to live in the same community have similar preferences, and the allocation of resources is optimal in the Pareto sense.

From the point of view of the disciplines of public administration, although the Tiebout model is restrictive, it has delivered the foundation for the study of local government finance and the process of fiscal migration, through which people have constituted localities that are stratified by income level. Tiebout postulates that, given certain circumstances, people might be perceived as mobile “consumer voters”. They have a wide variety of options as to where to reside within a metropolitan region in particular and therefore will choose to settle where they find that the municipal services available to them (schools, public services, firefighters and police, etc.) are more attractive. Tiebout is an example of a policy such as “methodological individualism” that assumes that people make location decisions without restrictions based on individual preferences and self-interest, within the broader social context.

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