Effects of Ideology on Citizen Evaluation and Satisfaction with Local Administration

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El efecto de la ideología en la evaluación ciudadana y la satisfacción con la administración local

RESUMEN: En las últimas dos décadas, los politólogos han comprendido que el paradigma de la satisfacción, procedente de las escuelas del marketing y de la gestión, podría ser de aplicación para explicar la satisfacción del ciudadano con un proveedor público. Otra línea de investigación también ha comprobado los efectos de la ideología sobre la evaluación de la acción pública. Sin embargo, el estudio de cómo la ideología acaba afectando al mecanismo calidad-satisfacción no ha sido suficientemente examinado. El principal objetivo de esta investigación es explorar la influencia de la ideología personal en la relación de la calidad percibida con la satisfacción. Estos resultados podrían ser relevantes para el debate sobre la conveniencia de utilizar datos subjetivos como una métrica válida de la eficacia de la acción administrativa. A partir de los datos de una encuesta realizada en nueve ciudades españolas y aplicando la técnica de las ecuaciones estructurales, hemos comprobado que la ideología no atenúa la fuerza de la relación entre calidad percibida y satisfacción, al menos en estos contextos específicos, sino que estaría mostrando algunas pautas de influencia no esperadas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Evaluación ciudadana, Ideología, Modelos no recursivos, Administración local, Modelos de ecuaciones estructurales.

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ABSTRACT: During the last two decades political scientists have found that the satisfaction paradigm, derived from marketing and management schools, could be applied to explain citizen satisfaction with a public provider. Another line of research has also examined the effects of ideology on the evaluation of public action. However, the study of how ideology affects the mechanism of quality-satisfaction has not been carried out in sufficient depth. The principal objective of this research is to explore the influence of personal ideology on the perceived-quality satisfaction relationship. These results may be relevant to the debate about the convenience of using subjective data as a valid metric of the efficacy of administrative action. Using data from a survey carried out in nine Spanish cities, as well as structural equations techniques, it has verified that the ideology may not only be attenuating the strength of the relationship between perceived quality and satisfaction, at least in these specific contexts, but may also be showing some unexpected patterns of influence.

KEYWORDS: Citizen Evaluation, Ideology, Non-recursive models, Local Administration, Structural Equation Models

1. Introduction

In the last couple of decades, a line of research has been developed to explore the relationship between service evaluation and citizen satisfaction (Chen et al. 2010; James, 2009; Kelly and Swindell, 2002; Morgenson III and Mithas, 2009; Roch and Poister, 2006; Van Ryzin 2004a, 2004b, 2006). For these experts, the perceived quality of public services is the main driver in explaining citizen satisfaction with the management of public affairs.

In customer behavior literature, perceived quality is usually conceived as an expectancy-disconfirmation process [1](Anderson, 1973; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Cadotte et al. 1987; Oliver, 1980, 1997; Olshavsky and Miller, 1972; Fornell et al. 1996; Parasuraman et al. 1988). From this point of view, the experience may be either surprisingly positive or negative and the contrast produces a judgment of satisfaction (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Tsé and Wilton, 1988; Oliver, 1997, 1999a). The evaluated perception of services is thus the antecedent of satisfaction[2] (Brady et al. 2001; Oliver, 1997; Ueltschya et al. 2004). This theoretical proposition was formulated to explain customer satisfaction in unregulated markets (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1997, 1999a; Tsé and Wilton, 1988). Some authors have suggested that a similar mechanism might work in the context of local government (Chen et al. 2010; James 2009; Roch and Poister, 2006; Van Ryzyn 2004a, 2006,). Recent research suggests that citizens are able to recognize and evaluate the performance of public services, and this assessment has a direct impact on their own satisfaction with the service provider (James, 2009; Kelly and Swindell, 2002; Lyon, 1992; Mizrahi et al. 2010; Morgenson, III and Mithas, 2009; Roch and Poister, 2006; Van Ryzin, 2004a, 2004b, 2006). Indeed, a set of scales have appeared to measure these aspects, including amongst others, the Canadian project "Citizen First" (Bruning, 2010; Howard, 2010), the British "Customer Voice" (Herdan, 2006), in continental Europe the project "Urban Audit" (Van Ryzin and Pino, 2009; Mizrahi et al. 2010) or the "North American Consumer Satisfaction Index American government version ACSI-Government" (Morgeson III and Mithas, 2009). Such studies are being promoted in Spain by AEVAL (The State Agency of the Ministry of the Presidency) (Van Ryzin and Pino, 2009).

Another line of research has considered socioeconomic variables and political ideology as factors which may influence citizen evaluation (DeHoog et al. 1990; Díaz-Pulido et al. 2010; Lyon et al. 1992). Some authors have noted significant effects related to sex and age on the evaluation of public policies (Brown and

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[1] Obviously, expectations are not the only comparison reference used by consumers in their quality judgments. A summary can be found in Richard Oliver (1999a).

[2] There has been some debate about the best order of conditioning between both. In our view, this problem could be circumvented when the level of generalization is controlled. Some authors have considered that satisfaction would be an antecedent better than a consequence of service quality (Bitner y Hubbert 1994; Bolton and Drew 1991; Oliver 1980). They are usually thinking of "encounter satisfaction", and this specific evaluation would play a more active role in satisfaction judgment's formation. However, when a higher level of generality is obtained, expectations tend to play a more passive role (Oliver 1997) and some more stabilized images of service would influence the level of general satisfaction with the provider (Brady et al. 2001; Cronin et al. 2000; Fornell et al. 1996; Harris and Goode 2004; Johnson et al. 2001; Oliver 1997).

Coulter, 1983; Dimitríades and Maraudas, 2007; Grosso and Van Ryzin, 2011; Morgenson III et al. 2010; Swindell and Kelly, 2002; Yang, 2010). Race and income level also seem to have produced differences in the evaluation of services (Brown and Colter, 1983; Van Ryzin and Immerwahr, 2004; Welch et al. 2005).

However, some authors argue that the contribution of these demographic variables on citizen assessment is minimal. Lyons et al. (1992) found that demographic information had no significant impact when service perception and emotional links with the local community were included in the regression (Lyons et al., 1992: 38). Brown and Coulter (1983) found some significant effects on satisfaction such as age, income and race, but in this case, the explained variance was minimal, R2 = 0.15 (Brown and Coulter, 1983: 55) and Yang recently demonstrated that demographic variables have a significant, but trivial, effect on overall satisfaction, R2 = 0.03, (Yang, 2010: 47). Furthermore, José María Díaz-Pulido et al. have found no significant gender effect on satisfaction with education services, Eloísa del Pino did not detect significant differences in public welfare policies related to gender nor age either (Pino, 2004; 180). In our research we have found no significant differences in evaluation of local services and satisfaction related to gender and age (p-values range between 0, 14 and 0, 99) (with one exception where older people were less satisfied with street conservation than younger people).

In contrast, ideology seems to have a more consistent effect on public evaluation of services. There is abundant literature on the effects of ideology on voting intentions (Bélanger et al. 2006; Calvo and Montero, 2002; Evans and Andersen, 2006; Lewis-Beck and Lobo, 2011; Lewis-Beck et al 2008; Montero et al. 2008; Montoro, 2007; Polavieja, 2001; Sinopoli et al. 2011; Torcal and Medina 2002; Veiga and Gonçalves, 2004).

However, the abundance of articles on political preference contrasts with the scarcity of research on the effect of ideology on citizen satisfaction. In general, it seems that people tend to be more satisfied with public services if their ideology is in accordance with that of the ruling party (Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003; Fraile, 2005). Inés Calzada and Eloisa del Pino demonstrated significant effects related to ideology on the evaluation of health and education policies. Furthermore, Díaz-Pulido et al. argue that if an individual has a conservative ideology, he or she will likely be less satisfied with policies of a liberal government (Díaz-Pulido et al. 2012, 59). In our empirical research, we focused on examining the effects of ideology on the relationship of between perceived quality and satisfaction.

This research has two principal objectives:
1. To verify the impact of ideology on perceived quality and citizen satisfaction with local services.
2. To explore how ideology is related to the satisfaction model.

2. Personal ideology versus party identification

In studies of voting behavior, authors usually distinguish between personal ideology (Bélanger et al., 2006; Calvo and Montero, 2002; Lewis-Beck et al., 2008;

Polavieja, 2001; Torcal and Medina, 2002) and party identification (Bélanger et al., 2006; Converse and Pierce, 1986; Evans and Andersen, 2006; Pierce, 1995; Polavieja, 2001; Torcal and Medina, 2002). In party identification, ideology plays a more cognitive role; the party behaves as a label that links together candidates and voters. By contrast, in "ideological identity", ideology is understood as self-perception. People position themselves on a continuum of political orientation ranging from left to right. This positioning is associated with a system of values and a philosophy of life that defines their political preferences and "guides assessment and political behavior" (Polavieja, 2001: 3).

In Germany, Portugal, France and Spain the concept that best fits voting behavior is ideological identification (Bélanger et al., 2006; Calvo and Montero, 2002; Lewis-Beck and Lobo, 2011; Lewis-Beck et al., 2008; Lobo, 2006; Montero et al., 2008; Polavieja, 2001; Torcal and Medina, 2002; Veiga and Gonçalves, 2004). That is why it has been chosen as the concept of "personal ideology" in order to verify the effect of ideology in citizen evaluation.

3. Research hypotheses

The influence of personal ideology on local service evaluation can be outlined in three sets of hypotheses:

1. The effect of ideology on the perception of local services and the effect on satisfaction. It is expected that citizens sharing the ideology of the party in power in local government will tend to evaluate services more positively and demonstrate a higher level of satisfaction with the management of public affairs. H1a: the average scores of local services from citizens sharing government ideology will be significantly higher than those who have an opposing ideology. H1b: the mean satisfaction from citizens who are ideologically closer to the current local government will be significantly higher than the average satisfaction of citizens who hold ideological convictions farther away from those of the currently ruling party.

2. Ideology as a moderator variable of the quality-satisfaction relationship. The moderation hypothesis seems to be very suggestive because it perfectly fits the requirements of dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). "If one cognitive element follows from another, they are said to be consonant, if … not, they are said to be dissonant and arouse a psychological tension called cognitive dissonance" (Oshikawa, 1968: 429). A citizen sharing government ideology has a consonant opinion about local services that favors the recognition of quality and an evaluation of positive overall satisfaction. On the other hand, a contrary ideology will involve more hostile attitudes that will weaken the formation of a positive satisfaction judgment. Thus, ideology will tend to moderate the impact of perceived quality on satisfaction and therefore their slopes will be significantly different (Mackinnon 2008).
    H2: the coefficient that links perceived quality to satisfaction in both ideological groups, opponents and supporters, will be significantly different.

3. Exploring the relationship between personal ideology on both perceived quality and satisfaction. Since ideology appears related to service evaluation and satisfaction, our next step is to test their reciprocal relationship in order to explore the predominant functional direction (Bollen, 1989).

    H3a: In a reciprocal relationship between ideology and perceived quality, the slope from perceived quality on ideology is significantly higher than the slope of return (ideology on perceived quality). In a loop, the effect of perception prevails.

    H3b: In a reciprocal relationship between satisfaction and ideology, the slope from satisfaction on ideology is significantly higher than the slope of return. In a loop, satisfaction prevails.

4. Measures of the perceived quality, satisfaction and ideology

In order to measure the perceived quality of local services, we have preferred the "servperf" format (Cronin and Taylor 1992) based on a direct evaluation of service performance. This format seems offer some advantages over the classic "servqual" approach: (1) direct assessments appear to have more predictive value of satisfaction judgment (2) the expectation component of the SERVQUAL scale adds no additional information beyond that which is obtained from performance perceptions alone. (3) Servqual measures have a harder interpretation when performance exceeds an "ideal expectation". (4) It demands less effort from respondents because they do not have to think about prior expectations (5) This format conceives service quality as an attitude and therefore would have effects on behavioral intentions such as voting. (Brady et al. 2002; Carreras and Gonzalez 2013; Cronin y Taylor, 1992) This view is consistent with the aforementioned theory of "passive expectations" (Oliver, 1997). From a generalized point of view, local services are always provided in practically the same way; consequently, citizens will continually be assimilating their expectations to the actual performance obtaining in this manner a lasting image of services, similar to an attitude.

It has therefore been suggested that expectations can be discarded in favor of a performance-only measure of service quality such as SERVPERF (Brady et al. 2002: 19). Furthermore, it has been suggested that the influence of expectations on satisfaction is, in practice, channeled through performance assessment (Fornell et al. 1996; Johnson et al. 2001) and therefore in satisfaction models could be removed. For all these reasons, our model ignores the expectations component.

Perceived quality has been measured using the Hierarchical Multidimensional Scale (Carreras and Gonzalez, 2012). This scale is particularly suitable for evaluating municipal services because it is articulated on a double level: the first contains specific dimensions for each service and the second brings together all services in a global measure of perceived quality.

4.1. Local services measurement

From the services which are included in Spanish law[3] on local administration, a selection was produced following a set of retention and rejection criteria (Carreras Jr, 2010).

1. Three retention requirements: Services which are more extensive, broadly recognized by people and correctly assigned to Local Government in order to minimize attribution error[4].

2. Two rejection criteria: (1) Services which are little-known (less than 50% of the population) such as cemetery services, heritage conservation, social services applicable to specific populations as waste water treatment. (2) Services which are barely assessed by citizens, such as the quality of drinking water.

The service of "public transportation" was removed because not all the cities that participated in this study provided their own transportation services.

In the end, nine local services were selected representing a great variety of transactions, including compulsory services such as police checks, services without interaction such as parks and gardens, monopoly services such as cleaning services or waste collection and administrative management such as paperwork, queries or suggestions, payment of taxes or other administrative requirements and so on and so forth.

List of nine services:

- Local Police:
    - Willingness to help citizens
    - Courtesy to the citizen
    - Ethical behavior with citizens
- Condition of streets:
    - Paving of streets
    - State of the sidewalks
- Cleaning services:
    - Garbage collection
    - Street cleaning
    - Cleaning of parks and gardens
- Parks and Gardens:
    - Equipment level
    - State of conservation
- Traffic:
    - The time that pedestrians are required to wait at traffic lights
    - Coordination of traffic lights
    - Fluency of traffic

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[3] Ley 7/1985, de 2 de abril, Reguladora de las Bases del Régimen Local.
[4] Citizen judgment is based on an adequate understanding about which administration is responsible for a particular service. If an assessment on a service were wrongly assigned, impact on satisfaction would have been spurious (Lyons et al., 1992: 118).

- Management of pollution
    - Air Quality
    - Noise level
- Parties and Public Events
    - Assessment of cultural local agenda
    - Assessment of sportive local agenda
- Administrative management of the citizen:
    - Fast and management procedures
    - Simplicity of procedures
    - Attention paid to suggestions and complaints from citizens.
- Complex, sports and cultural facilities
    - Maintenance of the complex
    - Cleaning of the complex
    - Variety of services offered

Numerical response scales with nine positions, ranging from 1 to 10, and extreme semantic anchors, 1 "very bad" and 10 "very good".

4.2. Scale of "satisfaction with city council management"

According to Van Ryzin (2006), satisfaction will be the consumer or citizen's summary judgment about the product or service (Van Ryzin, 2006: 601). In the field of satisfaction, the available literature has differentiated two levels: transactional (encounter) and general satisfaction (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994). Transactional satisfaction is understood as a judgment about a specific episode (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Tse and Wilton, 1988; Yi 1990), while a global or generalized satisfaction transcends the contingency of an event, to produce an overall assessment of a service provider. (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Johnson et al., 2001; Lam et al., 2004; Oliver, 1997).

Here, we have applied the second concept, "overall satisfaction", because it has demonstrated to have a greater predictive validity concerning behavioral intentions towards a provider (Cater and Zakbar, 2008; Fornell et al., 1996; Johnson et al., 2001; Lam et al., 2004; Oliver, 1997).

Overall satisfaction with Local Government Management has been measured through three indicators:
- A direct overall assessment. "The overall level of satisfaction with current management of the City Council". Nine numerical positions with extreme anchors: 1 "very bad" and 10 "very good".
- An overall evaluation of "expectation disconfirmation". "Given the expectations you had about the Mayor's team, now, would you say this team is responding better or worse than expected." A response scale of subjective disconfirmation. Nine numerical positions with extreme anchors: 1 "worse than expected" and 10 "better than expected".
- An emotional component of satisfaction. "Today, with the City Council how do you feel? Nine numerical positions with extreme anchors: 1 "very bad" and 10 "very well".

The first two indicators are commonly used in the literature (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1997; Tse and Wilson, 1988; Ryan et al., 1995; Yi, 1990). This third indicator comes from Richard Oliver who recommends incorporating a "feeling of well-being" in this construct (Oliver, 1997).

4.3. Declared personal Ideology

Ideological identity has been approached with a single question:

    • Declared Ideology: "Would you say that your ideas often are. . . ". "Very liberal," "liberal" "rather liberal", "center", "rather conservative", "conservative" and "very conservative". It also left the possibility available of answering "no ideology"." Also, the options of "center" and "no ideology"(although they were present and active) have not been cited in order to motivate the respondent to adopt an ideological position. These categories were only coded when they were explicitly declared by respondents. We have also preferred avoiding terms like "right" and "left" to minimize identification with a particular political party.

5. Methodology and data

A secondary analysis of the structural equation model has been made of data derived from nine probabilistic surveys using telephone interviewing in order to evaluate the perceived quality of local services in 9 cities of between 25.000 and 100.000 inhabitants, in the province of Valencia (Spain). The cities were selected by survey promoters. Fieldwork was carried out between the 23th September and the 20th October of 2008. The 9 municipalities included in the study were governed by the same conservative party.

Sample: 570 complete responses were obtained. Telephone numbers were selected by a systematic procedure from the phonebook in each city, with sample sizes, ranging from 45 to 80 interviews. Because of the insufficient sample size at the municipal level and in order to operate the analyses, the authors decided to form a complex sample adding the nine samples in a whole scenario; so our sample design would be stratified by municipality. Within each city sample, random samples were equilibrated by gender and age[5].

The presence of several cities does not invalidate the causal model because the analysis unit is at an individual level; each person assesses the service quality of their municipality and develops an intentional attitude towards their respective local government. On the other hand, the generalization of results is increased.

The telephone penetration rate in households for la Comunidad Valenciana in 2008 was 75,7% (INE's data "www.ine.es"). Coverage bias has been controlled weighting for gender and age, in order to obtain a sample that has the same structure as the general population. The demographical distribution of sample was as follows: Males from 18 to 45 years old, 26,7%; males older than 45, 23,2%; females from 18 to 45 years old, 23,2%, and females older than 45, 25,5%.

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[5] In SEM analysis, authors recommend sample size over 200 cases (Barrett 2007: 820).

Graphic 1.
Percentage distribution of personal ideological
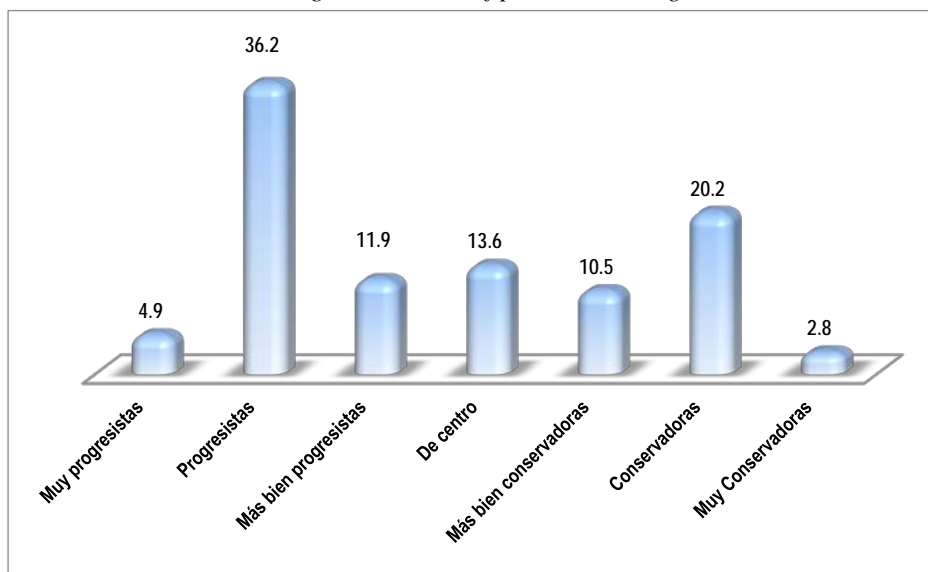
Source: Prepared by authors. (Legend: "conservadores=conservatives"; "progresistas= liberals".

Valid sample "n = 506". The analysis has been exclusively applied to people that have declared a clear ideological choice. From 570 interviewees, 56 said that they had no personal ideology and 8 didn't answer. In total, this database has 506 valid cases. Their distribution can be observed in the following graphic (graphic 1).

The Amos 20 program has been used for data analysis, and the model has been estimated by Maximum Likelihood. The data has not caused severe problems for the assumptions of this estimation method due to the following factors:

•　　　Asymmetric coefficients from individual distributions are held in a range between "-1,4" to "-0,3", far from the threshold ±3, and kurtosis, between "-0,7" to "+2,7", too far from ±5 (Kline, 1998)[6]. Multivariate normality index yields a significant value "205,8", but outliers indicate that there are no great deviations from centroides. The lack of multivariate normality, if it is not sharp, it tends to reject true models because the test of fit is based on "χ^2", and thus emphasizes the significance (West et al., 1994). When there is a good fit, we can reasonably be sure that model is according with data.

•　　　In estimation, there has been no negative variance detected, and there are sufficient cases for estimation. 506 is above the required level of 260 (26 variables by 10) (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

•　　　There are no negative variances in estimated errors, and all of them are significant (Bollen, 1989).

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[6] The unique exception is P28 "Building cleaning" that presents a strong curtosis "5,2", slightly above the threshold of tolerated. We have decided to keep it.

A Mardia Test of kurtosis obtained a value of 130,048, with a coefficient ratio = 28,768, more than 1.96, indicating the presence of non-normality distribution due to multivariate kurtosis. An approach to managing non-normality in SEM is the bootstrap resampling procedure (Nevit and Hancock 2001: 357). Applying the Bollen-Stain Boostrap available in AMOS, a better statistic of global adjust, was obtained, χ^2 Bollen-Stein = 292,261 with a p-value = 0,064, non-significant, indicating that the model is not rejected by the data.

The missing case treatment has been mean substitution. Substituted values have been minimal (less than 10%). The service least known is "Sport and Cultural Facilities". Only in that case, value replacements reached a level of 32% of cases.

6. Results

6.1. The Measurement Model

Anderson and Gerbing (1988) propose saturating all relations between latent variables. Two modifications were required in order to ameliorate the measurement model: (1) the indicator "park cleanup" is shared by two latent variables, "street cleanup" and "recreation parks. This makes sense because the cleaning teams are the same, in both streets and parks. (2) The indicator "fluid circulation" is also saturating in the cases of "management pollution" and "traffic". Obviously, the more traffic there is, the more noise and pollution is perceived.

Table 1.
Reliability and convergent validity of the latent variables

Latent Variables	Reliability	"Ave"
Local Police	0,92	0,80
Pathway Conditions	0,81	0,68
Recreation Parks	0,72	0,51
Traffic	0,78	0,58
Sport cultural facilities	0,82	0,60
Festivals	0,85	0,73
Streets cleanup	0,78	0,55
Administration procedures	0,89	0,73
Pollution management	0,59	0,33

Source: Prepared by authors. Rehability > 0,6; Ave > 0,5.

The final saturated model presents excellent values of adjust[7] indicating that in general terms, the organization of indicators in theirs latent variables is correct ("χ^2_{252} = 518, 9", 0,000 p-value. GFI = 0,929; CFI 0,967, RMSEA = 0,046, and a non-significant P-close = 0, 89)[8].

Both reliability and convergent validity have been verified for all constructs (table 1)[9]. An exception was "Pollution Management" (Table nº 1). The reliability index is slightly below the 0, 65 threshold. As a less than optimal measure, this factor may be improved in subsequent research[10].

Constructs are well discriminated. Confidence intervals have been computed for all pairs of correlations between latent variables. None of the correlations' intervals includes unity; consequently no pair of variables could be identical. On the other hand, with 95% confidence, none of the upper limits of each interval is above "r ≤ 0,6". This means that any pair of factors could share 36% of variation, at maximum.

In their responses, citizens show a high degree of discrimination with regard to all local services. This result agrees with Stipack's work (1977) which demonstrated that people distinguished well between services: police, parks and recreation, refuse collection, construction control, street repair and street cleaning (Stipack, 1977: 49).

In conclusion, the current measurement model is acceptable if it is well adjusted to data and all their latent variables show enough reliability and validity.

6.2. The base structural model

As predicted by previous studies, the perceived quality of services may be a direct antecedent of global citizen satisfaction (James, 2009; Morgeson III and Mitas, 2009; Van Ryzin, 2006). Citizens hold a global idea of local service quality (a second order construct) that is formed by the totality of specific evaluations (Carreras-Romero and González-Rodríguez, 2012: 360).

The results fit the theory (figure 1). The model is not rejected by data (χ^2_{287} = 681,892, 0,000 p-value. GFI = 0,906; CFI 0,951, RMSEA = 0,052, P-close = 0, 23). The standardized slope that links evaluation to satisfaction is very high (0, 78). The way in which people perceive local services has a great impact on their own satisfaction with them. Evaluation of services explains 61% Town Hall Satisfaction. These results are consistent with administrative literature, which contends that perceived quality is the direct antecedent of satisfaction (Chen et al., 2010; James, 2009; Kelly and Swindell, 2002; Morgenson III and Mithas, 2009; Roch and Poister, 2006; Van Ryzin, 2004a, 2004b, 2006).
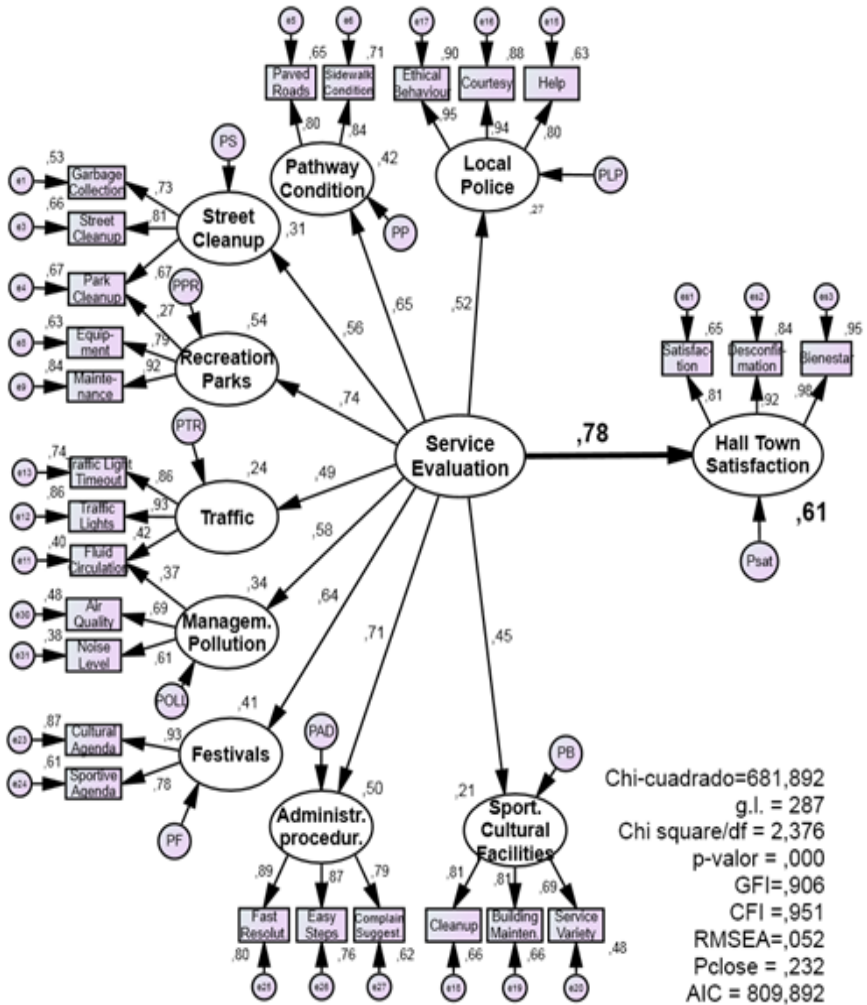
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[7] Index thresholds: GFI > 0.95. CFI > 0,95 y RMSEA (< 0,06). Hu and Bentler, 1999. "χ^2/fd < 3", Carmines and McIver, 1981).

[8] H0: RMSEA ≤ 0,05.

[9] Reliability, > 0,6; AVE, > 0,5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Baggozi and Yi, 1988)

[10] The "AVE Index" should not be applied to latent variables that share indicators (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Figure 1.
Initial Model
Relation between Evaluation of Services and Satisfaction

Chi-cuadrado=681,892
g.l. = 287
Chi square/df = 2,376
p-valor = ,000
GFI=,906
CFI =,951
RMSEA=,052
Pclose = ,232
AIC = 809,892

6.3. The effect of personal ideology on service assessments and citizen satisfaction

The effect of ideology on citizen evaluations has been tested for multi-group invariance by second order factor analysis (Byrne and Stewart, 2006). Ideological positions have been grouped into two categories, depending on the distance from declared government ideology. In 2008 all the cities studied were being ruled by the same conservative party, the "Partido Popular, PP", the closest group is formed by

citizen who have positioned themselves from "very conservatives" to "center" (n = 238), and the farthest group includes all liberal positions (n = 268).

Figure 2.

Effects of personal ideology on service assessments and citizen satisfation

Models	χ^2	g.l.	CFI	RMSEA	
Configural Model	810,9	504	0,961	0,035	
Equals Weights and interceptors	908,5	548	0,954	0,036	
	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δg.l.	p-valor	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA
Comparación	97,6	44,0	0,000	0,007	−0,001

Range Differences in satisfaction and quality of local service, due to personal ideology

Scores differences between ideological groups
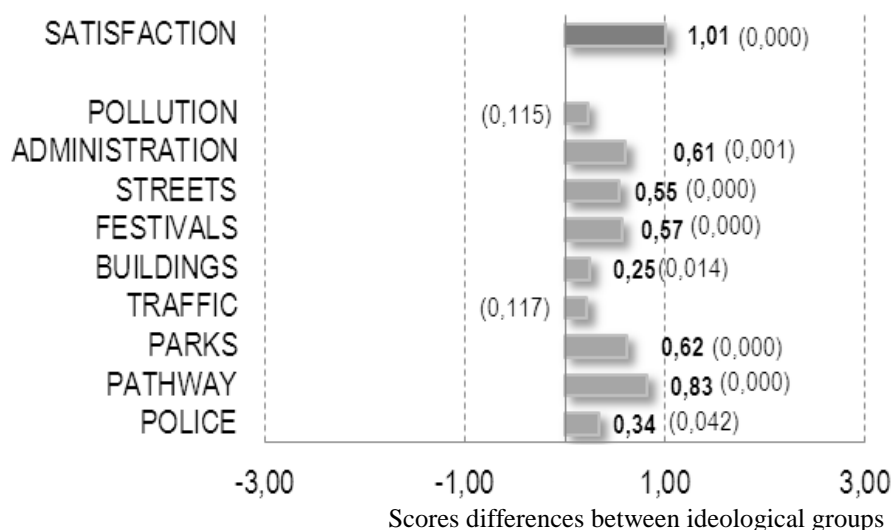
Perceived quality and satisfaction are latent variables that have been approximated in a reflexive way derived from specific sets of indicators. Consequently, in order to detect real changes in those attitudes, a test of latent mean differences is needed (Byrne and Stewart, 2006; Cheung and Rensvold, 2002).

In the first test (figure 2), the invariance of loadings (latent variables have the same meaning in both groups) and intercepts (latent variables show the same scale) has been proved[11](incremental CFI and RMSEA are less than 0,01). The analysis

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[11] Cheung and Rensvold (2002) recommend that the loss of fit between nested models should be assessed, in addition to incremental chi-square, by "CFI". Although the value of "$\Delta\chi2$" is significant, if meets that "ΔCFI <0.01", it shows a trivial loss, and therefore the model is invariant (Cheung and Rensvold, 2002: 251).

takes the liberal group as a reference. The chart shows to what degree the scores of the conservative group are higher (Byrne and Stewart 2006).

As was expected, conservative people tend to assess practically all local services more positively and they tend to show a significantly higher degree of satisfaction (one point above from progresist people).

Results seem to support the initial hypothesis. Personal ideology has a significant effect on evaluation of local services (H1a) and it appears to be associated with a higher degree of satisfaction (H1b).

6.4. The moderating effect of ideology

Once the effect of ideology has been tested on both components, we checked its moderating effect on the relationship: "perceived quality-satisfaction" (H2) using an invariance analysis (Byrne, 2004). If ideology actually does moderate the relationship, the slopes linking quality and satisfaction will be significantly different in both groups.

Invariance analysis works by comparing a sequence of progressively nested models until testing our focal slope (Cheung and Rensvold, 2002): (1) "configural invariance" (both groups are using the same indicators) (2) "invariance of item weights" (groups are understanding the same indicators in the same way). (3) "invariance of latent coefficient", except the focal link (PQ→SAT) (4) "invariance of all latent coefficients", including the focal one. Table 2 shows results of these progressive comparisons.

In all model comparison, incremental indexes CFI indicate that the loss of adjust in all nested models is practically negligible (less than 0,01). The last test verifies the equality of the coefficient that links perceived quality and satisfaction in groups. In consequence, "H2" has been rejected by data. Rival ideological positions don't significantly reduce the impact of perceived services upon satisfaction.

Data suggest that ideology does not attenuate the relationship between perceived quality and satisfaction. These results are in accordance with the theory of satisfaction (Churchill y Surprenant 1982; Oliver 1997, 1999a; Tsé y Wilton 1988), and its application to public service providers (James 2009, Kelly and Swindell 2002, Lyon et al. 1992; Mizrahi et al. 2010; Morgenson III and Mithas 2009; Roch and Poister 2006; Van Ryzin 2004a, 2004b, 2006). It seems that perceived performance has a direct impact on satisfaction, irrespective of the individual ideology professed.

Ideological groups show the same pattern of assessment (see figure 4). The capacity to discriminate seems to be the same. Both groups agree about the best and the worst aspects of each service.

Personal ideology affects the level of ratings in each aspect of services. Conservative citizens rate the services higher than progresist people. However, both ideological groups show the same profile of assessment. They all agreed about which services are the better and worse. Thus perceived quality is influencing satisfaction in both groups with the same intensity. That is why the moderating effect was insignificant.

Table 2.

Moderation effect of the ideology on evaluation-satisfaction relationship

Models	χ^2	g.l.	CFI	RMSEA	
1) Configural model	996,3	574	0,946	0,038	
2) Equal weights	1038,6	592	0,943	0,039	
3) Equal weights and coeficient, except the focal PQ→SAT	1042,8	601	0,944	0,038	
4) Equal weights and all coeficients	1049,2	602	0,943	0,038	
Comparing models	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δg.l.	p-valor	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA
Configural versus equal weitghs	42,3	18,0	0,001	0,003	-0,001
Configural versus equal weitghs and coeff, except focal	46,5	27,0	0,011	0,002	0,000
Configural versus equal weights and all coefficient	52,9	28,0	0,003	0,003	0,000
Comparing the focal impact PQ→SAT (free)	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δg.l.	p-valor	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA
Different impact versus the same impact, in both groups	6,4	1,0	0,011	0,001	0,000

Figure 4.

Profile of ratings of two ideological groups
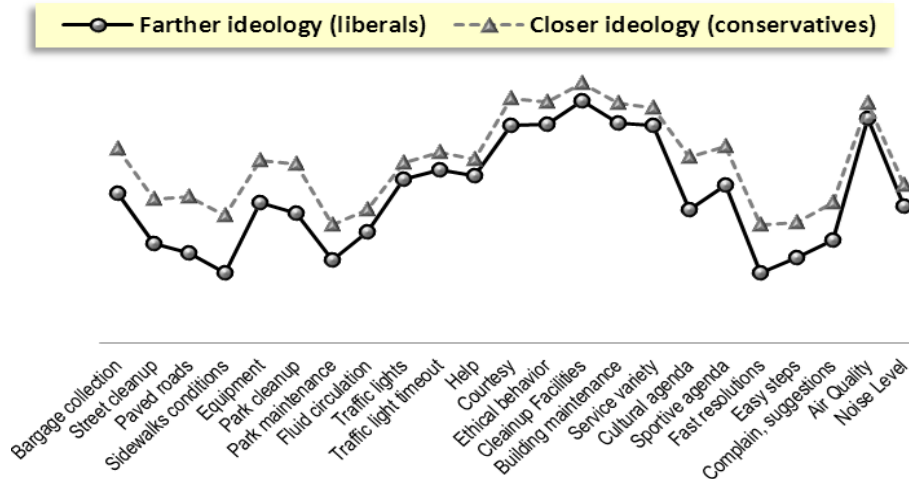
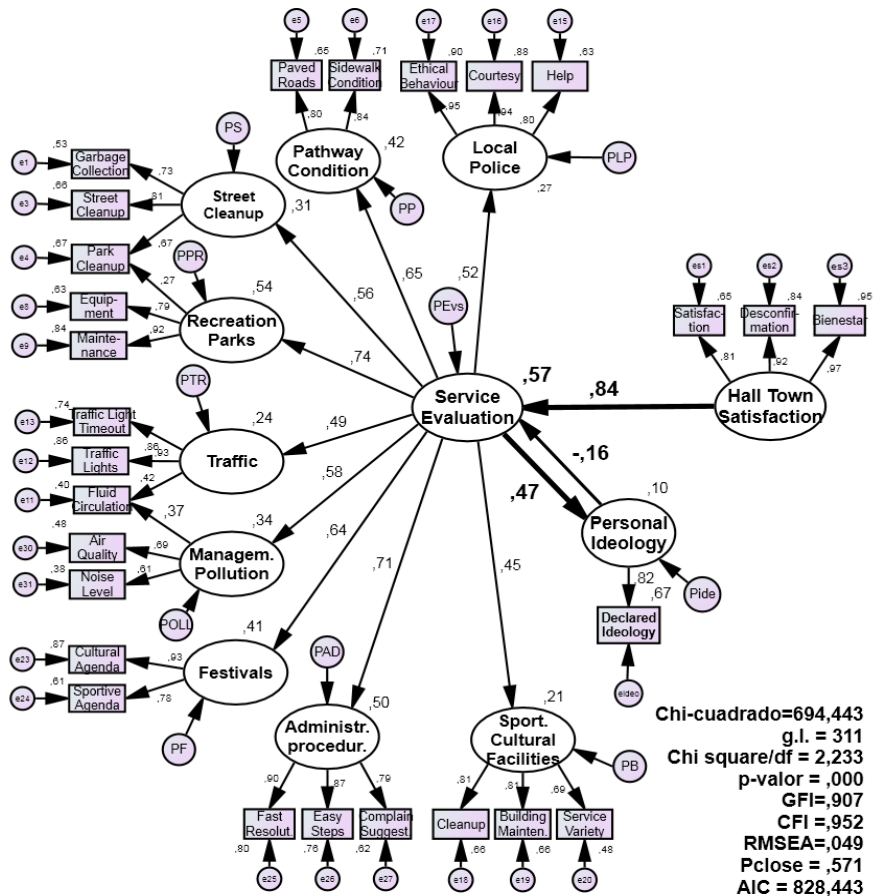### 6.5. Exploring the ideological reciprocal links

To better understand how ideology relates to the two components, we have applied a "non-recursive" model because of its ability to explore the predominant direction in a feedback relationship (Bollen, 1989).

We have examined two models (1) the interplay between ideology and evaluation, and (2) the reciprocity between ideology and satisfaction. Identification problems have been resolved in both cases[12].

6.6. Relationship between ideology and evaluation

Figure 5.
Relationship between ideology and evaluation

Chi-cuadrado=694,443
g.l. = 311
Chi square/df = 2,233
p-valor = ,000
GFI=,907
CFI =,952
RMSEA=,049
Pclose = ,571
AIC = 828,443

The adjustment of the model is very good. (χ^2_{311} = 694,4; p-value 0,000; (χ^2/df) = 2,2; GFI = 0,907; CFI 0,952; RMSEA = 0,049; P-closed = 0,571).

In a reciprocal relationship the ideology is deeply influenced by perceived quality (beval→ideo = 0,47; p-value =0,000) meanwhile the return effect from ideology to

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[12] In order to obtain identification, the slope that relates service evaluation and satisfaction has been reversed. In the same way, the variance of the service evaluation has been fixed to 1.

quality is weak and negative (bideo→eval = -0,158; p-value = 0,015). The presence of opposite signs points out that both components are linked in a negative feedback that would tend towards stabilization (Batenson et al. 2008). The difference between perception and ideology would tend to decrease.
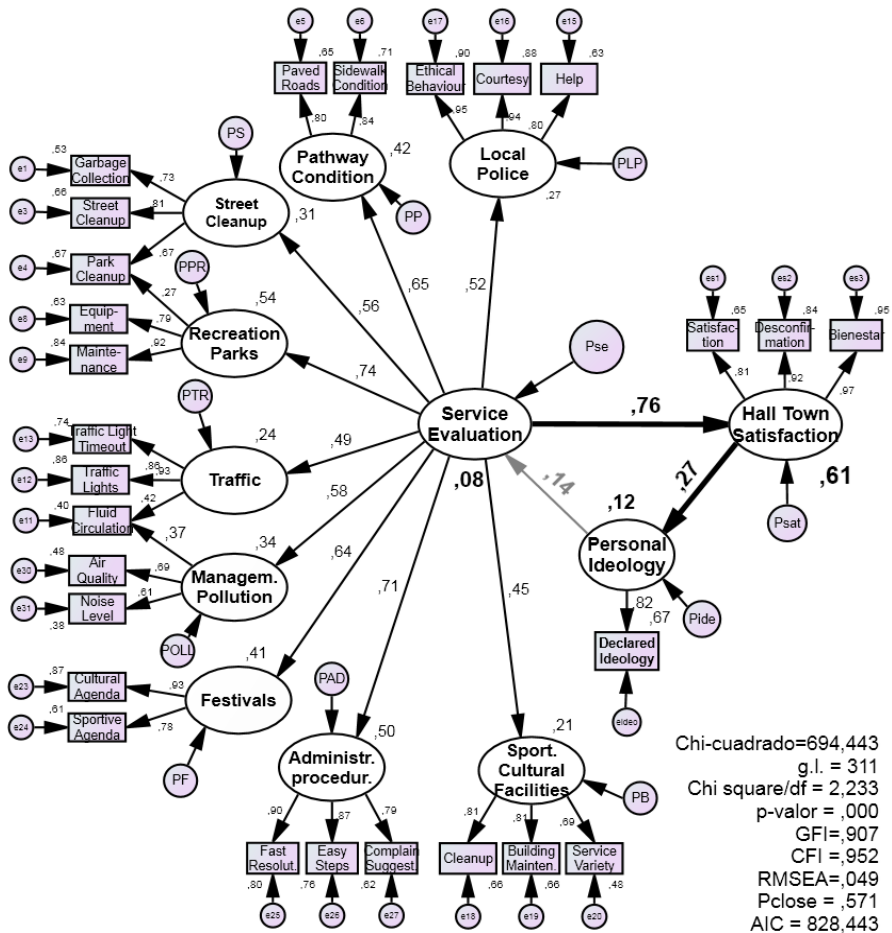
6.7. Relationship between ideology and satisfaction

Figure 6.
Feedback Relationship between Ideology and Hall Town Satisfaction (base: citizen with declare ideology)
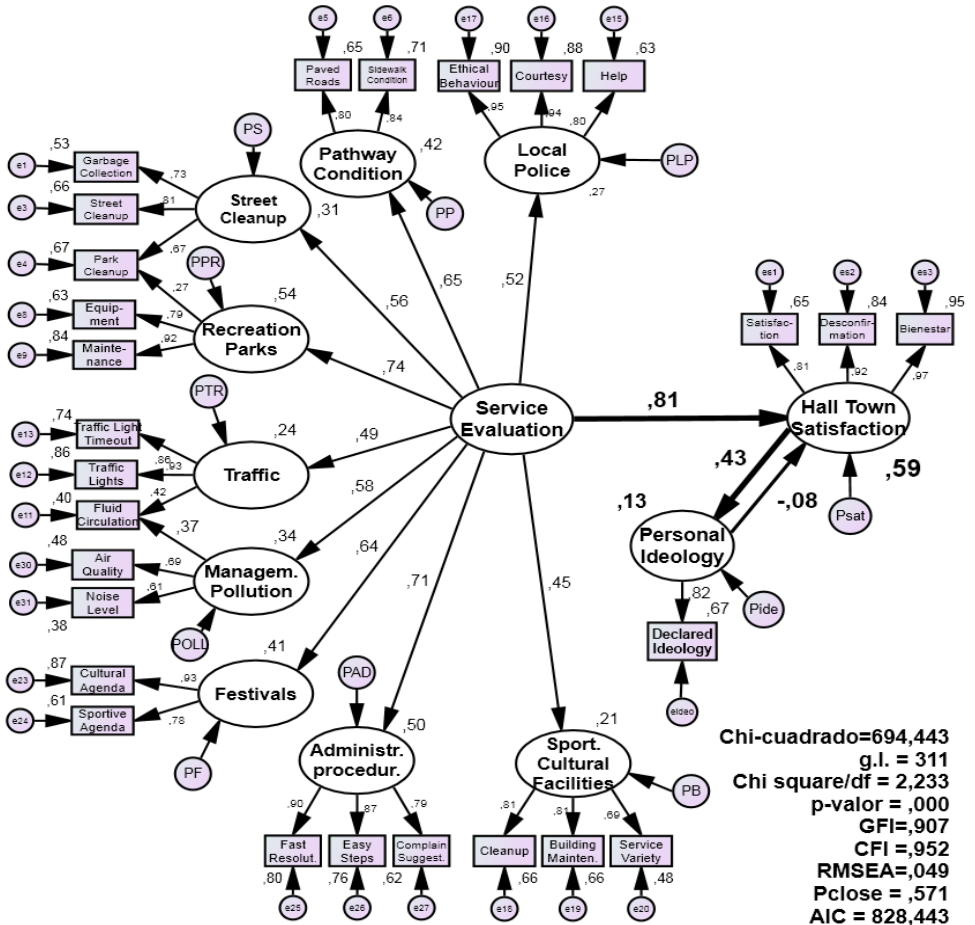
The adjustment of the model is also very good (χ^2_{311} = 694, 4; p-value 0,000; (χ^2/df) = 2,2; GFI = 0,907; CFI 0,952; RMSEA = 0,049; P-closed = 0,571) figure (6).

Figure 7.
The obtained functional model: loop among free components

Adjusting this second model, we have found a similar behavioral path. The prevailing direction is from satisfaction towards ideology ($b_{sat \to ideo}$ = 0,43; p-value = 0,000), but in this relation there does not exist any feedback, ($b_{ideo \to sat}$ = -0,08; p-value = 0,23). From this functional point of view, satisfaction is associated with more conservative positions. This is indicated by the positive sign of the slope.

From a theoretical point of view, perceived quality is a predominantly cognitive attitude (Oliver, 1999a). It is involved with personal ideology in a negative feedback that tends to reduce the gap between them. In contrast, satisfaction is emotional and overall evaluation (Oliver, 1997) which exercises an influence on ideology without return.

If we unify both sets of results from a functional point of view, the data seem to indicate a mediation process. Quality of services impacts directly on satisfaction, and satisfaction impacts on personal ideology, as described in the following model (figure 7).

This model appears be in accordance with the data ($\chi^2{}_{311}$ = 694, 4; p-value 0,000; (χ^2/df) = 2,2; GFI = 0,907; CFI 0,952; RMSEA = 0,049; P-closed = 0,571), but the path that links ideology on service evaluation is not significant ($b_{ideo \to Eval}$ = 0,14; p-value = 0,191).

6.8. The final empirical model

This last model is nested with the former because it has restricted the path evaluation-to-ideology to zero. This restriction makes the whole functional influence from service evaluation towards ideology, mediated by satisfaction.
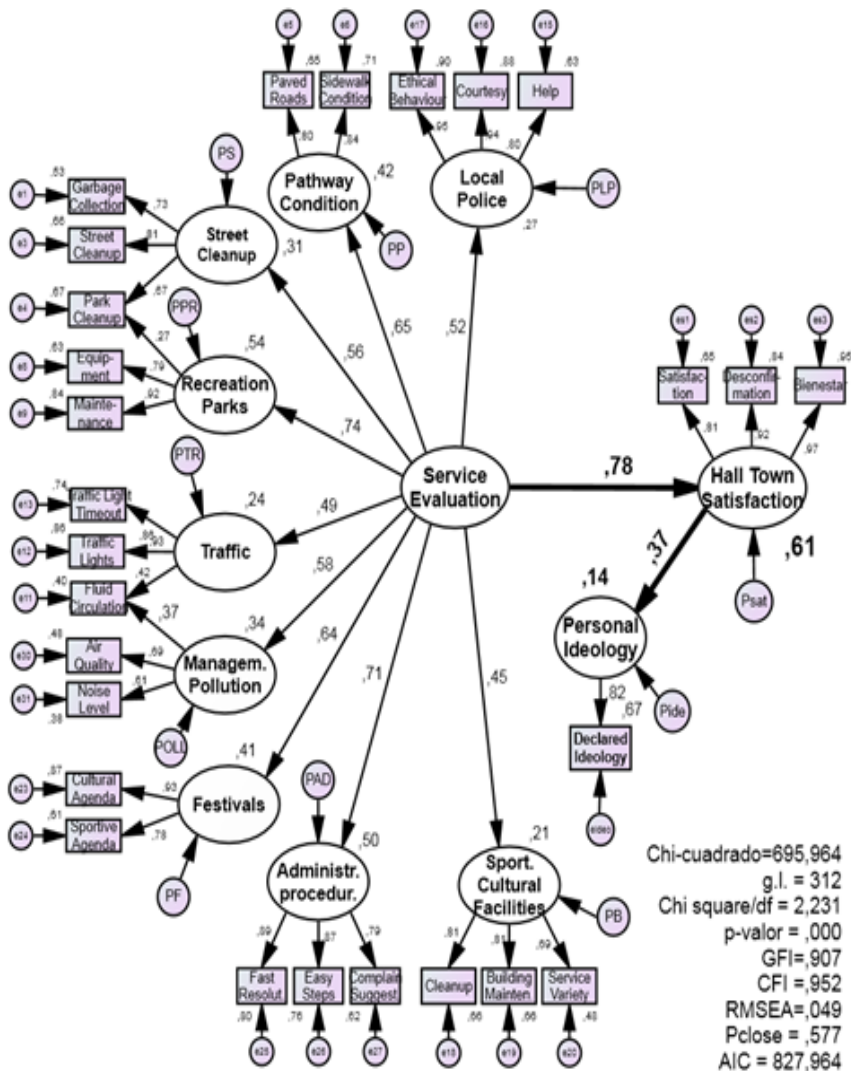
Table 3.
Test of Nested Model

Models	χ^2	g.l.	CFI	RMSEA	AIC
Former model. Mediation process	694,4	311	0,952	0,049	828,4
Nested Model, with restricted to zero (Eval→Sat)	696,0	312	0,952	0,049	828,0

Nested est	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δg.l.	p-valor	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA
Comparison nested - original	1,6	1,0	0,212	0,000	0,000

Table 3 verifies the restriction hypothesis. Comparing both models, it can be observed that there is no significant loss of adjust (p-value = 0.212). So the restriction to zero is correct.

Figure 8.
The Better Model. Only satisfaction is associated with ideology

Chi-cuadrado=695,964
g.l. = 312
Chi square/df = 2,231
p-valor = ,000
GFI=,907
CFI =,952
RMSEA=,049
Pclose = ,577
AIC = 827,964

The better adjusted model aims at a new process of mediation. In local services, perceived quality would directly impact on satisfaction and these "pleasant outcomes" (Oliver, 1999a: 56) would be associated with personal ideology. The positive slope indicates that the more satisfied a person is, the greater the tendency to adopt a conservative position.

In order to reinforce these results a power analysis has been performed. In 1987, Willen Saris and Albert Satorra warned of an asymmetry in the conclusion of SEM

models. These analyses assume that the model is true and therefore can determine the extent to which the covariance matrix implied by the model matches the real covariance. However, in the case of an erroneous model, the conclusion will be indeterminacy (Saris and Satorra, 1987). The authors recommended completing the assessment of the fitted model with a power analysis. In this case, the power means the probability of rejecting a model if it were false in population (Hancock, 2006).

Table 4.
Power analysis

n	f.d.	ε_0	ε_1	λ_0	λ_1	Power
506	312	0,049	0,05	378,3	393,9	0,907

- "ε_1" is the critic value of RMSEA
- Non central parameter for critical value: $\lambda_1 = fd\,(n-1)\varepsilon_1^2$
- "ε_0" is the empirical RMSEA
- Non central parameter for empirical value $\lambda_0 = fd\,(n-1)\varepsilon_0^2$
- $H_0: \varepsilon_0 \geq 0,05$ and $H_1: \varepsilon_{10} < 0,05$
- Probability distribution: Non Central Distribution χ^2, with $\alpha = 0.05$.

Our model has enough power (0, 907), that is, if the model had been false in reality, it would have been rejected by the data. In conclusion, the final model appears to have sufficient empirical support[13].

The results would be suggesting that the relationship between service evaluation and ideology is fully mediated by satisfaction. From this point of view, the satisfaction of citizens with providers may be a mechanism that would tend to move people´s ideological space.

7. Discussion

The literature on the effects of personal ideology on administrative management's assessment is still scarce and its mechanism remains practically unknown. Scholars have argued that the satisfaction model can be applied to public providers, while others have asserted that ideology has a significant influence on the perception of public policies. However, the relation between both mechanisms is still fuzzy. Available survey data allow us to guess the relationship between ideology and service satisfaction

First, we have observed that ideology has a significant impact on both the evaluation of local services and derived satisfaction. People with an ideology closer to that of the ruling party tend to evaluate local services significantly more positively than opposing ideological groups. The same difference has been found in the case of satisfaction. These results are consistent with literature on welfare policy evaluation

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[13] Power $\geq$ 0,80 (Hancock 2006)

(Blekesaune and Quadagno 2003; Calzada and Del Pino 2008; Díaz-Pulido et al. 2012; Fraile 2005).

We had hoped that personal ideology would provoke a stronger cognitive dissonance on in opposition groups; however, this assumption was rejected by the data. A moderator effect on perceived quality-satisfaction relationship was not detected. Although the ratings are different for each group, the intensity of the relationship between quality and satisfaction remains the same in both. In fact, two groups agree in pointing out the best and worst aspects of local services, showing the same profile.

According to these results, personal ideology may be responsible for differences in the level of perceived performance. This perception impacts directly on citizen satisfaction, and this is congruent with administration literature (Chen et al., 2010; James, 2009; Kelly and Swindell, 2002; Morgenson III and Mithas, 2009; Roch and Poister, 2006; Van Ryzin, 2004a, 2004b, 2006). However our results indicate that Satisfaction has a significant influence on own ideological position.

This last association should be clarified. The positive sign of the coefficient between satisfaction and ideology implies that satisfaction with local management reinforces ideological space. In other words, high satisfaction values would be related to more conservative ideological positions and lower satisfaction more related to liberal positions.

In summary, ideology would not mediate between perceived quality and satisfaction (figure 7). The ideology would be influencing the process at the beginning, modifying the perceived quality and at the end, with derived global satisfaction, reinforcing or weakening ideological positions.

8.   Limits and future directions

The present study has three salient limitations. First, it is a transversal research and its conclusions have a hypothetical nature that should be tested in longitudinal studies. Second, the temporal and geographical context of data is restricted. The data was collected at the beginning of the crisis, in 2008, and cities are from a particular area of Spain namely nine municipalities in Valencia. Third, all of these cities are ruled by the same conservative party. Therefore, in the case where the ruling party liberal, the relationships detected should be tested again.

Future research should examine the emotional and deliberative process in relation to the ideological identity of individuals.

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