

**The user's judgment: conceptualization, construction and  
validation of a measurement scale. Application to the  
public service**

**Le jugement de l'utilisateur : conceptualisation, construction  
et validation d'une échelle de mesure. Application au  
service public**

**Sanae HANINE**

PhD student - Research Laboratory in Marketing (LAREM)  
Higher Institute of Commerce and Administration of Enterprises - Casablanca

**Ouaffa GHANNAM**

Professor of Higher Education - Research Laboratory in Marketing (LAREM)  
Higher Institute of Commerce and Administration of Enterprises - Casablanca

## Summary

The purpose of this article is to construct and validate a measurement scale of judgment and to test it in the context of public service. The challenge of this research lies in the fact that it is about a princeps work. To our knowledge, there isn't up today a measurement scale of the "judgment" construct in marketing. Regarding its latent nature, the "judgment" construct can not be directly observed and can be apprehended only through indicators to represent it. In addition to its construction, the psychometric properties of the scale have been verified so that it can be used in future studies and predict the judgment of the public service user. From exploratory and confirmatory analysis through structural equations, we arrive at a measure that presents a reliable and stable structure. The results of the exploratory research highlight seven facets of the user's judgment following a public servuction: rationality, jugeability, mood, affectivity, familiarity, hedonism and warmth. Confirmatory factor analysis has endorsed a measurement model that demonstrates that the user's judgment following a public service is composed of five (5) main dimensions: rationality, judgment, affectivity, familiarity and hedonism.

**Key words:** Judgment, Servuction, Public Service, Scale of measurement, Churchill Paradigm.

## Managerial Summary

Understanding the way in which the user judges the public service offer following a servuction is one of the indicators that can be integrated into the management repositories for steering the performance of public administrations. Indeed, in a context marked by the commodification of the public service with its corollary of increased users requirements, public administrations are led forcibly to enhance the operation of servuction during which they come into direct contact with them. The purpose of this article is to develop a scale of the user's judgment following a public servuction and test it in the context of a public administration. A survey was conducted among 422 users who actually have benefited from public service services. It highlights five (5) main dimensions of judgment: rationality, stereotyping, affective valence, value of familiarity and ultimately hedonic value.

**Key words:** Judgment, Servuction, Public Service, Scale of measure, Churchill Paradigm.



## Introduction

In recent years, models of judgment have become increasingly important. Linked to decision-making, they have been the subject of numerous scientific publications of reference for the important value resulting from their application to social phenomena. As a domain of predilection for cognition and social psychology, judgment has begun its rise in disciplines such as marketing in recent years, particularly in behavioral marketing and more specifically in the cognitive styles of information processing, the taking of decision and satisfaction (Gabriel, et al., 2003).

Our goal is to translate the judgment in the context of the public service as a process intended to better know the behavior of the user to increase his satisfaction. Indeed, the public service appears as "the keystone of state building" (Chevallier, 1997). The conditions of its delivery is a central issue in public management (Myers & Lacey, 1996). Hence the incessant attempts to reform, decentralize, deconcentrate, modernize and managerialize the public service. The user service constitutes in itself the purpose of the public action. It is called to provide the concrete demonstration of its legitimacy and constantly improve the quality of its performance by placing the user "at the center" of its concerns (Chevallier, 1997). To this end, we make a basic assumption that servuction, which puts users in direct contact with the public administration, is a factor that affects the formation of its judgment toward it. Servuction is a moment of truth that confronts two realities, that of the user and that of the administration.

To this end, we have formulated the following research question as the premise of our research : How does servuction in public administrations influence the formation of the user's judgment?

The simultaneity of the production, consumption and distribution of a public service has several consequences. On the one hand, the service, as a result, can not be dissociated from the manner in which it is provided. (Schneider & Bowen, 1995) and (Bendapudi & Leone, 2003) state that "*services provide psychological experiences more than physical possessions. It's actions and processes, rather than physical attributes, that drive customer satisfaction.*" (Langeard & Eiglier, 1994), pioneering researchers on the issue, view the service experience as a "slice of life," a fixed-term episode that can be integrated into a more holistic relationship between the organization and the client. The "service encounter" or service experience according to (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2004) concerns the relationship between the front office and customers (Solomon, et al., 1985); (Czepiel, 1990). We will focus our attention on two cardinal components of public servuction that refer to two dimensions : the relational one (the staff in contact) and the material one (physical environment).

The contextualization of our research in the public administrations is justified by the importance of the current great debate that animates the public space in Morocco concerning the reform of the administration. For decades, the reform of the Moroccan administration has always been an open project (Mahir & Cherkaoui, 2017). The front office was constantly perceived as a mere administrative appendix serving the citizens, without any modern managerial vision that takes into account both the interest of the user and the performance of the administration. The front office in administrative practice is perceived by the users as an "administrative barrier" and an organizational limit to the dedication of the principle of free access to public services (Zaouaq, 2017).

In this perspective, the purpose of our research is to model the process of user judgment following a public servuction. Our goal is to provide some insights into the user's judgment so that public organizations can derive guidance that can be useful to them in their efforts to improve their relationship with users.

In effect, we carried out a prolific and multidisciplinary literature review for the conceptualization of judgment construct as a focal concept of our research from a definitive, etymological point of view and the meaning it has in different disciplines namely philosophy, sociology, social psychology, cognitive psychology and marketing to encompass all of its facets. Based on the review of the literature, we preceded to the dimensionality of the judgment construct and the extraction of the variables which are related to it and which will constitute the first frame of our scale of measurement.

The conceptual model of the research assumes that the user's judgment is formed upstream of the operation of servuction. It also states that the components of the servuction influence this judgment that results in a decision.

We have operationalized the research based on Churchill's (1979) paradigm. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted among 379 members of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works Education-Training.

### **1. Judgment, leverage to drive public performance**

"Judgment" as a phenomenon inherent in the human personality has always aroused the interest of researchers in the disciplines of the human and social sciences: in philosophy especially with its relationship with reason since the hellenistic period, in sociology we quote (Durkheim, 1911). In psycho-sociology we find (Goffman, 1982); (Forgas, 1991); (Drozda-Senkowska, 1997); (Kahneman, et al., 1982); (Fiske, et al., 1991), (Leyens, et al., 1997).

Indeed, psychology and social cognition have become involved in the modeling of "judgment". Researchers in these two disciplines have focused their attention on areas related to judgment such as: processes of causality in impressions formation mechanisms and dispositional inference, the role of affects in social judgments, heuristics and systematic as process of information processing and accuracy of judgment etc. The identification of factors specific to the individual, which influence the formation of his judgment, remains to date insufficient despite the considerable contribution they can make to lighten shadows in relation to the behavior of the user.

Given its characteristics, judgment as a latent variable can not be directly observed or measured. Our research tends to lead to the identification of the factors of its formation following a servuction according to the meanings that it attributes to it: environmental, affective, symbolic, cognitive, behavioral and ultimately utilitarian or pragmatic.

Through a review of the literature, we mobilize (03) theories to extract the dimensions of judgment:

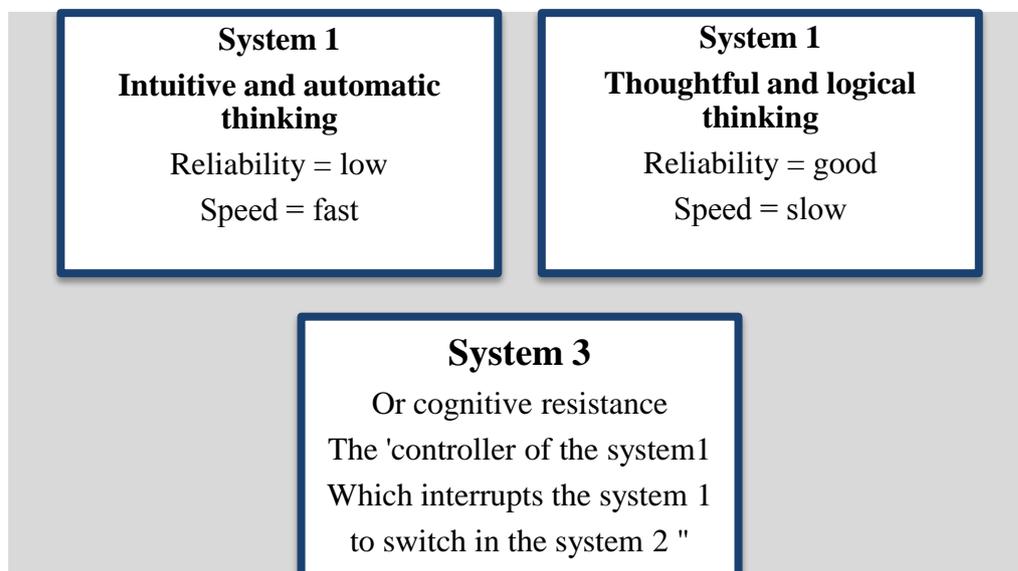
- The model of " Heuristics in judgment and decision-making" developed by (Tversky &Kahneman, 2012).<sup>1</sup>

- The "Social judgeability" model of (Leyens, et al., 2011)
- The "Social Judgment Theory" of (Hovland & Muzafer Sherif, 1961) as reviewed and supplemented by several researchers (Beauvois, 2003) ; (Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2008) and more recently (Cadet & Chasseigne, 2009).

The model of (Tversky & Kahneman, 2011) forms the basis of our theoretical framework. The essence of this model states that individuals use two modes of thought to make a judgment: heuristics (system 1) automatic mental operations or cognitive shortcuts, intuitive, fast and emotional, versus systematics (system 2), which are slower, more thoughtful, more controlled and more logical. For (Kahneman, 2011), individuals refer to either system 1 or system 2 decision-making situations, but generally system 1 takes over. The division of tasks between system 1 and system 2 is extremely efficient: it minimizes effort and optimizes performance.

(Kahneman, 2012) argue that individuals are unaware of the determinants of their judgments because they are anchored by unconscious biases, cognitive biases, delusions of familiarity, halo effect, optimistic biases, illusions of causality or anchoring effects or retrospective illusions etc. These anchors can lead individuals to make judgments and make decisions that may even be against their own interests. This is explained by the nature of the cognitive processes that individuals mobilize to make a judgment: heuristics (intuitive) as the first choice instead of resorting to systematic (slower and more rational processes). They refer to the cognitive processes that influence the processing of information without the individual being able to identify them introspectively. Kahneman and Tversky relativized the rationality of the decision-making process of homo economicus. They even testified that it is biased.

Figure 1. The transition from system 1 to system 2 Houdé (2014).



The theoretical model of social judgment (Leyens, et al., 2011) focuses on stereotypes in the judgment. It considers that individuals have in their minds a set of information that tells them how to make a judgment in a specific situation about a particular person, group or social situation despite introduction of informative elements to dilute stereotypes.

The last model, Social Judgment Theory (TJS) refers to an in-depth researchs on human personality, cognition, and affects as factors in the formation of judgment. The model is

analytical and descriptive and tends to capture individual judgment policies. We consider it an appropriate framework to understand the process of user judgment vis-à-vis the front office staff. The theory undertakes to analyze the processes "cognitive and affects engaged in the intrapsychic processing of social information: analysis of procedural strategies of information processing including categorization, memorization, activation of structures of representation" (Forgas, 1981).

### **1.1. The incorporation of the user's judgment into the management of service quality and public performance**

The public service is under increasing pressure to report on its performance and justify the allocation of the budgets it benefits. Reporting on his performance is equivalent to reporting his legitimacy. This performance is driven by indicators. To this end, the reference documents used as a basis for the elaboration and interpretation of these indicators, such as Total Quality Management, the International Standard Organization, the Balanced ScoreCard, the Common Assessment Framework and The Management Accountability Framework developed by Canada becomes central (Goudarzi & Guenoun, 2010). (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008) consider that these quality standards are not only a lever for incorporating performance logic into public organizations, but also serve as an analytical tracer to identify the emergence of a management system for complete and consistent public performance. To this end, our research aims to propose the incorporation of the user's judgment into the overall system for measuring the quality of the public service.

The user judgment of the public services is under problematized in academic researches. This can be explained by the very recent work developed on the subject on the one hand. On the other hand, the quality approaches initiated in the public sector are based on approaches related to "product logic" unlike the private sector for which the essence of quality management is the importance of customer perceptions (Goudarzi & Guenoun, 2010).

The objective is to better understand the notion of public service quality by taking as an anchor the judgment of users. It involves conceptualizing and testing a model of user judgment and considering its operationalization for public organizations. Like the SERVQUAL model in the profit sphere, judgment will be the newcomer to the principles of public service.

### **1.2. To drive public performance from a specific conceptualization of the measurement of the servuction quality**

Political sociology considers the administration as the repository of a unilateral domination which is currently constrained to implement a creative service relationship of integration and citizen values. (Bourdeau, 2003), in his relational approach stipulates, that public managers must not only worry about the service and its content, but also the process of its delivery, to worry for example about the relational skills of the staff what (Strobel, 1994) has named the reform "from below" that is to say by the user.

The demand for quality, although a product of the market sphere, is now legally recognized as a public service principle (Scharitzer & Korunka, 2000). Quality of service is today integrated into the management of public performance. Nevertheless, we do not find a scale of measurement specific to the quality of servuction. All the measurements carried out focused

on the service and not the service. This is the contribution we want to add to the research. Measurement of the quality of service is anchored every day more in the field of management control and performance management and user satisfaction. It is one of the key success factors of public performance.

The incorporation of the user's judgment and the quality of the servuction in steering public performance will be an added value for public administrations. Indeed, this new user-centered management philosophy is based on the selection of performance indicators theoretically meant to support resource allocation decisions. The measurement is not a neutral activity, it is therefore necessary to make as convergent as possible the model of measurement of the quality of the service with the representations that the users of what is a quality public service. The research thus notes the integration of the quality of the servuction into the management of public performance and highlights the interest of using quality of service models that rely on the judgments of users and are sensitive to principles of the public context.

### **1.2.1 The specificity of the front office staff in public organizations**

The role of the staff in contact takes on a particular dimension in public organizations because it induces a notion of power in the service relationship. Several researchers in social psychology have emphasized the importance of procedural and interactional elements in the contact relationship between public service agents and users (Weller 1998 ; Warin 1996). This relationship of power is materialized in the co-production of the service during the face-to-face.

### **1.2.2 The balance of power: helpfulness versus servitude**

The service relationship highlights the status of servitude and helpfulness of the "administrative staff " because it is intended to serve the citizens. But on the other hand, the he enjoys a status of depository of the public force. For this purpose, the balance of power is the particularity of the servuction. (Gadrey, 1994) considers that "*any relationship or service interaction has as its component a relationship of power*" or balance of power that can generate conflict. This power in a service is shared in a relationship of mutual dependence that makes no sense if one of the protagonists does not exist. (Merton, 1957) underline the superior power of the administrative agent related to his function (the public authority) is due to his mastery of official and unofficial laws, procedures and mysteries of his administration. This same agent derives his power from his arbitrary power of decision. (Heinich, 1997) describes this strategy as a paradox of superiority in submission. This position of superiority de facto distorts the relationship of servuction and destabilizes it.

Several authors claim that public officials deploy several strategies to materialize their power (Merton, 1957): non-involvement, impersonality and neutrality, avoidance of the user, depersonalization and distancing see punishment. They are implementing strategies *to ward off the risk of servitude and potential enslavement* (Gorz, 1988). The defense strategies used can vary and can go as far as a physical defense (closed doors) behind the regulation. (Jeantet, 2003) considers that "*the enslavement strategies for the customers are opposed to the resistance strategies of the agents. They have for mutual objective to find a recognition and a realization at least by being free of the risk of instrumentalisation by the 'other' "*.

On his part, the administrative agent is in a situation of "overhang", confronted with a contradictory injunction: he is asked to be technical and human. The adaptability of the public official is also considered insufficient. As a link between the administration and users, the public official is at the confluence of the legislature and the individual framework and therefore constantly at odds. Servuction materializes the relationship of administration to user in compliance with "inverse die" model whose creed is *"the theoretical supremacy of demand tends to make way for the dictatorship of supply"* (Galbraith, 1958). According to this model, public services are generally not very attentive to public demand. The public administrations tend to impose their wishes on "docile" users.

(Chevallier, 2008) explains in his opus "Public Service" that this inversion comes from an *"undeniable moral superiority"*. It even derives from the legitimacy of principle granted to the administrative agents, which equips them and exempts the society from doubting that they only make sure of the general interest by dictating their law to the users. Other problems may emerge in the service relationship such as the absence of pedagogy of the negative response, the stereotyping of the response and the lack of explanation etc.

### **1.3. Dimensionality of the judgment concept**

The dimensionality of the concept requires paying particular attention to the definitions that have been formulated in different disciplines. In philosophy (the mother of science whose task was to situate the logical functions of judgment in an overall conception of the activities of intelligence), "judgment" refers to *"an operation of knowledge"*. It is defined as a discursive act that *"poses two separate elements and relates them to each other"*. Descartes' definition is intellectualist: *«judgment is a mental decision by which we stop in a thoughtful way, the content of an assertion and we pose it as truth"*. Alain defines judgment as *"the decision that affirms or denies based on what one understands"*. The judgment will appear as "a verdict" if the bearer has a position of authority. Kant has already done some critical work on judgment. According to him, there are aesthetic judgments and teleological judgments. The National Center for Textual and Lexical Resources (CNRT) defines judgment as: *"An intellectual process by which an opinion is formed and is emitted; result of this process"*.

(Esnard, 2014) defines judgment as *"putting value on someone or something."* She argues that judgment has two ends: impressions formation and decision. For (Cadet & Chasseigne, 2009), the judgment corresponds to an *"openness of the perceptive span"* that makes it possible to *"make a synthesis that leads to characterize the situation by using a single value"*. (Schleifer, 2010) defines judgment as *"the discernment and decision of the determination of the concrete and of its discursive representation and resulting statement"*, discernment being understood in the sense of *"differentiating truth from falsehood"*. For (Mottier and all., 2008) the judgment is based on *"the construction of intelligibility of situations that may be singular, and on an interpretative reasoning that can not be reduced to the application of mechanical algorithms. The evaluation and the processes of judgment which constitute it are then interpretative"*. (Brief, 2010) in turn defines judgment as *"a hypothesis awaiting its verification to give itself a truth value"*. (Angers, 2010) considers that the judgment as "a personal act, fruit of a spontaneous reason or intelligibility remains purely individual".

For (Reboul, 1992) *"... To judge is to affirm content"*. He considers this content as a lexis "logical statement, considered independently of the truth or the falsity of its semantic content". He adds that *"the judgment depends on the object but also the" judge"*, it is a

decision, which creates a solution, and once found, transforms the course of things; a judicial verdict, a book review, a judgment on others or on oneself are always somewhat a self fulfilling prediction. "

Referring to (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), "the formation of a judgment consists in producing inferences from information, which implies several stages of information processing which are as many sources of potential bias". (Bressoux & Pansu, 2003) who represent the cognitivist current, define the formation of judgment as follows "consists in producing inferences from information, which implies several stages of information processing".

Social judgment theory defines judgment as: "*a cognitive process implemented as part of estimating the value of a variable on the basis of multiple indices*" (Chasseigne, et al., 1997). Definition that we hold for our theoretical framework. From the literature review, we have developed our own definition of judgment that is:

*It is a cognitive and emotional process designed to evaluate an experience, a person or an object in order to make a decision. The cognitive component is related to the processing of information. The latter stipulates the use of two types of processes: heuristic and systematic. Both processes involve the integration of stereotypes that are not necessarily negative but are likely to compromise the process of judgment. The affective component involves intuitiveness, emotions and mood. The resulting decision may be negative (rejection) or positive (acceptance) "*

### **1.3.1 The judgment dimensions**

According to (Boudon, 2004), dimensions can be deduced analytically from the general concept which encompasses them or empirically from the structure of their inters correlations. In our context the concept of "judgment" corresponds to a complex set of phenomena rather than a simple and directly observable phenomenon. According to the literature review, we start from the premise that judgment is a multidimensional construct.

#### **❖ The "Cognitive" dimension**

According to the literature, judgment is a rational reflection that implements a cognitive process (Yzerbyt and all.,1994). The cognitive dimension is defined as understanding and the ability to reason about the surrounding world (Cacioppo, et al., 1996). It is related to rationality and discernment. Cognitive processes are the different modes through which a brain system processes information by responding to it through action (Fiske and Taylor 1991, Bargh 1997). They are fundamental pre-determinants of the choice of action or option (Cadet & Chasseigne, 2009). These are mental processes that relate to the knowledge function and involve the information processing strategy (impressions, categorization, memory, language, reasoning, learning, intelligence, problem solving, decision-making, perception or attention which underlie the activity of judgment (Dujarier, 2010) The cognitive dimension refers for example to the knowledge or the previous experience of an event For (Leyens, Yzerbyt and Schadron, 1994, Schadron and Yzerbyt, 1999), the first rules of judgment are based on an analysis of the judge's cognitive abilities.

The cognitive dimension is related to the knowledge or previous experience of an event. It reflects individual beliefs about the act (Chaiken & Baldwin, 1981) and structures the relationship with the target and "finalized by the action that can not be dissociated from the intentions, motives and goals of the person who judges. It is linked to a central variable: information.

**H1: There is a positive causality between the quality of information and the rationality of the user's judgment.**

❖ **The "Judgeability" dimension**

"Judgeability" has emerged from literature as a dimension consubstantial to judgment. It is linked to a central variable: stereotypes. Stereotypes are fixed impressions that are not very consistent with the facts they claim to represent and that result from our tendency to define first and then observe. Stereotypes are socially shared beliefs about the characteristics or attributes of a group (Verbunt G., 2001). Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schardron (1996) draw from their research two essential points in relation to stereotypes:

1) Individuals, from a minimum of information are quick to assign the target a judgment. Therefore, the stereotypes, schemas or mental representations associated with the categories will guide and distort the perceptions: the confirmatory information will be actively sought. The contradictory information will be neglected or reinterpreted, and the missing information will be reconstructed in the sense of the diagram. We understand why stereotypes and prejudices die hard and weigh heavily on the judgment of others and situations in general with their tendency towards generalization.

2) The second point concerns the tendency of individuals to infer stable internal characteristics (attitudes, personality traits) to explain behaviors without having the information that is necessary for such inferences. The stereotype is therefore a cognitive representation associated with social categories.

**H2: Stereotypes, a sui generis component, negatively influence the user's judgment.**

❖ **The "Intuitiveness" dimension**

Etymologically, the intuition comes from the Latin word "intueri", which means: "look carefully inside oneself". It refers to the direct, unreflected knowledge that is characteristic of sensory or extrasensory reflection (Dictionary of Psychology, 1997). (Fordham, 2015) defined intuition as the immediate and unthinking understanding of reality. In contrast to an analysis more associated with rationality or discursiveness that relies on reasoning said logic. This illogical character is due to the unconscious, complex and rapid and instantaneous character of intuition. In addition to philosophers and psychologists, intuition has attracted the attention of management researchers.

(Sinclair & Ashkanasy, 2005) consider intuition to be a nonsequential mode of information processing, which includes both cognitive and affective elements and is the result of immediate knowledge without any conscious use of reasoning. While researchers deny any relationship between intuition and emotion, others regard intuition as consubstantial with emotion (Coget et al, 2009).

**H3: There is a positive causality between intuitiveness and a positive judgment of the user.**

❖ **The "Affective" dimension**

Several researchers have looked at the analysis of the affect as a stimulus and transmitter of information. For example, the theory of "feeling-as-information" (Schwarz & Clore, 1988) considers affect as a source of information on which the judgments of individuals will be based. Positive affect conveys information that everything is fine in the environment, while negative affect conveys information that the situation is problematic. Depending on this situational information, individuals will judge and behave differently in the particular context of a social interaction (Grégoire & Dardenne, 2004).

In this perspective, conscious and rational thinking seems to appear only secondarily to more primary processes, such as emotional reactions (Bodenhausen, 1993, Bodenhausen, Sheppard & Kramer, 1994, Bargh, 1997, Bless and Forgas, 2000, Damasio and Damasio, 2000). The simple observation of everyday social relationships reveals that even during interactions that take place on a strictly functional level, the emotional dimension tends to invade the social situation (Rimé, 1993). **Emotions seem to occupy a primordial middle place between judgment and action.** Indeed, each emotion seems significant of an event, signals an action, motivates the attention and the action, optimizes the chances to engage in interactions adapted according to the objectives.

Most of the work, which allows us to understand the impact of affect on judgment, is consensual to the fact that judgment can vary depending on the emotional state of the individual vis-à-vis the target in parallel of rational analysis of available information (Damasio, 1999).

Indeed, emotional reactions are considered crucial in the evaluation of a target (Bodenhausen, et al., 1994). The valence of the affect appears of considerable importance in the social interactions: it immediately determines if the adequate response to the stimulus responsible for the affective reaction is positive (the approach) or negative (the withdrawal).

**Table 1. The different emotions Damasio (1994)**

<b>Social emotion or feeling</b>	<b>Basic Emotions</b>	<b>Stimulus Trigger</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
Embarrassment Shame	Fear, sadness	Weakness of standards	Strengthening conventions, preventing punishment, restoring self balance.
Contempt Indignation	Disgust, anger	Violation of standards by others	Punishment, strengthening of conventions.
Sympathy, compassion	Sadness, attachment	Suffering of the other	Comfort, restoring balance in the other or the group.
Respect, gratitude, elevation	Joy	Recognition a contribution cooperative	Reward, strengthening the tendency to cooperate

**H4: There is a positive causality between a positive affect and a positive judgment of the user.**

❖ **The "Mood" Dimension**

Mood is a variable capable of informing the body about the characteristics of its current functioning. The mood can act both above and below the threshold of consciousness. Generally, the mood is polarized around two big dimensions: to be good or bad mood. The theory of "feeling-as-information" (Schwarz & Clore 1988, Schwarz 1990, Schwarz & Bless, 1991) suggests that moods like emotions have an informative function about the environment and the social context surrounding individuals. Individuals in good or bad mood may misinterpret pre-existing feelings at the time of judgment as an emotional response to the perceived situation. Their judgments are then biased congruently with their emotional state (Siemer & Reisenzein, 1998).

Researches have shown that mood influences heuristics (Erber et al., 1994). Indeed, joy, more than sadness or depression favors their use. The low importance of a task and its challenges, a great experience in a particular field as well as the development of mental shortcuts in it also influence their use.

Researchers are unanimous that mood affects judgment and is not the result of cognitive impairment. The only point of difference lies in the way. Some say that mood can promote heuristic processing of information while others say the opposite. And in fine, positive-mood individuals express a more positive judgment about their interlocutor than those in a negative mood.

**H5: There is a positive causality between a positive mood and a positive judgment of the user.**

❖ **The "Acceptance / Rejection" dimension**

The behavioral dimension materializes the final meaning and output of the judgment. We considered it appropriate to analyze the behavioral dimension of judgment through an integrating concept of "acceptance / rejection". This is a generic concept that has been applied in several disciplines including neurobiology in psychosociology and marketing. Generally, the concept of "approach / rejection" can be applied to most motivational constructs (Elliot, 2008) (for a review see, Ferguson & Bargh, 2004, Sherman, Presson, Chassin, Rose, & Koch, 2003; Fulmer & Frijters, 2009, Lang & Bradley, 2008).

Based on the theory of social judgment (Beauvois 1995, Fiske 1992), the behavioral dimension consists of three variables: the acceptance variable (latitude of acceptance), then the latitude of neutrality (latitude of neutrality), finally, the latitude of rejection (latitude of rejection). It can be manifested in two ways: reactive or delayed. The reactive behavior is visible on the field. It is spontaneous and automatic, while the delayed reaction is manifested in the long term.

Several marketing studies have examined the consequences of an experiment, for example, by assessing satisfaction, loyalty, word of mouth and recommendation (Mittal et al. Gera, 2012).

However, what is interesting to evaluate in the context of our research is the attitude of users following a service. With regard to theories in the field of consumer behavior, the notion of approach / avoidance is the most used to explain consumer behavior.

**H6: The behavioral dimension is polarized between "acceptance and rejection"**

#### **1.4 Dimensionality of the servuction concept**

Based on the Social Judgment Theory Hovland and (Muzafer Sherif, 1961), we extracted the dimensions relating to the servuction in its relational dimension (the staff in contact) and material (the physical environment). relationnelle (le personnel en contact) et matérielle (l'environnement physique).

##### **❖ The dimension "Hedonism"**

The dimension "hedonism" is a component of interactions, particularly induced by the physical environment. Several models have been designed to study the relationship between hedonism and the physical environment including that of (SOR) (Stimulus-Organism-Response) (Mehrabian & Russell's, 1974) or (Kahneman, et al., 1999). According to this model the individual will consider himself in a state of hedonic well-being when the positive manifestations will prevail over the negative ones such as the emotions of pleasure, attraction, joy, satisfaction, in opposition to the suffering, the 'avoidance and sadness (Kahneman, et al., 1999). (Kahneman, et al., 1999) consider that individuals always try to maximize the rewards and maximize the pleasure that results.

(Mehrabian & Russell's, 1974) believe that a person's behavior in his environment is influenced by the emotions generated by the environment. (Belk, 1975) linked the variable of hedonism to what he named: the objective situation and the subjective situation. In a continuum of the SOR model (Stimulus.Organism.Reply) of (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), which emphasized the emotional reactions evoked by the physical environment and their abilities to lead to behavioral approaches and (Belk, 1975) defines the objective situation as *"the set of specific factors at a given time and place which, without finding their origin in the stable characteristics of people or products, exert an influence on the environment. manifest and systematic behavior."*

The dimensions of the objective situation are: physical environment, geographical location of place, scenery, sound, smells, light, atmospheric conditions, place of products on shelves, social environment (represents the "human" component environmental: customers or employees); the time perspective: duration between two purchases, time available to make a purchase ...; the definition of the task to be accomplished or definition of the roles: objectives pursued (search for information, purchase for oneself, gift ...).

**H7: There is a positive causality between the pleasantness of the physical environment and the positive judgment of the user.**

##### **❖ The "Familiarity" dimension**

The first works on affects in social psychology, have shown that familiarity with a stimulus increases the attraction for the latter (Zajonc, 2000). Familiarity is defined as *"repeated contacts between members of different social groups, is a factor favorable to the reduction of intergroup conflicts"* (Allport, 1954).

(Bersheid & Reis, 1998) argue that familiarity accentuates perceived attractiveness. According to social motivations, what is familiar is good because known (understanding is facilitated). It is predictable (good for control), may be similar to ourselves (reinforces our need for familiarization) and probably related to our group (promotes our belonging), Fiske (2004); Forgas, 2000; has shown that simple familiarity, through repeated contact, provokes positive affective reactions to various stimuli, particularly human targets Rohmer, O. &

Louvet, E., (2004). When a person seems familiar, the individual has no particular motivation to engage in a painstaking (systematic) treatment of information, he will simply use his heuristics. This type of treatment will be reinforced by a positive affect. On the other hand, when the target appears to the subject as atypical and unfamiliar, the subject will be more likely to engage in a detailed treatment of the information provided that he is motivated and has sufficient cognitive abilities.

**H8: There is a positive causality between familiarity with the staff in contact and the positive judgment of the user.**

❖ **The "warmth" dimension**

According to the theory of social judgment, the general valence of a judgment depends on the warmth of the target while the end of the judgment depends on its competence. Asch (1946) states that perceived warmth is a central process in the formation of first impressions and thus in the categorization and formation of stereotypes. Linked to cooperation, human warmth is understood as the basis of the formation of social bonds. A warm person is often described as positive traits (kind, generous, etc.) while a cold person is perceived with negative traits (impolite, competitive, etc.). A dichotomy is often performed on a person and his morality according to his tendencies of warmth or coldness. Indeed, its two qualifiers are sufficient to tip the assessment of the person into good or bad.

In the "warmth-competence" model of Fiske and her colleagues (Fiske et al., 2002, Kervyn, N., Yzerbyt, V., & Judd, CM (2010), the two dimensions of judgment relate to the two questions that when faced with others: does it have good or bad intentions to me, and is it able to achieve these intentions? The first question is to position the target on the heat dimension: Is it friendly, warm or cold and hostile? Then comes the second question, which places the target on the dimension of competence: is it competent or not competent when it wants to achieve its objectives? According to this approach, perception is primarily pragmatic (Fiske 1992, Peeters & Czapinski 1990, Zebrowitz & Collins 1997).

**H9: There is a positive causality between the warmth of the staff in contact and the positive judgment of the user.**

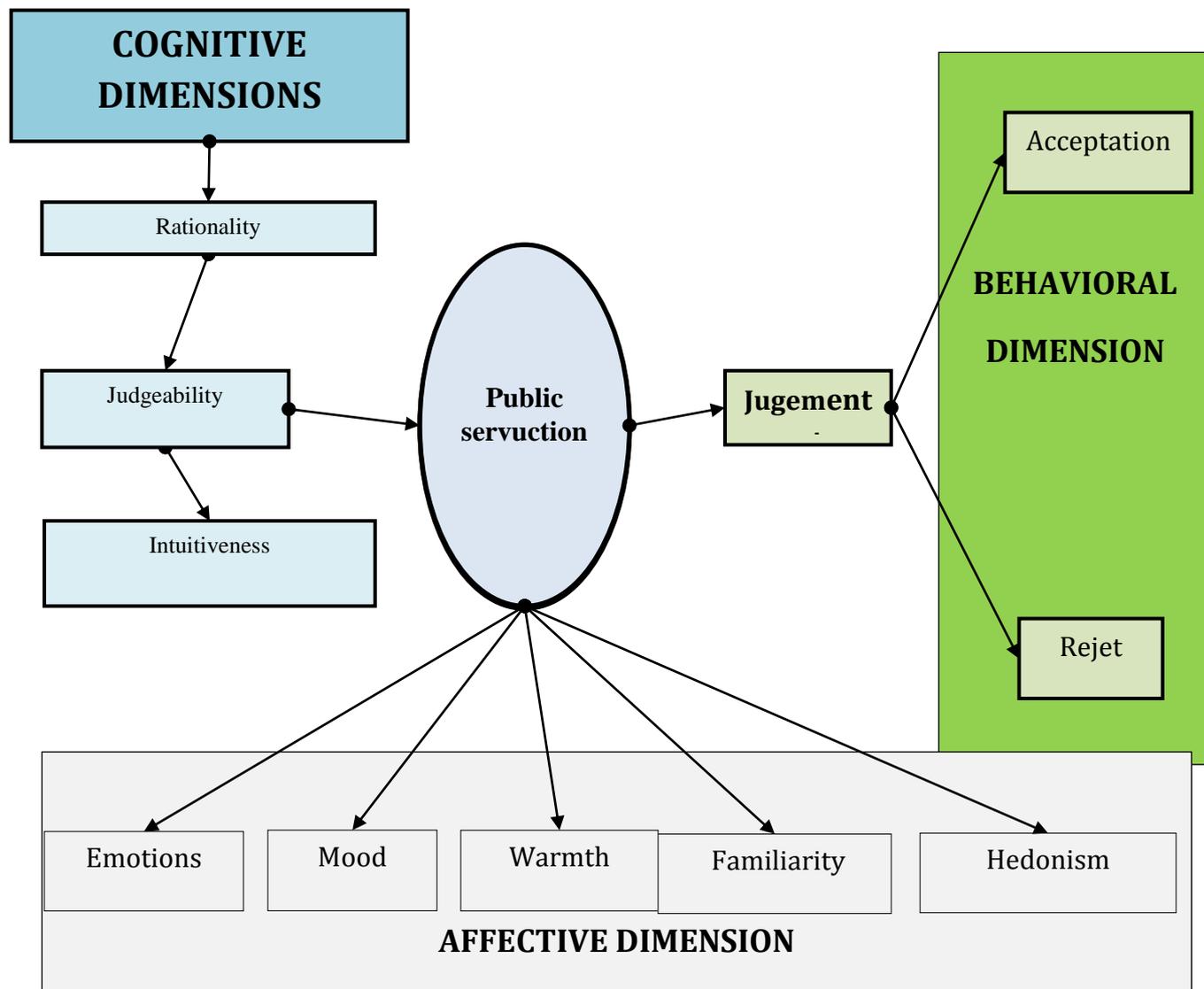
Table 2. The dimensions of the user's judgment following a service according to the literature

Facet	Dimensions	Variables
<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Rationality</b>	Information available
	<b>Judgeability</b>	Stereotypes
	<b>Intuitiveness</b>	Generalist treatment of information
<b>Affective</b>	<b>Emotions</b>	Positive Affect, Negative Affect
	<b>Mood</b>	Positive mood, negative mood
	<b>Familiarity</b>	Repeated contacts with the staff in contact
	<b>Warmth</b>	Friendliness of the staff in contact
	<b>Hedonism</b>	Pleasantness of the physical environment
<b>Behavioral</b>	<b>Acceptation</b>	Cooperation, generation of new solutions, facilitation, expansion, maintaining the relationship, appreciation.
	<b>Rejection</b>	Disengagement, avoidance, demotivation, confrontation, frustration, lack of cooperation.

Source: developed by the author

At this stage we can propose the following conceptual model:

Figure 1: The conceptual model



## **2. Methodology of development of the user's judgment scale following a public servuction**

### **2.1. Operationalization of the measure**

For the operationalization of our measure, we have made a certain number of epistemological and methodological choices. We based our research on a positivist epistemological posture inspired by K.Poper's reflection concomitant with a hypothetico-deductive approach. More specifically we based on (Churchill's, 1979) paradigm to ensure the validity of our measurement and to control its psychometric properties. Starting from the postulate that the measurement of the user's judgment following a public servuction is multidimensional and after the specification of our construct, we proceeded to the generation of the items on the basis of a first exploratory study which allowed the emergence of a factorial structure of the theoretical variable "Judgment following a public servuction". We carried out the purification of the scale by an exploratory factor analysis (study 1). We then proceeded to estimate the reliability and validity of the scale by confirmatory factor analysis (Study 2). This method is particularly adapted to our study since we propose an original multi-item scale.

### **2.2. The construction of scale items**

In order to generate a sample of items that captures the judgment construct following a public service, we based on the literature review and an exploratory study of semi-directive interviews with (40) users who actually benefited from a social service from Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works of Education-Training.

Participants were asked about their experiences in previous public services and those experienced in hosting the Foundation. At the end of this step, 55 items were generated for the pre-test. The variables were measured with 5 point Likert scales.

### **2.3. Data collection and sample**

An online questionnaire was developed and sent to 5,000 beneficiaries of the Foundation's social services throughout the country. With regard to the sampling method, the simple random non-probability method was adopted because the database of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works Education-Training is available, which contains a list of 350,000 individuals.

The initial questionnaire consisted of 9 dimensions and 37 items. The quantitative study was conducted among 379 members of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Promotion of Social Works of Education-Training. The use of the *Split half* technique allowed us to conduct both exploratory (N = 150) and confirmatory (N = 229) studies at the same time. At the end of the questionnaire, we collected 379 complete responses equivalent to a response rate of 7.64%. (Hair, et al., 1995) suggest a number of responses greater than 100 to continue factorial analyzes and this number is reached.

## 2.4. Verification of scale reliability: Exploratory Factor Analysis (AFE)

Following the approach advocated by Churchill, the dimensionality of the judgment scale following a public servuction was carried out through an exploratory factor analysis (principal component analysis with varimax rotation under SPSS version 22).

The purification of the scale converged after 4 successive PCAs. The results of Bartlett's sphericity and KMO tests meet the standards of the required indices in management sciences. This first purification led to the exclusion of 19 items either because they were poorly explained by the factors retained because of a communality score of less than 0.5 or because they were strongly and equally loaded on several factors. At the end of the Exploratory Factor Analysis we selected 7 dimensions and 18 items which explain 25% of rationality of the user, 18% of his /her judiability, 9.93% of the mood, 9.28% of the affectivity, 32% familiarity, 25% hedonism and 18% warmth.

The reliability of these factors was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The coefficients calculated are respectively 0.795 for the factor rationality, 0.787 for the factor judeability, 0.567 for the mood factor and 0.528 for affectivity. The index for the familiarity factor is 0.952 for the hedonism factor 0.624 and 0.524 for the heat factor. All these indices indicate a good reliability of our measurement.

Table 3: Purification results of the measurement scale of the "judgment" variable

Dimensions	List of items	Number of items	Quality of representation	Factorial contribution				Reliability
				Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	
Rationality	RatInfoDocConsult	5	,622	,767				0,795
	RatInfoSufServ		,595	,736				
	RatInfoResSoc		,570	,717				
	RatInfoJourOuvert		,537	,700				
	RatInfoSitWeb		,495	,698				
Judgeability	JugAbusPouv	3	,763		,867			0,787
	JugDrCitoy		,646		,801			
	JugSerQualDiff		,638		,767			
Mood	HumProbEchang	2	,662			,759		0,567
	HumSentChangNxEnv		,665			,757		
Affectivity	AffecNegatAdmin	2	,679				,757	0,528
	AffecCollObjec		,689				,741	
Eigenvalues				3,014	2,241	1,192	1,114	KMO = 0,720 P= 0.000 N= 150
Bartlett Test: Significant				Varimax				
Variance explained in%				25,116%	18,678 %	9,936%	9,282%	
				63,011 %				

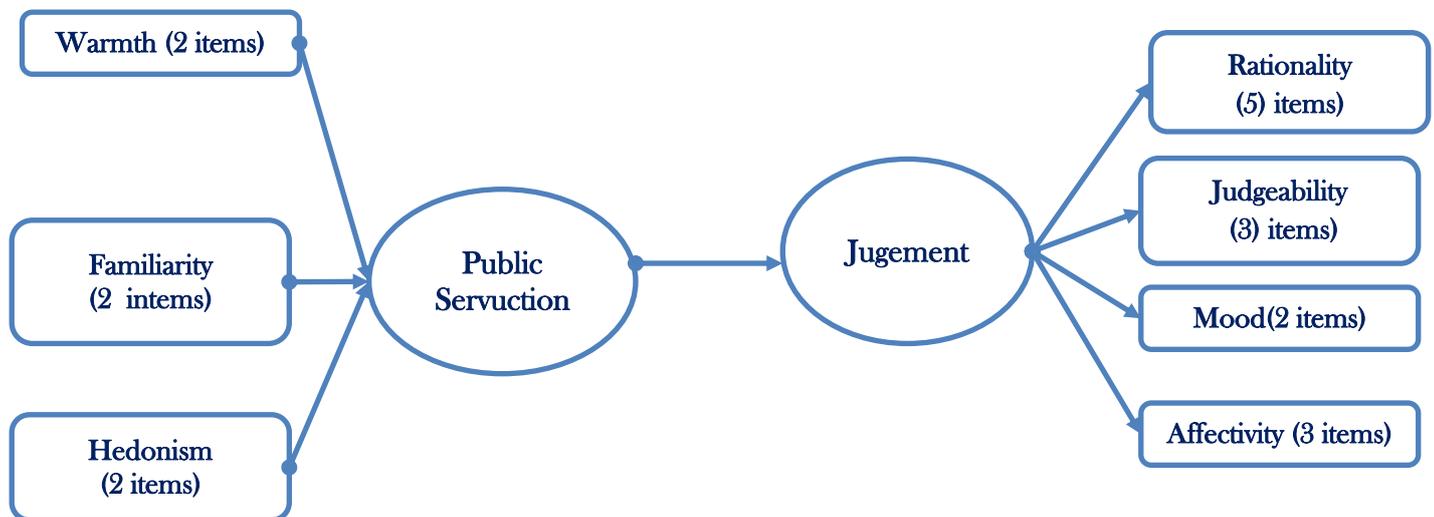
Source: developed by the author

Table 4: Purification Results of the Measurement Scale of the Public Servuction Variable

	Items	Number of items	Quality of representation	Factorial contribution			Reliability	
				Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3		
<b>Familiarity</b>	FamilRépVisit	2	,956	,977			0,952	0,642
	FamilValPartag		,951	,973				
<b>Hedonism</b>	HédMomAgr	2	,698		,835		0,624	
	HédCadr		,692		,824			
<b>Warmth</b>	ChalAmitEchang	2	,701			,818	0,524	
	ChalDecEmpExplic		,624			,740		
<b>Eigenvalues</b>				1,950	1,553	1,119	KMO= 0,626 P= 0.000 N= 150	
<b>Bartlett Test: Significant</b>				<b>Varimax</b>				
<b>Variance explained in%</b>				32,502%	25,889%	18,655%		
				77,045%				

Source: developed by the author Following the AFE, our conceptual model is as follows:

Figure 2. Conceptual model after purification and test of measurement scales



### 2.5. Estimation of the validity of the scale: Confirmatory Factors Analysis (CFA)

After the purification of our measurement, we carried out a confirmatory factor analysis by mobilizing the structural equation methods under the Lisrel (linear structural relations) approach. This analysis makes it possible to test the adjustment of the factor structure of the measurement model identified by the exploratory analysis. The CFA will allow to verify the convergent validity and the reliability of the

measuring instrument and finally to test the discriminant validity of the subscales of the concept “judgment”.

The AFC revealed that our final scale consists of 13 items divided into 5 dimensions (Rationality, Judgment, Affectivity, Familiarity and Hedonism). It also certifies the reliability and validity of our measure. It also confirms that the servuction has a significant impact on the judgment of the user. Thus, the results of this present study are very encouraging both theoretically and practically. Our results confirmed the multi-functionality of our scale, which we named "*The multidimensional measurement scale of the user's judgment following a public servuction*".

Table 5. Validity and reliability indices of the public servuction measurement scale

VARIABLES			FACTORIAL WEIGHT	STANDARDIZED FACTORIAL WEIGHT	C.R.	P
HédCadr	<---	Servuction_Publique	1,000			
HédMomAgr	<---	Servuction_Publique	1,085	,045	23,923	***
FamilValPartag	<---	Servuction_Publique	1,096	,045	24,465	***
FamilRépVisit	<---	Servuction_Publique	1,104	,048	23,155	***

<u>VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY INDICES</u>		
$\alpha$ Crombach= 0,952	$\rho$ Jorekôg= 0,967	Factor weight ( $\rho$ vc)= 0,654

Source: developed by the author

Figure 3: Measurement model retained for public servuction

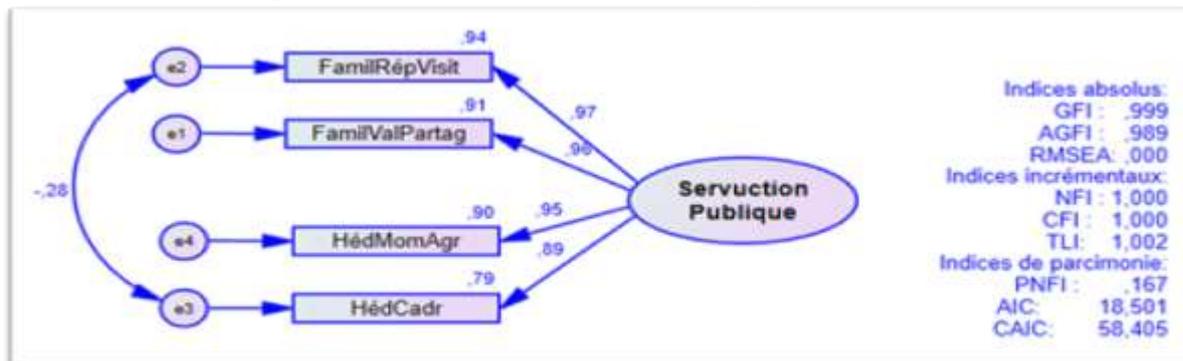


Table 6: Validity and reliability indices of the measurement scale of the judgment construct

			FACTORIAL WEIGHT	STANDARDIZED FACTORIAL WEIGHT	C.R.	P
<b>RatInfoSitWeb</b>	<---	Rationality	1,000			
<b>RatInfoJourOuvert</b>	<---	Rationality	1,001	,111	9,049	***
<b>RatInfoResSoc</b>	<---	Rationality	1,107	,099	11,233	***
<b>RatInfoSufServ</b>	<---	Rationality	1,284	,120	10,735	***
<b>RatInfoDocConsult</b>	<---	Rationality	1,024	,107	9,602	***
<b>JugSerQualDiff</b>	<---	Jugeability	1,000			
<b>JugDrCitoy</b>	<---	Jugeability	,534	,118	4,507	***
<b>AffecCollObjec</b>	<---	Affectivity	1,000			
<b>AffecNegatAdmin</b>	<---	Affectivity	,722	,109	6,595	***

**INDICES DE VALIDITÉ ET DE FIABILITÉ**

**$\alpha$  Crombach (9 items)= 0,674 ;  $\alpha$  (Rationalité)= 0 ,872 ;  $\alpha$  (Jugeabilité)= 0,930 ;  $\alpha$  (Affectivité)=0,847**

**$\rho$  Jorekôg (de l'échelle)= 0,741**

Source: developed by the author

Figure 4. Measurement model retained to measure the judgment construct

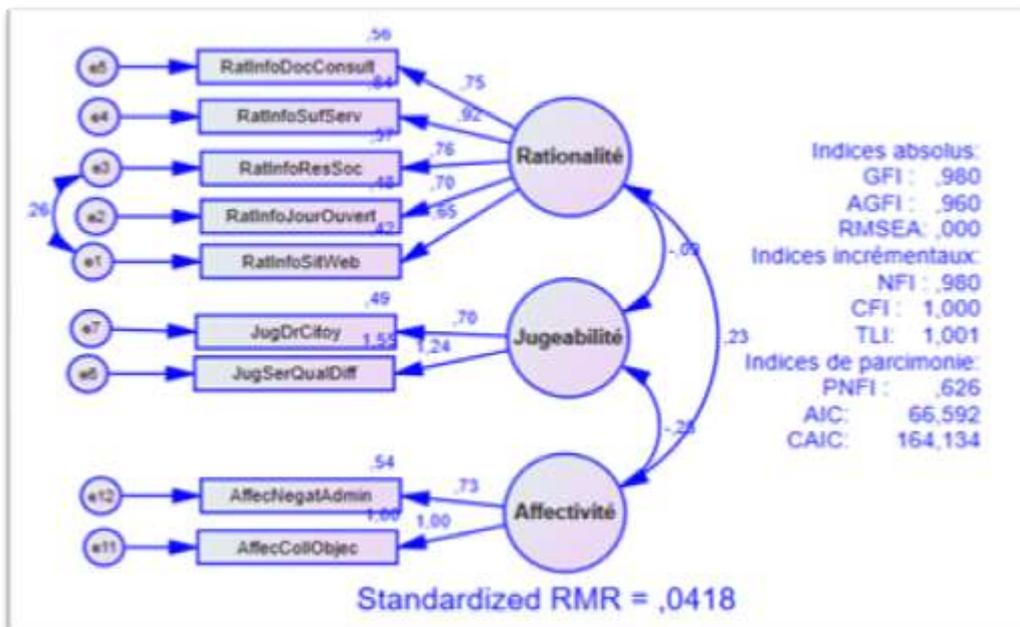


Table 7. Synthesis of the results of validation of the scale of measurement of the user's judgement following a public servuction

CONSTRUCTS	DIMENSIONS	ITEMS	CODES
<b>Public servuction (Familiarity and Hedonism - 4 items)</b>	<b>Unidimensionnel construct</b>	I am more satisfied when I feel that the staff in contact share the same values as me	FamilValP artag
		My sense of belonging increases with my repeated visits to the administration	FamilRép Visit
		The most important for me is the service not the setting: decor, infrastructure, cleanliness etc	HédCadr
		I think that the service experience in an administration must be "a pleasant moment"	HédMom Agr
<b>Judgment</b>	<b>Rationality (5 items)</b>	I have sufficient information about services	RatInfoSu fServ
		I consult the website of the administration	RatInfoSit Web
		I consult the information documents that the administration puts at my disposal (posters, flyers ...)	RatInfoDo cConsult
		I attend the information days by the administration	RatInfoJo urOuvert
		I inquire about the administration through social medias	RatInfoRe sSoc
	<b>Judgeability (2 items)</b>	I think that the quality of the services differs from one administration to another	JugSerQu alDiff
		As a citizen and taxpayer, I have rights that must be preserved	JugDrCito y
	<b>Affectivity (2 items)</b>	I feel mixed feelings (embarrassment, fear, impatience ...) when I am in contact with the administration	AffecNeg atAdmin
		Sometimes I get angry if my goal is not achieved when I go to an administration	AffecColl Objec

Source: developed by the author

## 2.6 Validation of the causal model

Like the Confirmatory Factorial Analysis, we have used structural equation methods under the Linear Structural Relationships approach to test hypotheses and the conceptual model of research. The two variables of our research (judgment and servuction) were modeled as latent variables, explained by a set of reflective indicators. The use of the Structural Equations modeling technique requires two complementary steps:

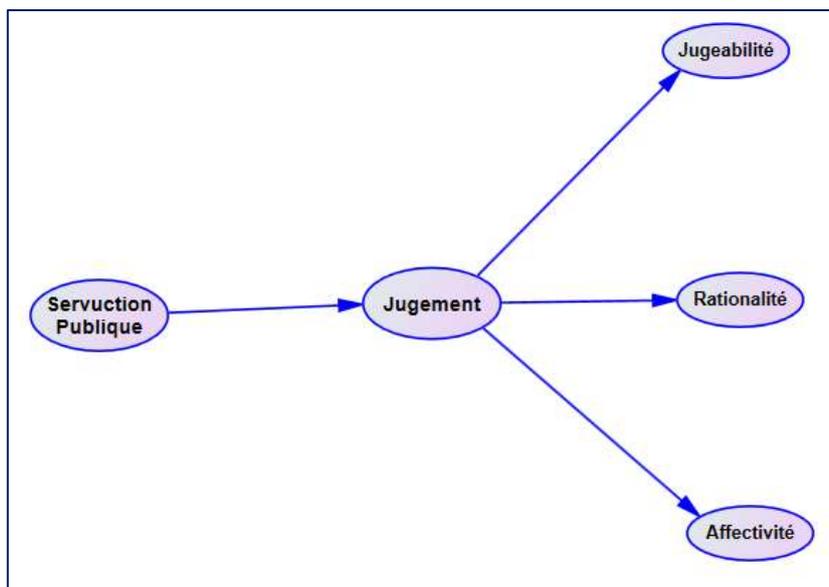
- ➔ First step: test the quality of fit of the proposed model to the empirical data,
- ➔ Second step: the test of the structural model.

In this sense, the model of our research is structured around a set of measurement models, representing the relations between indicators and latent variables, and a structural model specifying the supposed links between latent constructs.

### **Specification of the global model**

The figure below schematizes the structural model linking the latent variables of our research, namely: 1) public servuction, 2) judgment.

Figure 5. Structural model of research



The figure below illustrates the global model (structural model + measurement models) of our research

Figure 6. Schematic of measurement models and the structural model of our research

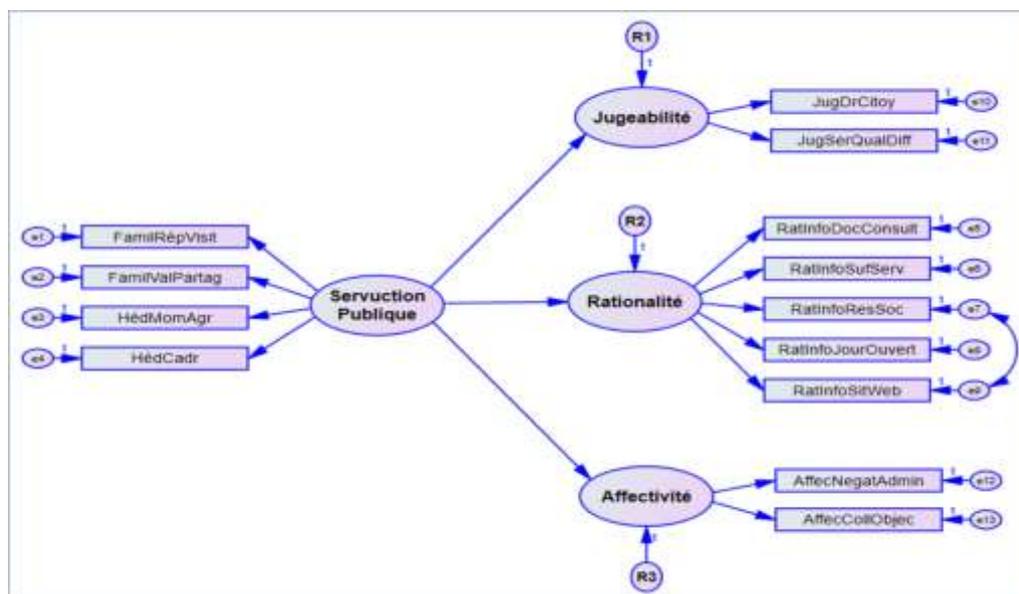


Table 8. Validation of hypotheses

THE HYPOTHESES		STATUT
H1	There is a positive causality between the quality of the information and the rationality of the user's judgment.	H.V
H2	Stereotypes, a sui generis component, negatively influence the user's judgment.	H.V
H3	There is a positive causality between intuitiveness and a positive judgment of the user.	H.R
H4	There is a positive causality between a positive affect and a positive judgment of the user.	H.V
H5	There is a positive causality between a positive mood and a positive judgment of the user.	H.R
H6	The behavioral dimension is polarized between "acceptance and rejection"	H.R
H7	There is a positive causality between the pleasantness of the physical environment and the positive judgment of the user.	H.V
H8	There is a positive causality between familiarity with the staff in contact and the positive judgment of the user.	H.V
H9	There is a positive causality between the warmth of the staff in contact and the positive judgment of the user.	H.R

Source: developed by the author

### 3. Discussion of results and conclusion

The establishment of a significant positive link between the judgment of the user and the quality of the service emphasizes the interest of establishing a public service relationship management mode that fits into a relational approach. The analysis of the five dimensions of the user's judgment invites us to be aware of the need for public administrations to give a strategic place to the quality of the information that it sends to the attention of its users and the public opinion. Indeed, the dimension of rationality, based on the quality of the information, is an essential component of the judgment (25 % of the variance of the AFE,) followed by two dimensions: the judicability and affectivity (respectively 18 % of and 9.93%). It is clear that the study revealed that the rationality of users' judgment is correlated with the control of the information process. The study shows two strategic outcomes:

- The judgment of the user is based on systematic rather than heuristic. It is rational rather than intuitive.
- Information is a strategic component in judgment.

The more the administration emits factual and sufficient information about the services and its operating mechanisms, the more it contributes to reducing a biased, stereotyped and more rational judgment among the users. However, this top-down information is not the only source of the user's judgment. In the age of digital and "Big Data", the user is turning to other sources to compose his judgment. Controlling and managing these abundant flows of information is a challenge for public administrations today. This reflection is one of the lines of research that we propose.

The second key result of the study was that stereotypes are consubstantial to judgment. The user selects the information (substrate of his / her judgment) in interaction with his / her pre-existing cognitive dispositions, built from previous experiences and the anchoring he has kept and the prejudices he has built on the public service. Administrations can bypass the use of these stereotypes and their "versatility" acting on information. Information is also the key to defeating and circumventing biases and stereotypes. If the user does not have sufficient and clear information on public administration, he is more likely to make a negative judgment. His judgment would be more strongly influenced by stereotypes.

The judgment can also be defined from the study by the affective valence of the user. He can consult "directly" his affect to infer a judgment. He then tends to analyze his emotions as a signal. The emotions experienced during the service are information used to judge the public administration.

Concerning the two dimensions: relational and material of the servuction, the study showed that they impact the judgment of the user. At this level the measurement scale test indicates that these two dimensions are closely related to familiarity and hedonism. The analysis of the relationships between the staff in contact confirms the existence of a positive correlation between familiarity and the positive judgment of the user. Thus the frequentation of the public administration and the creation of links with the staff in contact by the user reinforces his positive judgment. This dimension confirms the importance of the empathic and caring behaviors of the staff in contact with it. One of the most obvious managerial implications is to propose to public administrations to invest in the training of public service employees in order to make them specifically aware of the relational aspects with users. The logic of approach must be changed: the logic of administrative agents based on the balance of power must be transferred to a logic of helpfulness or empathy towards users. This requires investing in training and support for changing mentalities.

Indeed, when the relational dimension between the user and the staff in contact is absolved of the balance of power that characterizes the behavior of certain officials in the public administration, the judgment is more favorable.

Concerning hedonism, it materializes the material dimension of the quality of servuction related to the physical environment: It is a dimension on which the user is based in first intention for its tangible and reassuring side. Research has shown that judgment is correlated with a strong hedonic and expressive component. Judgment can be described as experiential behavior in that the search for pleasure, pleasant emotions (self-esteem, consideration), hedonism in general is an integral part of the judgment process.

**We can conclude by the observation that the judgment of the user is a rational / systematic process rather than intuitive or heuristic. It is formed before the operation of servuction including through stereotypes. It is largely based on the nature and quality of the information received.**

**The nature of the judgment also depends on the emotional valence that precedes, accompanies and follows the operation of servuction. This force can be moderated or reinforced by a mastery of the components of the servuction. The quality of the environment and the behavior of the staff in contact are also factors of influence.**

**Two elements to remember to qualify the judgment of the user: it is idiosyncratic (specific to each individual) and specific to each individual but can be mastered.**

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