

**The Performance of the Israeli Public Sector:  
A Citizens survey and National Assessment**

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## **The Performance of the Israeli Public Sector: A Citizens survey and National Assessment**

### ***Foreword***

The main purpose of this work is to develop a theoretical and methodological framework which will allow an attitudinal-behavioral analysis of Israeli public sector performance and which will lay the foundations for a comparative study of this field. It seems that until today no methodical data collection regarding Israeli public sector performance was carried out on this level. Thus, this paper is intended to be the first of a continuous series of evaluation studies and to constitute a part of an international project of public sector assessment. The project will comprise of the collection of data in a number of European countries and in Israel using tools and methods which will enable an inter-cultural comparison over time. The project consists of two main stages: (the first stage) A systematic study of citizens' perceptions of the public sector and an understanding of their development over time, (the second stage) a systematic and continuous study of the public sector's employees' perceptions and attitudes towards their work and the service which they convey to the citizens.

This paper deals with the first stage only and should be seen as a preliminary study consisting of three main parts. The first part will deal with the development of the ideational framework which guides this study. This framework consists of an explanation of the components and advantages of the NAPPA-IL project whose full name is "National Assessment Project of Public Administration- ISRAEL". This part lays the theoretical and practical foundations to the advancement of the project, which focuses mainly on the attitudinal-behavioral aspects of bureaucracies' performance in modern countries. As will be explained, the main advantage of the project is in its contribution to the strengthening of democratic structures in Israel and to the nurturing of citizens-governance relations. The project may enhance the governance's awareness of the citizens' needs as public sector customers and to improve constructive criticism of the governance and its operative branches. In addition, it stresses citizens' responsibility towards the administration and the governance and the need for greater citizens' involvement in public administration performance. In addition, the project is able to enhance the degree of collaboration between the governance and its operative-administrative branches, the citizens and the business and private sector. The second part of the paper will delineate the results of the citizens' perceptions of the Israeli public sector survey. The results are

based on an initial and exploratory sample of 345 citizens who represent to a great (though not comprehensive) degree the adult population in Israel. The discussion focuses on three main aspects: (1) Satisfaction with public services, (2) Trust in public administration, (3) The various attitudes and perceptions of the public system and its employees. The third and concluding part of the paper analyses the results and suggests a nationwide and up-to-date status- evaluation of Israeli public sector performance, while studying its strong and weak points and setting challenges for the future.

We expect this paper to be developed in the future into an inter-cultural longitudinal analysis so that it will be possible to trace and study the changes in the structures of citizen-services products and the level of service which they provide using the attitudinal-behavioral evaluation tools accepted in Social Sciences.

**Part One:**  
***The Ideational and Theoretical Foundations***

**1.1- The need for public sector performance study**

The study of outputs, products and performance is an essential tool for the continuous study and improvement of production and service processes of any organization and is mainly a challenge for the public administration and public sector.<sup>1</sup> The study of public sector performance is of great importance as it affects the daily life of each citizen and due to its unique functioning in a complex environment. The range of influence of public organizations on the life of citizens is vast and significant and is sometimes incomparable to that of private organizations. The public sector provides services in which the private sector is disinterested or is unable to provide, it functions over time and reaches places in which the private sector sometimes chooses not to act, and is required to respond to the needs of populations which are much more diverse and scattered than those with which the private sector chooses to communicate. Further, the public sector operates in an inter-organizational and extra-organizational environment which for the most part does not encourage performance improvement. The performance of the public system is also dependent upon decisions taken within a political system which has its own code of action and game rules, ones which are completely different from the rules of the market, economics and business according to which private organizations operate.

What may be the most important reason: It is agreed upon that an effective, productive and qualitative public sector provides essential support to the assurance of a modern democratic society's existence. While most free democracies handle public demands for improved services and the growing needs characteristic of developed communities quite well, even if with some difficulties, most non-democratic regimes employ an outdated and low-performance public sector which in the long run makes governmentability more difficult. Therefore, a well-performing public sector is a must for the existence of a democratic political culture and to its

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<sup>1</sup> This study makes parallel use of the terms public sector, public administration and public organizations, all referring to the non-business-like and non-privatized organizations. This definition includes, for example, public education and health services, local authorities services, the government offices and their branches, public not-for-profit firms and government companies, and bodies in whose financing and budgeting the country participates directly.

proper functioning (King, Feltey, & Susel, 1998). In order to strengthen the foundations of a democratic country, especially when it is in its critical developmental stages, one must consider the variety of tools which may contribute to the founding of a public services' system which is economical, effective and purposeful, and yet also responsible, responsive, social and just.

### **1.2 Different approaches to public sector performance evaluation**

One of the most accepted ways for public sector performance evaluation in general and in Israel specifically, makes use of various economic parameters and of tools borrowed from the policy evaluation field. The main bodies involved in this activity are the State's Auditor and the internal auditing structure, different research agencies, the Bank of Israel and different branches within the Ministry of Finance, as well as, informally, the written and electronic media. These bodies are very important and they convey much information regarding the ability of the government offices and their different branches to provide the public with a qualitative, quick, fair and reasonably-priced service.

On the other hand, it is clear that the traditional economical approach cannot supply all the needed information for the purposes of a comprehensive performance evaluation. Such a comprehensive evaluation has to take into consideration the attitudes of citizens who are often defined as the customers or consumers of public service as well. This attitudinal-behavioral approach guides the theoretical thinking of this paper. In actuality this approach receives only partial attention nowadays on the part of Israeli administration and governance. There is no current and reliable information with regard to the attitudes and behavior of those mainly involved with the public service process: service-receiving citizens and the public administration employees who provide it. In actuality, an authoritative attitudinal-behavioral evaluation of public organizations' performance is almost always given to the organizations themselves. Willing, they will carry it out or otherwise prevent its implementation. Willing, they will publish it or (as is usually the case) will avoid giving it any publicity or exposure. The data is of major importance but unfortunately it only serves the goals of the initiating organization. The academic community and the public have usually been denied access to the data and so they are also prevented from auditing it. The small number of academic papers which study attitudes and behavior in the public sector comprehensively, may serve as proof of that. The only fields regarding which there is relatively more information in Israel are education, immigration absorption, health and the prisons service (see for instance, Zidkiyahu,

1997; Dgany & Dgany, 1995; Levinson, Becker & Hakimi, 1999). Further, due to the local and limited purpose of the research tools and the avoidance from exposing them to external auditing, their quality and their scientific value may be doubted. One should assume that most of these researches lack satisfying external validity and therefore the ability to compare them with similar systems in Israel and the world is limited. Consequently, the values of public accountability and the receipt of sufficient governance response are being compromised. As this data was never part of a general move aimed at a comprehensive and comparative study of the Israeli public administration performance, the attitudinal-behavioral arena of public administration remained lacking a clear direction and an appropriate method. The result is that policy makers and professionals who are supposed to implement it are devoid of the ability to analyze essential information which may assist in improving the decisions on the public agenda. Consequently, proper responsiveness to the needs and demands of the public is delayed.

### **1.3- The Attitudinal- Behavioral Approach**

There are two main evaluation approaches, with different disciplinary origins, which guide the behavioral study of public organizations' performance. One approach bases itself on researches of public opinions which are also referred to as public opinion studies. This approach tests the opinions of citizens regarding government institutions' performance, their management style, the level of service they provide, opinions regarding fairness in the distribution of national resources and the government's response and responsiveness to public needs. On the other hand, the second approach is based on the field of organizational behavior and the study of opinions within the job realm as well as on personnel and human resource management. This approach focuses on the members of the organizations themselves and studies inter-organizational aspects which supply valuable information about what is actually happening within the public system branches, the nature of internal relations amongst members of the public organization and between them and the public. It also studies opinions, behavioral tendencies, and actual behavior related to performance in general and to performance regarding the individual and the system. Such an analysis assists in a general explication of a public system's outputs and the system's responsiveness to society's changing needs. While the two mentioned approaches are dealt with differently in professional literature, they both aim at goals which are actually complementary and sometimes even identical.

#### **1.4 Public opinions analysis as part of the attitudinal-behavioral approach to performance understanding**

Opinions and behaviors related to public sector performance may be evaluated both on the extra-organizational level (public opinions-citizens) and on the inter-organizational level (employees' opinions). These two levels complement each other but this paper deals mostly with the first approach which makes use of citizens' opinions regarding the public sector.

The literature refers to different aspects of the public's opinion of the different services it requires. Among those most often mentioned are the scope of services offered to the citizen, their quality, and the public's satisfaction with them, the degree to which public services comply with reasonable economic criteria of effectiveness and efficiency, a fair distribution of public resources as citizens see it, response and responsiveness to the needs and demands of the citizens, sensitivity to the needs of special populations, the feeling of citizens' trust in the public system and those who lead it, the public's willingness to contribute to the advancement of prioritized social and public values which the public administration finds difficult or does not wish to handle, opinions on the management style and quality of human resources in the public services' systems (for more detailed examples see: Balk, 1985; Bozeman, 1993; Carter, 1989; Hart & Grant, 1989; Local Government Training Board, 1987; National Consumer Council, 1986; Smith, 1993; Thomas & Palfrey, 1996; Winkler, 1987). In the last years the rising influence of the New Public Management approach, also referred to as NPM is mostly felt. This approach encourages the accumulation of data regarding citizens' opinions as clients of the public system. NPM believes in a comprehensive effort to create clear indicators of the public administration performance (Performance Indicators- PI). This approach aims at furthering the business-like orientation of public administration and at improving its sensitivity, flexibility and its ability to respond to changes in citizens' demands (Pollitt, 1988, 1990). Despite the differences in their attitude towards the need to respond in full (for example, do citizens have sufficient tools to decide what is worth the government's attention and what is not and to the decide on the manner of public policy performance? Can the public differentiate appropriate ways of implementing public policy from less appropriate ones?), they tend to assume that at least a minimal level of government responsiveness is essential for the existence of democracy and strengthens it (Vigoda, 2000; Poister & Henry, 1994). An enhancement in this direction is felt in the last years with the implementation of business-like management methods associated with NPM within the public system (companies' privatization,

amalgamation, breakage of monopolies, outsourcing, advanced management of human resources and reward-for-performance methods). In Europe and the USA the idea of reinventing government explained in detail in Osborne & Gaebler's book (1992) sinks in. This approach aims to create a flexible and self-renewing structure for the public system, a structure which adapts itself to a dynamic environment and which operates according to the management principles of the business sector.

It is therefore clear that both the information sources described here are very valuable to the understanding of public sector's operation and performance in the short run. Nevertheless, it seems that in the long run their contribution is even more important. Should data of opinions, perceptions and behavior be collected consistently and over time, it will constitute a vast database regarding: a) the interface between the public system and its citizen clients, b) the internal processes within public administration systems and the opinions of civil servants regarding the level of outputs, the attainment of organizational goals, and the quality of service provided to the citizen, and c) the mutual and complementary relation between different opinions and perceptions and their mutual contribution to the understanding of the unique environment of public organizations. The assumption of a connection between these levels is an important starting point of this research project.

### **1.5- An attitudinal-behavioral evaluation of public sector performance:**

#### **The situation in Israel and the world**

Surprisingly Israel does not have an ordered doctrine for behavioral evaluation of public sector performance. Indeed, over the period since the establishment of the State varied information has been gathered regarding the operation and performance of public organizations in Israel. Government and public committees have been established in order to study ways to improve organizational processes in public administration and its various branches (for example, the Mozes Committee, December 1965, the Zanbar Committee, June 1981, the Lorenz Committee, November 1985, the Kovarski Committee, August 1989). Efforts of this kind continue to be the center of attention and interest over the last years as well (see for example, Nachmias, Dannon-Kremzin and Yironi, 1997) and their advantage is in offering up-to-date and creative ideas for organizational improvement. However, a comprehensive study shows that these offers focus on the structural layout of government branches. On the other hand, they all lack a systematic approach towards the behavioral aspect of the public's relations with the administration and the importance of developing suitable tools for a behavioral evaluation of public sector

performance. For example, chapter three of the Kovarski committee's comprehensive report on the State's and public sector's services dealt with citizens-administration relations. It said that "a comprehensive and fundamental reform is needed in citizen-administration relations", a reform which should have as one of its main goals "the improvement of service to the citizen by maximizing the service's efficiency and quality and minimizing its economic and social cost" (p.65). However, the committee's suggestions include references to organizational and structural changes and do not point to behavioral tools which may assist in achieving the goal. As a result most of the information we have nowadays focuses on formal aspects of the public system or alternatively on its operation and performance from an economical perspective. The latter deals with budget analysis or with other issues of distribution of resources<sup>2</sup> and does not make use of tools from the social sciences field which are highly effective and contributory to the improvement of public service.

In the last years the need for the collection of data on the attitudinal-behavioral field in all its varieties and the interest in it rises. This data is aimed at the studying of public structures operation and performance through a general evaluation of the feelings, opinions and behavior of employees, managers and the citizens as a group of clients and customers. This tendency is mainly based on the New Public Management approach that stresses response-responsiveness factors and consideration towards citizens' demands. It is also based on psychological aspects of public administration that deal with the unique work within public systems and the difficulties that are associated with them. The accepted view today is that these aspects must be integrated in a wide considerations' system which designs public policy and decides upon the characteristics of administration in government and service systems (Weiss, 1996).

North America's countries are relatively advanced in this field. Over the last years it was there that the approach maintaining that public opinions towards government systems' operation should be evaluated in a systematic and orderly manner was becoming gradually more accepted. There are many examples of this:

- 1) Yearly surveys conducted in different states of the USA aimed at evaluating the performance of local governance structures and of civil servants (The Georgia State Poll).

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<sup>2</sup> See for example the Bank of Israel reports, publications of the Budget Branch in the Ministry of Finance, and the reports of the Center for Israeli Social Policy Research.

- 2) The American Customer Satisfaction Index-ACSI project- showing American customers' satisfaction with varied services on the Federal level.
- 3) The Canadian evaluation project of citizens/customers opinions towards different public services (Citizen-Centered Service Network: The Canadian Center for Management Development).

Despite that, it seems that European countries and Israel among them have dedicated only minimal attention to aspects of behavioral evaluation of the public sector. This is especially striking when compared with the evaluation of the public's political stands, mainly regarding the evaluation of the public's trust in different governmental institutes. These evaluations are conducted intermittently and they show that the Israeli public tends to relate to political parties and to mass media tools with only a minor degree of trust, the government and the Knesset win a relatively low degree of the public's trust, the judicial system wins a major degree of trust and the IDF wins the highest degree of trust (Barzily, Yaar-Yochtman and Segall, 1994).

In actuality, most performance evaluations related to the public sector's performance are different from the trust evaluations and result only from a local initiative of the public organizations' managers themselves. These sometimes turn to citizens for external evaluation and at other times they test the opinions, feelings and behavior of the organization's members themselves. This initiative, despite being congratulatory on its own merit, usually lacks sufficient scientific basis and it mostly lacks the comparability with the goings-on in similar organizations and public systems in the world. Therefore, one of the most important goals of the Israeli public sector performance evaluation process is to lay the ideational and empirical foundations for a behavioral study employing a theoretical model which may also be practically implemented. Such a model may in the future be a comparable and valid measure for the evaluation of the public sector on different levels.

#### **1.6- A continuous national project for the evaluation of Israeli public sector performance (NAPPA-IL: National Assessment Project of Public Administration- Israel)**

Graph number one shows a general model of the public sector performance evaluation project. The project will be a collection of evaluative work conducted in a number of European countries and its Israeli section is described here as (National Assessment Project of Public Administration- ISRAEL). The project's basic

assumption is that the performance of national public structures may be explained using a series of citizens' opinions, perceptions and behavior variables which express the attitude towards policy, procedures, value priorities, labor norms and components which are related to the personnel occupying public positions. Proficiency, service affinity, professionalism, and the general behavior of institutions and of employees and civil servants is studied at the same time. This kind of thinking is based mainly on the New Public Administration approach which encourages the introduction of economical/effective components into the relations between the governance and its citizens (Bozeman, 1993; Rainey, 1990). In addition, it is based on behavioral theories which are related to social exchange analysis (for example, Blau, 1964) and to organizational and employees' performance analysis on the formal or informal levels (for example, Porter et al., 1974; Organ, 1988).

No systematic collection and processing of attitudinal-behavioral information on the performance of public structures has ever been conducted in Israel. Further, no such collection has been carried out over time and this is also the reason for the inability to test it comparatively. The essentiality of such information is undoubted especially as it may be a further step in the scheme of public auditing of the performance of the government and its operational branches. Reporting to the multitude of citizens and enhancing the transparency of public administration will assist it in improving its performance and will assist citizens and professionals in testing this improvement and evaluating it. As graph number one shows, the greatest advantage of the NAPPA-IL project is that it is meant to collect data from at least two sources so as to minimize possible mistakes and to allow a critical study of the findings. This research project has therefore three main contributions:

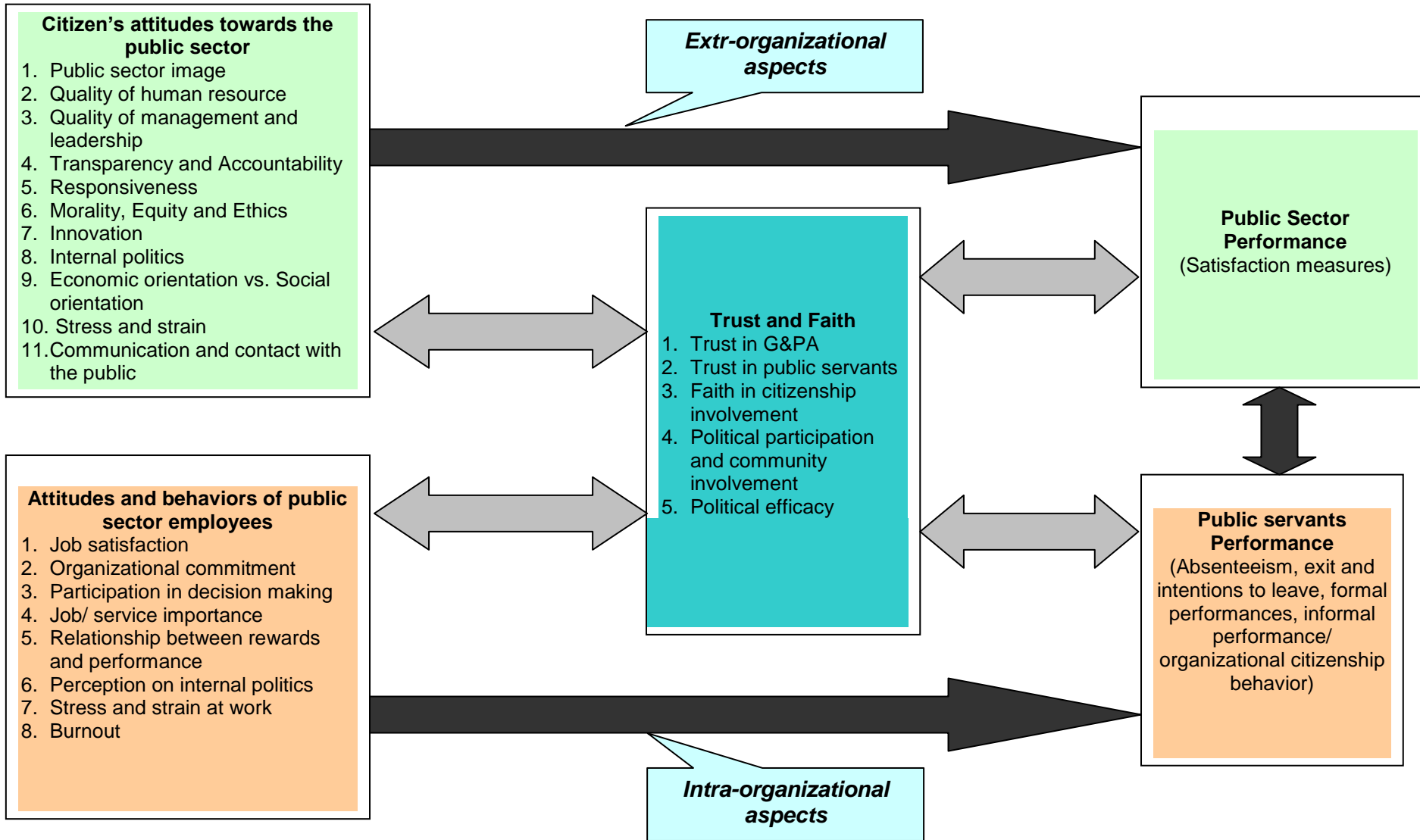
- 1) An initial and central contribution will be in starting a process of assembling data from different sources regarding public sector performance (opinions and behaviors of a multitude of citizens/the public, opinions and behaviors of the public sector employees, opinions and behaviors on the level of the public sector's managerial staff and decision makers). It may be that with time additional perspectives will be examined such as that of supporting suppliers (of equipment or service) from the private sector who work with the public sector, the opinions of different political levels, and maybe even the opinions of professionals. It will also be possible to construct detailed and unique tools that will test different bodies of the public sector separately and in depth. Through them it will be possible to focus on the problems which make these

bodies unique and to compare them with other bodies. This has never been done in Israel and is also quite rare in the whole world. A central byproduct of the first contribution will be the enrichment of theoretical knowledge of Israeli public administration, its development and the different opinions towards it. Being a source of information for the public sector researchers, the project will develop creative thinking with regard to management patterns understanding, the development of models encouraging service to the citizen, responsibility towards him, response and responsiveness to his needs. This information may be a pedagogical database for students and a source of inspiration to professionals and policy makers in the field of public personnel, the structure of public organizations and their functioning and the required changes in public administration.

- 2) A second and important contribution of the study will be on the methodological level. A comprehensive project such as the one suggested here will assist in developing tools and methods for an attitudinal-behavioral evaluation of public sector performance. These tools may serve in the future for a continuous collection of data, the comparative study of different organizations and maybe even for the needs of their internal professional development while adapting them to the unique characteristics of each. We aim to construct with time an attitudinal-behavioral performance index of Israeli public systems which will be termed (PSPI- Public Sector Performance Index). This index will serve as a comparable measure of service quality, public personnel quality and its attitude towards the citizen. Its inter-organizational part will also assist in testing employees and managers' opinions which reflect the public system's strength and health. There is no doubt that these indexes may teach us a lot on the quality of products and performance of public organizations and in developing tools for their improvement.
- 3) A third contribution is expected on the social and the cultural-symbolic levels. A project of this kind is essential for the strengthening of ties between the citizens and the national leadership, between service providers and its customers and between those who carry out public duties and their appointers. First, it enhances the level of public servants' administrative responsibility through a continuous analysis of their performance and its exposure to the multitude of citizens. Improving the public sector's transparency is essential for its recovery from the old illnesses of heavy and inept bureaucracy, the provision of a faulty and slow and -in some of the

branches- limited service and sometimes even lack of clarity with regard to the ethical code of behaviour. Secondly, bringing the public's opinion to the decision makers continuously and reliably will encourage trustworthy work for this public and will set essential balances against operational setbacks. In addition, this project sends out an important value-related message of enhancing the support of quality-encouraging mechanisms in the governance and the administration, as well as of encouraging the assimilation of direct democracy characteristics through a public administration which will be responding, responsive and more sensitive to citizens' needs and demands.

**Figure 1: The general structure of the attitudinal-behavioral arena of NAPPA**



## **Part 2**

### **The Citizens' Survey**

#### **Method**

##### **2.1- Research design and target population**

As demonstrated in Figure 1, the citizens' survey was the first phase of the general project. It consists of data collected from a representative sample of Israeli citizens. We used questionnaires that were distributed among various social groups of diverse ethnic background and across geographical areas. The questionnaires were designed to assess attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions of the public towards the Israeli public sector. As shown in Figure 1, the second phase of the project will add information on the attitudes, perceptions and behavioral intentions of public sector employees regarding their job environment and relationships with citizens. Thus, the next goal of the NAPPA-IL project is to combine these two meaningful sources of data into a reliable knowledge bank on the performance of the Israeli public sector.

In practice, the survey used a random method for the selection of participants. The questionnaires were distributed in person, and when completed were collected by the same personal method. Qualified participants were adult Israeli citizens (aged 18 and above). Participation was voluntary and citizens were assured full confidentiality of all information provided.

##### **2.2- Measures**

In this study we applied 15 different measures. Most of these were already used in previous studies (i.e., Vigoda, 2000; Mason, House, & Martin, 1985; Smith, 1981; Schuessler, 1982; Oswald, 1996; Dutton et al., 1991; Thomas & Palfrey, 1996; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991). However, we made alterations as necessary to conform to the Israeli public system<sup>3</sup>.

- 1. Citizens' satisfaction with public services.**
- 2. Trust in administrative and governmental institutions.**
- 3. Trust in civil servants.**
- 4. Faith in citizenship involvement.**
- 5. Public sector image.**
- 6. Quality of public personnel.**
- 7. Quality of leadership and management.**
- 8. Transparency and accountability.**
- 9. Responsiveness.**
- 10. Ethics, morality, and integrity.**
- 11. Entrepreneurship and innovation.**

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<sup>3</sup> Additional information on the measures and their scientific sources is available directly from the authors.

**12. Internal politics.**

**13. Business/economics orientation versus social orientation.**

**14. Stress and strain when contacting public authorities.**

**15. Communication barriers.**

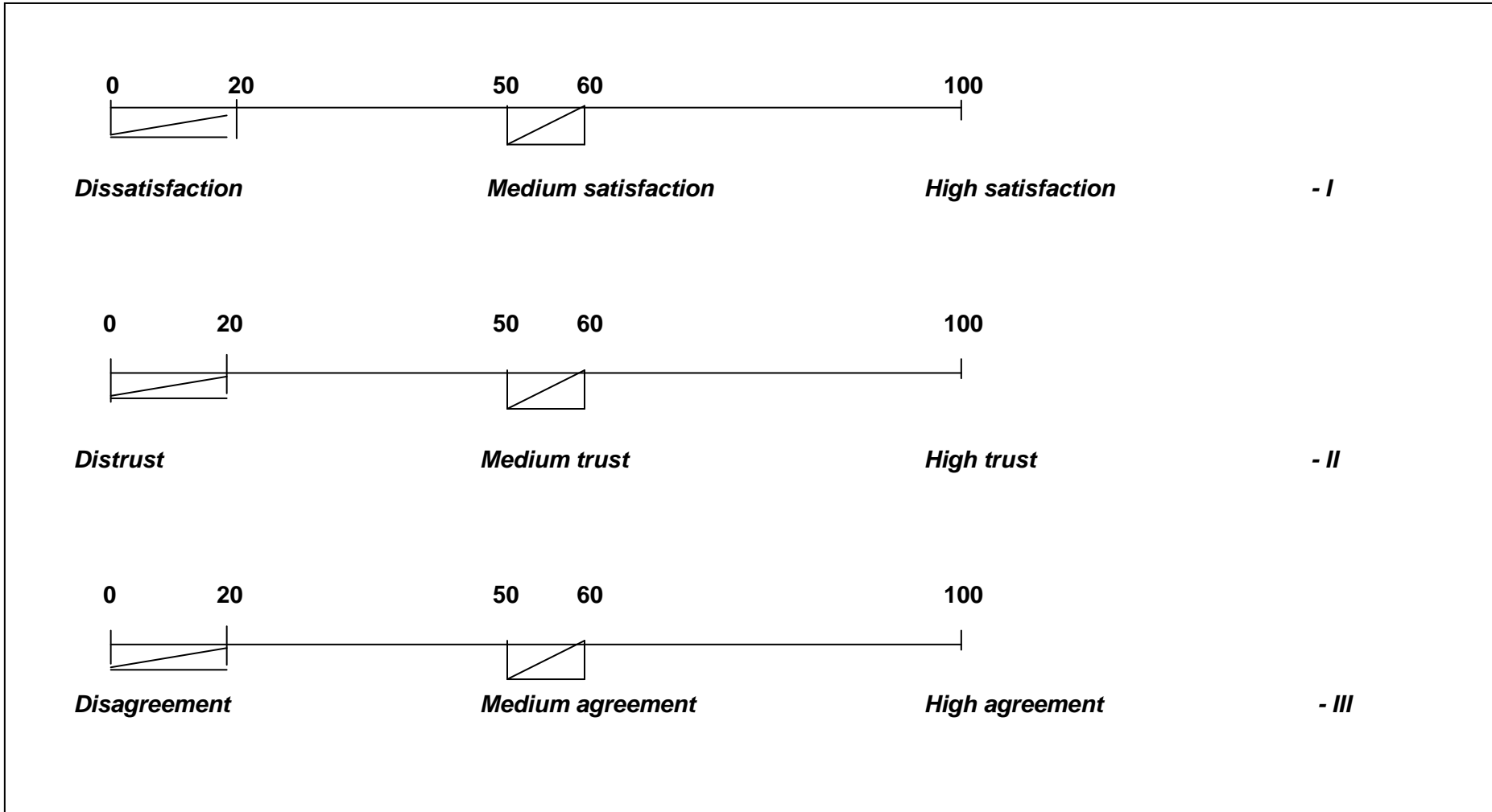
### **2.3- Sample characteristics**

The survey was conducted among 345 participants who well represented the Israeli population. Data were collected during May-July 2001 by a random sampling method. Interviewers asked participants to provide information about their attitudes to public administration activities and services. Questions probed various opinions and perceptions of citizens on the 15 measures listed above. 59.8% of the sample were male and 40.2% female, 54.3% were married, and 18.6% were new immigrants. Average age was 33.2 years (s.d.= 10.35); 33.5% defined themselves as "Ashkenazim", 21.7% as "Sefaradim", and 44.8% as "original Israelis". 41.1% had an elementary or high-school education and 58.9% had partly academic or higher education. 37.2% of the participants defined themselves as supporters of the political right in Israel, 23.8% supported the central parties, and 39.3% supported left-wing parties. 69.7% were Jews, 16.8% Muslims, 3.5% Christians, 8.8% Druze, and 1.2% were of other religions. A breakdown by income showed that 40.2% had low monthly net income (up to NIS4000/\$900), 37.3% had average income (NIS 4000-7000IS/\$900-1600), and 22.5% had high income (above NIS 7000IS/\$1600). Note that the demographic characteristics of the sample were quite similar to those of the total population in Israel as reported in the Statistical Yearbook for 2000). However, the sample group was slightly younger and better educated than the average Israeli population.

### **2.4- Method of assessment and comparison**

Figure 2 represents the method we applied for the univariate analysis of the findings. To simplify the presentation of the findings as well as their interpretations by academics and practitioners in the public sector we decided to use a unified scale of 0 to 100 points. The scale represents an "average grade" on the various aspects that were measured. Considering that we actually applied ordinal scales, we also examined the results on the basis of median values. This examination yielded quite similar findings in the univariate analysis and in the correlation analysis (Pearson's  $r$  and Spearman's  $r$ ). Thus, the numbers in each row and column of the following figures represent an average grade for the specific item, agency, or group of individuals. The 100-point scale is intended to serve for comparison of items, and across time, nations, and cultures. A rank of 100 points represented highest satisfaction with, highest trust in, and highest level of agreement with the particular item. A rank of 20 was the minimum level, representing absolute lack of satisfaction with and trust in the given item, or complete disagreement with it.

**Figure 2: Method of assessment and comparison**





## Findings

### 2.6 – Univariate analysis

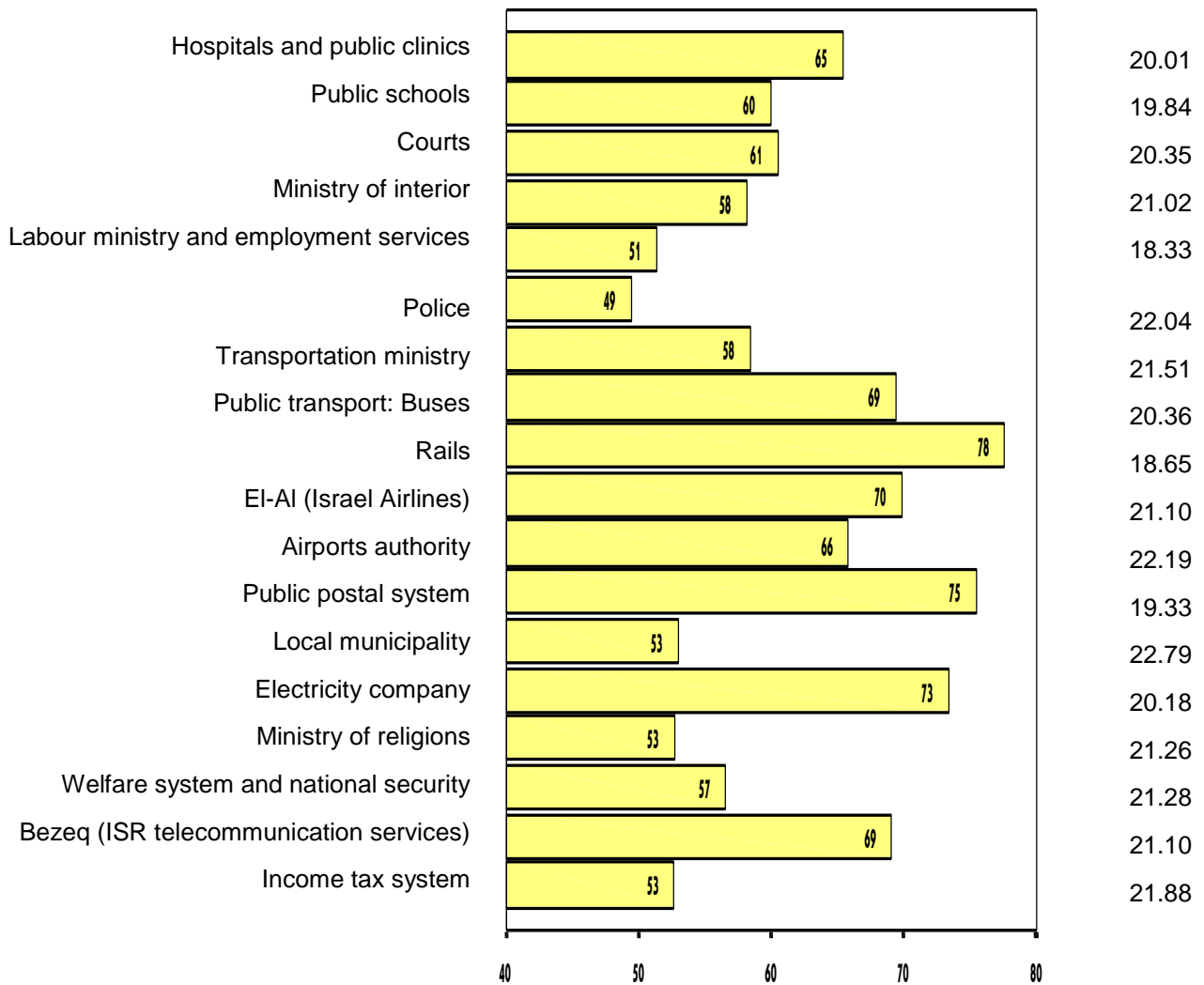
Figures 3 through 17 present the results of our study. Each figure deals with a separate variable and the main findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Citizens' satisfaction with public services was medium to low. Average grade was 62.24 (s.d.=10.29). The higher ranked services were rails and public postal systems and the lower ranked services were police and labor ministry and employment services.
2. Citizens' trust in administrative and governmental institutions was medium to low. Average grade was 58.21 (s.d.=10.89). The highly trusted institutions were the IDF, the secret security services, and the academic institutions while the low trusted institutions were political parties, the Knesset, and the religion services.
3. Citizens' trust in civil servants was also medium to low. Average grade was 59.73 (s.d.=11.33). The higher ranked group of public servants was IDF and security service personnel, judges, and university professors. The low ranked were MPs, cabinet members, employees of the religion ministry, and elected officials in local government.
4. Citizens' faith in citizenship involvement was low with an average of 46.18 (s.d.15.77).
5. Attitudes towards public sector image were medium to low with an average of 58.64 (s.d.=16.34).
6. Attitudes towards quality of public personnel were medium to low with an average of 56.13 (s.d.=16.08).
7. Attitudes towards quality of management and leadership were low with an average of 52.13 (s.d=15.91).
8. Attitudes towards transparency and accountability in the Israeli public sector were low with an average of 54.42 (s.d.=15.68).
9. Attitudes towards responsiveness of the public sector were low with an average of 48.02 (s.d.=16.25).
10. Attitudes towards ethics, morality, and integrity of public personnel were low with an average of 52.90 (s.d.=17.75).
11. Attitudes towards entrepreneurship and innovation were low with an average of 54.10 (s.d.=16.56).
12. Attitudes towards internal politics in the Israeli public administration were medium to high with an average of 73.36 (s.d.=14.85).
13. Business/economic orientation of the public sector was medium to high with an average of 63.15 (s.d.=18.73). Social orientation of the public sector was low with an average of 44.37 (s.d.=14.32).

14. Citizens' stress and strain when contacting public administration was medium with an average of 59.61 (s.d.=20.41).
15. Communication barriers in public administration were perceived quite heavy. The average grade for citizens' perception of the accessibility to public officials was 54.10 (s.d.=16.89).

**Figure 3- Satisfaction with Public Services**

**S.D.**



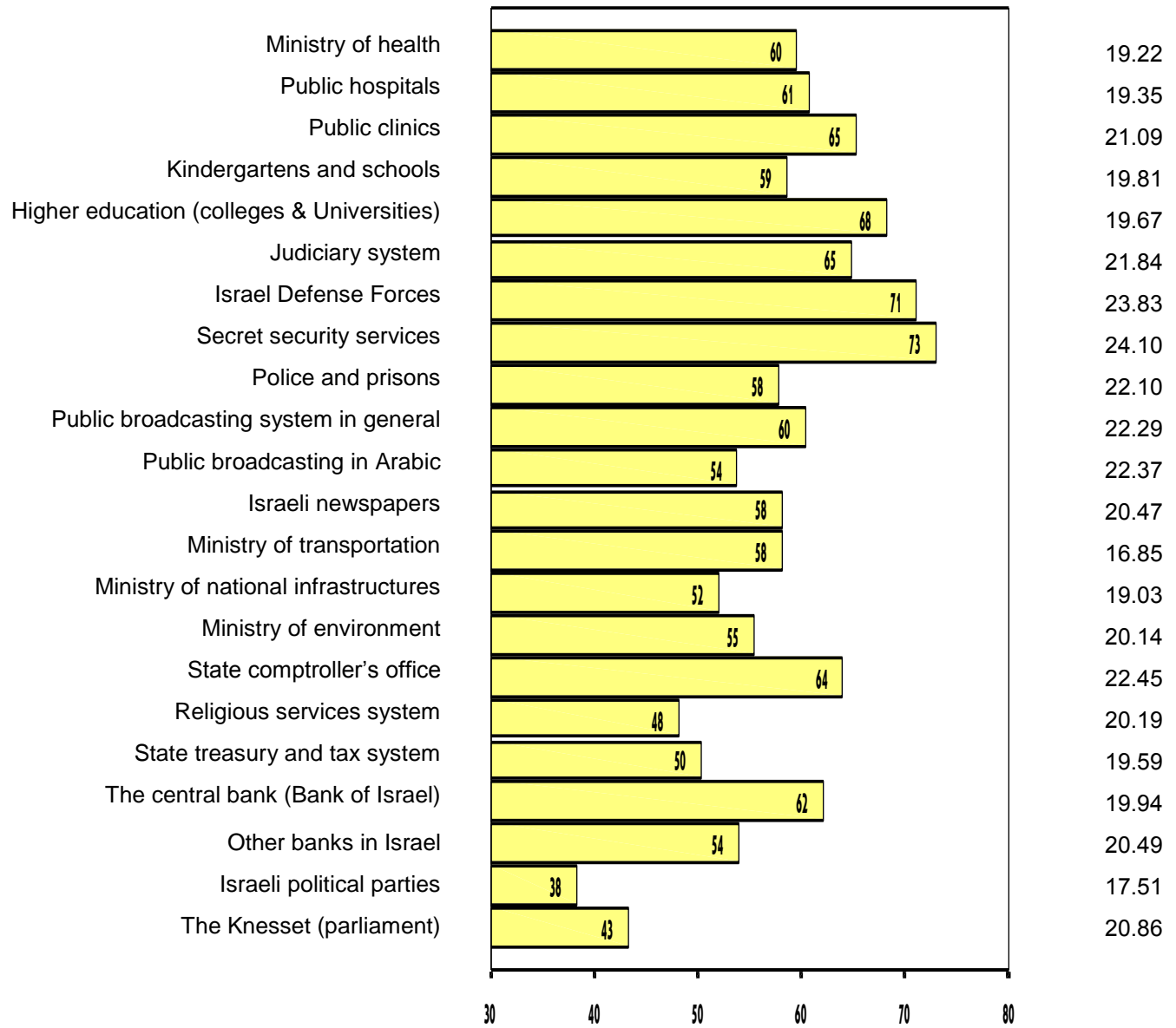
**Mean: 62.24**

**S.D.: 10.29**

**Mean**

**Figure 4 – Trust in Administrative and Governmental Institutions**

**S.D.**

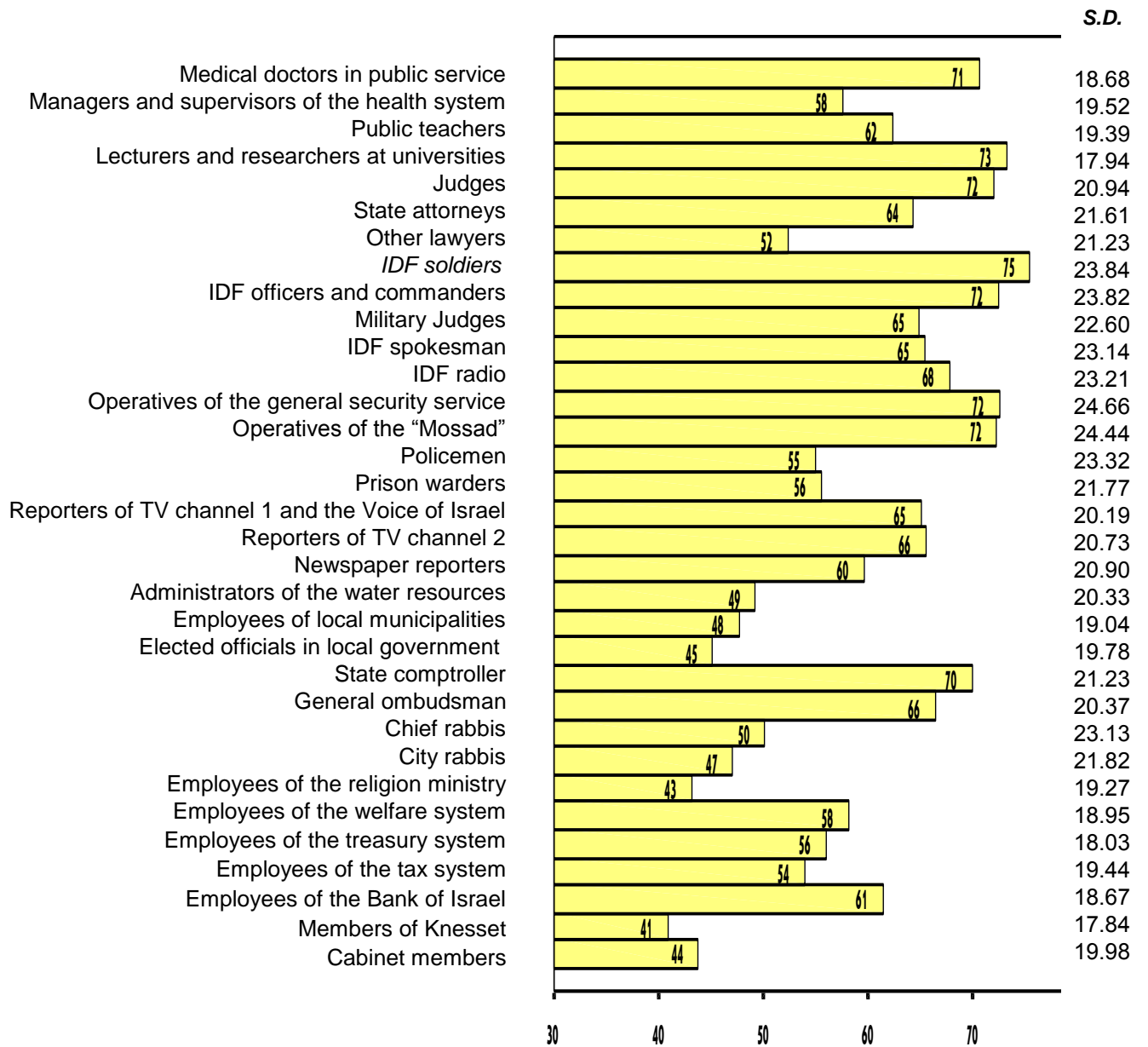


**Mean: 58.21**  
**S.D.: 10.89**

**Mean without other  
banks, political parties  
and the Knesset: 60.25**  
**S.D.: 11.05**

**Mean**

**Figure 5 - Trust in Civil Servants**



**Mean: 59.73**  
**S.D.: 11.33**

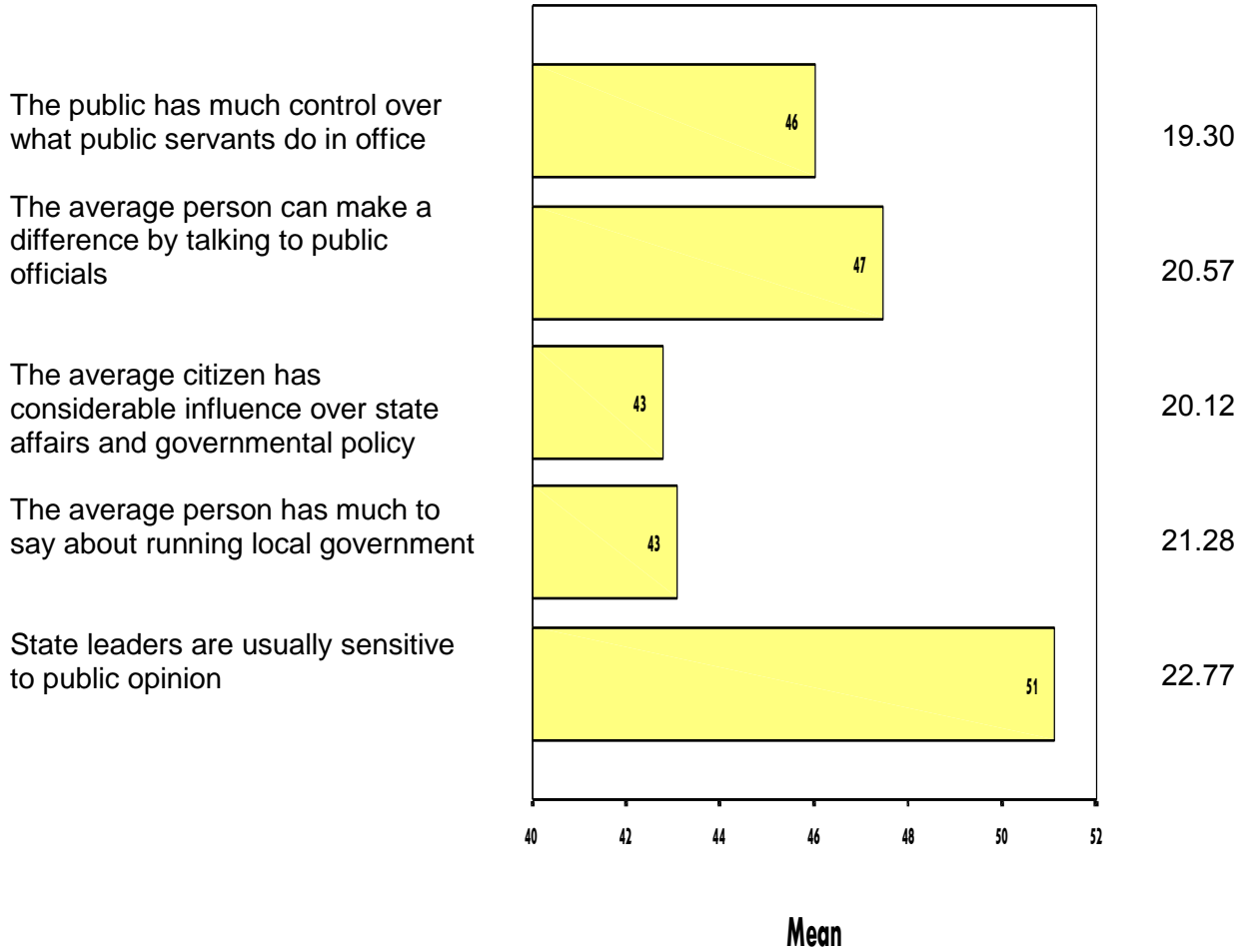
**\*Mean for Public Servants: 61.27**  
**S.D.= 11.69**

**\*Without reporters of TV channel 2, elected officials in local government, members of the Knesset, and cabinet members.**

Mean

**Figure 6 - Faith in Citizenship Involvement**

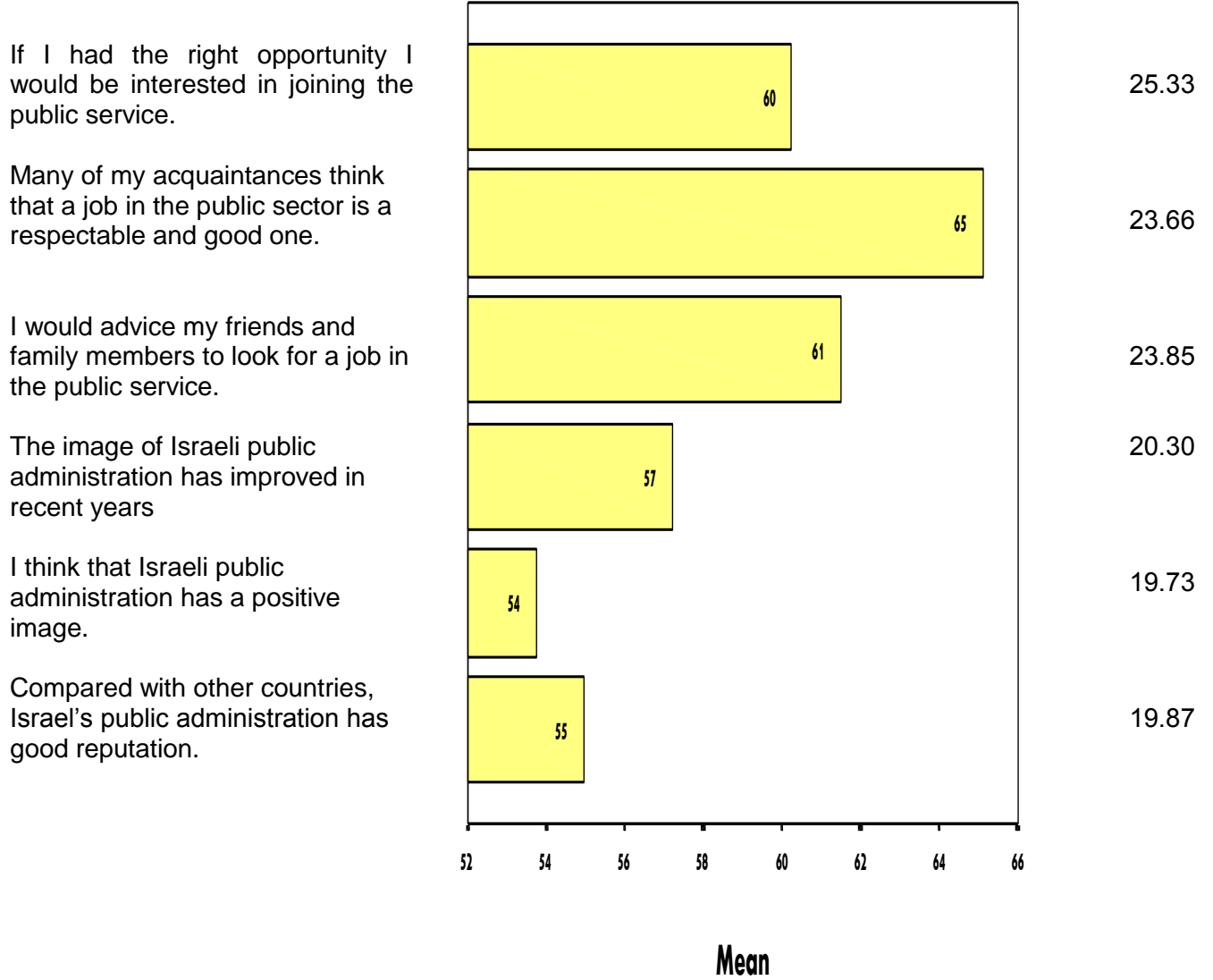
**S.D.**



**Mean: 46.18**  
**S.D.: 15.77**

**Figure 7 - Public Sector Image**

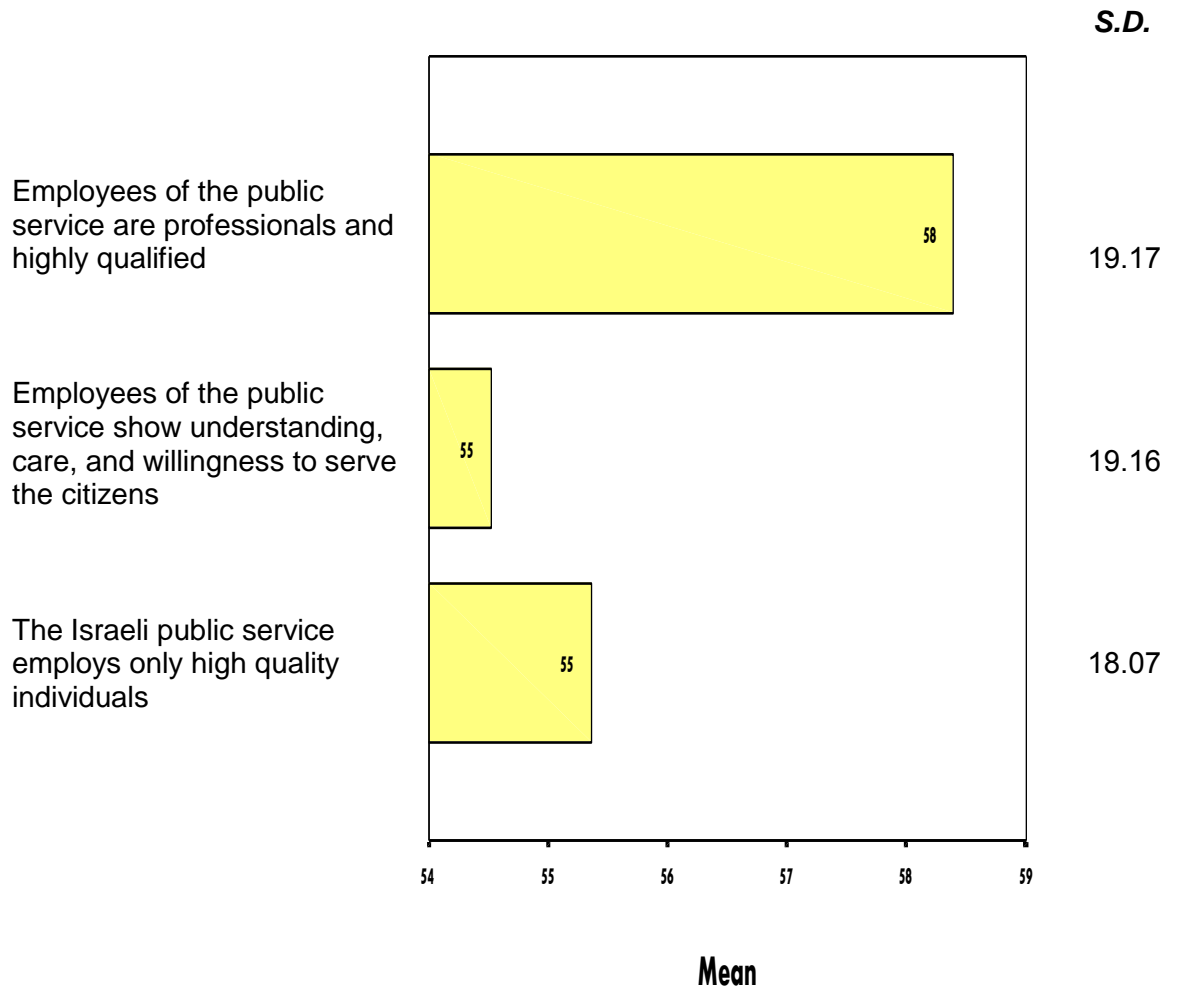
**S.D.**



**Mean: 58.64**

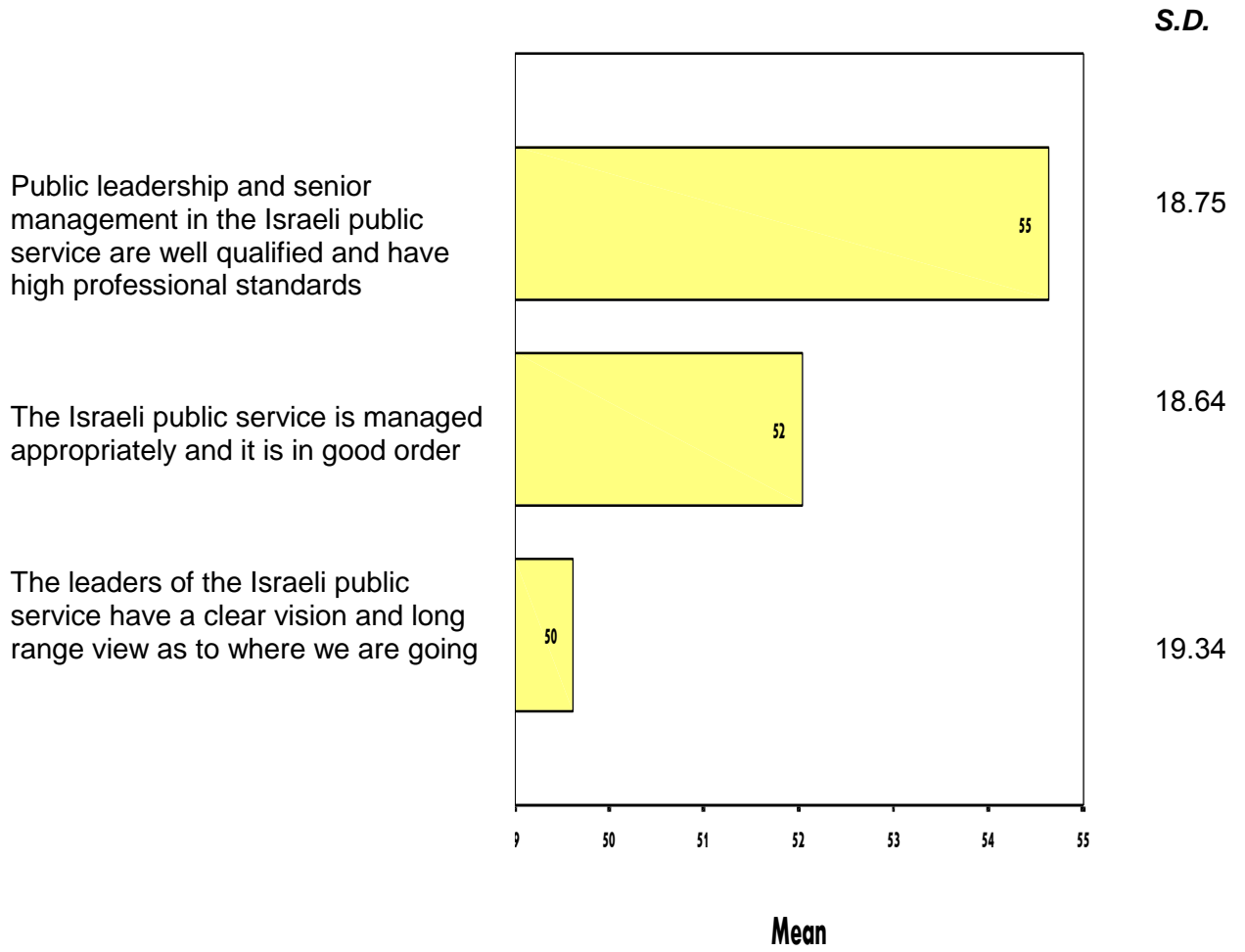
**S.D.: 16.34**

**Figure 8 - Quality of Public Personnel**



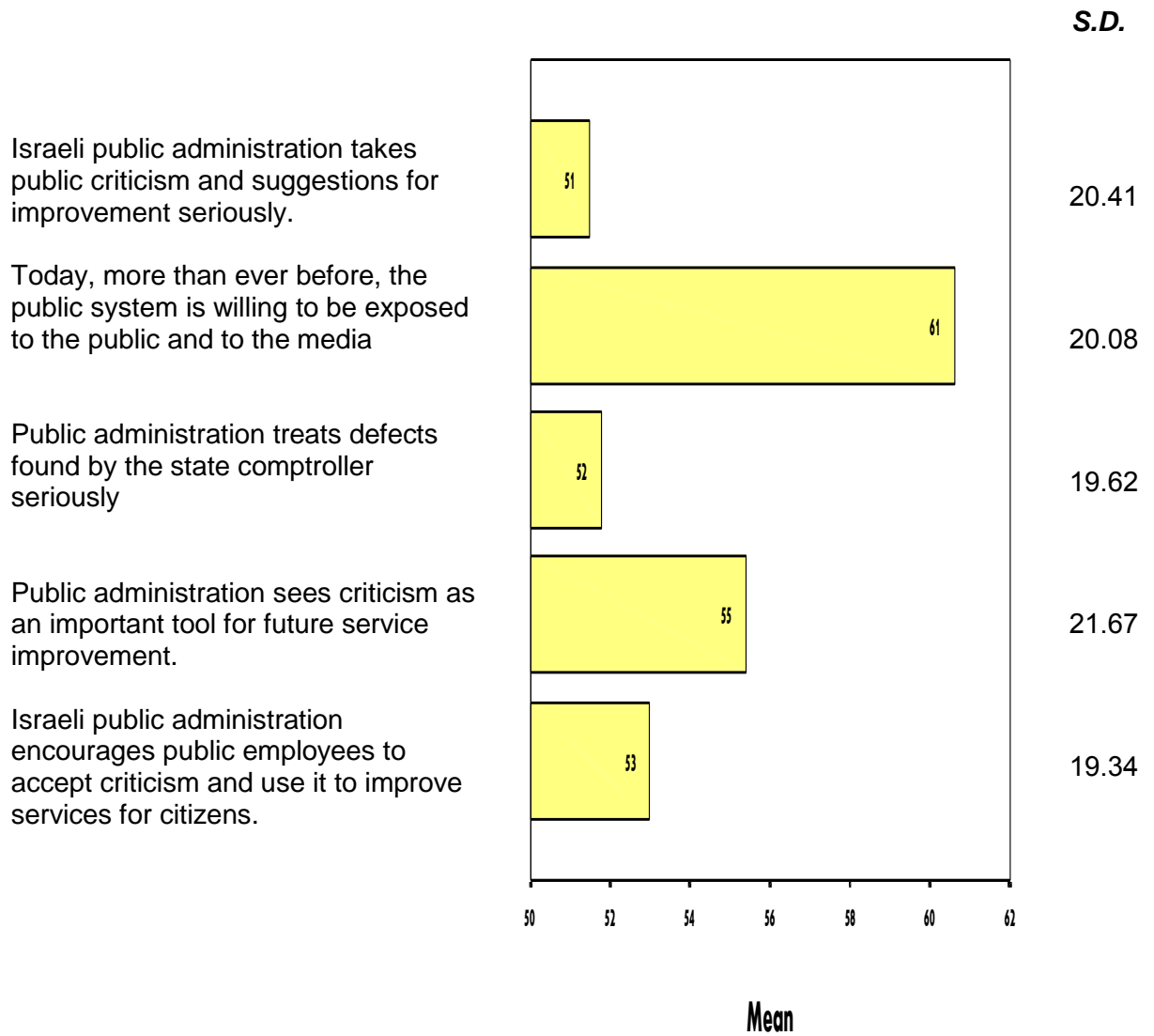
**Mean: 56.13**  
**S.D.: 16.08**

**Figure 9: Quality of Management and Leadership**



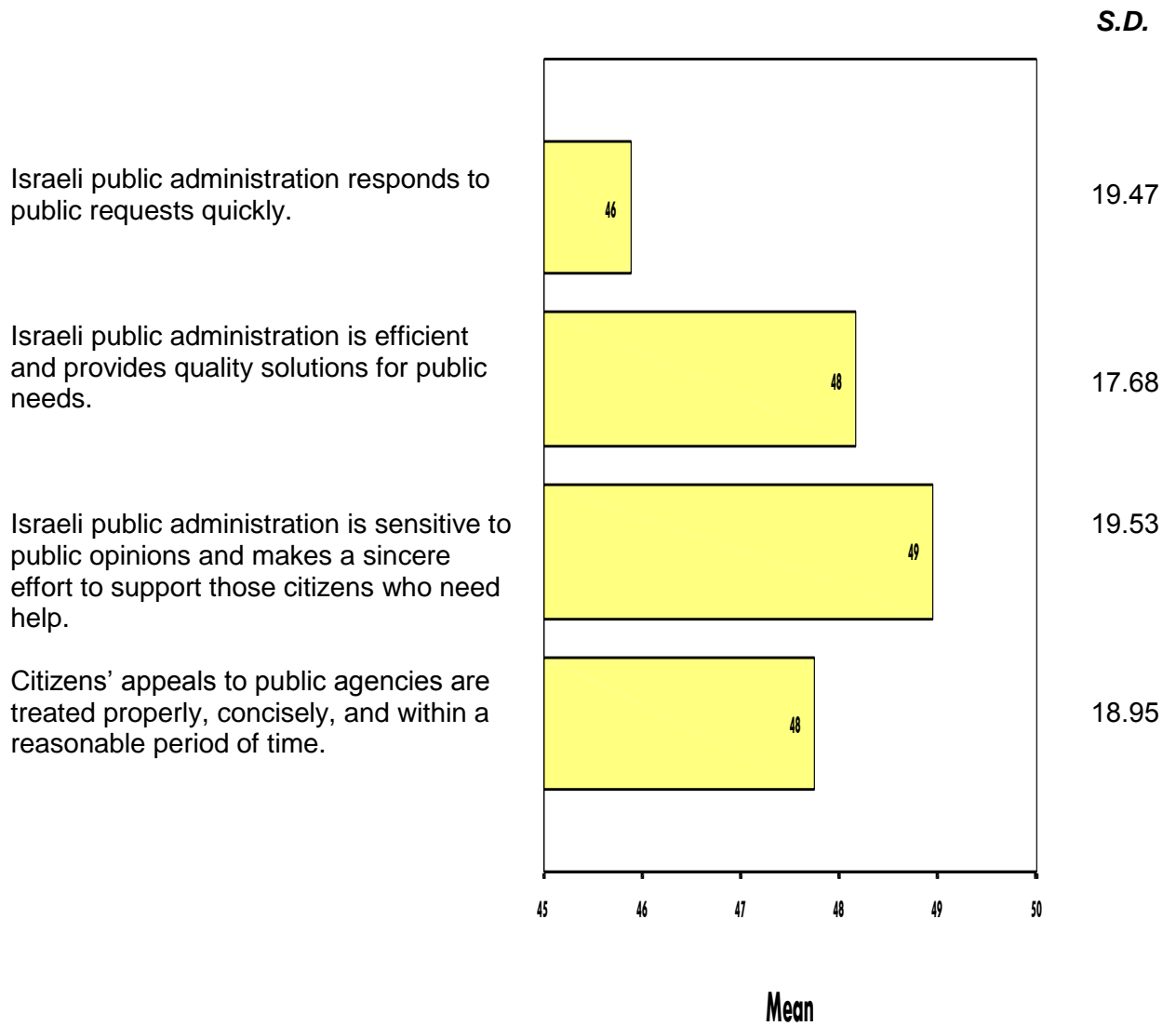
**Mean: 52.13**  
**S.D.: 15.91**

**Figure 10 - Transparency and Accountability**



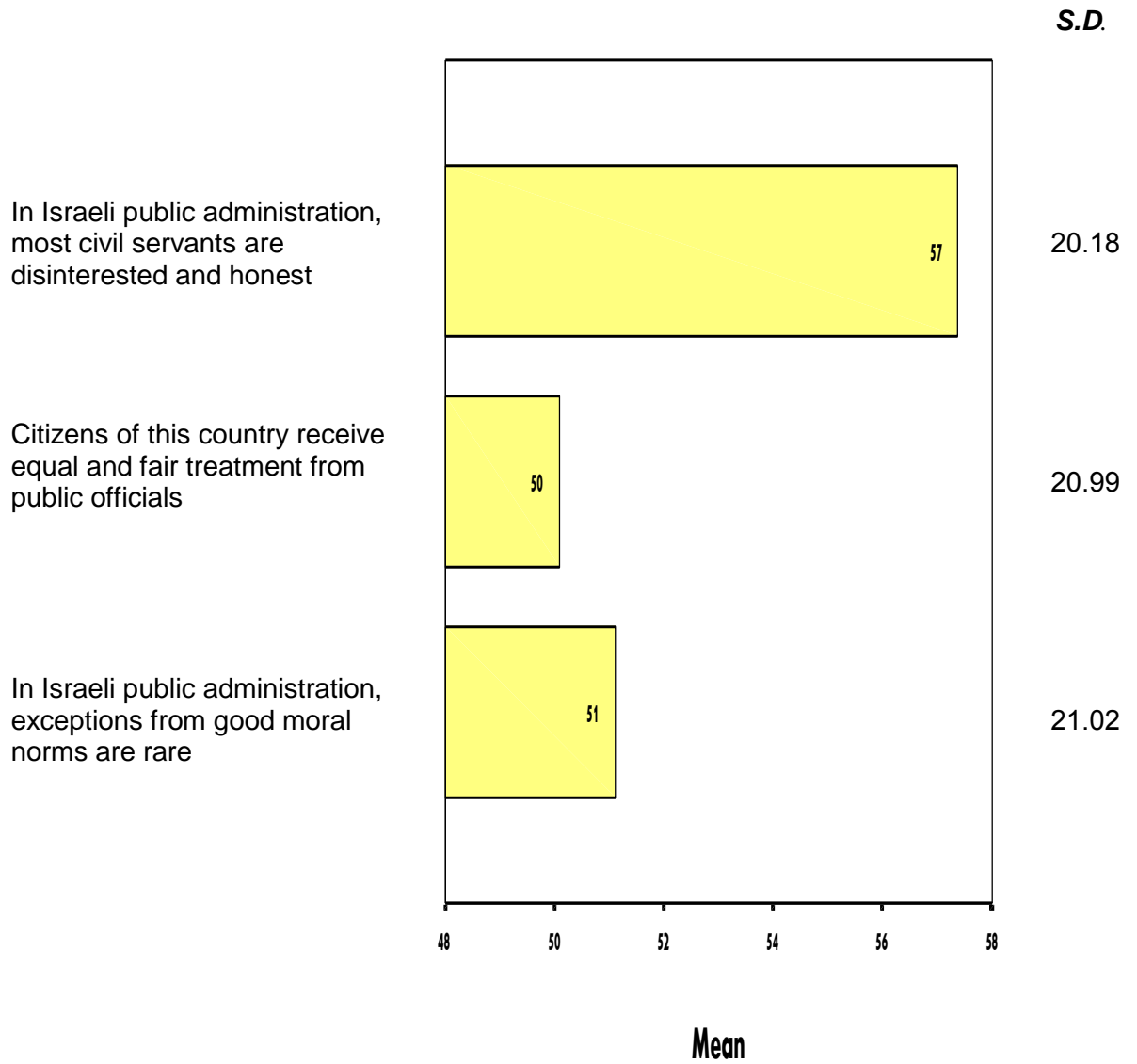
**Mean: 54.42**  
**S.D.: 15.68**

**Figure 11 - Responsiveness**



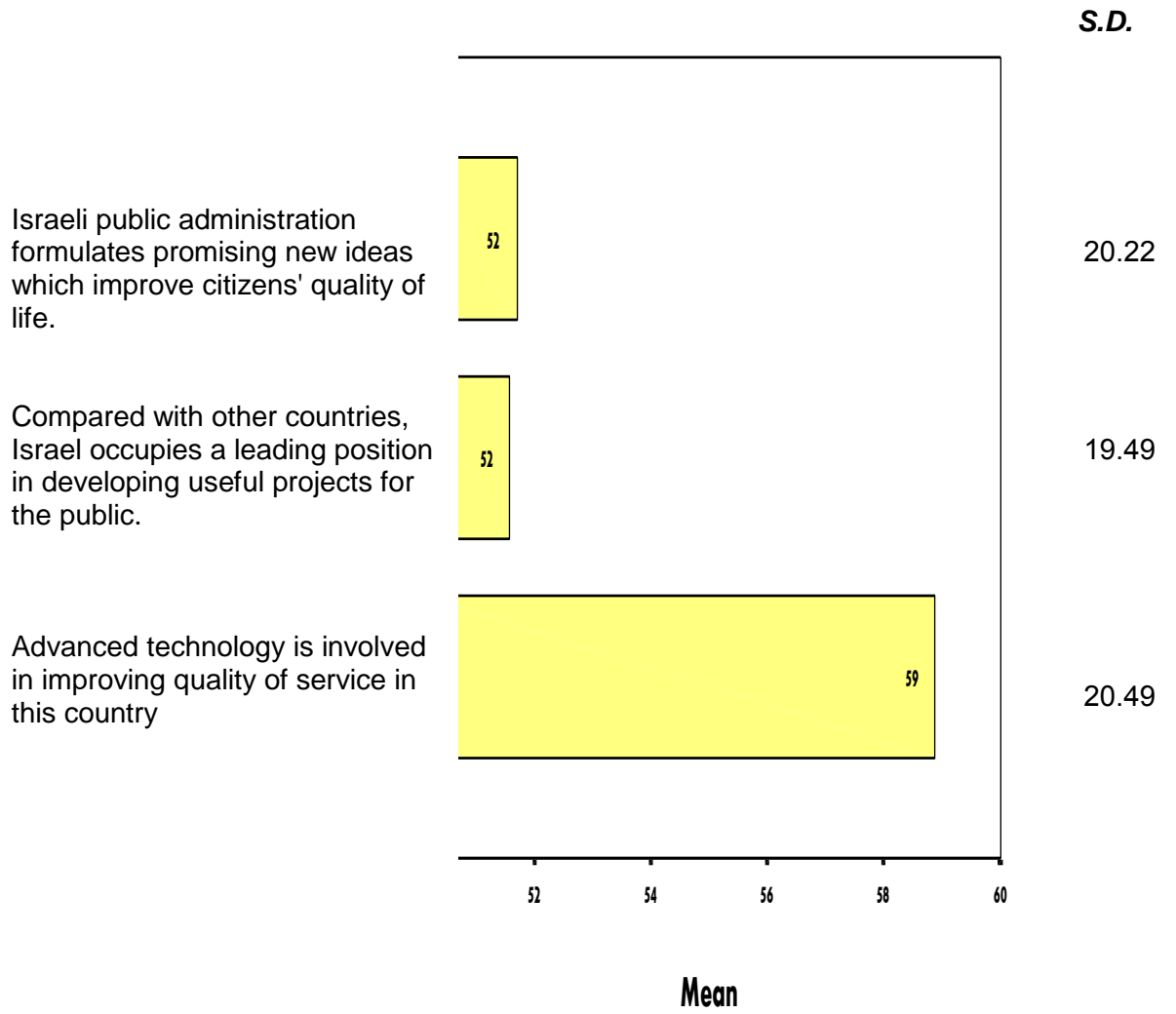
**Mean: 48.02**  
**S.D.: 16.25**

**Figure 12 - Ethics, Morality, and Integrity**



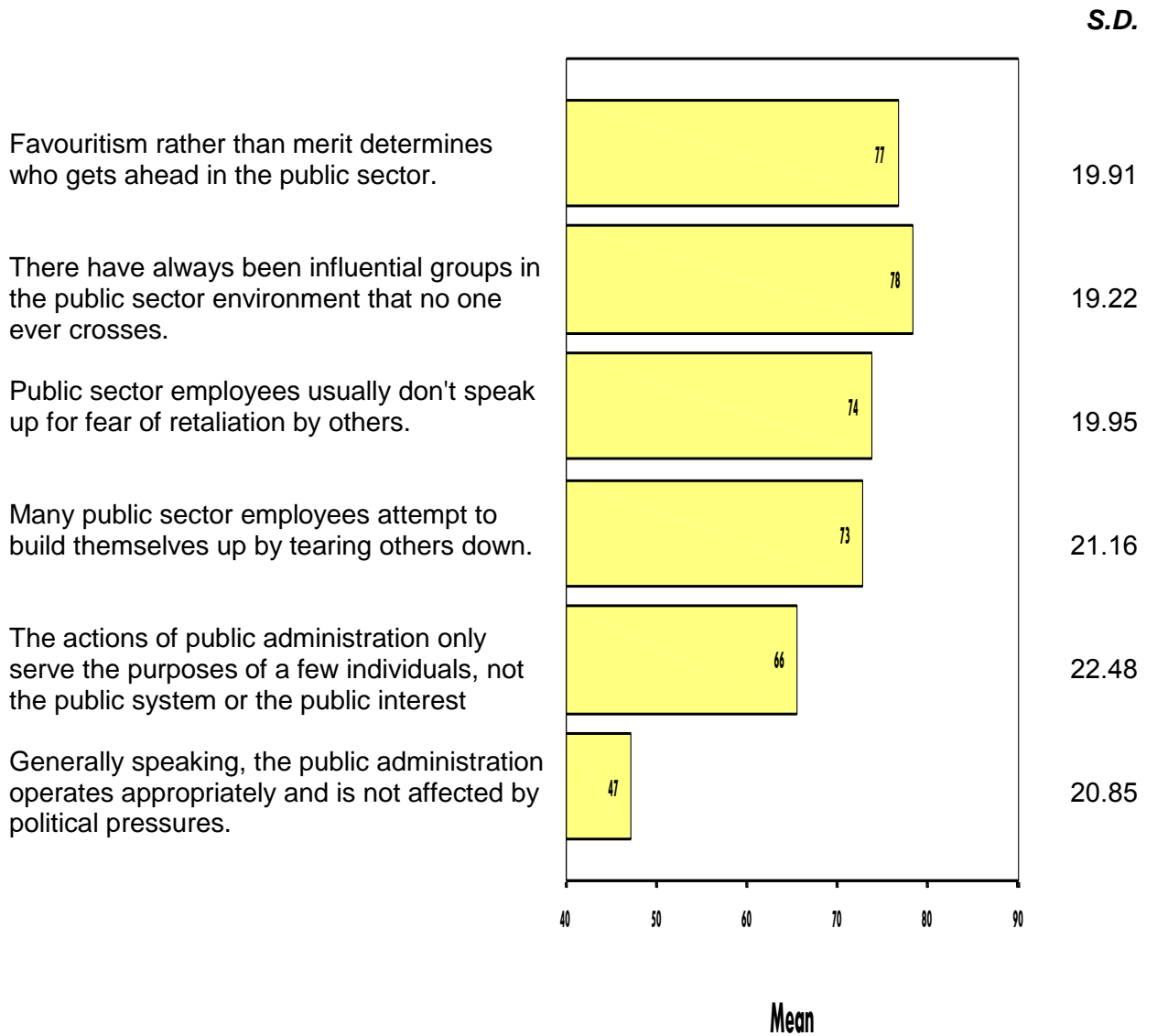
**Mean: 52.90**  
**S.D.: 17.15**

**Figure 13 - Entrepreneurship and Innovation**



**Mean: 54.10**  
**S.D.:16.56**

**Figure 14 - Internal Politics in Public Administration**



**Mean: 73.36**  
**S.D.: 14.85**

**Figure 15 - Business / Economic Orientation Versus Social Orientation**

**S.D.**

**Social Orientation**

Israeli government ministries really try to help weak populations and those who are incapable.

The state invests more in domains that need advancement and promotion than in other, stronger domains.

The state shares taxes equally between capable and incapable citizens .

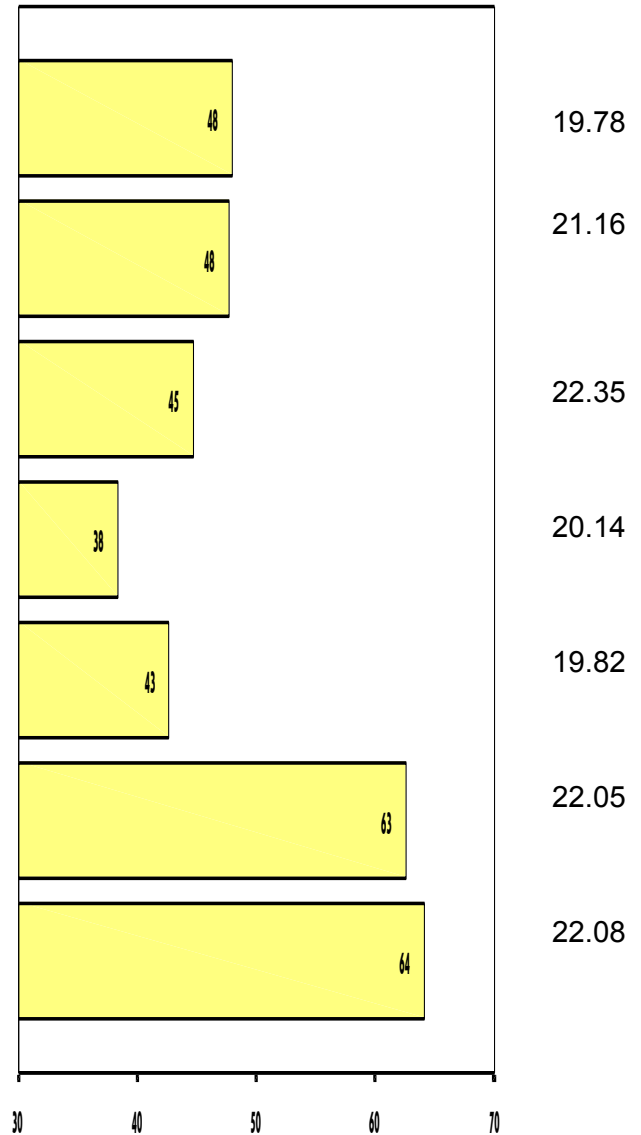
The burden of reserve military duty is shared equally by all citizens.

Generally speaking, social justice considerations are more important for the public administration than financial and economic considerations.

**Economic Orientation**

Israeli public administration is more concerned about financial incomes than about helping the less capable.

For the Israeli public administration, economic efficiency is the most important goal, while citizens are those who must pay the price.



**Mean for social orientation: 44.37**

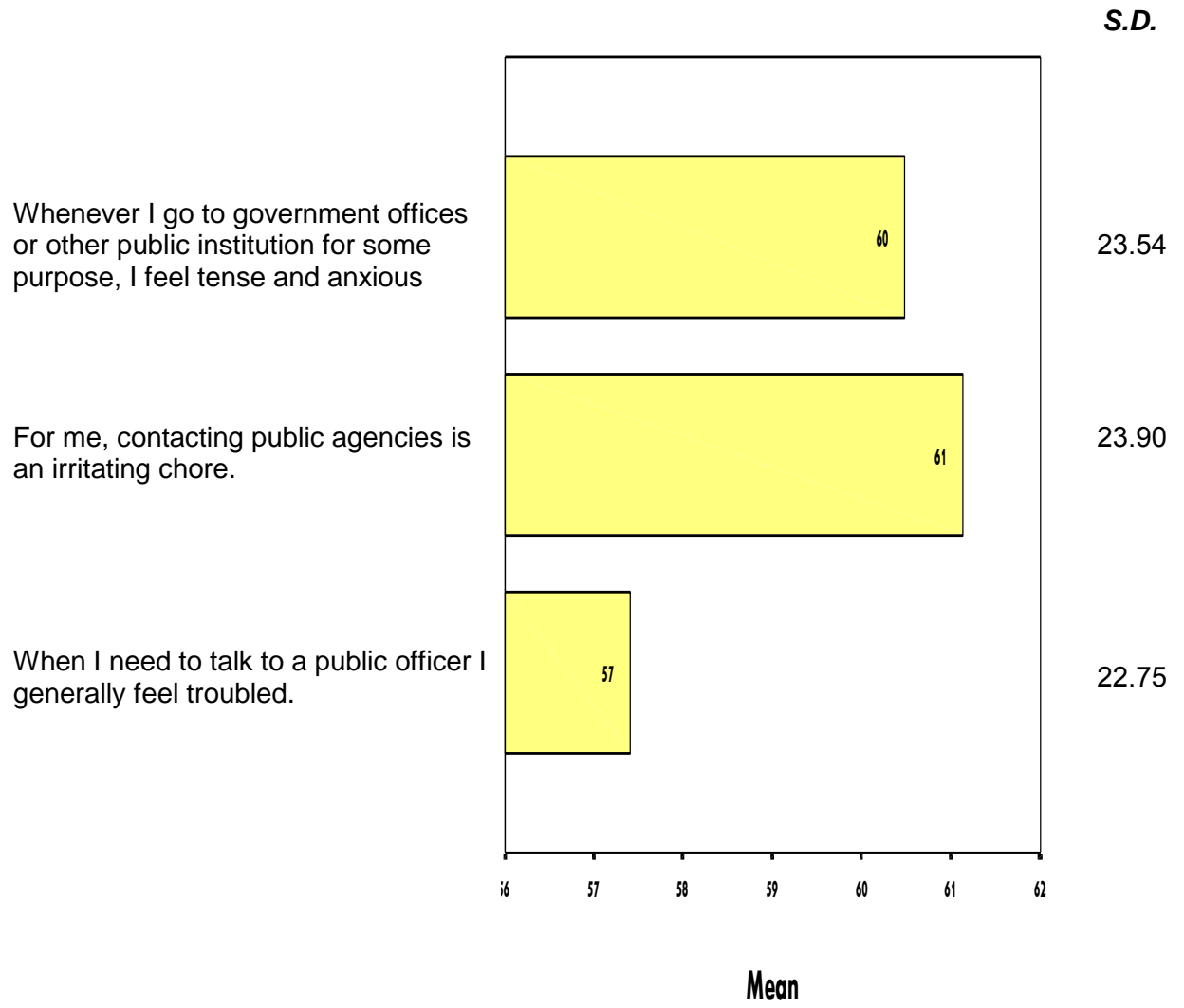
**S.D.: 14.32**

**Mean for economic orientation: 63.15**

**S.D.: 18.73**

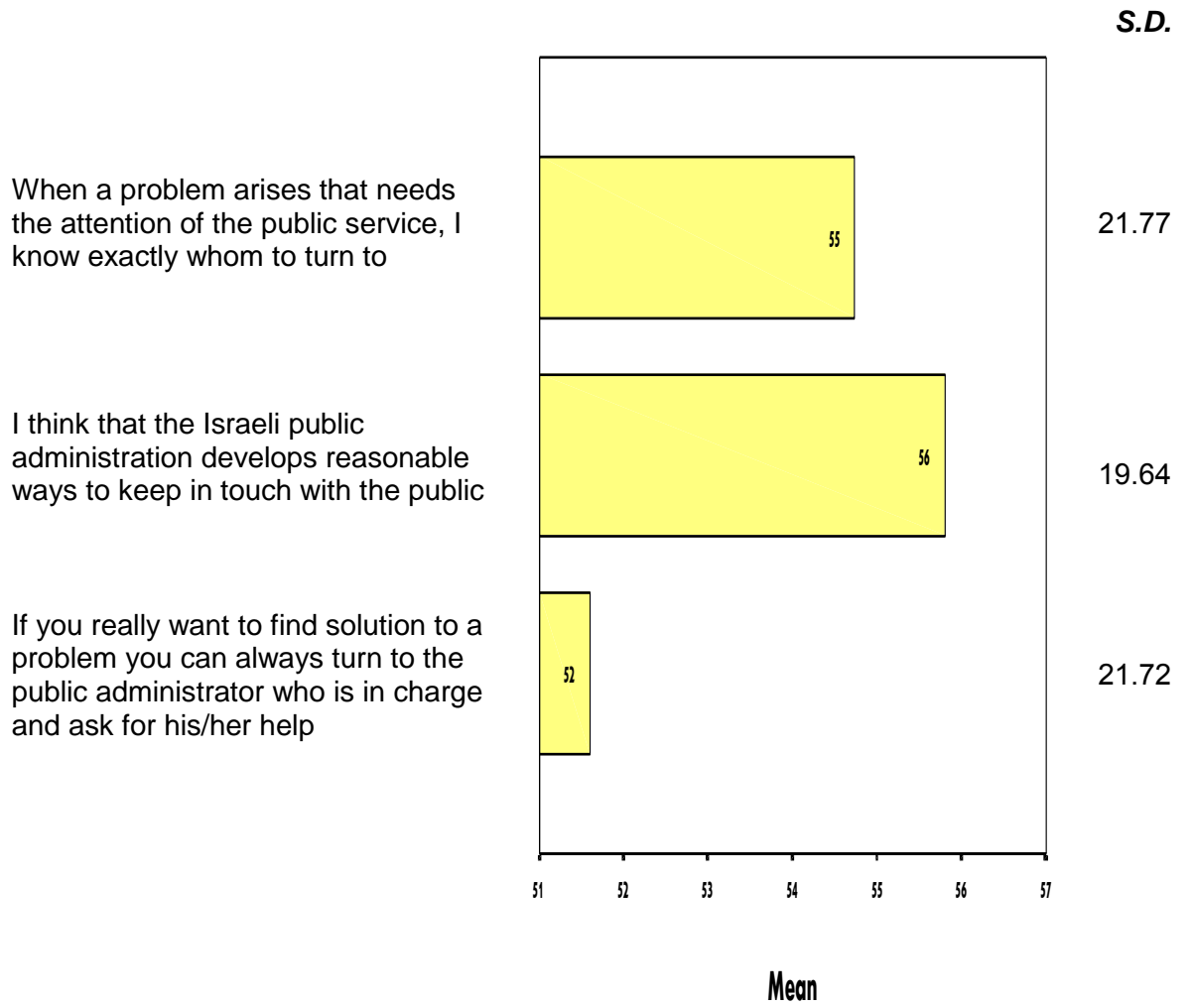
**Mean**

**Figure 16 - Stress and Strain When Contacting Public Administration**



**Mean: 59.61**  
**S.D.: 20.41**

**Figure 17 - Communication Barriers**



**Mean: 54.10**  
**S.D.: 16.89**

## **2.7 – Correlation analysis**

Tables 1 and 2 present Pearson's  $r$  correlations for the variables in this study, as well as correlations among these variables and a set of demographic variables. The main findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Satisfaction with public services is positively correlated with trust in administrative and governmental institutions ( $r=.62;p<.01$ ) and with trust in civil servants ( $r=.58;p<.01$ ). It also shows a more moderate positive relationship with faith in citizenship involvement ( $r=.20;p<.01$ ).
2. Satisfaction with public services is positively related with quality of public personnel and with quality of management and leadership ( $r=.41;p<.01$ ,  $r=.46;p<.01$  respectively). In addition, satisfaction with public services is positively related with transparency and accountability, responsiveness, ethics morality and integrity, entrepreneurship and innovation, social orientation, and communication barriers ( $r=.33;p<.01$ ,  $r=.49;p<.01$ ,  $r=.41;p<.01$ ,  $r=.39;p<.01$ ,  $r=.32;p<.01$ , and  $r=.36;p<.01$  respectively).
3. Satisfaction with public services is negatively related with internal politics in public administration and with level of stress and strain when contacting public administration ( $r=-.19;p<.01$ ,  $r=-.24;p<.01$ ).
4. Generally speaking, a positive relationship was found between trust, image, quality of human resource, transparency and accountability, responsiveness, ethics morality and integrity, entrepreneurship and innovation, and social orientation of the public sector.
5. Generally speaking, a negative relationship was found between most of the variables mentioned above and (1) internal politics in public administration and, (2) levels of stress and strain when contacting public administration.
6. The most dominant demographic variables that are related with various attitudes of citizens are: Age, education, religion, and occupational status (public or non-public sector employees).
  - 6.1 - Older citizens hold more positive attitudes towards the public sector, in comparison with younger citizens.
  - 6.2 - Highly educated employees are less satisfied with public services and show lower levels of trust in administrative and governmental institutions, in comparison with less educated employees. They also provide lower grades to the responsiveness of public administration, as well as to its entrepreneurship and innovation.
  - 6.3 - Non-Jewish citizens reported lower levels of satisfaction with public services and lower trust in administrative and governmental institutions, in comparison with Jewish citizens.
  - 6.4 – Citizens who are public sector employees evaluated the public sector more positively in comparison with those who are employees of other sectors.

Table 1: Correlation matrix (Pearson's r) for the research variables ( $\alpha$  Cronbach in parentheses).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Satisfaction with public services	62.24	10.29	(.81)															
2. Trust in administrative and governmental Institutions	60.25	11.05	.62	(.86)														
3. Trust in civil servants	61.27	11.69	.58	.82	(.91)													
4. Faith in citizenship involvement	46.18	15.77	.20	.32	.34	(.81)												
5. Public sector image	58.64	16.34	.28	.34	.32	.40	(.83)											
6. Quality of public personnel	56.13	16.08	.41	.38	.40	.36	.43	(.81)										
7. Quality of leadership and management	52.13	15.91	.46	.48	.44	.45	.52	.68	(.80)									
8. Transparency and accountability	54.43	15.68	.33	.44	.38	.46	.42	.49	.62	(.84)								
9. Responsiveness	48.02	16.25	.49	.49	.40	.48	.39	.59	.67	.67	(.88)							
10. Ethics, morality, and integrity	52.90	17.15	.41	.46	.46	.36	.30	.54	.51	.47	.58	(.77)						
11. Entrepreneurship and initiation	54.10	16.56	.39	.39	.34	.42	.36	.47	.59	.61	.69	.53	(.77)					
12. Internal politics in public administration	73.36	14.85	-.19	-.25	-.19	-.29	-.22	-.34	-.41	-.34	-.44	-.29	-.31	(.82)				
13. Social orientation	44.38	14.32	.32	.41	.35	.51	.29	.44	.49	.53	.62	.50	.52	-.42	(.73)			
14. Business / economic orientation	63.15	18.73	.01	-.05	.01	-.06	.01	-.02	-.08	-.11	-.12	-.12	-.01	.24	-.21	(.61)		
15. Stress and strain when contacting public administration	59.61	20.41	-.24	-.24	-.22	-.12	-.15	-.23	-.26	-.19	-.27	-.24	-.19	.27	-.29	.15	(.84)	
16. Communication barriers	54.10	16.89	.36	.35	.34	.46	.27	.49	.45	.44	.57	.48	.52	-.31	.45	-.08	-.20	(.72)

\*  $p \leq .05$  \*\*  $p \leq .01$  \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$

*Table 2: Pearson's r correlations for the research variables and the demographic variables*

Variables	Gender (male)	Age	Marital Status (married)	New immigrants	Education	Political position (left)	Religion (Jewish)	Place of living (city)	Income	Public sector employee
1. Satisfaction with public services	-.14*	.10	.10	.08	-.22**	-.27**	.20**	.07	.05	.05
2. Trust in administrative and governmental Institutions	-.09	.06	.02	.13	-.13*	-.25**	.23**	.01	-.04	.02
3. Trust in civil servants	-.04	.09	.03	.30*	-.09	-.31**	.32**	.03	.04	.04
4. Faith in citizenship involvement	.02	.08	.01	.18	-.04	.04	-.04	-.16*	.04	.14**
5. Public sector image	.02	.07	.11*	.11	-.02	-.03	-.07	-.08	-.03	.24**
6. Quality of public personnel	.01	.08	.04	.10	-.03	-.07	.04	-.02	.08	.12*
7. Quality of leadership and management	.01	.13*	.07	.11	-.11*	-.10	-.02	-.05	.06	.14**
8. Transparency and accountability	.07	.11*	.05	.06	-.09	-.10	-.06	-.05	.01	.16**
9. Responsiveness	.01	.17**	.06	.02	-.14**	-.11*	-.03	-.01	-.02	.12*
10. Ethics, morality, and integrity	-.08	.17**	.10	.17	-.06	-.17**	.07**	.07	.03	.13*
11. Entrepreneurship and initiation	.07	.19**	.09	.17	-.13*	-.09	-.04	-.03	.04	.14**
12. Internal politics in public administration	.05	-.14*	-.07	-.23	.07	.01	.07	.04	-.01	-.09
13. Social orientation	-.02	.12*	.02	-.03	-.05	-.10	.01	.02	.01	.03
14. Business / economic orientation	.06	-.08	-.02	-.03	-.10	.03	-.05	-.08	-.01	-.06
15. Stress and strain when contacting public administration	.07	-.05	-.13	.02	-.02	.12*	-.10	.06	-.07	-.17**
16. Communication barriers	-.02	.11	.05	.19	-.02	-.05	.09	.01	.04	.16**

\* p≤.05 \*\* p≤.01 \*\*\* p≤.001

## ***Part Three:***

### ***Summary, Implications, and a National Assessment***

#### **3.1- Summary of the Research Results and Their Meaning**

The citizens' opinions survey presented here offers a seismograph of Israeli citizens' attitude towards the main components of governance and especially towards systems created and formed to serve the individual. A number of interesting findings arise from the work and it is important to analyze them in the context relevant to the period in which the research was carried out:

##### **3.11- Descriptive evaluation**

The satisfaction with public services in Israel shows major differences amongst the different sectors. First, it seems that the Israeli citizen distinguishes between different levels of public systems' service and is capable of evaluating each of the services separately. Secondly, this kind of differentiating evaluation creates a group of organizations and services which receives the public's higher evaluation (high degree of satisfaction) and another group which receives lower evaluation (low degree of satisfaction). For example, the Israeli Train Company and the Postal Services belong, according to this survey, to the group which receives the higher evaluation and it may be assumed that the continuous and significant improvements in these service fields over the last years were expressed in the public's evaluation. Despite this and as was mentioned earlier, it is apparent that the absolute values of satisfaction from these and other services are not very high as they vary between 75-78 and never reach 80 points. On the other hand, an especially low level of satisfaction with the police services as well as with the Ministry of Labor services and the employment service is apparent. It may be that these low grades are related to two main problems with which the Israeli society has to deal nowadays: 1) The

problem of internal security which results from the escalation in the relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority as well as, 2) The financial recession which is becoming gradually worse and the increasing unemployment problem. It seems that the Israeli Police and the Ministry of Labor as well as the employment service, which are perceived by the public as those directly responsible for handling these two arenas, are also the butt of the public's criticism as the findings show.

The level of public trust in public institutions varies between medium to high values (71-73) when the IDF and the secret security services (excluding the police) are considered, and especially low values which are associated with the religious services system, the Ministry of Finance and taxes, and the National Infrastructures system (48-52). It is also apparent that the political parties and the Knesset, two institutions which are not naturally related to the "public administration" system, receive even lower evaluation (38-43). These findings show that the status of the army in Israel is still dominant in comparison with other public institutions and it wins much appreciation, even if it does not score very highly in absolute values. It is important to note that, understandably, the public administration in general and the army in particular gain lower trust among the non-Jewish population. It is also interesting to see that the trust in the army is higher than the trust in other service systems in Israel such as the judicial system or the Office of the State's Auditor. On the other hand, the low level of trust in religious services probably results from the current disagreement within the Israeli society on their status, their roles and their budgeting as well as on their internal management style which is perceived by most of the public as improper and faulty. Consequently, the level of trust in the institution studied here as "religious services" as a whole is compromised. The low level of trust in the Ministry of Finance and the tax-collection system probably also expresses the acute public criticism of the national budget distribution system, the government's prioritizations and the manner by which its activities are being subsidized. Significant

criticism can also be deciphered from these findings regarding the tax-collection system which might be perceived as unjust and unfair and therefore the level of trust in it is very low. The third public service which gains relatively low public trust is the management of the National Infrastructures system. This is probably the Israeli public's way of expressing the concern it feels regarding the handling of water, roads, state lands' management and similar issues. The public's feeling is that these fields lack a sufficiently clear and responsible policy and that they require a comprehensive change and a significant correction.

It is noteworthy that these findings coincide with data regarding the Israeli public's trust in governmental systems. Public opinion surveys conducted in Israel in the years 1987-1991 show that the Israeli public shows a low level of trust in political parties, in the media, in the government and in the Knesset. A higher level of trust is shown towards the judicial system and the IDF (Barzily, Yaar-Yochtmann and Segall, 1994: 54). However, the findings presented here significantly widen the scope of information we currently have as they also deal with the trust in many other institutions of Israeli public administration as well as with other various aspects of trust and performance.

The level of citizens trust in civil servants varies between the high values afforded the IDF's soldiers, its commanders, and those who serve in the security branches (72-75) as well as judges and lecturers in higher education institutions (72-73), and the low trust values afforded to employees of the Ministry of Religion, City Rabbis, and Chief Rabbis (42-50) as well as to local authorities' employees and to the Water Council employees (48-49). These low grades express again the doubt many citizens feel regarding the performance of those in charge of religious services in Israel. They also reflect the concern with local authorities' employees' performance in general. It also seems that employees of the agencies and organizations which manage the

water market in Israel such as “Mekorot” and the Water Council are seen as somewhat responsible for the current water crisis and the level of trust in their performance is quite low. Again and for comparison sake only, in this evaluation field as well, members of the Knesset and the government’s ministers gain the lowest grades (41-44), which shows that the public makes a significant differentiation between the administrative system which is directly responsible for the provision of different public services and the political-parliamentary system and the political-operative system which are supposed to guide its activity. To sum up this part it seems that in general the public regards both public institutions and those who hold positions within them with a medium to low degree of trust. However, it is interesting to note that the public regards the public servants themselves with a higher degree of trust than the institutions they belong to. For example, the Ministry of Health wins a medium level of trust (60) as do the local clinics (“Kupat Holim”), while the level of trust afforded doctors who belong to the public service is relatively high (71) both in comparison with some of the other civil servants and in comparison with the institutions the doctors belong to. This ratio remains quite consistent with regard to other public institutions and their employees as well.

Israeli citizens’ level of trust in citizens’ involvement is quite low (46.18) and expresses the feeling of many people that it is very difficult to influence the nature of public service provision and its fair distribution. It may be that such lack of trust points to a certain tendency to passivity on the part of citizens and to the minimization of their involvement in the country’s and community’s life with regard to public interest.

Other opinions of Israeli citizens regarding the public administration and its employees express a generally high degree of criticism on different levels. The public assumes that to a large degree (73.36) internal politics exist within public administration systems, and that political and irrelevant considerations are involved in

decisions which are supposed to be taken on a professional and relevant basis. In addition, they stress the business-like attitude of public organizations in their relations with the citizen (63.15), an attitude which is to a large degree opposed to the social, more sensitive attitude which is expected from these organizations (43.37). The public reports high levels of tension and stress in its communication with the public service (59.61), and this seems to point to a lack of sufficient sensitivity to the public's needs and demands. This data is also supported by a relatively low evaluation of the Israeli public service's level of response/responsiveness (48.02), and in a medium to low evaluation of managers and senior officials who head public systems (52.13), in a medium to low evaluation of the level of ethics, morality and honesty of the public sector employees (52.90), and in a relatively medium grade of the level of transparency and responsibility (54.42). The level of initiative and renewal of public administration systems as well as the level of their accessibility to the public gain the same medium grade (54.10). This grade is close to the general grade given to the quality of the public sector's personnel and its professionalism (56.13). To sum up, the general image of the public sector in the eyes of the citizens, is a little higher (58.64) but not high in absolute terms, both as a job-provider and as an important social institute.

### 3.12- Correlative Evaluation

The results of this paper show that the citizens' trust in public institutions is positively related to the trust afforded civil servants in different positions, as well as to the satisfaction from public organization services. Further, the data also show that the satisfaction with public services rises not only when the Israeli citizen expresses trust in a particular institution and in its officials but also when 1) the public sector's image is positive, 2) the personnel and management are qualitative, 3) there is a high level of transparency and responsibility, 4) there are response and responsiveness, 5) ethics and morality values are implemented, 6) there is a tendency towards

initiative and renewal, 7) the sector has a social attitude rather than a clear economic or business-like attitude. The satisfaction with public services is mostly compromised as a result of a feeling of tension and stress that the citizen feels when communicating with government authorities and as a result of his view on the internal politics within them. Non-Jewish citizens expressed a higher level of mistrust both of public institutions and of civil servants. They also expressed a higher degree of dissatisfaction than the Jewish citizens. It seems that these data may be related to the feelings of inequality and alienation of these sectors towards government authorities, especially during the period in which the study was conducted. Accordingly, the level of trust in citizen involvement rises especially when the governance has a higher social attitude towards the citizen beyond the simple financial attitude. As this attitude is weaker especially among the non-Jewish sector it may help to explain the growing separatism of a part of the Israeli non-Jewish population and its attempt to develop a social autonomy of its own beside the Israeli society and not necessarily as a part of it.

These and other data stress the essential need to develop suitable tools for evaluating the public sector's behavioral performance. These tools can assure the continual advancement and improvement of the public service and the widening of its activity scope within the different sectors of Israeli society. In the last years there is a growing need and interest in a systematic and comprehensive collection of data regarding public organizations' performance especially in the attitudinal-behavioral evaluation field. Such performance evaluation, which forms a major part of the New Public Management procedures, must include both economic and technical measurements, but also and specifically a comprehensive study of government-citizens relations using variables such as response factors, responsiveness and consideration towards public needs, the ethics of civil servants, an evaluation of public sector's employees' and managers' proficiency and professionalism, initiative,

renewal and the implementation of information systems, improving the communication channels with the public, public sector image and its fairness towards citizens. Analyzing the Israeli public sector using these tools is essential for tightening the citizens-governance relations, for the promotion of democratic values of citizens' involvement and for the enhancement of the State of Israel's national strength.

### **3.2- Public Sector Performance, Democratic Values and National Strength**

Over the years since the establishment of the state a wide-scoped public sector, which has plenty of resources and employees and endless missions typical of a modern welfare State, has been formed. Different global processes have defined Israel as a democracy wishing to maintain standards of living and equal opportunities for all its citizens. The changes in the perception of the welfare State's status as well as the changes in perception and ideology regarding the state's involvement in the market as they took place in the USA and in Europe since the Fifties, and to a greater degree since the end of the Seventies, have gradually filtered into the Israeli public sector which was seeking change, renewal and development accordingly. Management knowledge in general and the public administration sciences specifically have assisted in this and encouraged reforms and changes which would suit the advancement and development in the world.

However, public discussion in Israel is marked with the feeling that in the last fifty years public administration was mainly influenced by local strains related to current national security troubles and to a wish to preserve Israel's military advantage in the Middle-Eastern arena, where even today major parts of the Middle-East are hostile to its mere existence. The public sector was required to adapt itself first of all to changes resulting from the cultural, economic, security and political transformations on the local level, among which one may note the challenges of

immigration absorption, the settlement, and mostly the incessant confrontation in the security arena. These pressures have set the challenge of improving the public sector, in an important yet minor position on the national prioritization scale following the security, military and political challenges. Therefore, even today it is claimed that the Israeli public administration lacks a sufficient degree of planning, organization and long-term thinking of the kind which can lay the foundations of a developed and prosperous society in western terms. The lack of these planning and organization components created a governmental and managerial culture of founding an “under fire” nation which is characterized by a continuous state of withholding sufficient budgets for the starting of essential reforms in the public service fields.

Due to the fact that the national strength of a country does not depend solely on local components and on upheavals resulting from the needs of existence and of the times (such as national security and military strength components) but also and especially from the society’s strength, then today one should find a way to balance the two opposing forces. A strong and powerful society must test the kind of service with which it supplies its citizens, the level of trust that the citizens have in service providers, and the totality of public stands towards the governmental operative bodies, which reflect the affinity and the strength of the individual-state linkage. These form the legitimate basis of any democratic government which is supposed to take care of the individual’s welfare and quality of living. Therefore, the social strength and the security-related strength are inter-mingled and together they constitute the national strength of a nation and fortify its long-term existence.

Therefore, the State of Israel and its operative units, which determine and implement public policy, are facing a crossroad nowadays. On the one hand, the military and security challenge is not minor and some say that it is only becoming gradually more complex and difficult. On the other hand, Israel of the 2000 is

inhabited with citizens who are aware of the state's fragile security state but are nevertheless interested in leading an ordinary life in the modern context of a western proper state and society. It seems that in actuality, these two directions express complementary rather than opposed needs. This is also the reason why the required and essential change in public administration systems may not be delayed any further, as they are also the systems responsible for the enhancement of social strength which is an indispensable part of Israeli national strength.

The crossroad which the Israeli public sector is facing today and the required decisions, whether they be accepted or rejected, will determine to a large degree the social strength we are dealing with. The way to social strength depends, among other things, upon a constant improvement of the service to the citizen and in tightening the bond and trust between the operative bodies and the individual. Today, public organizations become gradually more involved in the citizen's life, their value in determining the national agenda is growing, their influence on the quality and style of life in Israel on the verge of the third millennium is undoubted. Therefore, a systematic data collection and a comprehensive process of studying the changes in this sector are required. This paper offers a possible framework and direction for developing these processes as part of the Israeli-European evaluation project NAPPA.

This project is based on the assumption that there is a direct link between the strength and survivability of a democratic society and the performance of its administrative and governmental units as the public sees them. The literature discussing the link between public administration performance and democratic values of citizen involvement and participation in the government's activities is gradually developing in the last years. The large number of publications in leading magazines dealing with public administration and the great interest which this field attracts in

important scientific conventions are proofs of this. The publications and the conventions deal with models and tools for the improvement of the public system's flexibility while raising the public's involvement in the change processes and especially in means for encouraging community initiative in the local field which may assist in and support the services which the public administration offers citizens. Issues of passive and active citizen involvement in the activity of public organizations (see for example, Box, 1998; Brudney, 1990) and the tools for measuring and evaluating citizens' needs and demands occupy an important place in the agenda of public systems' management. One of the most effective tools in this context, which can also be quickly transferred from the level of planning to the level of implementation, is the attitudinal-behavioral continuous evaluation of the administration's and the government's performance as it was presented in this paper. Accordingly, the summary section of this paper attempts to supply an initial national status evaluation for the public-government sector in Israel, an evaluation which may serve as a basis for continuous following and research in the future.

### **3.3- Summary, Discussion and National Status Assessment**

Israel was born as a welfare State with a very centrally managed market and society characterized by three main sectors: the public, the private and the organizational ("Histadrut"). The State's values as a welfare State included aspiring to provide social security, maintaining a standard of life, minimizing inequality and creating social integration (Doron, 1995). In order to achieve the goals matching these values the sectarian balance in the first years of the state leaned clearly towards the public and organizational systems. These systems usually acted together and in a coordinated fashion and stopped the introduction of managerial reforms characterized by an open-minded and economical approach, as these expressed a change which threatened the social values which were perceived as worthy. This balance was completely changed since the end of the Eighties and

beginning of the Nineties when on the one hand the organizational sector's dominance deteriorated greatly, and on the other hand, international trends encouraging increasing efficiency and stressing the business-like management of the public sector rose.

Indeed, the first signs of reforms and changes in the management style of the public sector began to appear at the end of the Seventies with the first political upheaval, but unfortunately were not integrated into a consistent and inclusive change and did not gain sufficient political support from the big parties. Governmental and public committees were formed in order to test alternatives for the public administration's and the public sector's structure and to determine the agenda for the carrying out of different reforms. Yet, they all lacked a systematic reference to the field of organizational performance evaluation and to a systematic evaluation of public sector's performance using attitudinal-behavioral tools as they are presented in this paper.

During the last couple of decades, a number of attempts were made to promote Israeli public administration and make it modernized, advanced and more renovated in its working systems and in the enhancement of the relations with the citizens. As part of this process, certain motives of the New Public Management approach entered the public administration arena. This approach maintains that one should advance structured processes of performance evaluation, set clear goals for public organizations and follow their attainment process closely, and even improve the handling of personnel and the integration of senior, professional, knowledgeable and experienced managers from the private sector into the public sector.

However, the main changes in the Israeli public sector since the end of the Seventies until today are based on two main components: a real revolution in the

field of distribution of authorities (for example, transferring many managerial authorities from the central to the local government and the provision of a greater freedom in budget-managing among different government offices), and an enhanced privatization beginning at the mid-Eighties (for details see the reports of the Government Companies' Authority). Processes of enhancing government's activities' transparency, encouraging managers' and institutions' responsibility towards the public, the introduction of modern technology and advanced communication mediums to improve the connection with the public, and a higher degree of public auditing involvement in fields not dealt with in the past, are gradually strengthened (Friedberg, 1999). On the other hand, it seems that in other fields such as the minimization of bureaucracy and the introduction of structural changes into public organizations, the introduction of a new managerial culture, and especially in the field of public organizations' performance evaluation, the steps taken are smaller and insufficient, and therefore the challenge of change is greater.

This paper aims to contribute to the public discussion of the issue of Israeli public administration's quality and its ability to continue to face the challenges ahead of it. The initial data presented here points to medium to low evaluations in most fields. This leads us to assume that in general there is much room for improvement. Despite the fact that it is difficult to compare the results achieved here with results from different countries (especially European countries) which have a public service system similar to the Israeli one, one may sum up the results of this paper in the assumption that the public is aware of the level of service it receives, is capable of evaluating it well, and wishes that its evaluations will receive a proper place in decision-making processes regarding the Israeli public administration structure and the reforms it requires.

The Canadian and American experience shows that such evaluation can be conducted using systematic and continuous researches of citizens' opinions and their position as clients of the public sector, as well as through the use of inter-organizational researches focusing on the public sector employees' population. Israel is becoming more involved in this trend as part of the NAPPA project and in the next years it will be possible to evaluate the public service's advancement in it over time and in comparison with additional European countries. It seems that this kind of evaluation will be able to provide policy makers and the whole public with a new and fascinating perspective on the quality and performance level of the Israeli public administration.

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