

The impact of e-service quality on public trust and public satisfaction in e-government public services

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ABSTRACT

Responsive, timely, and friendly service quality plays a central role in shaping trust between the government and citizens. With the improvement of service quality, the public feels valued and heard, reinforcing the mutual trust relationship between the government and citizens. In this regard, technology-enabled service processes can streamline time and cost, while automation reduces the risk of human errors. Through web platforms or applications, the government can provide easier access for citizens to various services without the need to physically visit government offices. Good and quality public services are not only aimed at meeting the practical needs of the public but also play a role in shaping the mutual trust relationship between the government and citizens. Therefore, the concept of e-service quality, which encompasses the quality of services provided through electronic platforms, becomes crucial. The objective of this research is to explore the extent to which e-service quality can influence the level of public satisfaction. The research method employs a quantitative approach using primary data sources, where random sampling is applied as the sampling technique. The research respondents are citizens using digital public service platforms organized by the local government of Jakarta. The sample size used in this study is 262. The variables tested in this research involve e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction. In analyzing the data, this research utilizes SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis results show that e-service quality has a significant influence on the formation of public trust. Furthermore, findings indicate that e-service quality also significantly affects public satisfaction. However, the analysis results do not support the idea that public trust mediates the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction. This signifies that while public trust directly contributes to public satisfaction with public services, other unmeasured factors also play a role in shaping public perceptions and satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

Good governance is the foundational element in achieving effective governance, and this is reflected through an emphasis on service quality and accessibility in public services (Hartanto et al., 2021). Transparency becomes a key element that requires the government to provide easily accessible information to the public regarding policies and decisions (Androniceanu, 2021). Thus, the public can have a better understanding of government actions and can oversee the policy-making process. Citizen participation is also a crucial aspect, as involving citizens in the decision-making process ensures better inclusivity and representation (Rijal, 2023). Policies generated reflect the needs and aspirations of diverse communities. Additionally, the principles of accountability and efficiency form a strong foundation in good governance. Accountability ensures that the government is responsible for its actions and policies, instilling confidence in the public that decisions made are for the common

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good (Sofyani et al., 2020). Efficiency ensures optimal use of resources, avoids wastefulness, and ensures that every government step maximally benefits the public (Lindgren et al., 2019). Furthermore, ease of access, both in physical and technological aspects, is a crucial effort to ensure that public services are easily accessible to all layers of society, so that no citizens are left behind in benefiting from government policies and programs (Malodia et al., 2021).

Responsive, timely, and friendly service quality plays a central role in shaping trust between the government and citizens. Responsiveness means public services can quickly and effectively respond to the needs and expectations of the public. Timeliness reflects the government's ability to address questions, complaints, or requests from the public seriously and promptly. Additionally, a friendly attitude from public service creates a positive atmosphere and invites collaboration (Li & Shang, 2020; Mansoor, 2021). With improved service quality, the public feels valued and heard, thereby strengthening the mutual trust relationship between the government and citizens. This trust is essential to build a solid foundation for collaboration between the government and the public in achieving common goals (Qalati et al., 2021; Wulur et al., 2020). In addition to focusing on service quality, innovation in public service delivery and investment in human resource training are crucial elements in supporting positive transformation in public services. Innovation allows the government to adopt new methods and advanced technologies for more efficient and effective service delivery. Investment in human resource training is also essential to enhance the competence and professionalism of public service employees, enabling them to provide better and higher-quality services (Dam & Dam, 2021).

The rapid development of technology makes the implementation of e-Government increasingly crucial and cannot be ignored. e-Government involves the use of information and communication technology to enhance efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in the provision of public services (Mustafa et al., 2020). Through web platforms or applications, the government can provide easier access for the public to various services without the need to physically visit government offices. This opens the door to broader public participation and facilitates citizens' interaction with the government online (Maulana, 2020; Firman et al., 2023). The application of public services in the form of a website or application also has the potential to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government administration. Service processes that utilize technology can reduce time and costs, while automation can decrease the risk of human errors. Furthermore, e-Government creates opportunities to enhance transparency by providing easily accessible information for the public (Twizeyimana & Andersson, 2019; Lee-Geiller & Lee, 2019).

Good and quality public services are not only aimed at meeting the practical needs of the public but also play a role in shaping the mutual trust relationship between the government and citizens (Alkrajji & Ameen, 2022). Therefore, the concept of e-service quality, which encompasses the quality of services provided through electronic platforms, becomes essential. Analyzing the extent to which e-service quality influences public trust, or the public's trust in the government, will provide in-depth insights into the impact of technology implementation in delivering public services (Santa et al., 2019; Noori, 2022). The objective of this research is to explore the extent to which e-service quality can affect the level of public satisfaction. By assessing the quality of services provided through electronic platforms, this research can offer a better understanding of the factors contributing to public satisfaction. Thus, the results of this research can serve as a foundation for the government to enhance the quality of electronic public services, with the primary goal of building greater trust among the public and improving public satisfaction levels with the services provided.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Electronic service quality reflects the ability of a company or organization to meet customer needs through online platforms. Quality electronic services are not just about providing products or information digitally but also about creating a satisfying user experience (Alblooshi et al., 2023). Key aspects influencing e-service quality include user-friendliness, transaction speed, availability of relevant information, robust data security, and responsiveness to customer needs. Excellent electronic services can enhance the user experience, make online interactions more efficient and effective, and ultimately build trust in the platform (Li & Shang, 2020; Aljukhadar et al., 2022). Electronic services not only provide a digital alternative to conventional services but also open up new opportunities by providing greater access, expanding geographic reach, and improving service availability (Hariguna et al., 2021). By implementing quality electronic services, governments and organizations can significantly improve effectiveness in meeting the needs of the public. Therefore, it is crucial for electronic service providers to pay attention to and continually improve service quality to ensure that the services genuinely meet the needs of the public (Chan et al., 2021). According to Obaid & Ahmadb (2022), the strong relationship between e-service quality and public trust highlights the importance of effective digital service management in fostering a climate of trust among users. E-service quality encompasses not only technical aspects such as user-friendliness and transaction speed but also includes elements that build trust, such as data security and responsiveness to customer needs (Li & Shang, 2023). A reliable and secure electronic service can instill confidence in the public that their personal information is well-managed and that their online interactions with the platform are reliable. In an era where online engagement is increasingly dominant, understanding the relationship between e-service quality and public trust is crucial (Abdulkareem & Mohd Ramli, 2022). Increased public trust in digital services not only strengthens the relationship between the government or service provider and the public but also motivates users to be more active and participate in various services offered. Therefore, a deep understanding of the dimensions of e-service quality that build and maintain public trust is crucial in the context of public services (Alblooshi et al., 2023).

Setiawan & Septiani (2018) underscore the importance of e-service quality dimensions in shaping customer perceptions of trust and satisfaction with electronic services. E-service quality, encompassing aspects like user-friendliness, speed, information availability, data security, and responsiveness, directly impacts the level of trust consumers build in a digital platform or service. With improved e-service quality, users feel more confident in the reliability and security of the service, forming a solid foundation for trust (Alsarraf et al., 2022; Nawafleh, 2020). Furthermore, the relationship between e-service quality and trust also has significant consequences for customer satisfaction. Customers experiencing high-quality electronic services and having trust in the platform tend to exhibit high levels of satisfaction. Noori's findings (2022) indicate that e-service quality and trust have both partial and simultaneous effects on customer satisfaction. Focusing on improving service quality and building trust can be an effective strategy to ensure optimal customer satisfaction in a world increasingly dependent on technology. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. *E-service quality has a significant effect on public trust.*

Hypothesis 2. *E-service quality has a significant effect on public satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 3. *Public trust has a significant effect on public satisfaction.*

Hypothesis 4. *Public trust mediates the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction.*

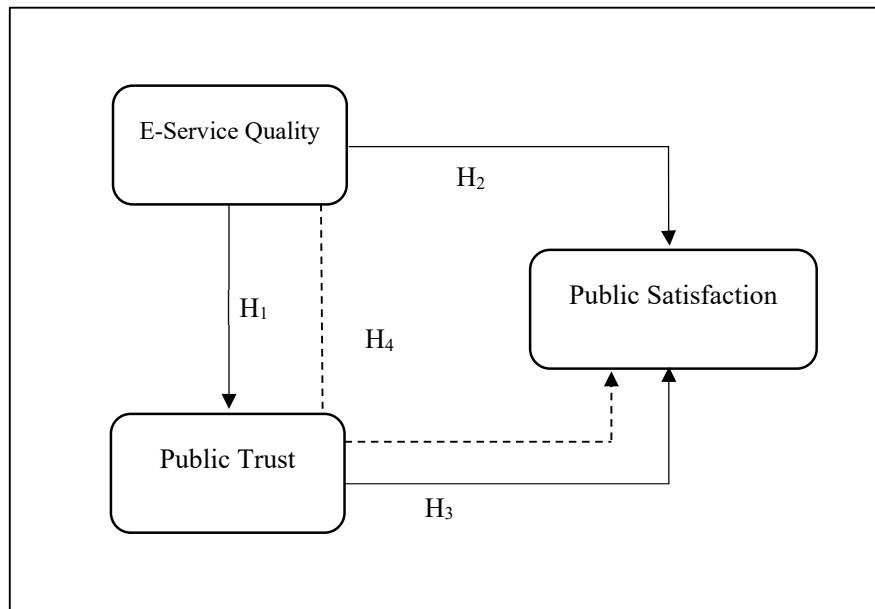


Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

3. Research Methods

This research adopts a quantitative approach, utilizing primary data sources with the applied sampling technique being random sampling. The research respondents consist of the public users of the digital public service platform organized by the local government of Jakarta. Data collection is carried out through online-distributed questionnaires with a 5-point Likert scale, and out of the 400 distributed questionnaires, a total of 287 were successfully collected. However, after selection, only 262 questionnaires were deemed suitable for inclusion in the analysis, serving as the sample for this research. The variables examined in this study include e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction. To measure e-service quality, indicators such as user-friendliness, service speed, information availability, and responsiveness are employed. Meanwhile, the public trust variable is measured through indicators of service reliability, transparency, and security. The public satisfaction variable is assessed using indicators like user satisfaction, service efficiency, service quality, and response to feedback. In analyzing the data, this research utilizes the SmartPLS 4 software. With this framework, the study seeks to evaluate the interrelationships between electronic service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction in the context of utilizing digital public service platforms.

4. Research Result

The initial analysis is conducted to evaluate the reliability of the indicators used to measure the variables of e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction. The e-service quality variable is measured through four indicators: ease of use, speed of service, availability of information, and responsiveness. The public trust variable is measured using indicators of service reliability, transparency, and security. Meanwhile, the public satisfaction variable is assessed through indicators of user satisfaction, service efficiency, service quality, and response to feedback. The standard loading factor test is employed to assess the extent to which these indicators can be relied upon. An indicator is considered reliable if the obtained standard loading factor value exceeds 0.6. With this approach, the research can determine the extent to which each indicator can be relied upon

as an accurate representation of the measured variable. The reliability of indicators serves as a crucial initial step before proceeding to further analysis regarding the relationships between variables and hypothesis testing.

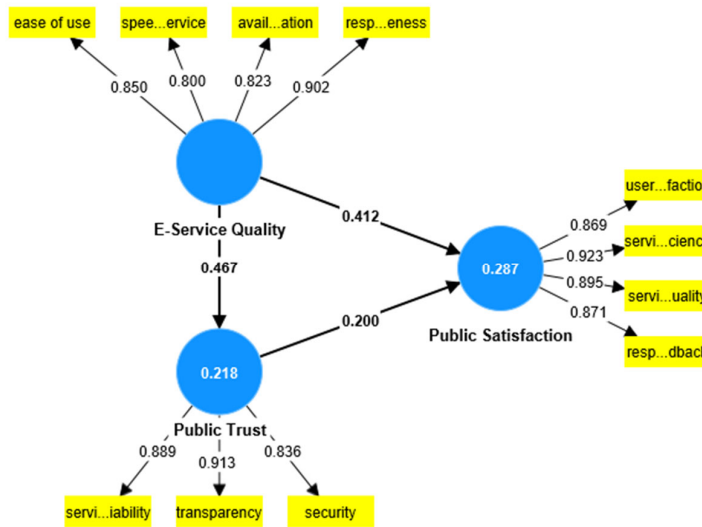


Fig. 2. Structural Model

Table 1
Standard Loading Factor Test

Variable	Standard Loading Factor
E-Service Quality	
• Ease of use	0.850
• Speed of service	0.800
• Availability of information	0.823
• Responsiveness	0.902
Public Trust	
• Service reliability	0.889
• Transparency	0.913
• Security	0.836
Public Satisfaction	
• User satisfaction	0.869
• Service efficiency	0.923
• Service quality	0.895
• Response to feedback	0.871

Table 1 presents the results of the standard loading factor test for each indicator used to measure the variables of e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction. For the e-service quality variable, the indicator "ease of use" has a standard loading factor of 0.850, indicating a high level of reliability. The "speed of service" indicator obtains a value of 0.800, "availability of information" is at 0.823, and "responsiveness" is at 0.902. All these indicators surpass the threshold of 0.6, indicating that all four indicators are reliable in measuring the e-service quality variable. The results for the public trust variable also demonstrate satisfactory outcomes, with all indicators service reliability at 0.889, transparency at 0.913, and security at 0.836 exceeding the 0.6 threshold. This confirms the reliability of all three indicators in measuring the public trust variable. Meanwhile, the public satisfaction variable also shows high reliability, with standard loading factor values for user satisfaction at 0.869, service efficiency at 0.923, service quality at 0.895, and response to feedback at 0.871. All these indicators meet the reliability criteria with values above 0.6. Thus, the results of the standard loading factor test in this table indicate that all indicators used to measure the variables of e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction are reliable.

After assessing the reliability of the indicators through the standard loading factor test, this research proceeded with the reliability and validity tests to ensure that the measurements of the e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction variables are reliable and valid. The reliability test was conducted to evaluate the consistency of the measurements from the questionnaires filled out by respondents in measuring latent variables. In the reliability test, the reliability criteria are considered met if the values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are greater than 0.7. The results of the reliability test help ensure that the research instrument is reliable in measuring the identified latent constructs. Furthermore, the validity test is used to evaluate the instrument's validity, assessing how accurately the questionnaire can measure latent variables. One aspect of the validity test involves Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where an AVE value above 0.6 is considered adequate to demonstrate construct validity. A high AVE value indicates that most of the variation in the indicators is explained by the measured latent variables, indicating an adequate level of validity for the research instrument.

Table 2
Reliability and Validity Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
E-Service Quality	0.866	0.879	0.713
Public Satisfaction	0.913	0.922	0.792
Public Trust	0.856	0.891	0.774

The results of the reliability test for the e-service quality variable indicate Cronbach's alpha value of 0.866, exceeding the 0.7 threshold, indicating good consistency in measuring the latent variable. The obtained composite reliability value is 0.879, meeting the reliability criteria. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value obtained is 0.713, indicating an adequate level of construct validity. For the public satisfaction variable, the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.913, and the composite reliability is 0.922, both surpassing the 0.7 threshold, indicating excellent consistency. The AVE value of 0.792 reaches the 0.6 threshold, demonstrating good construct validity. Meanwhile, for the public trust variable, the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.856, and the composite reliability is 0.891, both meeting reliability standards. The AVE value of 0.774 also reaches the 0.6 threshold, indicating adequate construct validity. The analysis results in this table confirm that the research instrument has a high level of reliability and validity in measuring the e-service quality, public satisfaction, and public trust variables. These findings provide a strong foundation for understanding and analyzing the relationships between variables and instill confidence in the interpretation of research findings.

Furthermore, this study strengthens the validity of the instruments through the discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). This approach allows researchers to evaluate the correlation between latent variables in the study, ensuring that the measured variables are truly distinct and do not overlap significantly. In the context of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) discriminant validity test, validity is considered achieved if the obtained HTMT value exceeds the 0.4 threshold. Through this analysis, the study ensures that the correlation between latent variables such as e-service quality, public satisfaction, and public trust does not exceed a level that could be considered a significant overlap.

Table 3
Discriminant Validity: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Variable	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)
E-Service Quality ↔ Public Trust	0.525
E-Service Quality ↔ Public Satisfaction	0.560
Public Trust ↔ Public Satisfaction	0.424

The results of the discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) for the e-service quality and public trust variables obtained an Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value of 0.525. This value exceeds the 0.4 threshold, indicating that the relationship between e-service quality and public trust is acceptable, and their correlation does not exceed the level considered as a significant indication of overlap between the two variables. For the e-service quality and public satisfaction variables, an HTMT value of 0.560 was obtained, indicating that the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction is acceptable and does not reach a significant level of overlap. Furthermore, the public trust and public satisfaction variables obtained an HTMT value of 0.424. This indicates that the relationship between public trust and public satisfaction is acceptable, with the obtained value being greater than 0.4. Thus, the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) discriminant validity test provide additional confidence that the latent variables measured in this study are truly distinct and reliable.

As for the next test, hypothesis testing was conducted to analyze the influence of the relationships between variables. In this study, there are four hypotheses proposed, where the first hypothesis tests the influence of the e-service quality variable on public trust. The second hypothesis tests the influence of e-service quality on public satisfaction. The third hypothesis tests the influence of public trust on public satisfaction. Meanwhile, the fourth hypothesis tests the mediating role of the public trust variable in the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction. In this regard, the relationship between variables is considered significant, and the hypothesis is proven to be acceptable with a T-statistic value of 1.96 and a p-value less than 0.05. The T-statistic value indicates the significance of the variable's influence in the analysis, while the p-value assesses whether this influence is statistically significant.

Table 4
Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Standard Deviation	T statistics	P values	Information
E-Service Quality → Public Trust	0.073	6.379	0.000	Significant
E-Service Quality → Public Satisfaction	0.072	5.709	0.000	Significant
Public Trust → Public Satisfaction	0.098	2.033	0.045	Significant
E-Service Quality → Public Trust → Public Satisfaction	0.048	1.927	0.057	Not Significant

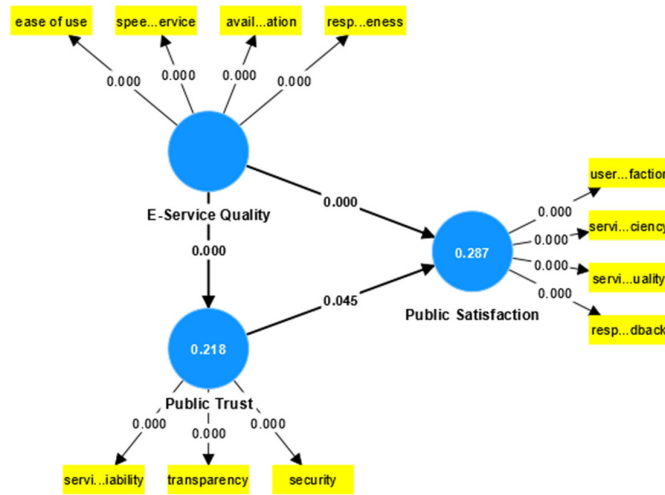


Fig. 3. Hypothesis Results

Table 4 presents the results of the hypothesis testing that examines the influence between variables in this study. In the first hypothesis, the relationship between e-service quality and public trust shows statistically significant results, with a T-statistics value of 6.379 and a very low p-value (0.000). This confirms that e-service quality has a strong influence on the formation of public trust. Furthermore, the influence of e-service quality on public satisfaction is also statistically significant, indicated by a T-statistics value of 5.709 and a p-value of 0.000. This result indicates that high-quality electronic services contribute positively to public satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between public trust and public satisfaction is also considered significant, with a T-statistics value of 2.033 and a p-value of 0.045. This suggests that the level of public trust impacts their satisfaction with public services. However, the relationship involving the variables e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction simultaneously shows statistically insignificant results. This is marked by the T-statistics value of 1.927 and a p-value of 0.057. Therefore, it is not acceptable that public trust mediates the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction in this study. These results provide important insights into the dynamics and influence of these variables on governance and public satisfaction in public services.

5. Discussion

The findings of this research provide valuable insights into the relationship between e-service quality, public trust, and public satisfaction in public services. The analysis results indicate that e-service quality has a significant influence on the formation of public trust. This reinforces the idea that the quality of electronic services plays a crucial role in building public trust in the government. This effect aligns with the paradigm that transparency, speed, and responsiveness in digital public services can enhance the level of public trust. Furthermore, the findings indicate that e-service quality also has a significant impact on public satisfaction, emphasizing that the implementation of information technology and efficient public services can have a positive impact on public satisfaction. The research findings are consistent with Setiawan & Septiani (2018) and Obaid & Ahmadb (2022), stating that e-service quality and trust influence satisfaction. However, interestingly, although public trust has been proven to have a significant influence on public satisfaction, the analysis results do not support the idea that public trust mediates the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction. This indicates that even though public trust directly contributes to public satisfaction with public services, other factors not covered in the measured variables also play a role in shaping public perceptions and satisfaction. Thus, these findings enrich our understanding of the importance of electronic service quality in building trust and satisfaction. The findings also invite reflection on additional aspects that may influence the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction beyond the dimensions measured in this study.

6. Conclusion

The conclusion of this research indicates that e-service quality plays a significant role in shaping public trust and public satisfaction in the context of public services. This finding contributes significantly to our understanding of the importance of implementing information technology and electronic service quality in building public trust and enhancing their satisfaction with public services. Furthermore, public trust has also proven to have a significant influence on public satisfaction, affirming that public trust directly impacts the level of satisfaction with services provided by the government. However, the analysis results not supporting the mediating role of public trust in the relationship between e-service quality and public satisfaction suggest the complexity of the inter-variable relationships in a broader context. These findings invite further research to explore additional factors that may moderate or influence these relationships, providing a more holistic and contextual understanding of electronic governance.

The implications of these findings are that governments and public service providers need to continually improve the quality of their electronic services to build public trust and enhance citizen satisfaction. Stakeholders can also focus on specific aspects that may influence public perceptions of trust and satisfaction when using digital public services. Based on these research results, it is recommended for future studies to delve deeper into additional variables that can affect the relationships between variables, such as contextual factors and individual perceptions of technology. Further research could involve additional surveys or cross-cultural studies to enrich the understanding of these dynamics. Additionally, expanding the geographical scope and exploring relevant additional variables can provide broader and more general insights applicable in various digital public service contexts.

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