

The Influence of Responsiveness, Reliability, and Empathy on Public Service Satisfaction through Perception of Service Quality as an Intervening Variable at Mapilli Community Health Center

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Abstract. *The aim of the current research is to investigate how the responsiveness, reliability, and empathy affect the level of public service satisfaction, in which the perceived service quality is an intermediate variable at the Mapilli Community Health Center. A quantitative style was used and a survey methodology was used to conduct the study by employing the users of community health services. The data were collected through closed-ended questionnaires, non-participatory observation and additional documentation. The methods of analysis included the structure equation modeling that can be varied to evaluate the direct and indirect relationships between the variables. The results showed that responsiveness, reliability, and empathy affected the perceived service quality in a statistically significant positive effect. Responsiveness and empathy also exhibited a statistically significant positive direct impact on the public service satisfaction. Additionally, the perceived service quality showed that it had a strong positive impact on the public service satisfaction. The mediation analysis showed that perceived service quality was a major mediator of the impacts of responsiveness, reliability and empathy on satisfaction with public service. These findings indicate that improving the responsiveness, reliability, and empathy of the health service personnel can strengthen the perceptions of service quality and therefore, improve the satisfaction of the populace. Finally, the paper confirms that perceived service quality is a strategic factor in enhancing the influence of the service quality dimension on the public service satisfaction in the primary health care setting.*

Keywords: Responsiveness, Reliability, Empathy, Perception of Service Quality, Public Service Satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

Public service is an essential aspect of governmental work aimed to meet the primary needs of the population (Perry & Buckwalter, 2010; Nengwekhulu, 2009). The quality of government service is a key parameter in gauging the government administration, particularly in the health sector. Primary healthcare centers, especially in the form of community health centers (Puskesmas) are located in a strategic place as the frontline of health care and directly impact community welfare. In turn, the improvement of the quality of services offered by Puskesmas

becomes an urgent task to achieve a higher level of satisfaction among the users of the services offered.

Community health centers are often faced with a continuum of issues in operational practice, such as delayed response to patient complaints, ambiguity in procedures, service inconsistency, and perceived lack of empathy among the health staff (Hartati & Zaini, 2024; Mishra, 2014; Bee et al., 2015; Fantus et al., 2022). Such shortcomings have a direct impact on citizen attitudes towards the quality of services and, eventually, on the level of public service satisfaction in general. The conceptualisation of public service is to understand that the feeling that individuals acquire with regard to comparing expected service outcomes to actual performance is public service satisfaction (Taylor, 2007; Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2013; Rhee & Rha, 2009; Rowley, 1998). As the provided service fulfills or exceeds the expectations, the population notices a disposition of satisfaction (Rusli et al., 2024); the opposite effect takes place when the expectations and the actual service do not align, which leads to dissatisfaction. To this end, the factors defining the level of satisfaction with public service should be the focus of an extensive, systematic study (Saputri & Muttaqin, 2023).

One of the most common methodological models that have been used to evaluate service quality is the SERVQUAL model, which anticipates the responsiveness, reliability, empathy dimensions (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022; Sangeetha & Mahalingam, 2011; AlOmari, 2021). Responsiveness refers to the willingness and the speed of the staff to provide services and respond to client complaints (Santoso et al., 2023). Reliability is the ability of the provider to provide a correct, consistent, and reliable service in line with the provided promises (Asti et al., 2024). Empathy represents the willingness, care, and awareness that employees exhibit towards personal patient situations and needs (Lajali et al., 2024).

To the context of the Mapilli Community Health Center, the quality of health services is especially important, since the social and economic profile of the served population is heterogeneous (Makaula et al., 2012; Ceccarelli et al., 2023; Panditi et al., 2025; Devika & Varghese, 2011; Vincent & Raj, 2022). There is an increasing demand on the part of the population to timely, precise, and humane services, which is accompanied by the expansion of the information flow in society and a more accurate understanding of the rights of recipients (Lajali et al., 2024). Therefore, an empirical investigation is needed to determine the degree to which responsiveness, reliability, and empathy condition the level of satisfaction with public services, and perceived service quality is included as an intermediate construct.

Rationalisation of Activities and Urgency.

The relevance of the research is based on the need to improve the quality of healthcare services at the primary care level. As primary healthcare institutions, community health centers should provide quality services, which are community-specific in order to promote community satisfaction. Without a comprehensive view of the determinants of satisfaction, efforts to increase the quality of services will be ineffective (Amini et al., 2025). Logically, the research is central to addressing the gap between the policy of the service of the society and its practical application. The study aims to provide a more comprehensive representation of how service quality dimension influences public service satisfaction by examining the mediating power of perceived service quality (Anisa et al., 2025).

Literature Review

Public service satisfaction can be defined as the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction felt by the people after making a comparison of the service performance and its initial expectations (Van, 2017; James, 2009; Akinloye et al., 2012; Lanin, D., & Hermanto, 2019; Zhang et al., 2022; Kampen et al., 2006). The theory of service quality assumes that the perception of the quality of received services mediates satisfaction (Khairani et al., 2025). Responsiveness is an important aspect of service quality that focuses on speed and availability in service delivery. Empirical

studies demonstrate that higher responsiveness is positively related to the view of the quality of the services as perceived by the population (Mellenia et al., 2025). Reliability is concerned with the quality of services and consistency; reliable services leads to trust and enhancement of user satisfaction. The humanistic aspect of service, empathy, is also important in building emotional connections between staff and patients (Yuliani et al., 2022). Perceived service quality serves as a mediating variable that connects dimensions of service quality to satisfaction; the perception is created in the direct experiences patients have when accessing the community health center using the services (Kharisma et al., 2025).

Problem-Solving Plan

The problem-solving approach that was taken by this study involved a quantitative approach which will include a survey methodology (Eyisi, 2016; Tian et al., 2017; Göktepe & Göktepe, 2023; Ploetzner et al., 1999; Kaeedi et al., 2023). Data were gathered through the dissemination of structured questionnaires to Mapilli Community Health Center users. This was followed by subsequent data analysis to outline both direct and indirect impacts between the variables of responsiveness, reliability, empathy, perceived service quality, and public service satisfaction (Putri et al., 2022).

Objectives of the activity

The objectives of this research are: (1) Analyzing the influence of responsiveness on perceptions of service quality in Mapilli Subdistrict; (2) Analyzing the influence of reliability on the perception of service quality in Mapilli Village; (3) Analyzing the influence of empathy on perceptions of service quality in Mapilli Village; (4) Analyzing the influence of perceived service quality on public service satisfaction; (5) Analyzing the influence of responsiveness, reliability, and empathy on public service satisfaction through perceptions of service quality as an intervening variable.

METHODS

Types and Approaches to Research

The current study is based on quantitative approach to explain the cause and effect relationships between the variables: the impact of responsiveness, reliability, and empathy on satisfaction with the public service, mediated by the perceived quality of the service. Data will be obtained through a structured questionnaire that will be given to all the people who have had services in Mapilli Community Health Center over the past three months.

Sampling Technique

Incidental strategy of sampling was used; they recruited all the clients that presented themselves at the Community Health Center and agreed to fill out the questionnaire. Primary data were therefore gathered as a direct result of handing out questionnaires to these clients.

Data Collection Technique

The instruments that were used were: A closed-ended questionnaire with 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Non-observation, which was undertaken to directly evaluate service conditions was complemented by documentary evidence in order to supplement quantitative results.

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis of data was performed with the help of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) version 4.0 which was run in the SmartPLS package. The steps followed included the following:

Validity and Reliability Evaluation

Outer loadings had to be more than 0.70 to meet indicator validity. The Extractions of the AVE were observed to ensure that the value was not below 0.50. Cronbach alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) Index: It was anticipated that the Standards of Cronbach alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) will be higher than 0.70.

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The information on R-square (R²) measured the explanatory strength of independent variables on the dependent variable. Path coefficients were analyzed to show whether relationships between constructs are positive or negative, and also their magnitude. Bootstrap resampling procedures were carried out to examine the statistical significance of both direct and indirect influence paths to make mediation testing easier.

Mediation Analysis

According to the methodology suggested by Dwi Saputro (2024), the Variance Accounted For (VAF) approach was used to measure the level of influence of perceived service quality on the effects of responsiveness, reliability, and empathy on the level of satisfaction with public services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The validity criteria with loading factor values can be seen as follows: (1) If the loading factor value > 0.7, then the questionnaire item is valid; (2) If the loading factor value is < 0.7, then the questionnaire item is invalid. After calculations were carried out using SmartPLS 3.2.7 software, the following results were obtained.

Table 1. Convergent Validity (Loading Factor)

	Responsiveness	Reliability	Empathy	Public Service Satisfaction	Perception of Service Quality
X1.1	0.946				
X1.2	0.932				
X1.3	0.894				
X1.4	0.903				
X2.1		0.925			
X2.2		0.894			
X2.3		0.944			
X2.4		0.724			
X3.1			0.871		
X3.2			0.903		
X3.3			0.895		
X3.4			0.941		
Y1				0.936	
Y2				0.915	
Y3				0.856	
Y4				0.895	
Z1					0.840
Z2					0.910
Z3					0.884
Z4					0.921

From the loading factor results above, it can be seen that all questionnaire items have value more than 0.7 which means all indicators are valid.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Responsiveness	0.939	0.940	0.956	0.845
Reliability	0.897	0.928	0.929	0.768
Empathy	0.924	0.926	0.946	0.815
Public Service Satisfaction	0.922	0.925	0.945	0.811
Perception of Service Quality	0.911	0.912	0.938	0.791

The table above shows that the variance (AVE) for all constructs is >0.50. Therefore, based on the table above, the AVE value can be declared valid.

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha

	Cronbach's Alpha
Responsiveness	0.939
Reliability	0.897
Empathy	0.924
Public Service Satisfaction	0.922
Perception of Service Quality	0.911

A construct can be said to be reliable if the Cronbach alpha value is > 0.70. Thus Based on the table above, the validity value above meets the reliability requirements. Cronbach's alpha

Table 4. Composite Reliability (CR)

	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability
Responsiveness	0.940	0.956
Reliability	0.928	0.929
Empathy	0.926	0.946
Public Service Satisfaction	0.925	0.945
Perception of Service Quality	0.912	0.938

The construct can be declared valid if the composite reliability value is > 0.70, thus. It can be concluded from the table above that all constructs have met the reliability requirements. based on composite reliability.

Table 5. Discriminant validity Cross Loading

	Responsiveness	Reliability	Empathy	Public Service Satisfaction	Perception of Service Quality
X1.1	0.946	0.945	0.889	0.848	0.863
X1.2	0.932	0.835	0.880	0.767	0.801
X1.3	0.894	0.779	0.867	0.843	0.840
X1.4	0.903	0.756	0.798	0.810	0.745
X2.1	0.793	0.925	0.862	0.873	0.910
X2.2	0.889	0.894	0.931	0.914	0.912
X2.3	0.819	0.944	0.898	0.840	0.919
X2.4	0.649	0.724	0.579	0.599	0.556

X3.1	0.835	0.793	0.871	0.930	0.863
X3.2	0.827	0.870	0.903	0.788	0.885
X3.3	0.794	0.828	0.895	0.804	0.864
X3.4	0.914	0.935	0.941	0.933	0.936
Y1	0.899	0.921	0.917	0.936	0.928
Y2	0.796	0.780	0.839	0.915	0.839
Y3	0.802	0.935	0.884	0.856	0.910
Y4	0.693	0.706	0.808	0.895	0.828
Z1	0.823	0.782	0.873	0.887	0.840
Z2	0.793	0.925	0.862	0.873	0.910
Z3	0.722	0.774	0.887	0.849	0.884
Z4	0.811	0.935	0.876	0.862	0.921

The cross-loading results in Table 5 above show that the correlation coefficient between a construct and its indicators is greater than the correlation coefficient between the construct and other constructs. Thus, all constructs or latent variables have high discriminant validity, as evidenced by the superiority of the construct's indicator block over the other indicator blocks.

Table 6. R-square

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Public Service Satisfaction	0.960	0.958
Perception of Service Quality	0.987	0.986

Based on the table, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.960. This finding implies that the regression model that uses X1, X2 and Y as the explanatory variables explains 90.1% of the variance in the Perception of Service Quality but the remaining percentage of variance attributed to other external factors. As indicated in the table the influence model coefficient of determination (R^2) of X1 and X 2 on the dependent variable Y is the value of 0.987. This implies that the regression equation where X1 and X2 are the independent variables accounts 98.7 per cent of the variance in the perception of the service quality and the rest of the variance is credited to other factors that are not within the research scope.

Table 7. Patch Mean Coefficients, T Values and P Values

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 -> Y	0.280	0.274	0.078	3,596	0,000
X1 -> Z	0.311	-0.305	0.041	7,556	0,000
X2 -> Z	0.325	0.307	0.093	3,491	0,001
X3 -> Y	0.545	-0.508	0.183	2,982	0,003
X3 -> Z	0.966	0.979	0.081	11,917	0,000
Z -> Y	1,264	1,233	0.137	9,236	0,000

The summary of the results in the table above shows that the responsiveness and public service satisfaction variables have a T-statistic of 3.596, which is greater than the threshold of 0.2027. The initial sample value is positive: it is 0.280, and the p-value is 0.000 that is less than 0.05. As a result, the variable of responsiveness and repayment of the public service shows that it has a positive and statistically significant impact. The findings that are summed up in the table above show that the responsiveness and perception of service quality variables have T-statistic of 7.556 that surpasses the threshold of 0.2027. The initial sample value is positive and it is 0.311 and the corresponding p-value is 0.000, which does not exceed 0.05. As a result, the

responsiveness and the perception of service quality variables show a positive and significant impact.

The findings as summarized in the table above show that the reliability and perception of service quality variables have T-statistic of 3.491, which is above the threshold of 0.2027. The original value in the sample is positive, and is 0.325 with a p-value of 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05. As a result, there is a positive and significant impact on the reliability and perception of variables of service quality. The conclusions of the above table reveal that the empathy and public service satisfaction variables have a T-statistic of 2.982, which is more than the significance of 0.2027. The initial sample value is positive, with the value of 0.545, and the p-value is 0.003, which is below 0.05. Therefore, empathy and the satisfaction of public service variables have a positive and significant effect.

According to the results that were summarized in the table above, one may state that the empathy and perception of service quality variables have a T-statistic of 11.917, which is higher than the threshold of 0.2027. The original sample is also positive and its value is 0.966 and its p-value is 0.000, which is not greater than 0.05. As a result, there is a positive and significant effect on empathy and perception of variables of quality of the public service. The findings summarized in the table above show that the service quality and variables of public service satisfaction have a T-statistic of 9.236, which is above the critical of 0.2027. The initial sample value is found to be positive (1.264) and the p-value is 0.000, which is below the value of 0.05. As a result, service quality, and variables of public service satisfaction determine a positive and statistically significant effect.

Table 8. Specific Indirect Impact (Indirectly).

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 -> Z -> Y	0.393	0.377	0.069	5,695	0,000
X2 -> Z -> Y	0.411	0.380	0.121	3,393	0.001
X3 -> Z -> Y	1,221	1,206	0.168	7,260	0,000

The findings shown in the table above show that the variable Responsiveness has a statistically significant positive correlation with Public Service Satisfaction measured by Perception of Service Quality construct. In particular, the t-statistic is 5.695 and is more than the critical value of 0.2027. The approximate coefficient of the original sample is 0.393 whereas the corresponding p-value is 0.000 which is much less than the traditional level of significance 0.05. Responsiveness therefore has positive and statistically significant impact on Public Service Satisfaction through Perception of Service Quality. The findings included in the table above also indicate that the variable Reliability in this case reflects statistically significant positive relationship with Public Service Satisfaction measured under the Perception of Service Quality framework (Bigne et al., 2003; Eboli & Mazzulla, 2015; Kant & Jaiswal, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2014). The t-test value is 3.393, which is higher than the critical value of 0.2027.

The original sample estimate of the coefficient is 0.411, and the p-value is equal to 0.001, which is less than the accepted level of significance. Reliability, therefore, affects Public Service Satisfaction positively and significantly by way of Perception of Service Quality. Lastly, the findings in the above table demonstrate that the variable Empathy continues to have a statistically significant, positive impact on Public Service Satisfaction, which was analyzed through Perception of Service Quality. T statistic is 7.260 which is much more than 0.2027, and the coefficient estimate in the original sample is 1.221. This is accompanied by the corresponding p-value of 0.000 which shows that it is statistically significant. Thus, Empathy has a positive and significant influence on Public Service Satisfaction via Perception of Service Quality.

CONCLUSION

The responsiveness is significantly and positively related to the Public Service Satisfaction with the T-statistic of 3.596 and P-value of 0.000. This implies that, the more the responsiveness, the more the satisfaction of the people with the public services. Responsiveness has a positive and statistically significant effect on the Perceived Service Quality with a T-statistic of 7.556 and P-value of 0.000. As a result, the responsiveness of services leads to improvement in the perceptions of people about the quality of the services. The effect of reliability is positive and statistically significant on the Perceived Service Quality with a T-statistic of 3.491 and P-value of 0.000 meaning that the more reliable and consistent the service delivery, the higher the perception of quality among people. Empathy has a positive and statistically significant effect on Public Service Satisfaction with T-statistic of 2.982 and P-value of 0.003. A sympathetic attitude towards the public service providers will therefore boost the satisfaction of the people. Empathy provides a positive and statistically significant effect on Perceived Service Quality, and T-statistic is 11.917 and P-value is 0.000, which means that the individual ability of service officers to understand and act on the needs of the community enhances the perceptions of service quality. Service Quality Perception has a positive and significant impact on Public Service Satisfaction, its T-statistic is 9.236, and a P-value is 0.000. Thus, positive social images of the quality of services have a direct positive impact on the level of satisfaction with the services of the authorities. The impact of responsiveness is indirect on Public Service Satisfaction through Perceived Service Quality as the T-statistic of 5.695 and P-value of 0.000 indicates that perceived service quality plays a substantive role as an intermediate. Reliability has an indirect impact on Public Service Satisfaction through Perception of Service Quality with T-statistic of 3.393 and P-value of 0.001 stating that reliability is a factor that helps bring about the satisfaction through quality perceptions. Empathy exhibits an indirect impact on Public Service Satisfaction with Perceived Service Quality as shown by the T-statistic value of 7.260 and P-value of 0.000 which show strong mediating power in improving satisfaction among the people.

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