

Original article

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EXPLORING STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION AS A MEDIATING FACTOR IN EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ELECTRONIC SERVICES FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PROVISION

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Abstract. This study reveals stakeholders' perceptions regarding electronic services in two local government cities, evaluates their impacts, and identifies existing opportunities and challenges. As a result, respondents indicated they are satisfied with the quality, responsiveness, accessibility, information disclosure, stakeholder perceptions, and effectiveness of electronic services. However, when the perception as an intermediary is considered, this factor gives meaning to the effectiveness of e-services. These findings provide valuable insights by offering an in-depth understanding of the factors influencing decision-making processes, social interactions, and the dynamics underlying the relationships between various stakeholders in the context studied. Local governments as providers of public services cannot be satisfied with just evaluating from one internal perspective; the perceptions of external stakeholders, including citizens, business actors, and community organizations, must be a key element in measuring the success and effectiveness of the services provided. In countries where local cultural attitudes are still very strong, the community's cultural values play a significant role in shaping the interactions and relationships between citizens and the local government. These values influence people's perceptions of government policies and services and determine their trust, participation, and support for government initiatives and programs launched.

Keywords: electronic services, stakeholder perceptions, service effectiveness.

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Introduction

Demands for public services characterized as transparent, accountable, innovative, participatory, integrated, efficient, and effective are of value for meeting community needs and satisfaction (Hartwig and Billert, 2018; Liang et al., 2018). This value orientation means that the needs and interests of the community are the main focus of public service. Awareness of community rights, obligations, and choices in public services for the public sector will strengthen government accountability (Shah, 2005). Therefore, modern public services aim to deliver information and provide solutions to community problems quickly, easily, and accurately.

In this context, several innovations in the public sector involve using information and communications technology or implementing new methods for delivering public services. Several developments have also been made in the public sphere that facilitate using digital platforms to access public services. In their study, Yunaningsih et al. (2021) revealed that digital public services are one solution to address these challenges.

Likewise, the results of research conducted by Samaan (2014) revealed that customer expectations and perceived service quality positively influence customer satisfaction. This is not much different from the studies of Rita, Oliveira, and Farisa (2019), and Pradnyadewi and Giantari (2022), which reveals a positive relationship between digital services and customer satisfaction.

There is a large volume of published studies describing the role of electronic media in government. Numerous existing research efforts emphasize the subject, exploring different aspects of electronic services and e-service delivery.

However, it is important to note that despite electronic services' importance and effectiveness, there are still some obstacles to overcome. This is particularly true when the review is conducted in the public sector. Aritonang's study (2017) revealed a misleading perception that an e-government system is the only key to achieving better public services. Arief et al. (2021) identified 34 main obstacles and challenges for e-government services in theory and implementation to develop the right strategies and recommendations to improve public services.

These obstacles are compounded by the low level of public participation in using electronic services and the lack of skills of government officials. Information security issues also affect the development of electronic services. Several factors related to the effectiveness of electronic services have been studied. The study by Wani and Mushtaq (2019) found that brand image, trust and security, and value proposition significantly influence electronic services satisfaction and loyalty.

Meanwhile, Sitorus and Yustisia (2018) revealed that service quality and trust factors contribute to customer satisfaction and mediate the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. Jing and Yoo (2013) showed that system and service quality significantly affected customer satisfaction, while information quality had no significant effect. In addition, customer satisfaction also significantly affected customer loyalty when using electronic banking services in China. The study by Yen and Lu (2008) showed that the dimensions of electronic service quality significantly impact buyer disconfirmation. In addition, buyer disconfirmation is positively related to satisfaction, and satisfaction is positively related to loyalty intention. In contrast to the studies of Utomo et al. (2023), who identified efficiency, privacy, and customer service, the results show that satisfaction mediates the relationship between electronic service quality and behavioral and attitudinal intentions of loyalty.

Nevertheless, several previous studies have not considered and integrated factors such as quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and disclosure of information in influencing the effectiveness of electronic services with perceptions. Based on these assumptions, the research questions are posed: Does stakeholder perception as an intervening variable mediate the relationship between quality, responsiveness, accessibility, information disclosure, and effectiveness of electronic services? The results will contribute to a better understanding of how stakeholder perceptions mediate the relationship between these factors and the effectiveness of electronic services in local government.

Theoretical framework and hypothesis development

In order to understand how stakeholders' perceptions of electronic services influence the effectiveness of services, this research uses Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984). This theory assumes that organizations (local governments) must consider the interests of all stakeholders when making decisions and taking action (Donaldson and Preston, 1995). In the context of this research, stakeholder perceptions of the quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and openness of information in electronic services will influence the effectiveness of these services, so understanding stakeholder perceptions can help local governments make more appropriate decisions when developing electronic services (Grunig, 1992).

Stakeholder theory

In 1984, R. Edward Freeman proposed the idea of Stakeholder Theory in his book "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach." Generally, this theory was developed in the business sector. However, as development progresses, the use of this theory becomes more widespread, as shown by the study by Bryson et al. (2014); and Tejedo-Romero et al. (2022) use this theory in their review of studies on electronic services in local government, which is not very different from the study by Rose et al. (2018). Boon et al. (2020) discuss the challenges of local authorities in managing public engagement in their study. Lindgren et al. (2021) discuss stakeholder theory in the context of electronic services in local government.

The relationship between quality, responsiveness, accessibility, information openness, and the effectiveness of electronic services with stakeholder perceptions as intervening variables

According to stakeholder theory, stakeholder perceptions of quality influence the effectiveness of the service. A study by Liao et al. (2009) has shown how important it is for companies to pay attention to customer perceptions. This does not differ significantly from the study by Grönroos (2006), which revealed that stakeholder perceptions significantly affect customer satisfaction. Berman et al. (1999) stated that stakeholder perception is an aspect of service quality.

According to Zeithaml et al. (1996) a critical aspect of this theory is the stakeholders' perceptions of the quality of service offered by the organization. Customer perceptions of service quality are essential to determining organizational success.

Fan et al. (2022) study shows that service quality positively influences customer engagement behavior. This is not much different from the studies conducted by Arilaha et al. (2021). Therefore, governments must pay attention to the quality of their electronic services and ensure that they provide good perceived value to users, which will increase their intention to continue using them. The study by Pham et al. (2023) shows a positive and strong relationship between the quality of electronic services and users' perceived value. The research findings of Kandie (2018) show that reliability, guarantee, physical adequacy, and responsiveness of services significantly influence students' satisfaction with library services.

Hypothesis 1: Service quality influences the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions.

Hypothesis 2: Service responsiveness influences the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions.

The writings of Silitonga et al. (2021) and Allard et al. (2003) show that service accessibility, satisfaction, and efficiency influence the quality of public services. They also show the influence of service accessibility on the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions.

Hypothesis 3: Service accessibility influences the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions.

Wulansari et al. (2017) discuss research results regarding the relationship between corporate disclosure of environmental information, stakeholder expectations, and environmental performance. This is not significantly different from the study by Wakefield (2013). Although the topic is related to privacy and user trust, this paper does not directly discuss the influence of information disclosure on the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions. Wang et al. (2019) discussed the influence of information openness on the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions. Research by Zhou et al. (2018) shows that providing accurate information about the environmental costs and benefits of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) compared to thermal power plants will reduce residents' Willingness To Pay (WTP) for RES. According to research by Liang and Turban (2011), information openness positively influences customer trust and intention to reuse electronic services.

Hypothesis 4: The openness of information influences the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions.

The above statement can be formulated as a major hypothesis: There is an influence of service quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and information disclosure on the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholder perceptions. We propose the structural model shown in Figure 1:

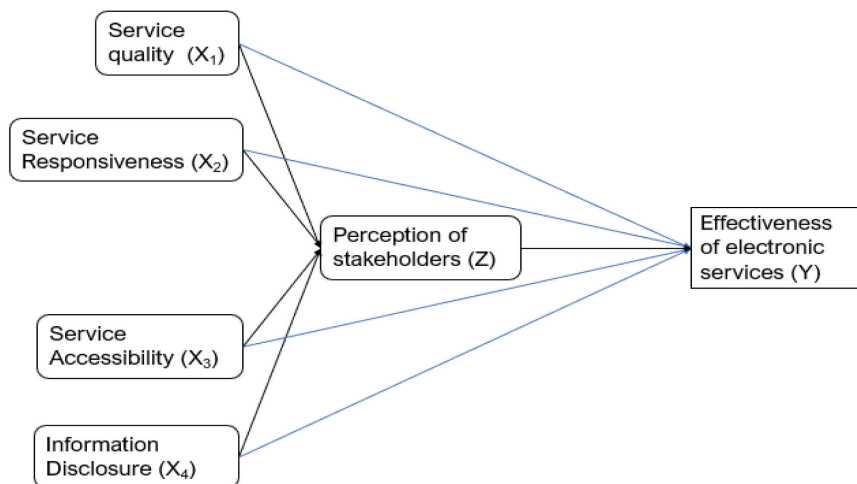


Figure 1: **Structural model.**

Materials and methods

Description of the respondents

To meet the requirements of the regression test using the SPSS program, data from a closed questionnaire with a Likert scale (ordinal) are first transformed into an interval scale using the method of Successive Interval transformation. Ordinal data are transformed into intervals by changing the cumulative proportion of each variable category to a normal curve value.

A study in which 96 respondents took part produced several findings. First, in terms of gender, 61.5 percent, or about 59 people, were men, while 38.5 percent, or about 37 people, were women. Considering the age group, it can be seen that the largest age group is 35 percent or 34 people aged between 23 and 27. In the 28 to 32 age group, it was 20 percent or 19 people—aged between 28–32. Then about 17 percent, or 16 people, were in the 33–37 age group, and about 11 percent, or 11 people, were in the 18–22 age group. There is 17.5 percent in the 38–62 age group. Regarding education, they generally have a bachelor's degree, 40.6 percent of the total sample studied. A further 37.5 percent have a secondary school leaving certificate (SLTA), and 21.9 percent have a secondary school diploma (SMP).

The above distribution of the respondents can help us understand their characteristics. It can also be used to analyze and interpret the results of the study.

Data analysis

In this study, four main factors are used as a reference for the analysis: (1) Service Quality, (2) Service Responsiveness, (3) Service Accessibility, and (4) Information Disclosure. The other two factors, User Perception and Effec-

tiveness of Electronic Services, are intermediate variables. The analysis of each of these factors is explained below:

1. **Service quality.** Three factors are the focus of the study, namely: (a) service provider capability, (b) reliability, and (c) ease of use of the service. The ability to meet the needs and demands of service users, which is included in point (a), shows that 41.7 percent of respondents stated that there was a very fast response in providing services. The high ability indicates that the service provider's level of responsiveness is very responsive in meeting service user needs. Point (b) refers to the level of consistency and dependability of the services provided. Generally, 35.4 percent of respondents indicated they are reliable in providing services. This condition points to the commitment of service providers to be consistently oriented toward the needs of service users. This consistency then manifests itself in a high-reliability value. As the third point (c), the ease factor also has a relatively high percentage. 46.9 percent of respondents in the study stated that the service was easy to use. Significant efforts by service providers (local governments) in designing and providing user-friendly interface services offer added value for service users.
2. **Service responsiveness:** This review identifies service providers' responsiveness and communication quality. As for timeliness, 37.56 percent of respondents expressed high satisfaction with the efficiency with which the service providers addressed their needs, and 41.77 percent expressed general satisfaction with the service. However, only 20.74% of respondents perceived the response as adequate, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction. Most respondents (33.3 percent) stated that they found the communication provided by the service providers elementary. However, 1 percent stated that the response given by the service providers was very inadequate. The above conditions refer to the ability of the local government to provide public services. Suitability for citizens' needs, immediate responses to any input or complaint, and adaptation to changing situations and community needs are the key elements of local government responsiveness. Based on the above statement, the responsiveness of the services factor is rated highly. This value can indicate that service providers (local governments) listen and strive to meet the expectations of their citizens in an efficient and timely manner.
3. **Information disclosure.** The availability of comprehensive information, the transparency of the service process, and the accessibility of user support are key elements of information disclosure. Based on the study's findings, respondents (32.3%) stated that comprehensive service information is easily accessible. In their separate assessment, respondents expressed their satisfaction with the ease and accessibility of the available access channels. Approximately 39.6% of respondents reported that this disclosure was satisfactory to them. According to respondents, user support was generally considered accessible by 34.4% of respondents. Thus, this study reveals that service providers have made efforts to offer easily accessible information. In addition, it points to a transparent service process.
4. **Stakeholder perception.** This indicator shows how stakeholders view the services provided. It includes their level of satisfaction, participation, and access

to public information. The study showed that the majority of the respondents, 41.7 percent, expressed satisfaction with the services provided. 46.9 percent of respondents stated that they actively used the service. Although 50 percent of respondents indicated that they experienced difficulties in using the service, they also stated that the completeness of the information provided was generally very good. Based on the analysis of the responses, it can be stated that stakeholders generally have a positive perception of the services offered and feel actively involved in the process.

5. **Effectiveness of e-services.** This factor includes user satisfaction, response time, and service completion rate. The findings show that most respondents (47.9%) are with the electronic services provided.

Most respondents (45.8%) were also satisfied with the response time of the electronic services. Additionally, most respondents (42.7%) were satisfied with the completion rate of the services. This indicates that the electronic services provided effectively meet users' needs and contribute to their satisfaction.

The above data is presented in Table 1:

Table 1

The results of the research data analysis

Variable	Indicators	Percentage
Service Quality	Responsiveness	Very prompt (41.7%)
	Reliability	Consistently reliable (35.4%)
	Ease of use	Very easy (46.9%)
Service Responsiveness	Speed of response	Satisfied (36.56%)
	Ease of communication	Extremely convenient (33.3%)
	Quality of responses	Quite satisfied (41.7%)
Service Accessibility	Location	Very easy to reach (53.1%)
	Information availability	Very easy to access information (53.1%)
	Availability of online services	Satisfied (60.4%)
Information Disclosure	Availability of comprehensive service information	Easy to access (32.3%)
	Transparency of service processes	Highly accessible (39.6%)
	Accessibility of user support	Accessible (34.4%)
Perception of stakeholders	Stakeholder satisfaction	Satisfied (41.7%)
	Level of participation	Active (46.9%)
	Level of public information disclosure	Excellent (50%)
Effectiveness of electronic services	Level of user satisfaction	Very satisfied (47.9%)
	Response time	Satisfied (45.8%)
	Service completion level	Very satisfied (42.7%)

Source: Research documents derived from processed research data.

Discussion

Based on the analysis results above, it can be stated that the variables studied in this research exhibit positive values. Factors associated with the effectiveness of electronic services demonstrate high values and stakeholder satisfaction. This includes responsiveness, reliability, ease of use, accessibility, information disclosure, stakeholder perception, and the overall effectiveness of electronic services. These findings indicate that the service provider has succeeded in delivering a positive user experience and meeting the expectations associated with the various elements of the services provided.

The contributions of Service Quality, Responsiveness, Accessibility, and Information Disclosure to the Effectiveness of Electronic Services also demonstrate a significant support value of 0.724 (adjusted R Square, chosen due to the number of variables greater than 2). This means that these factors contribute 72.4 percent to the effectiveness of electronic services, while only 27.6 percent is influenced by other unidentified factors in this study.

However, after further research, especially by examining the correlation test between these factors and the effectiveness of electronic services, it was found that of the factors studied, only Responsiveness, Information Disclosure, and Stakeholder Perception had a significant direct relationship with Electronic Effectiveness. Both have values smaller than the established alpha ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), equal to 0.00. On the other hand, the other two factors, namely Service Quality and Accessibility, do not have a significant relationship because their significance values are greater than the alpha value. The finding of the significance of Responsiveness, Information Disclosure, and Stakeholder Perception factors strengthens the findings of previous research that stated the existence of a relationship between these factors (Kandie, 2018; Li, 2020). However, there is a difference compared to previous research that indicated a relationship between Service Quality, Accessibility, and the Effectiveness of Electronic Services. The conducted research shows non-significant values. This means that the research conducted rejects some findings (Rahahleh et al., 2020; Sabani, 2020) and the hypotheses I have previously made.

On further examination, specifically when analyzing the role of Stakeholder Perception as a mediator, a quite surprising change occurred. Stakeholder perception is used to frame the effectiveness of electronic services. The value of Responsiveness changes to non-significant when Stakeholder Perception as a mediator is introduced in its relationship to enhancing the effectiveness of electronic services. The alpha value is more significant than 0.05, specifically 0.145. On the other hand, Information Disclosure changes to negative (-0.265), although it is still significant.

Changes also occur in service quality and accessibility, which are measures of location convenience, including ease of time, cost, and effort in obtaining services. When stakeholders' perceptions are used as mediating factors, these initially insignificant factors become significant. This means that service quality and accessibility have a significant and positive relationship through stakeholders' perceptions.

Both conditions align with Freeman et al.'s (1984) perspective in the study of stakeholder theory. The essence of this theory reveals that in managing its operational activities, an organization needs to consider the interests of all stakeholders.

Based on this theoretical perspective, the two conditions found in the study can be expressed as follows: Understanding stakeholders' perceptions enables local governments to meet their needs and expectations more effectively. This condition will enhance stakeholders' trust, satisfaction, and loyalty towards the local government.

In this context, the degree of participation and openness of public information can influence the effectiveness of electronic services. One thing to note is that not all communities accept change easily. Although the local government considers public perceptions, resistance to change or implementing new policies is still possible.

This can slow down or hinder progress and innovation in the delivery of public services. Furthermore, the research strengthens the hypothesis that service quality, responsiveness, ease of obtaining services, and information transparency influence the effectiveness of electronic services based on stakeholders' perceptions.

Conclusions

At the local government level in Indonesia, digitization of government refers to the use of information and communication technology to improve the functioning of government, including the provision of public services. This technology allows governments to provide services more efficiently and effectively, increasing transparency and accountability in decision-making processes.

Meanwhile, quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and information disclosure in electronic services influence the effectiveness of services. The quality of electronic services, such as reliability, speed, and convenience, can influence stakeholder perceptions of service effectiveness. Service responsiveness, that is, the ability to respond quickly and effectively to the needs and problems of stakeholders, can also influence their perceptions of the effectiveness of the service. The accessibility of the service and the disclosure of information facilitates access and transparency for stakeholders.

The digitization of government can therefore help to improve the quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and disclosure of information in e-government services and increase the effectiveness of services. Stakeholder perceptions of quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and information disclosure can act as intervening variables, as they can influence the relationship between the digitization of government and the effectiveness of e-services.

If stakeholders feel that the service does not meet the expected standards, they may perceive it as ineffective despite efforts to digitize governance. Therefore, in developing electronic services, local governments also need to pay attention to the perceptions of the stakeholders (community) when providing their services.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on these conclusions, here are some suggestions:

1. Local governments should conduct regular tests and checks to ensure good service quality.
2. To ensure service accessibility, a responsive design is necessary so everyone can use the service without obstacles.
3. Increase information transparency to promote stakeholders' trust and community participation.
4. They must continue to develop their e-services by following the latest technological developments and trends.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The research results may only be generalized to a limited extent. This is due to the variability and preferences of stakeholders in different regions.
2. The sample size needs to be increased to reduce errors in the statistical analysis.

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