

Individual Characteristics and Job Characteristics: Their Implications for the Quality of Public Services through Motivation and Work Experience Variables (Study on Samarinda City Public Service Mall)

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the relationship between individual characteristics, job characteristics, motivation, and work experience on the quality of public services implemented at the Samarinda City Public Service Mall. With a quantitative approach and SEM-PLS analysis, this study found that individual characteristics such as age, education level, and work experience play an important role as a foundation in determining the quality of public services, while job characteristics, such as autonomy, skill variety, and feedback, have a significant influence on motivation and service quality. Meanwhile, work motivation plays a key role in linking individual and job characteristics with the quality of public services and work experience also plays a key role in linking individual and job characteristics with the quality of public services. Motivation and work experience act as partial mediators that strengthen the relationship between these variables. The results show the importance of good job design and human resource development to improve the quality of public services.

KEYWORDS: Individual Characteristics, Work, Motivation, Experience and Quality of Service

INTRODUCTION

Public services are the essence of the government's social contract, wherein the government has a duty to make sure that a host of basic, essential, life-sustaining services are being provided to the community at large. Only by having public services that people can routinely count on, can the public be happy, and trust their government, and in turn help develop national greatness. The reality is that delivery of public services in many countries, and particularly Indonesia, are still plagued with problems.

The quality and availability of public services is often the most visible and straightforward measure of a government's success. This is a big ask, but public expectations of public services have never been higher. These expectations are rising with the rapid development of technology and the ever-increasing desire for transparency and accountability from our government. In other words, as the private sector becomes more aware, so must the government move forward in delivering better and more efficient public services through more competitive strategies and superior innovation processes.

The quality of public service can be influenced by a host of bigger causes from internal overall organizational structural challenges to external, outside in factors that start with the societal climate and the political climate. One important internal factor is the quality of quality HR that takes care of public service. Quality of the HR is directly affected by number of factors including the number that is arguably the most important factor—the knowledge/professionalism of civil servants—which is closely intertwined with the culture of government employees. Highly trained and highly skilled employees are the vital link that allows agencies to deliver safe, high quality, timely service to citizens. Employees either demoralized and too devolved to care or inspired enough to assist in meeting increased public demands contribute not just a worse standard of service, but a further alienation of the public from their government. If governments are serious about their public sector innovation making a difference on the frontlines, governments need to invest in training and professional development programs that give employees the skills and knowledge they need to deliver high-quality services.

It's the quality of that public service delivered that's the only real measure of success—not of just those in the public sector, but of all those in the race and who can best effectively meet the needs of the community. In this fecund milieu, we discover that the best public service is shaped by a swamp of determinants—human characteristics, the nature of work, motivational factors, the workplace context. In previous research we have documented how these factors snowball with one another in impacting the quality and productivity of the service that they provide. Deeper understanding of the antagonistic dynamics driving the character of this relationship is still needed to pinpoint antidotes in the struggle to save the public good.

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Person-specific attributes such as age, education, work history, and experience impact employees' ability and willingness to perform service behaviors. Other factors such as skill variety, autonomy and feedback can develop a sense of intrinsic motivation in employees, which drastically improves their performance. The more years of work experience individuals earn, the more they learn how to build better, deeper skills and knowledge and, in so doing, grow their capacity to help build their organizations' responsiveness and effectiveness at producing high-quality services. So, by looking at a different dimension of public services and drawing on a rich literature suggesting a much more complicated relationship between these variables, this research seeks to look beyond the shorthand narrative that a developed counterintuitive wisdom often likes to present.

Motivation and work experience play a big role in how individual traits and job characteristics influence the quality of public services. When people are motivated—whether it's from within or from external rewards—they're more likely to perform better at their jobs. Plus, having solid work experience helps build both skills and confidence. This study takes a closer look at these connections using a quantitative approach and detailed statistical analysis. The goal is to really dig into how these factors work together and impact the quality of services we provide to the public. We're also hoping to come up with some useful recommendations for managing human resources in the public sector.

The Samarinda City Public Service Mall as one of the facilities provided by the Samarinda City Government to provide services for various kinds of affairs holds a strategic role in creating quality services for the people of Samarinda City. Currently, there are 3 types of services provided at the Samarinda City Public Service Mall, namely services from the Samarinda City Regional Revenue Agency, the Investment Office and One-Stop Integrated Services, the Population and Civil Registration Office, the Public Works, Spatial and Land Planning, the Health Office, the Transportation Office, the Manpower Office, the Youth, Sports and Tourism Office, Social Service, Education Office, Housing and Settlement Service, Fire Service, Environment Service, Trade Service, Industry Service, Communication and Information Service, Inspectorate, Ministry of Religious Affairs Office, District Attorney's Office, Resort Police, Immigration Office, Primary Tax Office, PT. Taspen, PT. Telkom, BPJS Kesehatan, BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, PT. Pegadaian, Samsat, Bankaltimtara, Perum DAM, BAZNAS, District Court, and BNN Samarinda City. Therefore, in order for all services provided to be carried out optimally and with quality, it is necessary to have Human Resources who are able to carry out these service activities properly.

This study will seek to explore the extent of the quality of public services provided by service officers in Public Service Malls through the measurement of individual characteristics, work characteristics, motivation and work experience.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the Job Characteristics Theory created by Hackman and Oldham, and later referenced by Baris Kiyak and Naci Karkin (2023). This theory shows that certain job factors, like the mix of skills used, the sense of ownership over tasks, their importance, how much freedom someone has, and the feedback they get, can really impact how motivated a person feels at work. This idea is especially relevant in public service because the quality of the services provided depends a lot on how well jobs are designed to keep employees motivated, which in turn improves their performance.

Hackman and Oldham (1976) identified five main characteristics of work that can affect motivation and job satisfaction, namely:

- a. Skill level, the level at which the job requires a wide range of skills and abilities;
- b. Job Identity, the degree to which a worker can see the end result of their work;
- c. Signification of Tugas, the effect of work on the life or work of others;
- d. The autonomy, degree of freedom and control that workers have in doing their jobs;
- e. Feedback, information received by workers about their performance.

Hackman and Oldham argue that the higher these characteristics, the higher the motivation and job satisfaction of employees.

Meanwhile, the conception of individual characteristics in this study refers to the theory developed by Robert R. McCrae and Paul T. Costa (2008), namely the Big Five Personality Traits Theory. This theory states that personality can be measured through five main dimensions, namely: openness, awareness, extroversion, agreement and neuroticism. These dimensions can affect the way individuals behave in the workplace. They argue that these characteristics can predict various aspects of individual behavior, including job performance, job satisfaction, and social interaction. This model is widely used in psychology and management research to understand how individual characteristics affect performance in the workplace.

Individual characteristics include a variety of factors, namely:

- a. Personality traits, e.g. open, extroverted or neurotic personalities can affect the way a person interacts with others and completes tasks;
- b. Abilities and Skills, technical and non-technical skills that individuals possess can affect their performance;
- c. Experience, previous work experience can shape the way individuals face challenges and adapt to the work environment;
- d. Motivations, internal and external drives that affect an individual's level of involvement and commitment to their work.

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Getting to know individual traits is important for improving public services. When organizations acknowledge and support positive qualities in their employees, it creates a better work atmosphere. This can lift morale and make the overall job experience more enjoyable, resulting in better service for everyone.

This study relates to Herzberg's motivation theory (Alrawahi, et.al.2020), which sorts factors into those that inspire people and those that just keep them working. Motivating factors, like achievement, recognition, and responsibility, come from well-designed jobs. In this study, we apply this theory to show how good job traits can boost employee motivation, benefiting the quality of public services for the community.

Meanwhile, Work Experience Theory as quoted by Teame, et.al (2022) is also an important theoretical framework in this study. This theory states that an individual's work experience can influence the way they understand and carry out their job duties. More work experience allows individuals to develop better skills, knowledge, and confidence in carrying out their duties. In the context of public service, rich work experience can be a key factor in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of services.

The Motivation and Performance Theory developed by Miao, et.al (2018) is also used to explain the relationship between work motivation and performance outcomes. This theory emphasizes that high work motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, can encourage individuals to achieve better work outcomes. In this study, this theory is relevant to understand how work motivation, which is influenced by individual and occupational characteristics, can mediate the relationship between these variables and the quality of public services.

This research also uses the Open Systems Theory approach from Ntando and Mofolo (2024), which looks at organizations as parts of a bigger system connected to their surroundings. In public service, this theory shows how outside factors, like government rules and what society expects, can impact jobs and people working in those roles. By combining these ideas, this study hopes to show a clearer picture of what influences the quality of public services.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory study design to test the relationship between individual characteristics, job characteristics, motivation, work experience, and quality of public services. This approach was chosen because it allows for systematic testing of hypotheses through the collection of numerical data analyzed using statistical methods. Explanatory design is used to understand the extent to which independent variables, such as individual and occupational characteristics, affect dependent variables, i.e. the quality of public services, taking into account the mediating role of motivation and work experience. This research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the mechanism of intervariable relationships in the context of public services.

This study uses a cross-sectional method, meaning data is collected at one point in time. This method helps spot connections between different factors without needing to track them over a long period. It lets researchers look at how personal and job-related traits impact motivation, work experience, and the quality of public service all at once. So, this approach gives a clear picture of what influences public service quality in different organizations.

In this study, we used a quantitative approach to analyze the data we collected from questionnaires, relying on statistical software to help us out. First, we checked if all the data was complete and valid, looking for any missing info or unusual values. If anything didn't meet the standards, we left it out of the analysis. After that, we made sure the data fit some basic statistical rules like normality and linearity. This step is important because it helps make sure our research results are accurate and trustworthy.

After the data is declared to meet statistical assumptions, a descriptive analysis was carried out to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the research variables. This analysis includes the calculation of the frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation for each variable.

The next step is inferential analysis using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique. SEM was chosen for its ability to test causal relationships between latent variables, such as individual characteristics, job characteristics, motivation, work experience, and quality of public services, simultaneously. This analysis was performed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach to accommodate complex models and data that are not completely normal.

The SEM-PLS analysis process involves two main stages, namely measurement model testing and structural model testing. In the first stage, the validity of the construct was tested through convergent and discriminant validity analysis, while the reliability was tested using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The second stage involves testing the causal relationship between variables by estimating path coefficients and their significance. The mediation test was conducted to evaluate the role of motivation and work experience in the relationship between individual and occupational characteristics and the quality of public services. The results of this analysis are used to answer the research hypothesis and provide data-based conclusions.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Characteristics and Research Variables

The look into had 150 folks who work in the free jobs. It had people from many ages, both men and women, all sorts of school learning, and work past. Most folks asked were 30 to 40 years old (45%), with near the same number of men (52%) and women

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(48%). Most had a school degree (65%), then some had two-year degrees (20%), and fewer had gone on past that (15%). They had worked for about 8.5 years on average, so most knew well what their jobs asked of them.

The study found that people with higher education levels usually had more critical views on job features and public services. For instance, those who graduated had higher average scores than those with just diplomas or undergrads. Postgraduate respondents showed a stronger drive for personal growth and helping others, while diploma holders tended to be more focused on things like salary and job security. These differences help us understand how education can shape how people see their work and what motivates them in public service jobs.

We looked at the data using basic stats to show how the data spread out. Traits like age, schooling, and job years had normal scores for public job people. Things about the job, such as different skills, choice, and input, had a mid score of 4.2 out of 5, showing that people liked how the jobs were set up. How keen they were to work had a mid score of 4.0, with the drive from inside a bit more than the drive from outside.

Most people's work experience spread out evenly, with an average rating of 4.1. Those with over 10 years on the job usually rated their task performance higher. When it comes to public services, measured by effectiveness, efficiency, and user satisfaction, the average score came to 4.3. This shows that most respondents believe the public services they get are pretty good.

Initial correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between individual characteristics, job characteristics, motivation, and work experience and the quality of public services. Job characteristics had the highest correlation ($r = 0.68$), followed by motivation ($r = 0.62$) and work experience ($r = 0.59$). These results indicate that work and motivation factors have an important role in determining the quality of services provided to the community.

Overall, the descriptive analysis provides a comprehensive preliminary picture of the respondent profile and the research variables. This data forms the basis for further analysis, including testing the causal relationship between variables. These findings also show that individual and occupational characteristics, as well as motivation and work experience, are important interrelated elements in influencing the quality of public services.

The Relationship of Individual Characteristics to the Quality of Public Services

The research reveals some interesting connections between certain traits—like age, education, and work experience—and the quality of public services. One standout finding is the strong relationship between education and service quality, with a correlation of $r = 0.54$. Basically, it seems that people who are better educated tend to provide services that are not only higher in quality but also quicker. This suggests that a solid education really does make a difference in how well folks perform in public service jobs.

Age can affect the quality of public services, but the connection isn't super strong ($r = 0.38$). Older workers usually have more experience and are often better at dealing with their emotions. This can help them handle tough situations and provide good service. But, age isn't the only factor. It's important to consider other things, like job experience, too.

Work experience has a significant contribution to the quality of public services, with a correlation of $r = 0.59$. Employees with more than 10 years of work experience tend to have a deeper understanding of community needs and organizational procedures, so that they are able to provide more effective services. This supports the work experience theory which states that the accumulation of knowledge and skills through experience can improve individual performance.

The results of the regression analysis showed that the overall characteristics of individuals explained 35% of the variability in the quality of public services. The education level variable has the largest contribution, followed by work experience and age. These findings affirm the importance of human resource development through education and training to improve the quality of public services. In addition, organizations need to consider work experience as an important factor in placing employees in strategic positions.

The discussion of these results underlines that individual characteristics play an important role as a foundation in determining the quality of public services. However, the influence does not stand alone, but rather is influenced by interactions with other variables such as job characteristics and motivation. Therefore, a holistic approach that integrates individual development and good work design is necessary to achieve high-quality public services.

The Influence of Job Characteristics on the Quality of Public Services

The study found that job features had a big impact on how good public services were. The strongest link was seen in the area of freedom ($r = 0.71$). Workers who can pick how they do their work often do a better job. This backs up the Theory of Work Features, which says that having freedom boosts deep-down drive and how well work gets done. People who felt they could make their own work choices said they were happier with their jobs. This made the service they gave better.

Different skills really seem to make a difference when it comes to the quality of public services, with a solid correlation of $r = 0.65$. Workers who tackle tasks that need a mix of skills tend to feel more motivated and can handle tricky problems better. This suggests that when jobs are set up to use a variety of skills, employees are more likely to offer better services to the community.

The dimension of feedback in job characteristics has a significant influence on the quality of public services, with a correlation of $r = 0.67$. Employees who receive constructive feedback regularly show improvements in their performance, especially in terms of

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efficiency and user satisfaction. Clear and relevant feedback helps employees understand organizational expectations and fix shortcomings in task execution. These findings confirm the importance of effective communication in supporting the improvement of the quality of public services.

The results of the regression analysis showed that the overall characteristics of the job explained 48% of the variability in the quality of public services. The autonomy dimension makes the greatest contribution, followed by feedback and skill variation. These findings indicate that good work design, which includes these elements, can significantly improve the quality of service. Public service organizations are advised to design work that not only meets operational needs but also intrinsically motivates employees. This discussion of results highlights the importance of the role of job characteristics in creating a work environment that supports optimal performance. The characteristics of a well-designed job not only increase employee motivation but also contribute to the satisfaction of service users. Therefore, a strategic approach in designing work, such as providing autonomy, skill variety, and adequate feedback, needs to be a priority in efforts to improve the quality of public services.

The Role of Motivational Mediation in the Relationship of Characteristics to the Quality of Public Services

The study's findings show that drive plays a key role in linking personal traits to how good public services are. Analysis with SEM-PLS showed that traits like schooling and job past affect work drive, with a path number of 0.45 ($p < 0.01$). Then, work drive straight affects how good public services are, with a path number of 0.52 ($p < 0.01$). This means that drive is a big deal in tying personal traits to how well services work.

Work motivation plays a key role in how job features affect the quality of public services. Factors like autonomy, skill variety, and feedback in jobs strongly influence work motivation, with a path coefficient of 0.61 ($p < 0.01$). When jobs are well-designed, it boosts motivation, leading to better public service quality. This shows that good job characteristics can enhance what drives people inside, which in turn helps improve employee performance.

Further mediation analysis showed that work motivation has a partial mediating effect in the relationship between individual and occupational characteristics on the quality of public services. The direct effect of individual and occupational characteristics on service quality remained significant even though motivation was included as a mediator. However, the indirect effect through motivation contributes an additional 28% to the variability of public service quality. This confirms that motivation is not only an independent variable but also strengthens causal relationships between other variables.

The findings of this research point out that inner drive has a bigger impact than outside rewards in linking traits to how good public services are. Workers driven by inner reasons, like a sense of duty or wanting to achieve, often give better services. On the other hand, outside drives like money perks, hold less sway. These results highlight how key it is to build a work place that backs inner drive to make public services work better.

This talk about results shows that work motivation is really important for connecting personal traits and job details to how good public services are. When people are motivated, they do better at their jobs, and it helps tie together how work is set up and the results we see in services. So, public service organizations should think about ways to boost their employees' motivation, like recognizing their hard work and making sure their jobs feel meaningful, to improve the quality of services.

The Influence of Work Experience as a Mediator on the Quality of Public Services

The study's findings tell us that having job experience plays a big part in linking personal traits to how good public services are. By using path analysis with SEM-PLS, it was found that job experience impacts the quality of public services, showing a path rate of 0.48 ($p < 0.01$). Traits like how much schooling one has and how old they are, touch the quality of the service in a roundabout way through job experience. This means that job experience is a key tool that makes the link between personal traits and how well the service does better.

Work experience was seen to help link job traits and the quality of public work. The parts of freedom, skill change, and input in job traits had a clear effect on the job experience with a path score of 0.53 ($p < 0.01$). People with more job experience are more likely to use good job traits to make their work better and faster. These results back up the idea that job experience boosts a person's skill to meet job needs.

Further mediation analysis showed that work experience has a partial mediating effect in the relationship between individual and occupational characteristics on the quality of public services. The direct effect of individual and occupational characteristics on the quality of service remained significant even when work experience was included as a mediator. However, the indirect effect through work experience contributes an additional 25% to the variability of public service quality. This confirms that work experience is not only an independent variable but also strengthens causal relationships between other variables.

The results of the study also show that longer work experience allows employees to develop better interpersonal and technical skills, which ultimately improves the quality of public services. Employees with more than 10 years of work experience report higher levels of service user satisfaction compared to those with shorter work experience. This indicates that the accumulated experience provides a competitive advantage in understanding the needs of the community and completing tasks more efficiently.

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This discussion of results highlights that work experience plays a key role in linking individual and occupational characteristics to the quality of public services. Work experience not only increases employee confidence and competence but also strengthens the relationship between work design and service outcomes. Therefore, public service organizations are advised to provide sustainable career development opportunities and utilize employees' work experience as a strategic asset to improve the quality of services.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that individual characteristics, such as education level, age, and work experience, have a significant influence on the quality of public services. The level of education contributes the most, indicating the importance of competency development through formal education. In addition, longer work experience strengthens employees' ability to understand the needs of the community and complete tasks effectively. These findings confirm that human resource development through continuous education and training is an important strategy to improve the quality of public services.

In addition, the study also highlights the important role of competency-based training designed to meet the specific needs of jobs in the public sector. This kind of training not only improves technical skills but also strengthens the interpersonal skills necessary to interact with society. In this context, training that focuses on developing soft skills, such as communication, empathy, and conflict management, can have a significant impact on service quality. By integrating relevant training into employee development programs, organizations can create a workforce that is more adaptive and responsive to the dynamics of society's evolving needs.

Job characteristics, including autonomy, skill variety, and feedback, have been shown to have a significant influence on the quality of public services. Autonomy makes the greatest contribution, showing that freedom in regulating work methods can improve intrinsic motivation and employee performance. In addition, a variety of skills and feedback also play an important role in creating a work environment that supports optimal performance. Good work design, which combines these elements, can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, while increasing the satisfaction of service users.

Motivation and work experience were found to be significant mediators in the relationship between individual and occupational characteristics and the quality of public services. Intrinsic motivation has a stronger influence than extrinsic motivation, while work experience strengthens employees' ability to respond to job demands. These two variables not only improve individual performance but also strengthen the relationship between work design and service outcomes. Therefore, public service organizations are advised to focus on strategies that support intrinsic motivation and utilize employee work experience as a strategic asset to achieve optimal service quality.

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