# Organization Transparency and Public Service Quality During Pandemic

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**Abstract**
This study investigates the relationship between organizational transparency and the quality of public services during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on Palu City, Indonesia. The pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to public health systems and service delivery, necessitating a reevaluation of operational practices within government organizations. Utilizing a quantitative research design, this study employs regression analysis to examine the impact of transparency and negative emotions on service quality perceptions among citizens. Data were collected through online surveys, targeting a diverse demographic of Palu-Donggala residents. The findings reveal that higher levels of organizational transparency significantly enhance public trust and satisfaction with service delivery, while negative emotions adversely affect service quality perceptions. This research contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the critical role of transparency in fostering effective public service during crises. The implications of these findings underscore the need for government agencies to prioritize transparent communication and adaptive strategies to improve service quality in times of uncertainty.

**Keywords:** Transparency; Public service quality; COVID-19 pandemic; Citizen satisfaction

## INTRODUCTION

Since December 2019, the world has been hit by the COVID-19 Pandemic(Zhu et al. 2020). This outbreak is caused by coronavirus respiratory syndrome, a virus that causes a variety of deadly diseases to become a public health problem(Rothan 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has not only ushered in a new economy and recession but has forced all countries to take extreme decisions to contain the virus, to the point where "business as usual" is no longer possible. The pandemic requires businesses to think outside the box, leverage their own resources and creativity, and be resilient, dynamic, and proactive, adapting classic business models or developing new ones.(Alexandru et al. 2020; Bratianu 2020; Bratianu and Bejinaru 2021; Fasan et al. 2021; Qi, Yu, and Ploeger 2020). In line with Taleb's (2008) conceptualization, global pandemics have emerged as "black swans", which severely challenge expectations, have dramatic impacts on multiple levels, and

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encourage different actors (i.e., people, communities, and organizations) to find explanations and approaches that suitable for quick adaptation(Taleb 2007).

The Novel Coronavirus, commonly known as COVID-19, started attacking several parts of the world since December 2019. This virus is a respiratory contracting disease that has an incubation period from two to fourteen days, usually five days from the day of infection. The infection was initially seen in the Wuhan District, China. It spread worldwide in a short period of five months(Chen et al. 2022). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the rapid outbreak has led to an unprecedented situation in all markets. Significantly, the service sector is most affected, as human involvement is more present there than the goods market due to empathy. So, where there is a threat to human health, industry has to bear the brunt of the global situation. Considering the psychological evidence, COVID-19 will indeed lead to service delivery reforms, the most affected consumer engagement, because the human element has maximum implications in this sector(Addo et al. 2020).

In the post-pandemic world, the parameters of customer satisfaction have changed a lot(Monmousseau et al. 2020; Srivastava and Kumar 2021; Zhao and Zhou 2021). The pandemic has made personal interactions more challenging(Brown 2020). Customer satisfaction has become an important research area in behavioral studies. This concept is based on the belief that satisfaction is important for an organization to have sustainability and profitability(Radović-Marković, Shoaib Farooq, and Marković 2017). In essence, customer satisfaction is defined as a personal feeling of either pleasure or displeasure, which stems from contrasting the service function and the corresponding customer expectations (Kotler and Caslione 2009). Actually, customer satisfaction is related to experience which has been formulated based on service encounters. Satisfaction can only be achieved when the needs and preferences of customers are adequately met and prioritized by the company; However, individual preference variations must be considered(Khudhair et al. 2019).

Although strategy and service studies have demonstrated the superiority of customer orientation, the indirect role of customer orientation is still unknown. Researchers have viewed societal orientation as a cornerstone in the theoretical relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and firm performance(Brady and Cronin Jr. 2001; Kirca, Jayachandran, and Bearden 2005). Community orientation is also a major concern in the service literature. The idea's basic premise is that people-oriented service organizations outperform their competitors by exceeding customer needs and providing consistently good service that is ascribed to value and satisfaction.(Brady and Cronin Jr. 2001). Although several studies have found that the relationship between community orientation and service performance has an insignificant or

negative effect(Agarwal, Erramilli, and Dev 2003; Sandvik and Sandvik 2003), favorable satisfaction results resulting from the implementation of well-designed and executed activities that enable the service organization to acquire and assimilate available societal information(Pan and Ha 2021).

Recent data on user attitudes (in terms of society) focus heavily on perceptions of service quality. By definition, perceived service quality is known as an individual's assessment of the overall superiority and/or superiority of a service(Zeithaml 1988). Such an attribute depends on the perceived discrepancy between user expectations and perceptions of an entity's actual performance level (Zeithaml et al. 1990). Service quality refers to the ability of a service to address user needs(Newland and Kellett 2012). The concept of service has been defined since the 1980s by Churchill and Surprenant (1982) together with Asubonteng et al. (1996), who popularized the theory of customer satisfaction through measuring a company's actual service delivery according to user expectations, as defined by perceived quality attainment, and that satisfies the wants and needs of users beyond their aspirations. With this premise, Armstrong et al. (1997) then expanded the concept of service into five dimensions of service quality consisting of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.(Armstrong et al. 1997; Asubonteng, McCleary, and Swan 1996; Churchill Jr and Surprenant 1982).

Service quality improvement has been integrated as a key component of every business organization's strategic plan, and has become an inevitable part of total quality management in almost all companies around the world. Indeed, the core concept of total quality management is mainly oriented towards implementing successful measures aimed at supporting customer satisfaction; this may include improving services, processes, and products (Nagarajan 2018). Thus, many large organizations have established quality programs that measure user evaluations of quality and correlate it with different service attributes. This is because service quality is increasingly considered a key factor in discrimination between service products and an important aspect in building competitive advantage (Kusumadewi and Karyono 2019). Therefore, improving the quality of services provided has become a mainstay approach to ensure user satisfaction, which can be linked to loyalty, word of mouth recommendations, market share, and organizational image. (Fida et al. 2020; Jiang and Zhang 2016).

Facing the unprecedented circumstances generated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, we are all challenged to find suitable adaptive and future-oriented solutions to fight the multilevel systemic crisis brought about by the virus outbreak.(Alvarez, Argente, and Lippi 2020; Bratianu and Bejinaru 2021; Cegarra-Navarro, Vătămănescu, and Martínez-Martínez 2021; Delaporte and Pena 2020; Fasan et al. 2021; Hasanat et al. 2020; Nemteanu and Dabija 2021;

Reeves, Lang, and Carlsson-Szlezak 2020; Scott et al. 2020). Employees' psychological needs and emotions are especially acute during workplace changes. This need is influenced by perceptions of job security, voice autonomy and fairness related to organizational decisions. In turn, organizational decisions and managerial actions shape a state of psychological security. Employee experiences of high or low psychological safety refer to freedom of expression, feelings of security, interpersonal risk-taking, and mutual trust and support(Carmeli and Gittell 2009; Edmondson 1999; Kahn 1990).

To successfully implement change and minimize the negative consequences of the change, a deep understanding of employee attitudes and behavior towards change is essential(Shin, Taylor, and Seo 2012). Organizational change, especially unplanned change, can cause many problems and create questions and uncertainties for employees, which can affect their relationship with the organization. Negative feedback and reactions to organizational change include rejection, resentment, and disengagement from employees and can hinder the successful implementation of organizational change(Oreg et al. 2018).

Social support that embodies the support of the organization, supervisors, and co-workers promotes psychological safety(Singh, Shaffer, and Selvarajan 2018). Sudden crises and workplace changes impact the emotional response of employees. Social support shown through mutual trust, open communication and empowerment

creates a sense of stability and security. Conversely, a lack of support and autonomy leads to low psychological security and negative emotions. Previous studies of psychological safety are associated with learning behaviors (egCarmeli and Gittell 2009), satisfaction, leader relations, task performance, and civic behavior(Frazier et al. 2017)in the physical workplace environment. It is unclear whether different groups in the workplace experience similar emotions, psychological safety, and organizational support during disturbing events.

Organizations can protect their employees from the potential dangers of virus transmission because they have close interaction with an unspecified number of people during service delivery(Hu et al. 2021). Organizational change refers to a process in which an organization changes its existing structure, work routine, strategy, or culture which can significantly affect the organization(Herold et al. 2008). Such changes may be planned or unplanned, depending on the specific forces driving the change and the purpose of the change(Malopinsky and Osman 2006). As the literature points to the important role of transparent communication in organizations, this study examines how such communication practices influence employee coping styles and the uncertainty management process associated with unplanned organizational change.(Li et al. 2021). The subject of this research is societythe community as service recipients and the Palu City Social Service and Health Service as government organizations that have contributed most to the

handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in serving public needs are the objects of research.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### a. METHOD DESCRIPTION

This research will focus on testing the theoretical model which states that there isthe effect of organizational transparency and negative emotions on the quality of post-covid-19 services in hammer city. Researchers test theoretical models to understand the consistency of the theory so that it can be used as new scientific findings. This study uses quantitative research techniques with regression analysis techniques.

### b. PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

The participants in this study were the people of Palu-Donggala city. Recruitment of participants through online surveys. Participants are required to read the informed consent form before participating in this study and can stop at any time. The following are sociodemographic data in this study:

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic Data Of Participants

| Variable |
|---|
| **Gender** |
| Woman |
| Man |
| **Ethnic group** |
| Kaili |
| Bugis/Makassar |
| Java |
| Bali |
| Other |
| **Education** |
| SD/Equivalent |
| Middle School/Equivalent |
| SMA/Equivalent |
| Diploma and/or Bachelor Degree |
| S2 and/or S3 |
| **Status** |
| Not married yet |
| Marry |
| Widow widower |
| **Age** |
| 18-20 |
| 21-25 |
| 26-30 |
| 31-35 |
| 36-40 |
| 41-45 |
| 46-50 |
| **Type of work** |
| Doesn't work |
| Non-permanent workers |
| Trader |
| Farmers, Fishermen, |
| Skilled Worker (Tailor, Mechanic, Carpenter, Barber) |
| Bankers, Administration/Office |
| Civil Servants (Regional Servants) |
| Professional (teacher, doctor, engineer, journalist) |
| Other |

### c. MEASUREMENT

The measuring tools used in this study are collaboration to measure organizational collaboration, innovation to measure new ideas in the organization and performance to measure organizational performance during the co-19 pandemic. All measuring

instruments in this study went through a process of adaptation to Indonesian.

a. Organizational communication is developed by **Rawins, 2009**used to measure organizational transparency consisting of 7 items. This measurement tool uses a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The reliability coefficient value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.95 which indicates that all the results of the scale analysis are valid and reliable for use in measurement. Examples of items "provide information that is easily understood by someone like me".

b. Service quality is developed by **fandy tjiptono (2016)** used to measure the quality of organizational services which consists of 5 items and is divided into 4 dimensions (tangible, empathy, responsiveness, reliability, and certainty). This measuring instrument uses a 5-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.89 which indicates that all the results of the scale analysis are valid and reliable for use in measurement. Example item "I am satisfied with proper service?"

c. Innovation developed by Lee and Song, 2015used to measure organizational innovation consisting of 5 items. This measuring instrument uses a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The reliability coefficient value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.93 which indicates that all the results of the scale analysis are valid and reliable for use in measurement. Example item "capable of adopting new skills and technologies"

d. **Data analysis**

This study used several data analysis techniques, including; 1) descriptive data analysis, 2) Bivariate correlation, 3) Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), 4) Regression.

e. **Population and sample collection techniques**

1. Population

In the research method the word population is very popular, used to mention allied or a group of objects that are the target of research. Therefore, the research population is the whole (universum) of the research object that can be in the form of humans, animals, plants, air, symptoms, values, events, attitudes to life, and so on, so that these objects can be a source of research data

Population data in this study were taken from the total population in the East Palu District area, the population in this study totaled 49,279 people. This

population was taken according to population data in 2020 by the Palu City Statistics Agency.

2. Sample

The sample selection method in this study uses a purposive sampling technique or chooses a sample on purpose. The method will determine respondents with the conditions that are the characteristics or criteria needed or those that have been determined by previous researchers, the samples taken are not random but the researchers determine the samples taken themselves with certain considerations, namely the community affected by the co-19 pandemic. Respondents who represent the population at the research location use the sample determination rules according to Krejcie and Morgan

In taking the sample required by the researcher, it can be determined using the formula introduced by Krejcie & Morgan (1970). The formula in Figure 3.1 is used to determine the number of samples as follows:

**Formula Image Krejcie & Morgan**

$$s = \frac{x^2 . N . P (1 - P)}{(N - 1). d^2 + x^2 . P (1 - P)}$$

Information :

S = desired sample size

X2 = chi-square table value for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841)

N = population size

P = population size (assuming 0.50 as this will give the maximum sample size)

d = level of accuracy expressed as the rate (0.05)

Calculation of the number of samples needed for the population of West Palu sub-district is determined using Figure 3.1. The following is the calculation of the number of samples required as respondents in this study:

$$S = \frac{3841 (49.279)(0,5)(1 - 0,5)}{0,05^2 (49.279 - 1) + 3841(0,5)(1 - 0,5)}$$

$$S = \frac{47.320}{123,195 + 0,960,25}$$

$$S = \frac{47.320}{124,15525}$$

$$S = 381,13 \approx 381$$

The number of samples needed in this study using the formula is the total population of the East Palu area, which is 381 people

## RESULTS

### a. Description of Biographical Data

| Demographic Background | Items | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Man | 223 | 58% |
| | Woman | 158 | 42% |
| Age | 18-20 | 5 | 1% |
| | 21-25 | 95 | 26% |
| | 26-30 | 86 | 22% |
| | 31-35 | 95 | 26% |
| | 36-40 | 57 | 15% |
| | 41-45 | 22 | 6% |
| | Etc | 21 | 5% |
| Ethnic group | Bugis-Makassar | 101 | 25% |
| | Kaili | 196 | 49% |
| | Java | 61 | 15% |
| | Bali | 10 | 3% |
| | Etc | 32 | 8% |
| Education | Senior high school | 190 | 49% |
| | S1/D4 | 148 | 38% |
| | S2/S3 | 43 | 13% |
| Status | Not married yet | 125 | 34% |
| | Marry | 256 | 66% |
| Work | Farmer | 26 | 7% |
| | Laborer | 12 | 3% |
| | Self-employed | 199 | 51% |
| | civil servant | 116 | 30% |
| | Doesn't work | 10 | 3% |
| | Etc | 18 | 7% |

From databiographies can be seen that this research was conducted in Palu City with the result that the respondents in this study were men with a total percentage of 58%. The results were high school graduates and S1 who dominated with a presentation of 49% and 38% as research respondents, ethnicity was dominated the kaili tribe which has a presentation of 49%. The data is also dominated by productive age, namely age 21-25 with a total presentation of 26% which has the same presentation rate, namely age 31-35 years, with self-employed work with a percentage rate of 51%.

### b. Data Analysis

Based on the results of the measurement model analysis, it is known that there are several indicators with a value below 0.7, so they must be excluded from the analysis, namely X2. The six indicators

have a loading factor value below 0.70. The next step is retesting to see if all indicators meet the standard value > 0.7. Convergent validity in PLS is also assessed by AVE (Average Variance Extracted). The rule of thumb used for convergent validity is AVE ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 1998). After repeated testing, the results of the convergent validity test revealed that the AVE value was greater than 0.50 for all variables, namely quality of service, finance, and training and development, so that it was concluded that the variable was convergent. legitimate.
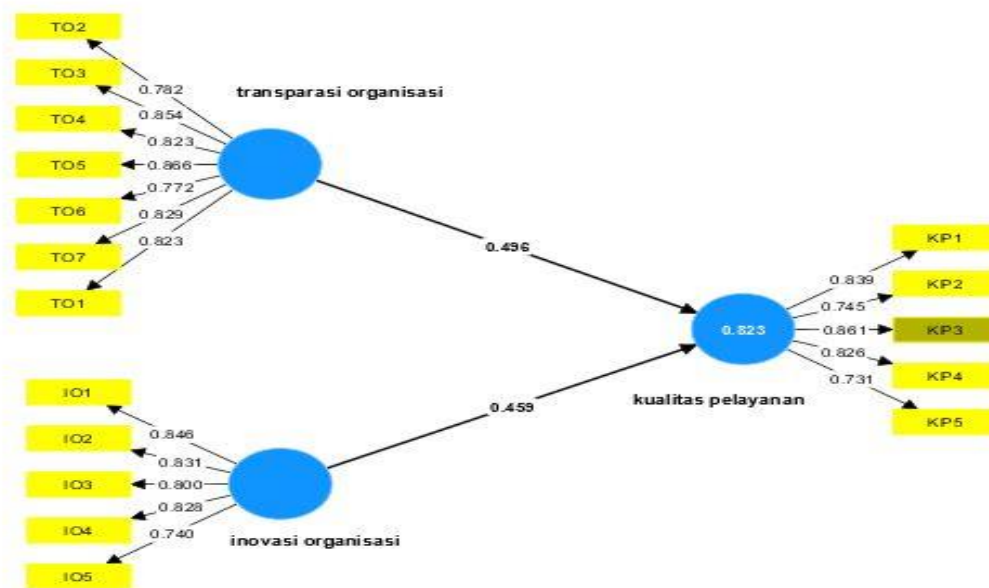


Based on the picture above it shows that all indicators have an outer loading greater than 0.7, so it is concluded that it is valid in reflecting the variables of organizational innovation, organizational collaboration and organizational performance

**Composite Reliability Test**

Based on the composite reliability test showed that the value of all variables > 0.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variables tested are valid and also reliable (Ghozali, 2005).

| Indikator | | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability (Rho_A) | Composite Reliability (Rho_C) | Average V |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| Inovasi Organisasi | | 0,868 | 0,870 | 0,905 | 0,656 |
| Kualitas Pelayanan | | 0,860 | 0,866 | 0,900 | 0,644 |
| Transparansi Organisasi | | 0,920 | 0,921 | 0,936 | 0,676 |

### a. Inner Model Collinearity Test Analysis (Structural Model)

The results of the collinearity test show that on the path of the influence of finance (X1) and Learning and training (X2) on Service Quality (Y) it is known that the collinearity values for the variables Finance, Service quality and Learning and Training have VIF all below 5, so it is said that free water from linearity

| Independent Variable | Vif | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|
| organizational innovation | 1,995 | |
| organizational transparency | 1,985 | |
| service quality | 2,418 | |

### Determination Coefficient Test (R-Square)

The R2 value for Service Quality (Y) is 0.823, meaning that the percentage influence of Organizational Transparency X1) and Organizational Innovation (X2) on Organizational Performance (Y) is 82%, while the remaining 18% is explained by other variables,

| Indicator | R-Square | R-Square Adjusted |
|---|---|---|
| Service quality | 0.823 | 0.822 |

### Path coefficient test
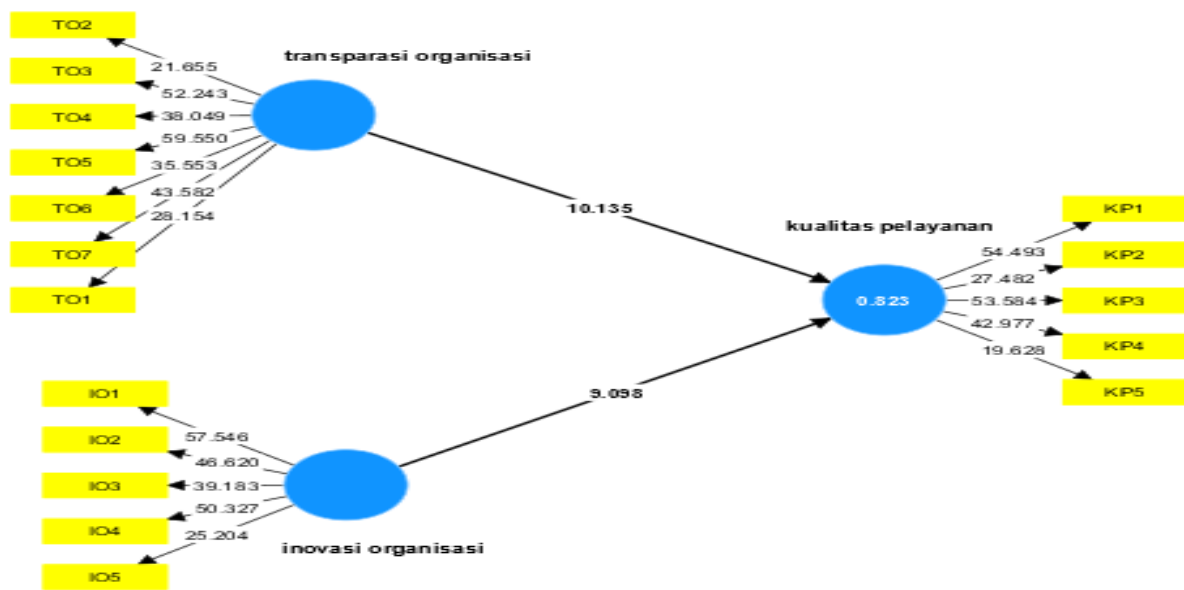


| Indicator | Original Sample (O) | Sample Means (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T Statistics (\|O/STDEV\|) | P Values |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational Innovation -> Service Quality | 0.459 | 0.457 | 0.050 | 9.105 | 0.000 |
| Organizational Transparency -> Service Quality | 0.496 | 0.499 | 0.049 | 10,095 | 0.000 |

The test results show that the beta coefficient value of Organizational Transparency is 0.499 and the t-statistic is 10.095. From this result, the t-statistic is significant. because >1.96 with a pvalue <0.05 so that organizational transparency is accepted. While the test results show a beta coefficient value of organizational innovation of 0.457 and a t-statistic that is equal to 9.105 of these results is stated to be a significant t-statistic. because >1.96 with a pvalue <0.05 so organizational innovation is accepted.

**Model Fit Test (Model Fit)**

The SRMR value limit is below 0.08 indicating a fit or good model, and if the SRMR value is more than 0.08 but still smaller than 0.12 it indicates the model is still acceptable (marginal fit), whereas if the SRMR value is greater than 0, 12 shows the model is not fit (lack of fit or poor fit). The results of the evaluation of the model fit with SRMR were 0.098, this value was greater than 0.08 but still within the limits of 0.12, so it can be concluded that this research model has a marginal fit level or is called marginal fit.

**DISCUSSION**

To see the significant value of the relationship between organizational transparency variables and service quality.the organizational transparency indicator has seven items and service quality has 5 items. The investment results in this analysis can be seen that the indicators of organizational transparency and service quality have a significant relationship to the handling of Covid-19. From the analysis of the data above, it can be seen that organizational transparency has a significant positive value on service quality in handling Covid-19. So it can be concluded from this analysis that there is no doubt that the handling of Covid-19 in Palu city is in accordance with the policies set by the central government and local governments. And also about organizational transparency variables, namely the importance of transparency of information and actions when handling Covid-19, especially in Palu City, where information is very important for the people of Palu City during the Covid-19 pandemic. From the analysis test it can be stated that Transparency has a significant value to the quality of service in handling the Covid-19 Pandemic in Palu City.

Judging from the indicator of Organizational Transparency which has 7 items, namely communication in providing information that is easily understood by the community. To provide information that is easy to understand, setting indicators of organizational transparency as a parameter in good service quality can be seen from providing information that is easy to understand, providing appropriate information, good communication in providing information in handling Covid-19 in Palu City. Also seen from the items in the indicators of service quality in handling Covid-19 which can be seen from the item of community satisfaction with services during the handling of

Covid-19 because a community satisfaction is a form of value that the quality of service is good or bad.

When the Palu City Health Office revolutionized due to technological changes, demographic changes, and changing situations, innovation became a necessity to provide quality services. Organizational innovation analysis has a significant value on service quality which has a higher convergent value. So it can be concluded that service quality requires innovation according to the situation. There is innovation in handling Covid-19 in Palu City, there is no doubt that service quality has a positive relationship and goes according to policies issued by the central and regional governments in handling Covid-19. strong in improving the quality of service in handling Covid-19 in the city of Palu.

Organizational innovation has 5 items that are in accordance with the threshold, so the quality of service in handling Covid-19 in Palu city has good innovation. That the development of technology in the Covid-19 situation. The development of innovation in handling Covid-19. Establishing this innovation indicator as a parameter in the success of a service in handling Covid-19. that the community understands innovation in handling so that the community is satisfied with the quality of this service because the service is tangible and the efforts made by service providers to comply with central and regional policies in handling Covid-19 to satisfy society. Considering the fact that most of the public Health Offices have low services, the lack of services is

coupled with high workload and pressure, there is usually the possibility of information delays and high turnover rates, which can have a negative impact on service quality. these findings have several profound practical implications. The results of this study are the level of relationship between organizational innovation that has a significant relationship to the quality of services available at the Palu City Health Office in handling Covid-19.

## CONCLUSION

Service quality is an important aspect of a quality measurement system that helps organizations to monitor, measure and manage service. Service quality monitoring reveals gaps between planned and implemented results and helps identify and correct potential problems. This is very important for improving the quality of services in critical sectors such as Covid-19 health handlers in developing countries such as Palu City, given the challenges associated with the public health care system. Although the main function of the Dinas Kesehatan is to provide valid and appropriate information, modern Dinas Kesehatan cannot work without supporting services whose biggest component in the Dinas Kesehatan is organizational transparency. However, the quality of service providing information about the handling and control of Covid-19 has not received the necessary attention because most of the interventions are focused on the performance of clinical health services. Responding to the need to develop service quality, which can be considered

for measuring organizational communication on organizational transparency, is the main objective of this study. Following a review of the literature on service quality, a set of service qualities was first created. It then undergoes further content validation and construct validation through the application of factor analysis, principal component extraction. The analysis resulted in a final list of 17 indicators which were categorized and then expanded. It includes five sets of indicators on quality, seven indicators on organizational transparency, and five on organizational innovation.

There are many other studies like this without limitations. The indicators proposed are general in nature and mostly subjective, which is in accordance with the practice of handling Covid-19 at the Palu City Health Service. Measurable measures can pose challenges, besides that the information may not be available. This research is limited to 3 coverage of service indicators. Even though the selected services are located next to each other, a significant relationship exists between organizational transparency and organizational innovation on service quality in Palu City. that's very good. the possible preference of indicators may exist in fact though results validating random data loops from all three services. From the limitations of this study, hence future research should target the development of service quality more objectively for assessment over time. A larger sample may also be necessary to investigate each quality level at each service level. In addition,

future studies should be directed to place weights on the proposed indicators to ensure preference of indicators based on weight. As a next step, empirical testing and indicator validation are suggested to improve the service quality of public health office management facilities. In addition, future studies should be directed to place weights on the proposed indicators to ensure preference for indicators based on weights. As a next step, empirical testing and indicator validation are suggested to improve the service quality of public health office management facilities. In addition, future studies should be directed to place weights on the proposed indicators to ensure preference for indicators based on weights. As a next step, empirical testing and indicator validation are suggested to improve the service quality of public health office management facilities.

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