

### Short Paper

# Assessing the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in the Registry of Deeds Towards Improved Customer Services

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## Abstract

The Public service efficiency is a vital factor influencing customer satisfaction, especially within government institutions such as the Registry of Deeds (RoD). This study explores the impact of five service quality dimensions (assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness) on customer satisfaction in the context of post-pandemic service delivery. It also examines how demographic variables, including age, sex, and educational attainment, shape perceptions of service quality to determine key areas for improvement. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational design was employed, with data collected from 351 clients who engaged with the RoD beginning in 2022. Respondents were selected through simple random sampling to ensure diverse representation. A validated survey questionnaire based on the SERVQUAL model was used to assess service quality and customer satisfaction across three dimensions: customer service, timeliness, and accessibility. The results show that assurance and reliability are the most significant predictors of customer satisfaction, highlighting the importance of professionalism, trustworthiness, and accurate service in building confidence in public institutions. Empathy and responsiveness also contribute positively, reflecting the relevance of timely and considerate interactions, although these aspects were perceived to be less developed. Tangibility received the lowest ratings, indicating a need for improved physical infrastructure and digital access. Notably, satisfaction levels varied significantly with educational attainment, as respondents with higher education levels tended to be



more critical of service quality, suggesting greater expectations or awareness. The findings underscore the need for sustained investment in staff training focused on assurance and reliability. Furthermore, enhancements in responsiveness and digital infrastructure are essential to meet the demands of a modernized public service environment. These insights can guide policy actions and capacity-building programs aimed at increasing customer satisfaction and strengthening operational performance in the RoD.

*Keywords* – Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Public Service Efficiency, Registry of Deeds, Government Institutions

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Public service institutions are integral to societal and economic development, ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in administrative transactions. The Registry of Deeds (RoD) plays a vital role in securing legal property rights, facilitating real estate transactions, and maintaining public trust in land registration. However, variations in service quality perceptions and customer satisfaction continue to challenge public sector agencies. Ensuring reliable, accessible, and customer-centric service delivery is imperative for maintaining institutional credibility and operational efficiency.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift toward digital transformation in public service delivery, prompting agencies like the RoD to adopt hybrid models combining face-to-face and digital services. While these initiatives have enhanced accessibility, they have also reshaped customer expectations regarding service timeliness, efficiency, and responsiveness. Studies indicate that assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness are key dimensions influencing service quality and customer satisfaction (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Ladhari, 2009). Research further suggests that demographic characteristics such as age, sex, and educational attainment impact service perceptions, with higher-educated individuals often exhibiting more critical assessments of service efficiency (Cruz, Cabrera, & Mendoza, 2021).

Given the growing reliance on e-government services and digital platforms, it is essential to assess how these factors interact to shape customer satisfaction in the RoD. This study explores the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction while examining demographic variations in perception. By identifying service gaps and areas for improvement, the research provides insights that can guide policy enhancements, customer service training, and digital transformation strategies in the RoD. The study contributes to the broader discourse on public service modernization and its implications for governance and citizen engagement.

## **Background of the Study**

The Registry of Deeds (RoD) is a fundamental government institution responsible for maintaining accurate and legally binding records of property transactions. The efficient delivery of services within the RoD is critical for ensuring property security, reducing transaction delays, and promoting economic activity. In recent years, advancements in digital technology have led to the modernization of various government services, including real estate documentation and property registration. However, despite these developments, public service agencies still struggle with improving service quality, particularly in addressing assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness in service delivery.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the transition towards digital and hybrid service models, necessitating rapid adaptation by institutions such as the RoD. Digitalization efforts aimed at enhancing transparency, efficiency, and customer satisfaction became more pronounced as public institutions faced increased demands for online and remote service access. However, customer expectations have also risen, requiring a comprehensive assessment of service quality and the factors influencing customer satisfaction at the RoD.

While digital transformation has improved accessibility to government services, several challenges persist within the RoD. Long processing times, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inconsistent service quality continue to hinder effective public service delivery. Studies have highlighted issues such as delayed response times, difficulty in accessing records, and lack of responsiveness from personnel as primary concerns affecting customer satisfaction (Kim & Lee, 2016; Dwivedi et al., 2020). Furthermore, public institutions often struggle with bridging the gap between traditional face-to-face services and online platforms, making it essential to assess how well service quality dimensions align with customer expectations.

Another challenge is the variation in service perception across different demographic groups. Research suggests that customer satisfaction is influenced by factors such as age, sex, and educational attainment, with individuals from higher educational backgrounds often demonstrating greater scrutiny in evaluating service efficiency and reliability (Cruz, Cabrera, & Mendoza, 2021). Understanding these variations is critical to tailoring service improvements that meet the needs of diverse customer groups effectively.

Recent shifts in government policies have emphasized digitalization and process automation in public service agencies, including the RoD. The Philippine government has launched initiatives to improve e-governance and streamline public transactions, particularly through digital transformation programs under the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT). The implementation of online services for real estate transactions and property documentation is a significant step forward, yet gaps remain in service accessibility and operational efficiency.

Moreover, as institutions adapt to post-pandemic realities, customer expectations for streamlined, efficient, and reliable services continue to increase. Reports indicate that while digital transactions have grown in popularity, issues such as system downtimes, lack of technical support, and delayed response times continue to hinder full adoption. These challenges highlight the need for a thorough evaluation of service quality in the RoD and the impact of demographic factors on customer satisfaction.

The Registry of Deeds (RoD) operates within the Philippine land administration system, which ensures the legal integrity of property transactions. It plays a crucial role in economic development by providing secure land titles and records for businesses and private property owners. However, as a public institution, it must balance regulatory compliance, service efficiency, and customer satisfaction to maintain trust and credibility. Service quality assessment is particularly important in this setting, as inefficiencies in property transactions can lead to delayed economic activities, legal disputes, and financial burdens on stakeholders. Given the variability in customer experiences, examining the factors that influence service quality perceptions is essential for policy formulation and institutional improvements.

Prior studies on public service quality and customer satisfaction have extensively utilized the SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which identifies assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness as critical determinants of service perceptions (Ladhari, 2009; Alhelalat, Ma'moun, & Twaissi, 2017). Research has consistently shown that these factors significantly influence public trust and satisfaction in government institutions.

In various government agencies, service quality assessments have highlighted the importance of digital transformation and process efficiency in improving customer experiences (Dwivedi et al., 2020). Studies in other sectors, such as healthcare and transportation, have also examined the impact of demographic factors on service perceptions, emphasizing the role of age, educational background, and accessibility concerns in shaping customer satisfaction (Kim & Lee, 2016). However, limited research has focused on how these demographic factors influence service satisfaction within the context of real estate transactions and land administration services.

Despite growing research on public service quality, several gaps remain regarding the intersection of service quality dimensions, customer satisfaction, and demographic variations. Key questions include:

- How do different demographic groups perceive service quality in the RoD?
- Which service quality dimensions have the most significant impact on customer satisfaction?
- How do digitalization efforts influence customer trust and expectations in the RoD?

Addressing these research gaps is crucial for enhancing public service efficiency and responsiveness. By investigating how service quality influences customer satisfaction across different demographic segments, this study provides insights that can inform policy improvements, training programs, and digital service enhancements in the RoD.

The Registry of Deeds processes thousands of transactions annually, affecting a diverse customer base ranging from individuals to corporate entities. Any inefficiencies in service delivery have significant implications for property ownership, investment security, and economic development. The study focuses on RoD clients in selected regional offices, providing a targeted assessment of service quality challenges and customer experiences.

Failing to address service inefficiencies in the RoD could lead to prolonged transaction times, increased customer dissatisfaction, and weakened public trust. Furthermore, if digitalization efforts do not align with user needs, there is a risk of exclusion among less tech-savvy clients. Identifying and addressing service quality gaps is essential to ensuring that the RoD remains a reliable, efficient, and customer-centered institution.

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

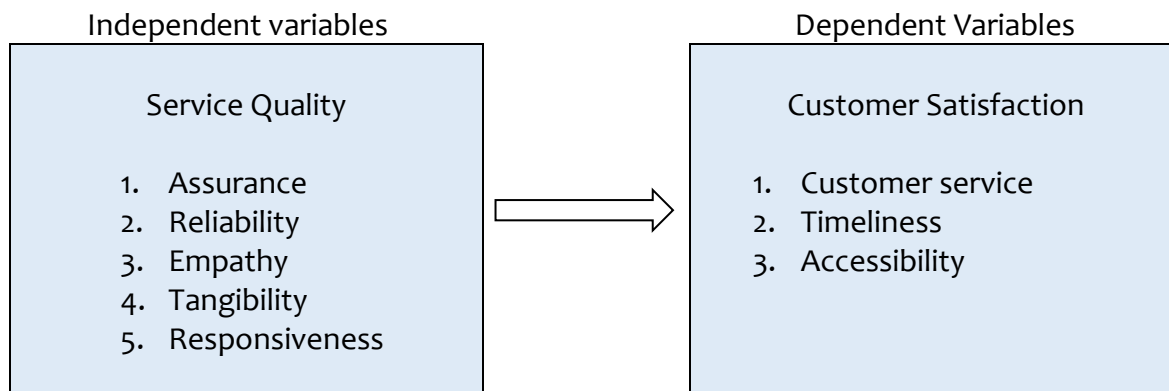


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between Service Quality as the independent variable and Customer Satisfaction as the dependent variable. This framework provides a structured approach to understanding how various dimensions of service quality influence overall customer satisfaction within the Registry of Deeds (RoD) post-pandemic. Given the importance of efficient and high-quality service delivery in public institutions, this study seeks to examine the extent to which service quality dimensions affect customer perceptions and satisfaction levels.

Service quality plays a crucial role in shaping customer experiences and perceptions, particularly in government institutions where efficiency, accessibility, and reliability are essential. In this study, service quality is assessed through five key dimensions: assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness. Assurance refers to the confidence

and trust that service providers instill in customers through professionalism, courtesy, and expertise. Reliability pertains to the ability of the institution to consistently provide accurate and dependable services. Empathy highlights the personalized attention and care that service personnel extend to customers, ensuring their needs and concerns are understood and addressed. Tangibility encompasses the physical aspects of service delivery, including facilities, equipment, and documentation, which influence customers' perceptions of service quality. Lastly, responsiveness reflects the willingness and efficiency of service providers to address customer inquiries, concerns, and requests on time. These five dimensions collectively determine how customers perceive the overall quality of services provided by the RoD.

On the other hand, customer satisfaction is measured based on three critical factors: customer service, timeliness, and accessibility. Customer service refers to the level of interaction between service providers and clients, which includes attentiveness, courtesy, and effectiveness in addressing customer needs. Timeliness pertains to the efficiency and speed of service delivery, as delays and prolonged processing times can negatively impact customer satisfaction. Accessibility refers to the ease with which clients can access the services provided by the RoD, including the availability of online services, clear procedural guidelines, and physical accessibility to office locations. These factors collectively contribute to the overall satisfaction of customers when availing themselves of the services of the RoD.

The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is central to this study. It is hypothesized that higher levels of service quality lead to greater customer satisfaction. When customers perceive service providers as reliable, responsive, and empathetic, they are more likely to have a positive service experience and report higher satisfaction levels. Conversely, poor service quality—such as delays, lack of professionalism, and inefficient processes—can result in dissatisfaction, frustration, and reduced trust in public institutions. Given the increasing demand for high-quality service delivery, particularly in the post-pandemic context, it is crucial to examine how improvements in service quality can enhance customer satisfaction in government institutions such as the RoD.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The reviewed literature and studies collectively emphasize the dynamic and multifaceted relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. A significant portion of research has demonstrated that customer satisfaction is heavily influenced by various dimensions of service quality, particularly in both physical and digital service contexts. Several scholars, including Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (n.d.), have developed the SERVQUAL model, which identifies tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as fundamental dimensions that shape consumer perceptions of service quality. These dimensions remain widely utilized in evaluating service quality

across industries, serving as the foundation for this study. Oliver (n.d.) further reinforces this perspective by emphasizing that service quality directly impacts customer satisfaction, establishing it as a key determinant of consumer loyalty and retention.

The significance of customer interaction in shaping service perceptions has been widely discussed. Han et al. (2021) and Palese and Usai (2018) emphasized that both face-to-face and online communication play a crucial role in influencing customer satisfaction. The shift towards hybrid service delivery models, where both physical and digital interactions co-exist, has redefined consumer expectations regarding service quality. Wu and Suchánek (2024) and Ismagilova et al. (2019) further highlighted the increasing role of social media engagement in assessing responsiveness, empathy, and reliability in service delivery. This indicates that organizations must adapt their service models to maintain high levels of customer engagement across multiple platforms.

Tangible service elements such as pricing strategies, competitive positioning, and marketing efforts have also been linked to customer satisfaction. Ismagilova et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of these factors in shaping consumer expectations. However, tangible factors alone are insufficient without a strong foundation in service quality dimensions. Villanueva, Alejandro, and Ga-an (2023) underscored the pivotal role of reliability in fostering customer trust, particularly during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings align with those of Han et al. (2021), who emphasized that timeliness and error-free services contribute significantly to customer satisfaction, particularly in online service settings. Furthermore, Tan, Oriade, and Fallon (2024) and Cao et al. (2018) provided empirical evidence on how businesses can enhance competitiveness by prioritizing staff training, accountability measures, and proactive customer feedback mechanisms.

The role of personalization and empathy in service delivery has also emerged as a key factor influencing customer satisfaction. Cao, Omar, and Zhou (2018) demonstrated that in the hospitality industry, personalized customer interactions significantly enhance satisfaction and loyalty. This finding was supported by an empirical study at Starbucks (2024), which identified empathy as a critical determinant of positive customer experiences. Advances in AI and data analytics have further enabled companies to provide more personalized services, although this also raises concerns about data privacy (Bahadur et al., 2018; Murray et al., 2019). This suggests that businesses must balance personalization with ethical considerations to maintain consumer trust.

The hybridization of service delivery models has been another emerging trend. Han et al. (2021) explored how digital banking services have adapted to hybrid models, emphasizing that integrating ease of use, reliability, and responsiveness significantly improves customer satisfaction. Villanueva et al. (2023) provided similar insights within the fast-food industry, where restaurants adapted their services through hybrid solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain customer loyalty. This reflects a broader shift in

consumer expectations, with customers now demanding seamless and efficient service experiences across multiple touchpoints.

The influence of social media and digital platforms on customer satisfaction is another recurring theme in the literature. Wu and Suchánek (2024) argued that mismanagement of online customer interactions can lead to dissatisfaction, while Ismagilova et al. (2019) and Omar et al. (2020) emphasized that communication quality in digital platforms directly influences customer perceptions. These findings suggest that businesses and public service institutions must adopt proactive social media engagement strategies to align customer expectations with service delivery.

Despite the extensive research on service quality and customer satisfaction, gaps remain in the literature, particularly concerning post-pandemic service delivery in public institutions like the Registry of Deeds (RoD). Most studies focus on the private sector, health services, or general consumer behavior, with limited research addressing how public service institutions have adjusted their service quality frameworks following the pandemic. While the SERVQUAL model remains a widely applied tool in service evaluation (Palese & Usai, 2018; Ismagilova et al., 2019), there is little empirical evidence assessing its relevance in public service institutions during the COVID-19 recovery period. Specifically, no comprehensive study has yet examined how different dimensions of service quality—such as reliability, empathy, and assurance—have shifted in significance in response to changing customer behaviors and expectations.

In addressing this gap, this study will extend the application of the SERVQUAL model to public service institutions like the RoD, particularly within the context of post-pandemic service quality adaptation. It will assess how service reliability, empathy, timeliness, and accessibility influence customer satisfaction in a public service setting, thereby contributing to policy recommendations for enhancing public service delivery models. Additionally, the study's findings informed strategies for optimizing hybrid service delivery, ensuring that institutions remain responsive to the evolving needs of their clients. By identifying key areas for improvement, this research will contribute to shaping future service delivery strategies not only within the RoD but across the public service sector in the Philippines.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to systematically examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the Registry of Deeds (RoD) post-pandemic. The descriptive aspect of the study aimed to profile the perceptions of respondents regarding service quality, while the

correlational component sought to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction levels.

The study was guided by the SERVQUAL model, which evaluates service quality based on five key dimensions: assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness. Meanwhile, customer satisfaction was assessed based on customer service, timeliness, and accessibility. By employing this design, the study provided an empirical basis for understanding how the perceived quality of services impacts customer satisfaction in the context of government transactions.

### ***Population and Sampling***

The study focused on individuals who engaged with the Registry of Deeds for real estate transactions since 2022, encompassing a diverse group of real estate professionals, property buyers, and sellers, attorneys, and other stakeholders. The total population was estimated at 4,001 clients, and a representative sample of 351 respondents was determined using Raosoft's sample size calculator, ensuring a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to provide equal representation across various demographic groups. This method minimized sampling bias and enhanced the generalizability of findings. The final sample composition was analyzed to ensure diversity in age, sex, and educational attainment, allowing for meaningful comparisons of perceptions and satisfaction levels across different subgroups.

### ***Survey Instrument and Validation***

The primary instrument used in data collection was a structured survey questionnaire, which was designed to comprehensively assess respondents' demographic profiles, perceptions of service quality, and satisfaction levels. The questionnaire consisted of three major sections:

1. Demographic Information – Capturing respondents' age, sex, and educational attainment.
2. Service Quality Perceptions – Evaluating assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).
4. Customer Satisfaction Levels – Measuring customer service, timeliness, and accessibility using the same Likert scale format.

To establish content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert evaluation by specialists in public service delivery, customer experience, and real estate transactions.

Their feedback was incorporated to refine wording, clarity, and alignment with study objectives. A pilot test was conducted with 30 non-sample respondents, ensuring the instrument's reliability before full-scale data collection.

The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded high-reliability coefficients across all dimensions:

- Service Quality Dimensions: Assurance (.928), Reliability (.952), Empathy (.928), Tangibility (.967), Responsiveness (.977), Overall Reliability = .950
- Customer Satisfaction Indicators: Customer Service (.951), Timeliness (.981), Accessibility (.974), Overall Reliability = .969

### ***Data Collection Procedure***

Data collection was conducted through a combination of face-to-face and online surveys, ensuring broad participation and accessibility. Respondents were approached within Registry of Deeds offices, and digital survey links were distributed via email and social media platforms to increase response rates.

To enhance data validity, brief follow-up interviews were conducted with select respondents to clarify ambiguous responses. This supplementary qualitative approach helped validate the survey findings by ensuring that perceptions of service quality and satisfaction were accurately captured.

### ***Statistical Treatment and Data Analysis***

Following data collection, responses were systematically encoded into Microsoft Excel and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A combination of descriptive and inferential statistics was applied to extract meaningful insights from the data.

- Descriptive Statistics – Used to summarize the demographic profiles, service quality perceptions, and satisfaction levels through means, percentages, and frequency distributions.
- Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation – Employed to assess the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction indicators, determining the strength and direction of the association.
- Inferential Analysis – Applied to test the hypothesis regarding the significance of service quality in influencing customer satisfaction.

## ***Ethical Considerations***

The study adhered to strict ethical research protocols to protect the rights, privacy, and well-being of participants. Ethical considerations included:

- **Informed Consent:** All respondents were briefed on the study's objectives, confidentiality measures, and voluntary participation, ensuring their explicit consent before completing the survey.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal identifiers were removed, and all responses were anonymized to prevent the disclosure of sensitive information.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Respondents were assured that participation was completely voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence.
- **Data Protection:** All collected data was securely stored and accessible only to authorized research personnel, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.
- **Honest Reporting:** The findings were presented objectively, with no manipulation of data, ensuring research integrity.

## **RESULTS**

The study investigated the service quality and customer satisfaction levels at the Registry of Deeds (RoD), examining key service quality dimensions—assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness—and their relationship with customer satisfaction indicators such as customer service, timeliness, and accessibility. The study also explored the impact of respondents' profiles (age, sex, and educational attainment) on their perceptions of service quality and satisfaction. The results provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the RoD's service delivery and the factors contributing to customer satisfaction.

### ***Demographic Profile of the Respondents***

The demographic profile of the respondents revealed a diverse population, with a significant portion (41.6%) aged 51 years and above, followed by those aged 36 to 50 years (33.3%) and a younger group aged 35 years and below (25.1%). The gender distribution was fairly balanced, with males comprising 55.0% and females 45.0% of the respondents. In terms of educational attainment, a majority were college graduates (55.6%), while 23.4% had attended college without completing a degree. A smaller portion of respondents had

lower educational backgrounds, such as high school graduates (10.0%) and high school undergraduates (4.3%), while 6.0% held master's degrees or had taken graduate units.

This distribution suggests that the majority of RoD clients are well-educated individuals who may have greater expectations regarding service quality. The predominance of older individuals also implies that many respondents likely have extensive experiences with government services, making their feedback crucial in assessing service efficiency.

### ***Perceived Level of Service Quality at the RoD***

Respondents rated all five dimensions of service quality as very high, indicating strong satisfaction with the RoD's performance. Among these dimensions, assurance received the highest ratings, suggesting that customers have a strong sense of trust and confidence in RoD personnel and services. These findings align with Parasuraman et al.'s SERVQUAL model, which underscores the importance of assurance in fostering customer satisfaction.

Reliability and responsiveness were also highly rated, highlighting the RoD's consistency in delivering accurate services and addressing customer concerns promptly. This supports previous research by Zeithaml et al. (2018), which emphasizes the critical role of dependable and timely services in ensuring customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, empathy and tangibility were perceived positively, reflecting the RoD's ability to provide personalized service and maintain a professional environment. These findings align with Brady and Cronin's (2001) assertion that the physical and relational aspects of service quality significantly enhance customer experiences. Overall, the results suggest that the RoD has successfully cultivated an environment of trust, reliability, and responsiveness, which strengthens its service reputation among clients.

### ***Customer Satisfaction Levels at the RoD***

Customer satisfaction levels were very high across all three measured dimensions: customer service, timeliness, and accessibility.

- Customer Service received the highest satisfaction ratings, indicating that clients find RoD personnel professional, courteous, and efficient in handling transactions. This aligns with Parasuraman et al.'s emphasis on customer interactions as a crucial determinant of overall satisfaction.
- Timeliness and Accessibility also garnered very high ratings, reflecting the RoD's efficiency in service delivery and the ease with which clients can access its services.

These findings correspond with Akhter's (2012) argument that timely and convenient services significantly contribute to higher customer satisfaction.

The consistently high ratings across all customer satisfaction indicators suggest that the RoD meets and often exceeds customer expectations, fostering trust, loyalty, and positive service perceptions among its clientele.

### ***Relationship Between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction***

The study further examined the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction indicators, revealing strong positive correlations across all variables. Among the service quality dimensions:

- Assurance and Empathy exhibited the strongest correlations with customer service and accessibility, indicating that trust and personalized attention significantly enhance customer satisfaction.
- Reliability demonstrated the highest correlation with timeliness (.801), underscoring the importance of delivering accurate, dependable services on time to meet client expectations.
- Tangibility and Responsiveness also positively influenced customer satisfaction, reinforcing the value of well-maintained facilities, professional staff, and prompt service delivery.

These findings validate the SERVQUAL model, which suggests that improvements in specific service quality dimensions lead to increased customer satisfaction. Given the strong correlations, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction was rejected. This underscores the importance of maintaining high service quality standards to ensure sustained customer satisfaction at the RoD.

### ***Implications of the Findings***

The results of this study have several practical and theoretical implications for service improvement at the RoD and similar public service institutions.

1. Service Excellence and Trust Building – The high ratings for assurance indicate that RoD personnel are perceived as knowledgeable, professional, and trustworthy. Maintaining this high level of service is crucial for fostering long-term public trust and satisfaction.

2. Enhancing Service Responsiveness – While service quality ratings were very high, continued improvements in responsiveness and timeliness can further enhance customer experiences, particularly by streamlining processing times and response mechanisms.
3. Targeted Improvements Based on Educational Backgrounds – The findings showed that educational attainment significantly influenced perceptions of service quality. Clients with higher educational qualifications may have different expectations compared to those with lower levels of education. This suggests a need for targeted service enhancements, such as clearer communication strategies and educational outreach initiatives.
4. Optimizing Customer Service Training – Given that customer service had the highest satisfaction ratings, maintaining staff training programs focused on interpersonal skills, problem resolution, and client engagement will be essential for sustaining service excellence.
5. Leveraging Digitalization for Service Accessibility – The results emphasize the importance of service accessibility in shaping overall customer satisfaction. Enhancing digital platforms, online appointment systems, and information dissemination can help improve service reach and efficiency.

The study confirmed the strong relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction at the RoD, highlighting the importance of assurance, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and responsiveness in shaping positive service experiences. While the RoD has demonstrated excellence in customer service, timeliness, and accessibility, there remain opportunities for continuous improvement, particularly in responsiveness and digital service accessibility.

## **DISCUSSION**

This section presents the study's key findings, analyzing their implications in relation to existing literature on service quality and customer satisfaction. The discussion synthesizes empirical results with the theoretical foundations, particularly the SERVQUAL model, and recent scholarly insights on post-pandemic service delivery dynamics.

### ***Perceived Level of Service Quality in the Registry of Deeds***

The results revealed that respondents rated service quality as very high across all SERVQUAL dimensions, with assurance, reliability, and empathy receiving the highest scores. This finding aligns with the framework proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which underscores that these dimensions significantly shape customer perceptions of service quality.

The high rating for assurance suggests that clients trust the Registry of Deeds personnel, recognizing their competence, courtesy, and ability to provide reliable service. Similar findings were reported by Khan and Fasih (2014), who identified assurance as a primary driver of customer satisfaction, particularly in bureaucratic and regulatory services. Additionally, the importance of assurance in service-oriented institutions was echoed by Kaura et al. (2012), who highlighted that service providers who project professionalism and credibility foster greater client confidence and trust.

Reliability, the second-highest rated dimension, underscores the Registry's ability to consistently deliver services accurately and dependably. These results parallel the findings of Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2018), who emphasized that predictability and dependability in service delivery are critical in building customer satisfaction. Given that government institutions often face scrutiny for inefficiency, the RoD's ability to maintain a high degree of reliability suggests successful adaptation to post-pandemic service challenges.

The dimension of empathy also received very high ratings, indicating that clients perceive personnel as responsive, attentive, and considerate of individual needs. This result is consistent with Grönroos' (1990) service quality theory, which states that customers value personal attention and genuine care in service encounters. In the context of public service, empathy plays an essential role in fostering trust and satisfaction, particularly when clients experience procedural delays or complex transactions.

Tangibility and responsiveness were also rated very high, though slightly lower than the other dimensions. While tangibility pertains to the physical aspects of service delivery, including office facilities and digital platforms, its slightly lower rating may reflect the need for infrastructure or technological improvements. This observation aligns with the findings of Lovelock and Wirtz (2016), who noted that service environments directly influence customer perceptions but are often secondary to interpersonal service quality factors. Similarly, responsiveness, which pertains to timeliness and staff willingness to assist customers, was highly rated, but its lower score suggests that some clients may have encountered delays or inefficiencies in response times.

These findings indicate that while the Registry of Deeds is excelling in service delivery, further improvements in infrastructure, digitalization, and response efficiency may enhance overall customer experience.

### ***Customer Satisfaction Levels with RoD Services***

Findings revealed very high satisfaction ratings for customer service, timeliness, and accessibility, with customer service emerging as the most positively rated factor. This result supports Oliver's (1980) Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, which posits that

when service performance exceeds expectations, customers experience high levels of satisfaction. The exceptional rating for customer service suggests that interpersonal interactions, professionalism, and assistance provided by RoD personnel play a crucial role in shaping positive customer experiences.

The findings align with Cao et al. (2018), who found that service quality directly influences customer engagement and loyalty, particularly when employees exhibit courtesy, attentiveness, and problem-solving abilities. Similar studies by Zhou et al. (2019) further emphasize that positive client interactions significantly enhance satisfaction levels, even in traditionally bureaucratic institutions.

The dimension of timeliness was also rated very high, although slightly lower than customer service. This suggests that while the RoD has made efficiency improvements, some clients may still experience delays in service processing. Research by Villanueva, Alejandro, and Ga-an (2023) on service efficiency in government institutions indicates that bottlenecks in bureaucratic procedures often create discrepancies in service expectations and experiences. Addressing these minor service delays through streamlined processing workflows and digital innovations could further enhance timeliness and efficiency.

Accessibility was similarly rated very high, indicating that customers found RoD services easy to access. This supports the insights of Han et al. (2021), who explored the role of digital platforms in government service accessibility, demonstrating that efficient, multi-channel service delivery models contribute to higher customer satisfaction. The positive evaluation of accessibility also aligns with the post-pandemic shift toward hybrid service models, which integrate physical office services with digital transaction platforms.

For correlation analysis, a p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant, indicating a strong relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. This analytical approach ensured that findings were both statistically sound and practically relevant in evaluating service delivery effectiveness.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of this study have significant theoretical, practical, and policy-related implications for public service institutions, particularly the Registry of Deeds (RoD), as well as for future research on service quality and customer satisfaction in government agencies.

### ***Theoretical Implications***

This study reinforces the applicability of the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988) in assessing service quality within government institutions. The strong correlations between service quality dimensions (assurance, reliability, empathy,

tangibility, and responsiveness) and customer satisfaction indicators (customer service, timeliness, and accessibility) validate the model's effectiveness beyond private-sector applications.

Furthermore, the findings align with Oliver's (1980) Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, which posits that customer satisfaction is derived from the extent to which service performance meets or exceeds expectations. Given the very high service quality ratings, it can be inferred that the RoD has effectively surpassed client expectations, fostering greater trust and confidence in its services.

By providing empirical evidence that assurance, reliability, and empathy significantly drive customer satisfaction, this study expands the discourse on service quality frameworks in the post-pandemic government service sector. It highlights the growing importance of digital transformation, accessibility, and personalized service interactions in shaping modern customer expectations.

### ***Practical Implications***

The very high service quality ratings suggest that the RoD has successfully adapted to post-pandemic challenges, maintaining a high level of professionalism, reliability, and customer engagement. However, slightly lower scores for timeliness and tangibility indicate that, while customers are satisfied overall, there are still areas for improvement in operational efficiency and infrastructure development.

- **Service Excellence and Trust Building:** The high ratings for assurance indicate that RoD personnel are perceived as knowledgeable, professional, and trustworthy. Maintaining this high level of service is crucial for fostering long-term public trust and satisfaction.
- **Enhancing Service Responsiveness:** While service quality ratings were high, further improvements in responsiveness and timeliness can enhance customer experiences, particularly by streamlining processing times and response mechanisms.
- **Targeted Improvements Based on Educational Backgrounds:** The study found that educational attainment significantly influenced perceptions of service quality. Clients with higher educational qualifications may have different expectations compared to those with lower levels of education. This suggests a need for targeted service enhancements, such as clearer communication strategies and educational outreach initiatives.
- **Optimizing Customer Service Training:** Given that customer service had the highest satisfaction ratings, maintaining staff training programs focused on

interpersonal skills, problem resolution, and client engagement will be essential for sustaining service excellence.

- **Leveraging Digitalization for Service Accessibility:** The results emphasize the importance of service accessibility in shaping overall customer satisfaction. Enhancing digital platforms, online appointment systems, and information dissemination can help improve service reach and efficiency.
- **Enhancing Timeliness:** The findings suggest the need for process optimization strategies, such as implementing automated queue management systems, digital service portals, and streamlined document processing workflows to minimize delays.
- **Improving Tangibility:** Investments in modern office facilities, signage, and digital transaction platforms could enhance the physical service environment, improving customer perceptions of quality.
- **Training and Development:** Since empathy and assurance were key drivers of customer satisfaction, further staff training programs in customer relations, dispute resolution, and digital literacy could help sustain and enhance service quality.

These practical insights are especially relevant for service-oriented government agencies, where bureaucratic inefficiencies often hinder customer satisfaction. Implementing these improvements can help the RoD and similar institutions enhance service delivery, client trust, and institutional reputation.

### ***Policy Implications***

The study's findings provide empirical evidence for policymakers and government administrators to support the formulation of customer-centered service policies in public sector agencies. Specifically, the strong relationship between reliability, responsiveness, and customer satisfaction highlights the importance of institutional reforms in service delivery models.

- **Digital Transformation:** Policymakers should prioritize integrating technology into government services, ensuring that online service platforms, digital record-keeping, and remote transaction processing are widely accessible.
- **Performance Monitoring:** Establishing regular service quality audits and customer feedback mechanisms could help identify areas for continuous improvement, ensuring that government services remain adaptive to evolving customer expectations.

- **Service Standardization:** The study underscores the importance of standardized service procedures across different RoD offices, ensuring that service quality remains consistent regardless of location or transaction type.

## CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This study examined the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the Registry of Deeds (RoD) post-pandemic, using the SERVQUAL model as a theoretical framework. The findings revealed that service quality was perceived as very high across all dimensions, with assurance, reliability, and empathy receiving the highest ratings. Additionally, customer satisfaction levels in terms of customer service, timeliness, and accessibility were also very high, demonstrating that the RoD has effectively maintained service excellence in its operations.

A significant positive correlation was established between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction levels, confirming that higher service quality leads to improved customer satisfaction. Among the dimensions, reliability, and empathy showed the strongest relationships with customer service and accessibility, emphasizing the critical role of dependability and personalized service interactions in shaping positive client experiences.

These findings align with the SERVQUAL model and previous research, reinforcing that customers value professionalism, accuracy, and responsiveness in public service transactions. However, while overall perceptions were highly favorable, timeliness and tangibility were rated slightly lower, suggesting areas for improvement, particularly in streamlining processes and enhancing service infrastructure.

Given these results, the study rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The evidence confirms that continued investment in service improvements—such as digital transformation, enhanced staff training, and operational efficiency—will further strengthen customer trust and satisfaction in the Registry of Deeds and similar government institutions.

Future research should explore longitudinal analyses of service quality trends and the impact of digital innovations on customer satisfaction to provide deeper insights into sustained service excellence in public administration.

## RECOMMENDATION

While this study provides substantial insights into service quality and customer satisfaction in the RoD, future research should explore additional variables that may influence customer perceptions, such as service affordability, transaction complexity, and comparative studies with private-sector service models.

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Future studies could examine how service quality perceptions change over time, particularly as digital innovations and process improvements are implemented.
- **Comparative Analyses:** Investigating service quality differences between government agencies and private service providers could offer deeper insights into best practices for public administration.
- **Impact of Digitalization:** As government agencies continue to digitize services, further research is needed to assess how digital platforms enhance or hinder service quality and customer satisfaction.

By addressing these future research directions, scholars can contribute to the continuous improvement of public service delivery models, ensuring that government institutions remain responsive, transparent, and efficient in meeting the needs of their constituents.

The study's findings provide valuable insights into service quality management in government institutions, particularly in the Registry of Deeds. The results suggest that high service quality significantly enhances customer satisfaction, emphasizing the need for sustained improvements in service efficiency, digital transformation, and customer-centered policies. These theoretical, practical, and policy implications offer actionable recommendations for both government agencies and future research, ensuring the continued enhancement of public service delivery in a post-pandemic era.

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## DECLARATIONS

### *Conflict of Interest*

The author declares no conflict of interest in conducting or publishing this study.

### *Informed Consent*

All participants provided informed consent in the study.

### *Ethics Approval*

Approval was obtained from the appropriate institutional review board, ensuring compliance with research ethics guidelines.

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