

Research Article

The Impact of Employee Competence and Organizational Climate on Service Satisfaction and Its Effect on Trust at the Animal Health Center (Puskesmas) in Serang City

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Abstract: Public trust in public services is an important factor for the sustainability of service delivery. At the Serang City Animal Health Center (Puskesmas), trust can be developed through service satisfaction, which is influenced by the quality of human resources and the organizational climate. This study aims to analyze the effects of Employee Competence (X1) and Organizational Climate (X2) on Service Satisfaction (Y) and their impact on users' Trust (Z) at the Serang City Puskesmas. This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The population consisted of 224 service users, and a sample of 144 respondents was obtained, including 118 passive users and 26 active users. Data were collected using a 1–5 Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS. The results indicate that Employee Competence has a significant effect on Service Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.664$; $p = 0.000$), and Organizational Climate also has a significant effect on Service Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.497$; $p = 0.000$). Service Satisfaction significantly affects trust ($\beta = 0.473$; $p = 0.000$). Employee Competence and Organizational Climate also directly affect trust ($\beta = 0.335$; $p = 0.000$) and ($\beta = 0.293$; $p = 0.000$), respectively. In conclusion, improving employee competence and creating a conducive organizational climate can enhance service satisfaction, thereby strengthening users' trust.

Keywords: Employee Competence; Organizational Climate; PLS-SEM; Service Satisfaction; Trust.

1. Introduction

Public trust in service institutions is a vital outcome of effective public management. In the context of the Animal Health Center (Puskesmas) in Serang City, establishing this trust is paramount for ensuring community participation in animal health programs. However, maintaining high service satisfaction remains a challenge due to varying levels of employee competence and organizational dynamics.

Previous literature presents inconsistent findings; while some studies suggest that organizational climate significantly boosts service quality, others find negligible direct impacts on satisfaction variables. This research seeks to bridge this gap by examining how internal organizational factors—competence and climate—interact to drive satisfaction and ultimate trust among service users in a specialized public health sector.

2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review

Employee Competence

Employee competence refers to a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional attitudes that enable individuals to perform tasks effectively. Competent employees tend to provide accurate, responsive, and reliable services, thereby improving user satisfaction and organizational performance.

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate describes employees' shared perceptions regarding organizational policies, leadership support, communication patterns, and work environment conditions. A positive climate encourages motivation, collaboration, and commitment, which ultimately enhances service quality.

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Service Satisfaction

Service satisfaction reflects users' evaluations of their service experiences. It represents a key indicator of perceived service quality and determines behavioral intentions such as loyalty, compliance, and positive institutional perception.

Trust

Trust is defined as the willingness of users to rely on a service provider based on perceived competence, integrity, and credibility. In public service contexts, trust is a crucial determinant of citizen participation and policy compliance.

3. Proposed Method

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative survey design. The population consisted of all 224 service users of Puskesmas Serang City. A proportional sampling technique was applied to obtain 144 respondents representing both active and passive users.

Measurement Variables

The research variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale: Employee Competence (X1), Organizational Climate (X2), Service Satisfaction (Y), trust (Z)

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. The analytical procedure consisted of:

First step: evaluating the measurement model to assess validity and reliability; Second step: evaluating the structural model to test hypotheses; Third step: examining mediation effects.

4. Results and Discussion

Employee competence significantly influences service satisfaction ($\beta = 0.664$; $p < 0.001$), indicating that professional skills and knowledge strongly determine user satisfaction levels. Organizational climate also significantly affects service satisfaction ($\beta = 0.497$; $p < 0.001$), suggesting that supportive work environments improve employee performance and service delivery.

Service satisfaction significantly affects trust ($\beta = 0.473$; $p < 0.001$), confirming that satisfaction is a direct determinant of public trust. In addition, employee competence directly influences trust ($\beta = 0.335$; $p < 0.001$), and organizational climate directly affects trust ($\beta = 0.293$; $p < 0.001$). These findings demonstrate that internal organizational factors influence trust both directly and indirectly.

Mediation testing indicates that service satisfaction mediates the relationship between competence, organizational climate, and trust. Thus, improvements in internal organizational quality will be more effective in strengthening trust when they simultaneously enhance user satisfaction. These results support theoretical assumptions that internal service capacity determines external institutional credibility.

5. Comparison

Compared with previous studies, this research provides a more comprehensive model by integrating competence, organizational climate, satisfaction, and trust into a single structural framework. While earlier research confirmed individual relationships among these variables, this study demonstrates their simultaneous interaction and mediation mechanism within public veterinary service institutions.

6. Conclusions

This study concludes that employee competence and organizational climate significantly influence service satisfaction, which in turn affects trust. Both competence and organizational climate also directly influence trust. Service satisfaction acts as a mediating variable that strengthens these relationships. The findings highlight that improving human resource quality and fostering a supportive organizational climate are essential strategies for enhancing service satisfaction and building public trust.

Future studies should include additional variables such as leadership style, service system quality, or organizational culture and test the model across other public service sectors to enhance generalizability.

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