# ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA CHẤT LƯỢNG DỊCH VỤ CÔNG ĐẾN SỰ HÀI LÒNG VÀ TIN CẬY CỦA CÔNG DÂN ĐỐI VỚI CÁC CƠ QUAN HÀNH CHÍNH NHÀ NƯỚC - ĐIỀU TRA THỰC TẾ TẠI HÀ NỘI

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## Tóm tắt

Nghiên cứu nhằm phân tích tác động của chất lượng dịch vụ công đến sự hài lòng và tin tưởng của người dân đối với cơ quan hành chính Nhà nước tại Hà Nội bằng phương pháp định lượng. Từ số liệu của 475 công dân sử dụng dịch vụ công của các cơ quan hành chính nhà nước tại Hà Nội, mô hình phương trình cấu trúc (SEM) được áp dụng để đánh giá tác động của chất lượng dịch vụ công đến sự hài lòng và tin cậy của người dân. Kết quả cho thấy mối quan hệ tích cực giữa chất lượng dịch vụ công với sự hài lòng và tin tưởng của người dân. Chất lượng dịch vụ công xuất sắc sẽ làm tăng lòng tin của người dân đối với các cơ quan hành chính Nhà nước. Kết quả của nghiên cứu cho thấy một số tác động quan trọng đối với các cơ quan quản lý Nhà nước trong việc tăng cường sự hài lòng và tin cây của người dân.

Từ khóa: Chất lượng dịch vụ công, sự hài lòng, cơ quan hành chính nhà nước, niềm tin.

## IMPACT OF PUBLIC SERVICE QUALITY ON CITIZEN SATISFACTION AND TRUST WITH STATE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES – AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION IN HANOI

#### Abstract

The study aims to analyze the impact of public service quality on citizen satisfaction and trust with State administrative agencies in Hanoi using quantitative methods. From data provided by 475 citizens using public services of State administrative agencies in Hanoi, the structural equation model (SEM) was applied to evaluate the impact of public service quality on citizen satisfaction and trust. The results show a positive relationship between public service quality with citizen satisfaction and trust. The excellent public service quality will increase citizen trust with State administrative agencies. The result of the study suggests some significant implications for State administration agencies to increase citizen satisfaction and trust.

**Keywords:** Public service quality, satisfaction, State administrative agencies, trust. *JEL classification: J88.* 

#### 1. Introduction

Providing quality service is one of the key strategies for the success and sustainability of public or private organizations (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Zeithaml et al., 2009). Currently, public organizations are facing the pressure of increasing demand for quality and effective public services of the people in society. Public service is a component of activities in government operations in countries to achieve economic, social, and human development goals (Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., 2010). If public services are provided inefficiently, it will reduce the government's power to implement policies or seriously affect the stability of the government and citizen satisfaction.

Trust is referred to as the underpinning of all human contacts and institutional interactions and the willingness of one party to rely on the other party to keep its commitments (Blind, 2007; Tonkiss et al., 2000). Hence, trust in government is a necessary precondition for representative democracy (Meer, 2017; Meer & Zmerli, 2017). Trust is an asset that all organizations, public or private, must thoroughly understand and properly

manage to succeed in today's complex operating environment. Garbarino & Johnson (2009) indicated that citizen satisfaction plays an important part in citizen trust.

Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam. Hence, the public sector plays an important role in the development and growth of the economy by performing official duties. The operational ability of the State administrative apparatus is significant for the maintenance of social order and the economy as well as the development of Hanoi. However, the State administrative agencies are facing difficulties in providing public services to citizens consist of administrative procedures are complicated. The civil servant has limited qualifications and is weak in communication attitude with the citizen. The time for handling administrative procedures takes many hours. So, it will reduce citizen satisfaction and trust in government. In addition, the survey results of the Ministry of Home affairs in 2020 pointed out that the satisfaction index of public administrative services (SIPAS) of Hanoi City reached 85.15%, ranked 33<sup>rd</sup>/ 63 provinces and cities of Vietnam. Although the results of the City's Satisfaction

Index in 2020 are among the provinces with the highest sustainability index since the assessment (in 2017), up 19 steps compared to 2019 and 5/5 criteria are higher compared to 2019. However, through analysis of index results, some criteria and component criteria are lower than the national average. Hence, it is necessary to study the impact of public service quality on citizen satisfaction and trust with State administrative agencies in Hanoi.

The study aims to analyze the impact of public service quality on citizen satisfaction and trust with State administrative agencies in Hanoi. Based on the analysis results, the study suggests some policy implications to enhance citizen satisfaction and trust.

# 2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses 2.1. Theoretical Background

2.1.1. Public service quality and components of public service quality

Edvardsson et al. (1994) argued that service quality is a service that meets the expectations of customers and satisfies their needs. Parasuraman et al. (1988) defined service quality as the difference between customer expectations about the service and their assessment of the service they receive. Service quality is assessed in two aspects include the process of service delivery and the results of the service (Lehtinen & Lehtinen, 1982). Unlike Lehtinen & Lehtinen (1982), Gronroos (1984) indicated that service quality includes technical quality and functional quality. Technical quality reflects what the customers obtain from the service experience. Hence, it takes into account the effectiveness of the service provided to the customers. On the other hand, functional quality reflects the perception of how service is delivered. In addition, service quality is a customer's assessment of the better service. It is a form of attitude and the consequences from comparing with what is expected and received (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Decree No. 43 of the Government of Vietnam defined public administration service as related to law enforcement activities, not intended for profit, granted by State administrative agencies to organizations and individuals as legally valid papers in the field managed by that State agency. Public administration service is performed by State administrative agencies related to service the rights and obligations of citizens and offering on state management (Hai & Hau, 2010).

Thus, public administration services are activities of State administrative agencies to the people according to law and not intended for

profit. In which, citizens performing this service have no choice but to receive compulsory services under the law. So, the quality of public administration services is also not out of the general characteristics of service quality.

In the study, the authors use criteria to measure public service quality the following Decision No. 2640 of the Ministry of Home affairs includes (i) access to service; (ii) administrative procedure; (iii) the civil servant directly handling the work; (iv) the results of public administration service; (v) receiving and handling comments, reflections, petitions.

Access to service: related to citizen reception area includes seats, equipment, conditions for the citizen to access the service, etc.

Administrative procedure: Administrative procedure is the order, implementation method, dossier, requirements, and conditions prescribed by a State agency to handle a specific job related to an individual or organization.

The civil servant directly handling the work: related to the attitude of civil servants in dealing citizens' problems.

The results of public administration service: related to documents and administrative papers that citizens receive from State administrative agencies.

Receiving and handling comments, reflections, petitions: related to receiving and solving the opinions of the citizen.

#### 2.1.2. Citizen satisfaction

Tse & Wilton (1988) argued that customer satisfaction is the reactivity of the customer to measuring the difference between the wishes and the actual performance of the product. Bachelet (1995) defined customer satisfaction as an emotional response of customers compared to their experience with a product or service. Customer satisfaction is the feeling of satisfaction or disappointment, comparing the results obtained from the product (service) with their expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2009). Oliver (1997) pointed out that customer satisfaction includes positive satisfaction, stable satisfaction, and passive satisfaction.

Hence, the customer satisfaction level is the constant between the result received and their expectations. If the actual outcome is lower than expected, the customer will not be glad. If the actual result is equal to expectations, the customer will be satisfied; and if the realistic consequential exceeds expectations, the customer will be satisfied, joyful, and excited.

In public administration service, citizen satisfaction is the result of the perception and awareness of the service performance compared to the citizen's expectations.

#### 2.1.3. Citizen Trust

Currently, trust with the service of State administrative agencies is receiving much attention. Trust is a general concept rather than satisfaction and serves as a handy and accessible indicator. The studies in Western Europe consider trust to be indispensable for the Government of Western Europe to operate.

Trust is one of the most valuable social capitals, and if it is flawed heavy expenses will impose on the political system. Declining public trust is one of the core issues in present government policies (Ruscio, 1996).

Denhardt's opinion (2002), no government failure such as judicial error, inefficiency, waste, inadequate taxes, or regulations can undermine the foundation of a government. Except for, the citizens think that public organizations seek their benefits rather than treating them as a customer. If citizens have those thoughts for a long time, they will lose trust in State administrative agencies of government (Guiso et al., 2003). The most important thing is to create trust and loyalty in citizens. If the citizens do not believe in government (Levi & Stoker, 2000), they will not participate in difficult decisions, especially decisions that involve sacrifice and devotion (Schyns & Koop, 2010).

Trust contains an essential theoretical and practical significance for the study of public organizations (Nachmias, 1985), and is a mechanism to maintain integrity and to create unity in the social systems (Blau, 1964), and is a facilitator for improving the efficiency of organizations (Bennis & Nanus. developer of democratic values and a factor in the efficiency and effectiveness of social groups. Trust leads to effective performance because it encourages data interaction between organizations and citizens, and it plays an undeniable role in the macro-effectiveness of organizations (Culbert & McDonough, 1985). Thus, trust is a link between public organizations and citizens (Warkentin et al., 2002; Welch et al., 2005).

## 2.2. Hypotheses

2.2.1. The relationship between public service quality an citizen satisfaction

Wahab (2005) indicated that good service quality will lead to citizen satisfaction. The studies of Ravichandran et al. (2010), Kheng et al. (2010) agree with Wahab (2005), they argued that service quality affects satisfaction. However, Nilsson (2006) showed that service quality has no significant effect on citizen satisfaction.

Zeithaml & Bitner (2000), Tho (2003) indicated that customer satisfaction is a general concept that expresses their satisfaction when consuming a service, while service quality only focuses on the factors of service quality. Service quality is an essential factor that affects customer satisfaction. It is very reasonable because the service quality will increase customer satisfaction with products or services (Manullang, 2008).

Hence, the studies have proven that perceptions of service quality lead to customer satisfaction or service quality are the main factor that affects satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor 1992). The higher the quality of the service leads to having increased customer satisfaction. There is a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. So, service quality is the assessment of customer satisfaction. Therefore, the first hypothesis proposed in the study is:

H1: Public service quality has a positive impact on citizen satisfaction.

2.2.2. The relationship between public service quality and citizen trust

There are many studies on the impact of service quality on citizen trust with different results. Kotler's opinion (2007), the services provided by an entity are an effort to build citizen trust. Morgan & Hunt (2004) said that the ability to communicate effectively could create citizen trust. Effective communication will help people improve their knowledge and understand the importance of building trust in an agency. Regular communication and high quality will produce a higher level of credit. It means that service quality is an essential factor affecting citizens' trust (Jasfar, 2005; Kotler, 2007).

Nabaasa & Musinguzi (2009) concluded that public service quality has a significant impact on citizen trust in the government. Therefore, the second hypothesis put forward in the study is:

H2: Public services quality has a positive effect on citizen trust.

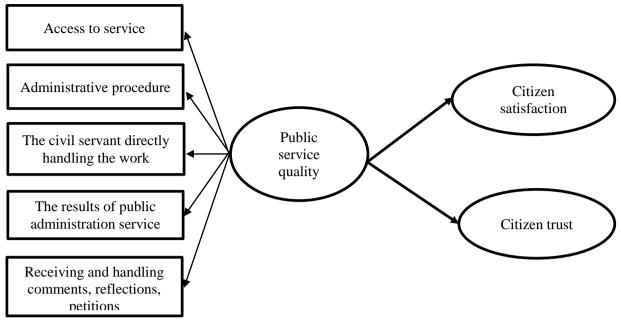


Figure 1: Study Framework

## 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Measures of study

Preliminary scale is built based on the factors in the study framework and inherited from domestic study. In which, the scale of public service quality includes 5 factors of Ministry of Home affairs with twenty-two observed variables. For the scale of citizen satisfaction and trust, the authors synthesised and built seven observed variables. Besides, the observed variables using the Likert scale of five levels. The survey items for all the variables used in the study are presented in table 2.

#### 3.2. Sample size

Hair et al. (2014) said that the minimum sample size to use exploratory factor analysis is 50, preferably 100 or more. The ratio of observations on an analytic variable of 5:1 or 10:1 will provide the minimum sample size of the study to ensure reliability. In this study, the authors use the 10:1 rule. The study has 29 observed variables, so the number of needed samples size is 29\*10 = 290.

The study uses a convenient sampling method for citizens using public service at twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi. The authors selected twelve district-level People Committees of Hanoi city to survey because of their high population density. Therefore, the demand for public services is grand. To avoid the case of invalid answer sheets, the authors take the sample size of 500 respondents. After cleaning the data, the study collects 475 valid answer sheets with a return rate of 95.0%. The survey period is from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Survey forms

Source: The authors propose send directly to citizens using public service at twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi.

#### 3.3. Data analysis

The obtained data will be screened and analyzed with SPSS version 26 and AMOS version 20 software. The study used analytical including descriptive methods statistics, reliability test of the scale by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) uses to show the relationship between public service quality, citizen satisfaction, and citizen trust. To evaluate the reliability test of scale through two tools as Alpha and exploratory factor Cronbach's analysis. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient uses to eliminate "junk" items. The items with a total correlation coefficient lower than 0.3 will not retain. The items will select if Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is higher than 0.6 (Tabachnick & 2013). Exploratory factor analysis considers observed variables with transmission coefficients less than 0.5 and extracts two factors with a difference of less than 0.3 that will not retain. Eigenvalue (representing the variation explained by a factor) is greater than 1, and the total variance extracted is more than 50%. Besides, the KMO test and Bartlett test evaluate the reasonableness of the data (Hair et al., 1998). For CFA and SEM analysis, the research model is suitable and good with the research data if the probability value < 0.05; CMIN/df ≤ 2; TLI và  $CFI \ge 0.9$ ; RMSEA  $\le 0.08$  (Hair et al., 2010).

## 4. Findings and Discussion

#### 4.1. Sample characteristics

The results showed that more than half of the citizens (62.1%) were males, and 37.9% were females. In terms of their age, 82.1% were aged 45 years and below. The result showed that the education level of the citizens using public administrative services in the Hanoi capital is higher than the average level because 55.6% of citizens have bachelor's or master's degrees, and 23.8% of them have intermediate education and college qualifications. Related to occupation, employees or staff working in enterprises (all

kinds of enterprises) are 33.5%. They are freelancers and account for 19.6%, and account for 17.3% are civil servants working in State organizations, 17% of the participants are students, and others. About income, 51.8% of the survey citizens have a monthly salary of 5 to 10 million VND per month. Overall, the citizens described as males (62.1%), not more than 45 years of age (82.1%), with university degrees (55.6%), employees (33.5%), and with an income of not more than 10 million VND (66.1%). Table 1 summarizes the result of sample characteristics.

**Table 1:** Sample Characteristics

	Characteristics	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	295	62.1
	Female	180	37.9
Age	Under 25 years old	101	21.3
	From 25 to 45 years old	289	60.8
	From 46 to 60 years old	57	12.0
	More than 60 years old	28	5.9
Education	High school	98	20.6
	Intermediate education and college	113	23.8
	University	250	52.6
	Post-graduate	14	3.0
Occupation	Pensioner	60	12.6
_	Freelance	93	19.6
	Employee	159	33.5
	Civil servant	82	17.3
	Student	51	10.7
	Others	30	6.3
Income	Below 5 million VND	68	14.3
	From 5 to 10 million VND	246	51.8
	From 11 to 15 million VND	105	22.1
	More than 15 million VND	56	11.8

Source: Authors' Analysis

#### 4.2. Reliability Test of Scales

The results show that the lowest Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.788, and the highest is 0.833 (Table 2). Compared with standard 0.6, all observed items of the scale are internally consistent. The corrected item-total correlation coefficient is higher than 0.3. Cronbach's alpha if items deleted of all 29 observed items is lower than Cronbach's Alpha value, which indicates that no items are removed. All scales achieve two reliability and discriminant validity. Hence, the scale is good and meets the reliable requirement for exploratory factor analysis.

#### 4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The study uses the Principal Axis Factoring extraction method along with Promax rotation. The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is

conducted with 29 observed items from seven factors include access to service; administrative procedure; the civil servant directly handling the work; the results of public administration service; receiving and handling comments, reflections, petitions, citizen satisfaction, and citizen trust. The EFA obtained results with the coefficient KMO = 0.821, Bartlett Test is statistically significant with Sig. = 0.000 (< 0.05), and seven factors were extracted with Eigenvalue = 1.375, Sums of Squared Loadings = 80.26% (higher than 50%). And the seven factors can explain about 80.26% of the variance of all the variables from the total variance explained. Table 2 summarizes the result of the reliability test of scale and exploratory factor analysis.

**Table 2:** Survey items and reliability for measures in the study

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Abbr.	Items	Source	Cronbach's Alpha	Item loadings				
	Administrative procedure							
AP3	The composition of dossiers that citizens must submit is correct.	Ministry of Home	0.801	0.838				
AP4	The fee is correct.	affairs		0.833				
AP2	Administrative procedure is exactly publicized.	(2017)		0.822				
AP5	The time for handling administrative procedures is right.	(===-/		0.805				
AP1	Administrative procedure is public.	aami'aa		0.790				
DD2	The results of public administration		0.014	0.640				
RP2	The results are fill-in information.	Ministry	0.814	0.640				
RP1	The results are correct.	of Home		0.633				
RP3	The results with accurate information.	affairs (2017)		0.626				
	Receiving and handling comments, reflecti							
RH2	It is easy for people to make comments, reflections, and petitions to State administration agencies.	Ministry of Home	0.822	0.786				
RH4	The State administrative agencies announce the results of handling comments, reflections, and petitions promptly for citizens.	affairs (2017)		0.779				
RH3	State administrative agencies receive and actively handle comments, reflections, and petitions of a citizen.			0.771				
RH1	State administrative agencies that arrange forms of receiving, commenting, reflecting, and petitioning of the citizen.			0.769				
	Access to service							
AS3	Equipment to serve citizens at the agency is modern.	Ministry	0.833	0.724				
AS4	Equipment for citizens at the agency is easy to use.	of Home		0.718				
AS2	Equipment to serve citizens at the agency is full.	affairs		0.715				
AS1	There are enough seats for waiting at State administrative agencies.	(2017)		0.711				
	The civil servant directly handling the	ne work						
CDS1	Civil servants have a polite communication attitude.	Ministry	0.826	0.816				
CDS5	Civil servants guide easy-to-understand declaration of dossiers.	of Home affairs		0.811				
CDS6	Civil servants comply with regulations in handling jobs.	(2017)		0.809				
CDS4	Civil servants guide the declaration of dossiers religiously.	(2017)		0.805				
CDS2	Civil servants pay attention to listening to the opinions of the citizens.			0.798				
CDS3	Civil servants respond, fully explain the opinions of the			0.789				
	citizens.							
CTI 1	Citizen Trust	C 16	0.00=	0.024				
CT1	You feel happy to spend the rest of your career at the agency.	Self- developed	0.805	0.824				
CT2	You realise that all the problems of the agency are also your problems.			0.813				
CT3	You feel that you belong to the agency.			0.808				
CT4	You feel a strong emotional bond with the agency.  Citizen satisfaction			0.801				
CS3	Satisfied with the quality of public administration services.	Self- developed	0.788	0.825				
CS2	Appreciate the quality of handling dossiers.	_		0.817				
CS1	Satisfied with the service attitude of civil servants.			0.803				
CSI	Satisfied with the service attitude of civil servants.		Source: Auth					

Source: Authors' Analysis

#### 4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The results of confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model scale show that the weights of the observed variables are all standard ( $\geq 0.5$ ). Hence, the scales reach convergent validity. The results show that the model has 1352 degrees of freedom, the test value CMIN (Chi-square) = 521.135 with the probability value = 0.000; the

test value CMIN = 2.543 < 3 and the Goodness of Fit index (GFI) = 0.901, the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.907, the Comparative Fit index (CFI) = 0.913 greater than 0.9, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.030 less than 0.08. So, the research model is consistent with the research data. Figure 2 summarizes the results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

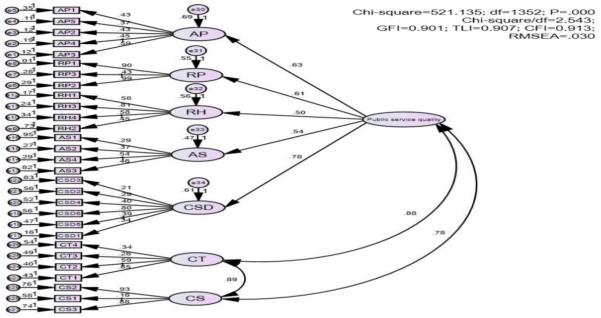


Figure 2:The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model scale

Source: Authors' Analysis

#### 4.5. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Based on the outcomes of the confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model scale, the results of the structural equation modeling are consistent with the research data. That is shown by the test value CMIN = 2.734 < 3.0 and the Goodness of Fit index (GFI) = 0.905, the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.912, the Comparative Fit index (CFI) = 0.923 greater than 0.9; the root

mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.035 is less than 0.08.

At the same time, based on the analysis results, the probability value of the impact relationships between the factors is less than 0.05. Hence, the relationship between public service quality, citizen satisfaction, and citizen trust is statistically significant in the structural equation modeling (SEM). Table 3 summarizes the model results.

**Table 3:** The results of Regression Weights

	Correlati	on	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
Citizen satisfaction	←	Public service quality	0.434	0.032	3.725	0.000
Citizen Trust	←	Public service quality	0.432	0.021	3.615	0.000
AP	←	Public service quality	0.411	0.054	3.595	0.000
RP	←	Public service quality	0.402	0.039	1.821	0.000
RH	←	Public service quality	0.398	0.010	0.704	0.000
AS	←	Public service quality	0.400	0.046	1.433	0.000
CSD	←	Public service quality	0.407	0.013	1.235	0.000

Source: Authors' Analysis

The results pointed out that public service quality has a positive impact on citizen satisfaction and trust with twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi. The results are similar to the studies of Ravichandran et al. (2010), Kheng et al.

(2010), Nabaasa & Musinguzi (2009). In which, the factor of administrative procedure has the highest impact on citizen satisfaction and trust at the twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi with the standardized estimate of 0.411. It

means, if the administrative procedure is simple, it will improve citizen satisfaction and trust with administrative agencies. Along with administrative procedure, the civil servant directly handling the work is an important factor impact on citizen satisfaction and trust at the twelve districtlevel People's Committees in Hanoi with 95% confidence and the standardised estimate of 0.407. Therefore, if civil servants have a polite attitude to the citizen, they will feel respected. Hence, they are satisfied and trust the government. Following by the results of public administration service have a significant impact on citizen satisfaction and trust at the twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi with a standardised estimate of 0.402. It explains that if the results paid to citizens are accurate, complete, and following regulations, it will improve gladdening of citizens and trust. In contrast, if the results are inaccurate, it will be a nuisance for the citizen to use those papers to solve citizen trust in Hence. administrative agencies will decline. Furthermore, the factors of receiving and handling comments. reflections, petitions has a significant impact on citizen satisfaction and trust at the twelve districtlevel People's Committees in Hanoi. If citizens' complaint is solved quickly and reasonably, citizen satisfaction and trust will increase.

#### 5. Conclusion

The relationship between public service quality, citizen satisfaction, and citizen trust analysis through the data set obtained by the direct survey method of citizens using public service of twelve district-level People's Committees in Hanoi. Confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling analyses were performed to confirm the relationship between the constructs in the research model. The analysis results indicated that the components of public service quality has a positive impact on citizen satisfaction and citizen trust. Based on the obtained results, the study provides some policy implications to help the district-level People's Committees in Hanoi improve citizen satisfaction and trust.

First, with the importance of the administrative procedure, district-level People's Committees need to handle administrative procedures with a one-stop shop mechanism to ensure that citizens can deal with issues that can be addressed consistently.

Second, State administrative agencies need to train civil servants in polite behavior and listening skills, limiting attitudes that make it difficult or troublesome to provide public services.

Third, the results of public administration service should be accurate, consistent with the rules, and not waste much time on citizens.

Fourth, district-level People's Committees need to prepare modern equipment for citizens to easily access public services at the place of receiving and returning dossiers.

Fifth, district-level People's Committees should design public service quality surveys for people to evaluate. In addition, district-level People's Committees need to connect hotlines and email boxes so that people can contribute ideas to the agency.

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