

## **Internal Service Quality In The Non-Profit Sector**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to describe the quality of internal services in the non-profit public sector. The research respondents are permanent employees and non-permanent employees who work at the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council of Lampung Province. Determination of the sample using simple random sampling of 124 respondents. The results of the study show that the existence of internal service quality in the organization can create job satisfaction. In addition, internal service quality can increase employee commitment to work so that the organization can more easily achieve goals with good relationships between organizational units. Thus, job satisfaction also has an impact on employee commitment. This research implies that internal service quality is the main factor that needs attention from the organization. This research is novel in describing the quality of internal services in the government sector. Further research is suggested to expand research on internal service quality in different sectors.*

### **Introduction**

Employees play a very important role in creating a conducive environment to improve performance as a determinant of organizational success and competitive advantage (Pantouvakis, 2012). Employees are the most important aspect in supporting the internal marketing concept. The concept of internal marketing has appeared in marketing literature since the 1970s. Berry (1981) said that to have satisfied customers, the organization must have satisfied employees first. Researchers have argued that competitive advantage can be achieved by paying attention to meeting the needs of employees so as to provide superior service to external customers.

Internal service is part of internal marketing which shows that encouragement and reward (Stauss, 1995) as well as employee empowerment can develop customer orientation (Piercy dan Morgan, 1991). Employees of an organization are customers and service suppliers (Marshall et al., 1998), while the internal marketing orientation integrates various functions, giving birth to a service orientation, enabling employees to serve their customers (Grönroos, 2000). The focus of internal service delivery is to achieve effective internal exchanges between the organization, employee groups, and employees. This exchange in turn contributes to organizational performance (Sharma et al., 2016; Jun dan Cai, 2010). Internal service quality acts as a driver of job satisfaction, productivity, and customer loyalty (Akroush et al., 2013; Zuger, 2004) and generate increased profits (Baalbaki et al., 2008). Internal service quality builds on services provided across internal units and aims to provide quality service to external customers (Nazeer et al., 2014; Jones dan Silvestro, 2010).

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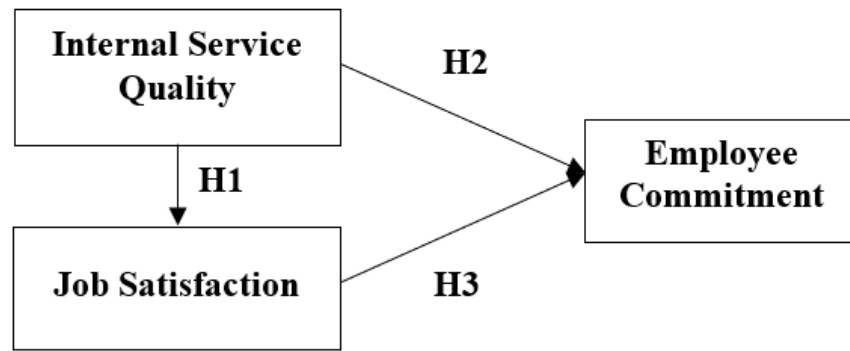
Srivastava and Prakash (2018) stated that organizations must pay attention to internal service quality by understanding and managing service quality among internal customers as well as between employees (Vandermerwe dan Gilbert, 1991). Internal service quality strongly supports the performance of employees who are oriented towards external service quality. Good co-worker relationships will make it easier for employees to provide the best service to the organization and their customers. This study aims to look at the quality of internal services in the non-profit public sector, especially in government agencies.

So far, the services provided by the government sector to the community are considered not good. This is because employees representing the organization have not been able to work optimally in providing services to external customers. On the other hand, Abdullah et al. (2021) said that internal service quality is very important for organizations engaged in the service sector. Internal service quality that is successfully formed in an organization can have an impact on employee commitment to work and job satisfaction they feel. It is supported by Sharma et al. (2016) that employee satisfaction and employee commitment can support employee performance in meeting company goals. However, internal service quality is the main factor behind job satisfaction and employee commitment.

Satisfied employees are generally more productive, creative, and motivated (Lambert et al., 2002). Satisfaction inherent in individuals will create employee commitment to remain in the company where they work or produce better performance such as meeting company targets. (Abilash & Siju, 2021). According to Qureshi et al. (2019), that job satisfaction and commitment to the organization are considered as work attitudes that reflect important work results and bring positivity to employee performance. Work Commitment is an indicator of employee loyalty, professional engagement, and enjoyment of work. This tends to reflect the degree of fulfillment an individual feels from the nature of his job, job description, and organizational attachments.

Much of the available literature relating to service quality refers to government sectors such as Alkrajji (2020); however, there are relatively few studies examining the effect of internal service quality on job satisfaction and employee commitment, especially in developing countries like Indonesia. Therefore, this research is specifically conducted in the government sector to determine the quality of internal services that occur between fellow employees in the work environment of government organizations.

Then, previous research was limited to describing the quality of internal services in the for-profit public sector in Indonesia such as the banking sector (Susanti, 2018), aviation sector (Wahyuni-Td & Fernando, 2016), and the hotel sector (Samadara, 2020). On the other hand, internal service quality is very important in building the success of an organization. Thus, our research will examine internal service quality on job satisfaction and employee commitment in the government sector in Indonesia. Based on this analogy, framework 1 is a research model:



**Figure 1. Framework Research**

### **Theoretical model and hypotheses development**

#### **Internal Service Quality and Job Satisfaction**

According to Sharma et al. (2016), internal service quality can be one of the main drivers of job satisfaction. Internal service quality focuses on satisfying internal customer needs such as relationships among employees. If the internal service quality is poor, it can undermine employee commitment. Berry (1981) states that the occurrence of quality internal services can facilitate organizations to achieve goals more effectively and efficiently. Previous research revealed that internal service quality helps employees to do their job better and makes them feel more satisfied (Abdullah et al., 2021; Chiang & Wu, 2014; Hallowell et al., 1996; Nazeer et al., 2014; Pantouvakis & Mpogiatzidis, 2013; Srivastava & Prakash, 2018).

Employee satisfaction is described as the feeling of joy that employees get from their work (Sharma et al., 2016). Employee satisfaction is recognized as one of the most important drivers of service quality, productivity, and employee loyalty (Matzler & Renzl, 2006). The level of employee satisfaction describes an employee's perception of his work, whether he is willing to work in a particular organization, and to what extent the job is associated with positive and negative aspects (Moorhead & Griffin, 2008). Internal service quality has a significant influence on job satisfaction and improving internal service quality facilitates employees to improve their job performance (Njilo et al., 2020). Thus, the quality of internal services is very important to be developed in the organization in increasing the success of the organization in achieving its goals.

H1 : Internal service quality has a positive effect on job satisfaction

#### **Internal Service Quality and Employee Commitment**

In management research, employee commitment is considered as an important aspect because it has a direct relationship with employees and with organizational performance (Yasmin & Hossain, 2021). Several factors are related to human resources and these factors play an important role in the development of the organization through factors such as employee satisfaction, employee commitment, loyalty, and communication. Higher levels of commitment from employees to their leaders lead to higher levels of productivity. Employee performance and commitment have a direct relationship and high commitment from employees has a positive impact on their work performance (Agustina, Valeriani, & Yunita, 2021).

Over the last few years, the concept of employee commitment has emerged significantly and a strong relationship has been found between employee commitment and internal service quality (Bai et al., 2006; Boshoff & Mels, 1995; Ching et al., 2019). Internal service quality has a positive influence on employee commitment because it can increase employee commitment to a high level and encourage them to work hard for the progress and success of the organization (Rahmawati & Hadian, 2022). Some researchers consider employee commitment as a psychological state of employees that shows a strong relationship between employees and the organization and motivates them to work harder for their employer's organization (Mihardjo et al., 2021). Higher levels of employee commitment are beneficial to the organization because they lead to higher levels of behavioral outcomes and help the organization achieve its overall goals (Abdullah et al., 2021).

H2 : Internal service quality has a positive effect on employee commitment

### **Job Satisfaction and Employee Commitment**

Gunlu et al. (2010) stated that the level of job satisfaction predicts employee commitment. This statement is supported by research results by Bailey et al. (2016); Frye et al. (2019); Mahmood et al. (2019) that job satisfaction affects employee commitment. However, Eleswed and Mohammed (2013) argue that when employees are satisfied with their work, they will be committed to the organization. However, employees who perceive that their needs are not being met develop general dissatisfaction and are increasingly interested in moving to a competitor's workplace (Tziner, 2006) which often results in voluntary termination of employment.

Organizations need to pay attention that happy employees are happy customers (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015). Menurut Aydogdu & Asikgil (2011) that job satisfaction influences the decision to stay or leave the organization. Eleswed & Mohammed (2013) found that when employees are satisfied with their jobs, they become more committed to the organization. However, employees who perceive their needs as not being met develop general dissatisfaction and become increasingly interested in competing in the workplace (Tziner, 2006) which often results in voluntary termination of employment.

It is said that employees with high levels of job satisfaction tend to show higher levels of commitment, while employees who have lower job satisfaction tend to show behavior that is detrimental to the organization. According to Gunlu et al. (2010), employee job satisfaction level predicts their commitment. Studies conducted by Bahadur et al. (2020) concluded that if workers are satisfied with their jobs, they become more committed to their organizations than when they are dissatisfied.

H3 : Job satisfaction has a positive effect on employee commitment

### **Methods**

This was a relational quantitative study that used self-administered survey approach for primary data collection.

### **Research design, settings, and participants**

This research is a quantitative relational study that uses a cross-sectional design approach to examine the proposed relationships. The purpose of this approach is to determine the effect of internal service quality on job satisfaction and employee commitment, as well as job satisfaction on employee commitment in the government sector. LISREL 10.2 software was used for data analysis because this technique was widely adopted by the scientific community,

and being more powerful compared to traditional regression analysis (Amram & Dryer, 2008). Respondents in this study were employees who worked at the Secretariat of the Regional People's Representative Council. Determining the number of respondents is done by a simple random sampling technique (Wulandari, 2023). Furthermore, the questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms to all employees. Finally, a total of 124 responses to the questionnaire will be used for data analysis.

**Measures**

Multi-item measurements are used for construct measurements used in this study to avoid deficiencies that can occur due to the use of a single-item scale (Churchill, 1979; Nunnally et al., 1978). Single-item scales have no appropriate correlation between variables (Churchill, 1979). Furthermore, the Likert scale approach is generally used to collect responses to measure latent constructs (Kent, 2001). In this study, a 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from 5 for “strongly agree” - 1 for “strongly disagree” to measure participants' responses to each research construct.

Internal service quality adopts the conceptual definition proposed by Marshall et al. (1998) namely the perception of the quality of services provided by different organizational units or the people working in the unit and the measurement of indicators of this variable was developed by Caruana dan Pitt (1997). This research adopts the measurement of internal service quality from Prakash and Srivastava (2018) as many as 4 items. Then, job satisfaction adopts the conceptual definition put forward by Locke (1969), namely a positive emotional state as a result of job assessment or work experience and measuring indicators of this variable developed by Price dan Mueller (1981). This research adopts the measurement of job satisfaction from the results of research by Mainardes et al. (2019) as many as 6 items.

Furthermore, employee commitment adopts the conceptual definition proposed by Buchanan (1974); Sheldon (1971); Mahmood et al. (2019) namely the cognitive process for identifying someone in the organization and measuring employee commitment developed by Mowday et al. (1979). This measurement was adopted by Arocas and Camps (2007); Allen et al. (2003); Bozeman and Perrewé (2001). This research adopts the measurement of employee commitment from the results of research by Mahmood et al. (2019) as many as 3 items. Table 1 shows the measurement of research variables and scale items.

**Table 1. Measurements**

<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Scale Items</b>
<b>Internal Service Quality (Srivastava &amp; Prakash, 2018)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High level of commitment</li> <li>2. Knowledgeable and technical competence</li> <li>3. Sense of responsibility and prompt service</li> <li>4. Flexibility in the work</li> </ol>
<b>Job Satisfaction (Mainardes et al., 2019)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I find real joy in my job</li> <li>2. I like my job more than people in general like their jobs</li> <li>3. I rarely get bored with my job</li> <li>4. I would not consider a job change</li> <li>5. On most days, I am excited about my job</li> <li>6. I feel very satisfied with my job</li> </ol>
<b>Employee Commitment (Mahmood et al., 2000)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization to be successful</li> </ol>

2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for
3. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization

## Results and Discussion

First, the study conducted CFA to determine how the measured variables represented the respective constructs (Hair et al., 2018). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) aims to evaluate whether an indicator used together with other indicators explains a latent variable (construct) and is theoretically a valid indicator in each of the latent variable constructs. Then to evaluate the measurement model, verification of convergent and discriminant validity was carried out. For this, a factor loading matrix generated from CFA, as well as AVE and CR is used.

**Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

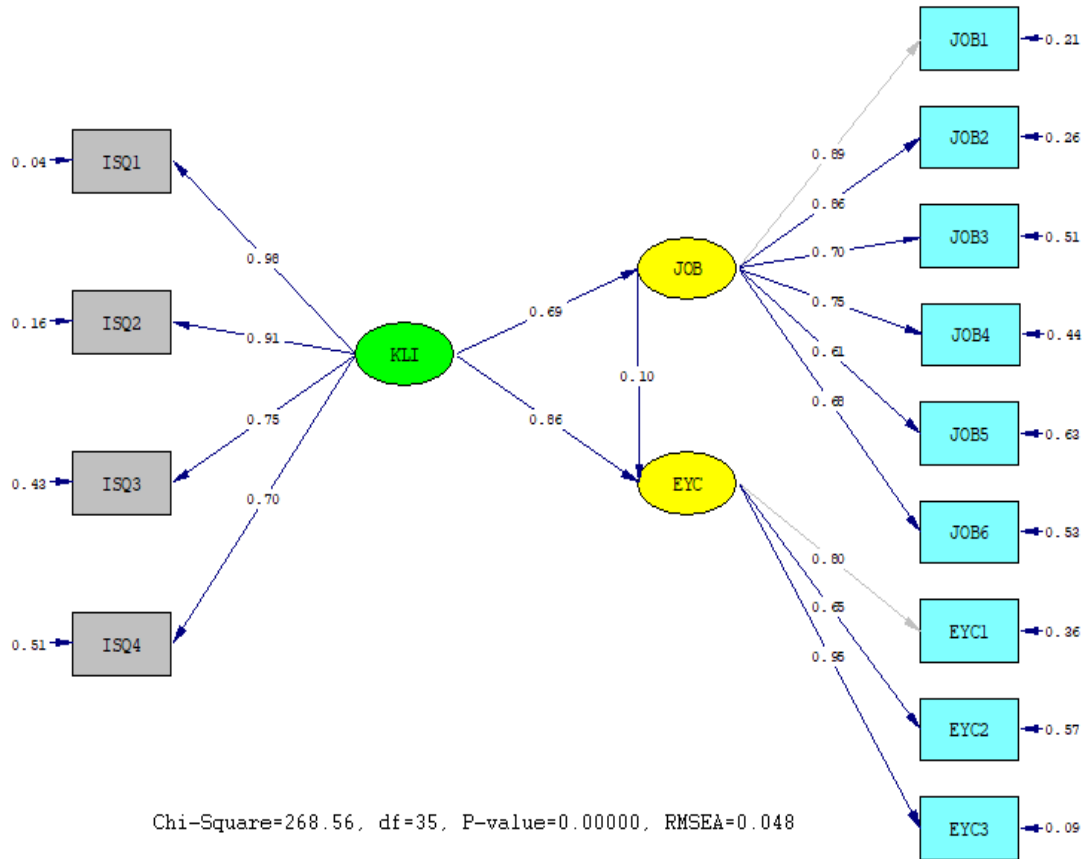
Construct	Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
<b>Internal Service Quality</b>	ISQ1	0.98	<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.71</b>
	ISQ2	0.91		
	ISQ3	0.75		
	ISQ4	0.70		
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	JOB1	0.89	<b>0.89</b>	<b>0.57</b>
	JOB2	0.86		
	JOB3	0.70		
	JOB4	0.75		
	JOB5	0.61		
	JOB6	0.68		
<b>Employee Commitment</b>	EYC1	0.80	<b>0.85</b>	<b>0.66</b>
	EYC2	0.65		
	EYC3	0.96		

Table 2 presents the value of factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) from the constructs used in this study. The factor loading and AVE score are more than 0.50, which empirically proves the convergent validity of all research constructs. At the same time, the composite reliability (CR) is greater than 0.8, indicating an acceptable CR level for all study constructs. The validity of a measure can be defined as the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure (Bordens & Abbott, 2008).

Construct validity was checked using convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was checked through factor loading, CR, and AVE. However, discriminant validity was analyzed by comparing the square root of the AVE with the relevant correlation where the square root of the AVE should be higher than the relationship in question (Hartini & Suwandewi, 2022). Overall, these results empirically prove the validity and reliability of all the constructs used in this study. Therefore, after completing the validation of the measurement model in the first stage, the research will continue with an examination of the structural model of the research.

To examine the relationships proposed in this study, the authors developed a structural model represented by a path diagram (Figure 2), which depicts the relationships between the

constructs studied. This study evaluates the structural model through path coefficient analysis between exogenous and endogenous constructs which shows how much variance of an endogenous construct is explained by the exogenous constructs associated with it (Hair et al., 2014). Structural model validation was completed after evaluating the significance of the estimated coefficients for the pathways representing the hypotheses of this study.



**Figure 2. Standarization Solution**

Based on Figure 2, H1 shows that internal service quality has an influence on job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.69 > 0.01$ ). This research is supported by research conducted by Abdullah et al. (2021); Srivastava & Prakash (2018) in the health sector. Bouranta et al. (2009) show that employees in service organizations are internal customers in the order of service quality and represent a very important relationship. On the other hand, meeting the needs of internal customers in the service sector can be regarded as a prerequisite for providing quality services to external consumers (Chiang & Wu, 2014). More precisely, establishing a philosophy that emphasizes the well-being of internal consumers or employees can serve as a tool for attracting and retaining external customers (Skarpeta et al., 2020).

Then, H2 shows that internal service quality has an influence on employee commitment ( $\beta = 0.86 > 0.01$ ). This research supports previous studies conducted by Perić et al. (2021). Internal service quality has a positive influence on employee commitment because it can increase employee commitment to a high level and encourage them to work hard for the progress and success of the organization. Some researchers consider employee commitment as a psychological state of employees that shows a strong relationship between employees and the organization and motivates them to work harder for their employer's organization (Richardsen

et al., 2006). According to Singh (2016) that internal service quality will increase the level of functionality. In addition, internal service quality improves the relationship between employees and the organization by increasing the level of employee commitment and satisfaction which in turn affects employee performance (Sharma et al., 2016). Likewise, H3 shows that job satisfaction has an influence on employee commitment ( $\beta = 0.10 > 0.01$ ). The results of this study support research conducted by Frye et al. (2019); Mahmood et al. (2019) that job satisfaction is an antecedent to employee commitment. Job satisfaction is influential in determining whether to survive or leave the organization (Aydogdu dan Asikgil, 2011).

If employees are not satisfied with their jobs, they are likely to leave the organization. If employees believe they are treated fairly and rewarded, they are less likely to leave the organization. Employee commitment is noteworthy because it determines whether workers are responsible for leaving their job or executing without evidence. Prabhu et al. (2020) said that the construct of organizational commitment includes elements of desires, needs, and obligations that are represented in the three components of organizational commitment. Three important components related to the definition of organizational commitment that has been found in the literature are affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Ganeshkumar et al., 2019).

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to verify the relationship between internal service quality as an antecedent construct which is a major factor in increasing job satisfaction and employee commitment in the government sector. This study adopts the concept of internal marketing in describing employee and organizational activities. Internal marketing explains that employees who can meet the needs of the organization in return, the organization will provide payment in the form of a salary. Internal service quality in this study illustrates the occurrence of relationships between fellow employees in an organization to support their work in achieving organizational goals.

Internal service quality that is successfully built within the scope of the organization will increase employee job satisfaction. According to Parasuraman et al. (1985) that service quality is supported by five dimensions, namely reliability (ability to perform the promised service reliably and accurately); responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service); physical evidence (physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel); empathy (attention, individual attention that the company gives to its customers); and assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees, ability to convey trust and confidence). From these dimensions, it shows that the dimensions of empathy, responsiveness, and reliability are very important in building internal service quality. However, this study has limitations in measuring internal service quality items. Therefore, this study suggests further research to be able to conduct research related to internal service quality using the dimensions of empathy, responsiveness, and reliability.

This study provides evidence that internal service quality can directly affect job satisfaction. This means that a well-established relationship between organizational units will make it easier for employees to work together so as to create a sense of pleasure and satisfaction at work (Sugiarti & Rusmana, 2022). Job satisfaction is a very important factor in supporting employee work productivity. However, to improve internal service quality and employee job satisfaction, organizations need to hold refresher activities at work such as gatherings. In addition, organizations need to rotate employees between sections, so employees don't feel bored or bored in their current field of work. However, this also needs to be aligned with the capabilities and educational background of the employees.



Internal service quality has a significant impact on employee commitment. Commitment is very important in directing employees to better performance and thus the organization gains a competitive advantage (Mahmood et al., 2019; Jaramillo et al., 2005). Nayak et al. (2018); Mowday et al. (2013); Newstrom (2011) reveal employee commitment as the level of employee loyalty with a willingness to work and be bound to the organization as a whole. The results of these findings have practical implications for organizations to be able to increase employee commitment in achieving internal service quality, it is necessary to hold a briefing every morning by evaluating the results of the work of employees.

This study shows that job satisfaction has a positive effect on employee commitment. Employees who have high levels of job satisfaction tend to show higher levels of commitment, while employees who have low job satisfaction tend to show behavior that is detrimental to the organization. Faragher et al. (2013) also suggest that job satisfaction for employees is very important because it significantly affects life satisfaction and overall well-being. In addition, job satisfaction also increases employee commitment and encourages organizational performance (Bos-Nehles & Meijerink, 2018; Curriuan, 1999). This research provides practical implications for providing training aimed at increasing the skills, knowledge, and changes in employee behavior needed to increase employee commitment and performance.

This research still has limitations in internal marketing literature in discussing internal service quality. In addition, internal service quality has only been discussed in several sectors such as the government sector and the hospitality sector. Therefore, further research is recommended to be able to expand internal service quality research in different sectors. Future research can use different employee statuses to determine the quality of internal services found in organizations or companies. Then, this study still has limitations in taking samples using simple random sampling. Thus, future researchers can use different techniques to be able to generalize the findings of this study.

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