

**THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON
THE PERCEPTION OF SERVICE QUALITY IN
LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTHERN
THAILAND**

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**THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON THE PERCEPTION OF
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THAILAND**

By

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**Thesis Submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government,
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in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRAK

Kerajaan tempatan di Thailand menghadapi banyak kekangan dalam usaha meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan kepada masyarakat. Antara faktor kritikal yang dikenalpasti ialah partisipasi awam yang lemah dalam proses pembuatan keputusan kerajaan tempatan. Oleh itu, kajian ini meneliti darjah partisipasi awam dalam proses pembuatan keputusan dalam kerajaan tempatan di selatan Thailand. Kesan partisipasi awam terhadap persepsi kualiti perkhidmatan dalam kerajaan tempatan juga dikaji. Di samping itu, kajian ini membandingkan persepsi kualiti perkhidmatan di antara pelanggan dan pegawai kerajaan tempatan. Akhirnya, kajian ini turut mengkaji perbezaan persepsi pelanggan terhadap kualiti perkhidmatan antara jenis perbandaran, dan juga antara lokasi perbandaran. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Populasi kajian terdiri daripada pegawai-pegawai kerajaan tempatan yang bekerja sebagai pegawai pentadbiran, dan pelanggan yang menerima perkhidmatan kerajaan tempatan. Lebih daripada 600 soal selidik telah dikutip daripada kedua-dua pelanggan dan pegawai di lebih 200 buah majlis perbandaran di selatan Thailand. Sebanyak 20 orang pegawai telah ditemubual untuk mendapatkan maklumat terperinci. Untuk menganalisis data, ujian *t*-bebas dan *ANOVA* digunakan untuk menguji perbezaan antara kumpulan sementara analisis korelasi Pearson digunakan untuk menguji hubungan antara pemboleh ubah bebas dan pemboleh ubah bersandar. Regresi linear telah digunakan sebagai alat statistik yang sesuai untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Hasil kajian menunjukkan darjah partisipasi yang tinggi di dalam proses pembuatan keputusan di peringkat penetapan matlamat. Terdapat kesan yang signifikan di antara partisipasi awam dan persepsi kualiti perkhidmatan pegawai-pegawai kerajaan tempatan. Di samping itu, dapatan menunjukkan perbezaan kualiti perkhidmatan lebih tinggi bagi kumpulan pelanggan berbanding kumpulan pegawai kerajaan tempatan. Seterusnya, dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan terdapat perbezaan persepsi yang signifikan bagi jenis perbandaran dan lokasi perbandaran. Oleh itu, untuk meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan, dicadangkan supaya semua jenis majlis perbandaran menggiatkan usaha untuk meningkatkan partisipasi awam dalam proses pembuatan keputusan. Kajian ini turut menyumbang kepada himpunan ilmu dengan menyatukan kedua-dua pendekatan pengurusan awam dan pemasaran dalam membincangkan persepsi mengenai kualiti perkhidmatan.

Kata Kunci: Partisipasi Awam, Budaya Organisasi, Kualiti Perkhidmatan, Kerajaan Tempatan, Thailand.

ABSTRACT

Local government in Thailand is facing many hindrances in providing service quality to the public. Among the critical factor noted is poor public participation in local government decision-making process. Therefore, this study evaluates the degree of public participation in the decision-making process in local government in Southern Thailand. The impact of public participation on the perception of service quality in local government was also examined. In addition, this study also compares the differences in the perception of service quality between customers and local government officials. Lastly, the differences in customers' perception of service quality between types of municipality and locations of the municipality is also reviewed. This research employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. The target population consisted of local government officials who were working as administrative officials, and customers who received the services of the local government. More than 600 questionnaires were collected from both customers and officials of over 200 municipalities in Southern Thailand. Twenty officials were interviewed to gather in-depth information. To analyse the data, independent t-test and ANOVA were used to test the differences between the groups while Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Linear regression analysis was used as appropriate statistical tool to test the hypotheses. The results showed that the degree of decision-making participation occurred at a high level in a goal setting process. There was a significant positive impact between public participation and the perception of service quality of the local government officials. In addition, it showed that the gap in the perception of service quality was higher for the customer group compared to that of the local government officials. Moreover, this study revealed that there were significant differences in customers' perception of service quality between the types of municipality and the locations of the municipality. As such, in order to increase service quality, it is recommended for all types of municipalities to increase efforts to enhance public participation in their decision-making process. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by integrating together the public management and the customer-oriented approaches in relation to the perception of service quality, which is based on the marketing approach.

Keywords: Public Participation, Organizational Culture, Service Quality, Local Government, Thailand.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADAPT	Adaptability
COMSATS	COMSATS Institute of Information Technology
CON	Consistency
CSS	Customer Satisfaction Survey
CVM	The Competing Value Model
DOCS	Denison Organizational Culture Survey
FLE	Frontline Employee
INV	Involvement
LAO	Local Administrative Organization
MIS	Mission
OC	Organizational Culture
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPDC	The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission Thailand
PAO	Provincial Administrative Organization
PP	Public Participation
QMS	Quality Management System
ROA	Return on Assets
SOA	Service-oriented-architecture
SQ	Service Quality
TAO	<i>Tambon</i> Administrative Organization
TQM	Total Quality Management

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In many developing countries, including Thailand, the public organization is poorly managed and lacks the ability to provide quality public services. In addition, it cannot meet customers' satisfaction because of the weak motivation for government officials to deliver services efficiently (OECD, 2001). While the public sector has been confronted by many external factors, for example, changes in the economic, social and political systems, and also changes in information and communication technology, the government has focused on a basic theme about governance which emphasizes the roles and responsibilities of the public service to respond to citizens or customers' needs. According to Paarlberg (2007), organizational achievement depends on its capacities to constantly gather data of customers' needs and requirements in order to increase organizational performance and establish better value for customers. Thus, public organizations are moving toward a more customer-oriented management approach to cope with current and future challenges and changes.

Many studies, for example, Total Quality Management (TQM) and Good Governance were considered in order to reform the public sector and to improve the public sector efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery (Baird *et al.*, 2004).

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