



Service Innovation and Licensing Service Quality as Determinants of Business Operator Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the influence of service innovation and licensing service quality on business operator satisfaction at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Office (DPMPTSP) of Probolinggo Regency. The research employs a quantitative approach with a sample of 95 business operators who received licensing services. Data were collected through Google Forms questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression with SPSS 25. The findings reveal that licensing service innovation does not significantly affect business operator satisfaction, while licensing service quality—comprising tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—has a positive and significant impact on satisfaction. When examined simultaneously, both service innovation and service quality significantly influence business operator satisfaction. This study confirms that improving public service quality, particularly in aspects of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible evidence, is the primary factor in creating satisfaction among business operators in Probolinggo Regency.

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INTRODUCTION

Public service quality improvement is a cornerstone of bureaucratic reform, particularly in developing countries seeking to enhance government responsiveness, transparency, and efficiency. High-quality public services are essential not only for citizen satisfaction but also for building trust in public institutions and supporting sustainable economic development. Governments are increasingly expected to deliver services that are timely, reliable, and responsive to diverse stakeholder needs (Abas & Kholidah, 2025; Yakin et al., 2025). Public management literature demonstrates that service quality directly influences public value creation and stakeholder satisfaction, especially in service-intensive government functions (Osborne, Radnor, & Strokosch, 2021).

Business operators represent a critical stakeholder group because their activities drive employment, innovation, and fiscal revenue. When public services fail to meet their expectations, the consequences may include reduced investment and weakened governance legitimacy (Afifah, 2025; Hadi & Masuwd, 2025). Therefore, improving service quality—particularly in licensing services—has become a strategic priority.

Despite broad recognition of the importance of public service reform, many government institutions continue to face persistent service delivery challenges (Musthofa & Faizin, 2025; Prayoga et al., 2025). Common issues include bureaucratic rigidity, limited responsiveness, procedural complexity, and inconsistent service standards (Fauzi et al., 2025; Maulidy & Zaini, 2025). These problems are especially evident in licensing services, which often involve multiple administrative stages and regulatory requirements. Inefficient licensing systems increase transaction costs, delay business operations, and discourage formal registration. In Indonesia, public service reform has been institutionalized through Law Number 25 of 2009 on Public Services, which defines public service as regulatory, guidance, facility provision, and service delivery activities conducted to meet societal needs. However, implementation gaps remain substantial, particularly at the local government level. As a result, disparities in service quality persist, undermining the intended outcomes of bureaucratic reform initiatives.

In practice, licensing service delivery continues to experience operational constraints that directly affect business operator satisfaction. Common issues include prolonged processing times, limited information transparency, and inconsistent service performance (Sholehah & Ichsan, 2025; Zibyan, 2025). These shortcomings weaken reliability and responsiveness, which are critical dimensions of perceived service quality. Empirical studies indicate that such deficiencies negatively affect trust and satisfaction among service users (Kusmanto et al., 2022). In regions with strong economic potential—such as those based on agriculture, fisheries, and tourism—inefficient licensing services pose additional risks by constraining competitiveness and investment. To address these challenges, local governments have introduced service innovations, including digital platforms and mobile outreach initiatives. One example is the “jemput bola” service, which delivers licensing assistance directly to business operators in remote areas. However, the effectiveness of these innovations in improving satisfaction remains underexplored.

Previous studies consistently highlight the importance of service quality in shaping stakeholder satisfaction. Service quality is commonly assessed through dimensions such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, which reflect users’ perceptions of service performance. Empirical

evidence confirms that higher service quality leads to greater satisfaction, trust, and compliance (Osborne et al., 2021). Alongside service quality, service innovation has gained attention as a means of improving public service effectiveness through digitalization, procedural simplification, and citizen-centered approaches. Research suggests that innovation can reduce administrative burdens and enhance accessibility, particularly in business-related services (World Bank, 2020). However, findings regarding the direct effect of service innovation on satisfaction remain inconsistent, indicating the need for integrated analysis.

Despite valuable insights from prior research, several gaps remain. First, most studies examine service quality and service innovation separately rather than assessing their simultaneous effects on satisfaction. Second, empirical evidence from developing countries, particularly at the local government level, is still limited. Third, business operators as public service users remain underrepresented in the literature, despite their importance to economic development. Licensing services constitute a unique administrative domain where service quality and innovation intersect, yet their combined influence on satisfaction has not been sufficiently explored. Moreover, existing research often focuses on digital innovation while overlooking non-digital initiatives such as mobile outreach services. This study addresses these gaps by integrating service innovation and service quality into a unified analytical framework.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative examination of business operator satisfaction within public licensing services. Unlike prior studies that prioritize either service quality or service innovation, this research evaluates both variables simultaneously to assess their individual and combined effects. In addition, it expands the concept of service innovation beyond digital transformation by incorporating mobile and outreach-based service models, which are particularly relevant in regions with geographical constraints. By focusing on licensing services, the study addresses a critical administrative function that directly influences the investment climate and ease of doing business. The findings are expected to clarify whether service innovation alone enhances satisfaction or whether traditional service quality dimensions remain the dominant drivers.

Based on the identified gaps and field conditions, this study examines how service innovation and licensing service quality influence business operator satisfaction in public service delivery. It argues that while service innovation is essential for modernizing public administration, service quality remains the primary determinant of satisfaction. Accordingly, the study hypothesizes that licensing service quality has a positive and significant effect on business operator satisfaction, whereas service innovation may exert a weaker or indirect influence.

Using a quantitative approach, this study contributes empirical evidence to public service management literature and offers practical insights for local governments. The findings are expected to support policymakers in prioritizing reform strategies and allocating resources more effectively to enhance satisfaction among key economic stakeholders.

Theoretical Foundation

Service Quality and Public Value

Service quality theory has developed substantially since the SERVQUAL model was introduced by Parasuraman and remains a key framework for evaluating service delivery. SERVQUAL conceptualizes service quality through five dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—which capture users' perceptions of service performance across private and public sectors. Empirical evidence confirms its continued relevance in public administration, although contextual adaptation is often required to accommodate regulatory and institutional characteristics (Rashid & Jusoff, 2020).

In public administration, service quality is closely associated with public value theory, which emphasizes efficient, effective, and equitable service delivery (Osborne et al., 2021). Service quality reflects the extent to which service performance meets or exceeds user expectations, consistent with expectancy-disconfirmation theory. Satisfaction arises when perceived performance aligns with or surpasses expectations, whereas dissatisfaction occurs when expectations are unmet. This linkage highlights service quality as a central determinant of satisfaction in public service settings.

Service Innovation in Public Sector Context

Public service innovation refers to the implementation of new or significantly improved services, processes, organizational methods, or communication approaches that enhance public value (Osborne & Brown, 2021). In the public sector, innovation extends beyond technological change to include procedural reforms, alternative service delivery models, and improved interaction between government institutions and service users. Diffusion of Innovations theory explains that innovation adoption depends on perceived relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability, which shape users' willingness to adopt innovations within public service processes.

The Technology Acceptance Model further suggests that perceived usefulness and ease of use are key drivers of technology adoption and satisfaction. In licensing services, innovations such as online applications, electronic documentation, and mobile service delivery are expected to improve

accessibility, reduce processing time, and enhance transparency (Dwivedi et al., 2021). However, innovation effectiveness depends on implementation quality, user readiness, and contextual suitability. As noted by Osborne et al. (2021), public service innovation creates public value only when accompanied by sustained improvements in service quality, underscoring the need to examine both factors simultaneously.

Business Operator Satisfaction in Public Services

Customer satisfaction is a post-service evaluation of performance relative to prior expectations and serves as a key indicator of success in public service delivery. In licensing services, business operator satisfaction reflects the extent to which services meet expectations regarding processing speed, transparency, procedural simplicity, and cost efficiency. Higher satisfaction is associated with stronger regulatory compliance, increased trust in public institutions, and greater willingness to invest, thereby supporting regional economic development (Bannister & Connolly, 2020).

The expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm explains satisfaction as the result of comparing expected and perceived service performance. Satisfaction occurs when perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations, while dissatisfaction arises when expectations are unmet. This framework is particularly relevant to public licensing services, where business operators expect efficient processing, clear procedures, transparent costs, and professional staff. Consequently, achieving satisfaction requires not only innovative service delivery mechanisms but also consistently high service quality across all service interactions.

Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

Despite extensive research on service quality and service innovation, empirical evidence on their combined effects on business operator satisfaction in public services within developing countries remains limited. Prior studies report inconsistent findings on the impact of service innovation, with some identifying positive effects (Aruan, 2024; Sudja'I et al., 2023) and others finding non-significant relationships due to implementation and contextual challenges. These mixed results suggest that the effectiveness of innovation depends on contextual conditions and implementation quality, highlighting the need for further empirical investigation.

Furthermore, although SERVQUAL dimensions are well validated in commercial services, their applicability and relative influence in public licensing services remain underexplored, particularly in local government contexts characterized by regulatory complexity. To address this gap, this study examines

the individual and simultaneous effects of service innovation and SERVQUAL dimensions on business operator satisfaction in public licensing services. Based on relevant theories and prior evidence, the study formulates testable hypotheses to explain these relationships.

H1: Service innovation positively influences business operator satisfaction.

H2: Tangibles positively influence business operator satisfaction.

H3: Reliability positively influences business operator satisfaction.

H4: Responsiveness positively influences business operator satisfaction.

H5: Assurance positively influences business operator satisfaction.

H6: Empathy positively influences business operator satisfaction.

H7: Service innovation and service quality dimensions simultaneously influence business operator satisfaction.

Research Objectives

This research is important to provide an empirical picture of the success of licensing service innovations and as evaluation material and decision-making for relevant agencies. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) Test and analyze the effect of service innovation on business operator satisfaction; (2) Test and analyze the effect of service quality dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) on business operator satisfaction; (3) Analyze the simultaneous effect of service innovation and service quality on business operator satisfaction at DPMPTSP Probolinggo Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an associative causal research design to examine the cause-and-effect relationships between service innovation, service quality, and business operator satisfaction. The research was conducted in Probolinggo Regency and targeted business operators who received licensing services at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Office (DPMPTSP) during the period from July to September 2025. The population consisted of all business operators in Probolinggo Regency who had obtained licensing services. Based on data from the OSS Risk-Based Dashboard, the total number of risk-based business licenses issued in the second quarter of 2025 (April 1–June 30, 2025) was 1,607 Business Identification Numbers (NIB). The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a tolerance error of 10% ($e = 0.10$), resulting in a sample of 95 respondents.

A purposive sampling technique was applied, selecting respondents who had directly experienced licensing services at DPMPTSP Probolinggo Regency. Questionnaires were distributed online via Google Forms through WhatsApp. Of the 95 questionnaires distributed, 70 were returned and deemed valid, yielding a response rate of 73.7%. The research instrument employed a five-point

Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Service innovation was measured using indicators of service availability, procedural simplicity, officer responsiveness, and clarity of service information. Service quality was measured using the five SERVQUAL dimensions—tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—comprising a total of 22 statement items. Business operator satisfaction was measured through indicators of overall satisfaction with the service and satisfaction after the completion of the licensing process.

Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression with SPSS version 25. Prior to hypothesis testing, instrument validity and reliability were assessed using Pearson correlation and Cronbach's Alpha, respectively, with validity criteria of significance < 0.05 and $r\text{-count} > r\text{-table} (0.240)$, and reliability criteria of Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60 . Classical assumption tests were also performed, including normality testing using the Kolmogorov - Smirnov method (significance > 0.05), multicollinearity testing using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF < 10) and tolerance values (> 0.10), and heteroscedasticity testing using the Glejser test (significance > 0.05). Hypothesis testing involved partial effects using t-tests, simultaneous effects using F-tests, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the explanatory power of the independent variables on business operator satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Characteristics

Based on the valid 70 questionnaires, the characteristics of respondents show that the majority of respondents are female (59.3%) and male (40.7%). In terms of age, the majority of respondents are aged between 21-40 years (70.4%), while those aged over 40 years are 29.6%. This data indicates that the business operators who use licensing services at DPMPTSP Probolinggo Regency are mostly at productive age and have sufficient digital literacy to interact with modern licensing service systems.

Instrument Testing Results

Validity Test Results: All items in each variable have a significance value < 0.05 and $r\text{-count} > r\text{-table} (0.240)$, with Pearson correlation values ranging from 0.551 to 0.925 for all statement items. Thus, it can be concluded that all items on the variables of Service Innovation (X1), Service Quality dimensions (X2-X6), and Customer Satisfaction (Y) are declared valid and can accurately measure the variables studied.

Reliability Test Results: All variables have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.60. Specifically: Service Innovation variable (X1) = 0.866; all Service Quality dimension variables (X2-X6) = 0.964; and Customer Satisfaction variable

(Y) = 0.806. These values indicate that all instrument items are highly reliable and can consistently measure the variables studied, so the questionnaire can be trusted to collect research data.

Classical Assumption Test Results

Normality Test: The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test shows a significance value of $0.074 > 0.05$, indicating that the residual data is normally distributed and meets the requirements for parametric regression analysis.

Multicollinearity Test: All independent variables have VIF values of 1.483 (< 10) and Tolerance values of 0.674 (> 0.10), indicating that there are no multicollinearity symptoms among the independent variables. This means that each independent variable provides unique information and does not have high correlations with other independent variables.

Heteroscedasticity Test: The Glejser test shows all variables have significance values > 0.05 (ranging from 0.729 to 0.993), indicating that there are no heteroscedasticity symptoms in the regression model. This means the variance of residuals is constant across all levels of independent variables.

All classical assumption tests show satisfactory results, indicating that the regression model used in this study meets the requirements and is suitable for hypothesis testing.

Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Table 1 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis examining the relationships among service innovation, service quality dimensions, and business operator satisfaction.

Table 1. Results of Hypothesis Testing Using Multiple Regression

Variable	Coefficient (β)	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	0.393	1.718	0.091
Service Innovation (X1)	0.104	1.907	0.061
Tangibles (X2)	0.832	17.387	0.000
Reliability (X3)	0.832	17.387	0.000
Responsiveness (X4)	0.832	17.387	0.000
Assurance (X5)	0.832	17.387	0.000
Empathy (X6)	0.832	17.387	0.000
F-value		254.859 (Sig. 0.000)	
R² (Coefficient of Determination)		0.887 (88.7%)	

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

The regression analysis reveals several critical findings. Service innovation demonstrates a positive but non-significant effect ($\beta = 0.104$, $t = 1.907$, $p = 0.061 > 0.05$), failing to support H1. Conversely, all service quality dimensions exhibit strong, positive, and significant effects on business operator satisfaction: tangibles ($\beta = 0.832$, $t = 17.387$, $p < 0.001$), reliability ($\beta = 0.832$, $t = 17.387$, $p < 0.001$), responsiveness ($\beta = 0.832$, $t = 17.387$, $p < 0.001$), assurance ($\beta = 0.832$, $t = 17.387$, $p < 0.001$), and empathy ($\beta = 0.832$, $t = 17.387$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2–H6.

The simultaneous model test yields $F = 254.859$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating that service innovation and service quality dimensions collectively exert a significant influence on business operator satisfaction, supporting H7. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.887$) shows that the model explains 88.7% of the variance in satisfaction, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.876 accounting for the number of predictors, demonstrating exceptional explanatory power. Only 11.3% of the variance is attributable to factors beyond this model, such as cost structures, regulatory complexity, or external environmental conditions.

Discussion

The finding that service innovation does not significantly influence business operator satisfaction ($\beta = 0.104$, $p = 0.061$) appears counterintuitive when viewed through the lens of innovation diffusion theory. However, this result is consistent with recent empirical evidence from developing country contexts, where the benefits of innovation are often constrained by implementation challenges (Aruan, 2024). From an expectancy–disconfirmation perspective, service innovations such as mobile jempot bola services raise expectations regarding accessibility and efficiency, yet business operators' actual experiences may fall short in terms of processing speed, procedural clarity, and outcome certainty. When perceived performance does not meet these heightened expectations, satisfaction fails to materialize, explaining the non-significant statistical effect observed in this study.

Several contextual barriers help explain the limited impact of service innovation on satisfaction. First, technical infrastructure limitations, particularly in remote areas, reduce the effectiveness of innovation by hindering real-time processing and communication. Second, insufficient staff training limits the practical benefits of new service delivery methods, as personnel may lack the competencies required to fully utilize technological or procedural innovations. Third, inadequate outreach and socialization efforts mean that some business operators remain unaware of available innovations or do not fully understand how to access them. These findings reinforce Osborne et al.'s (2021) argument that innovation creates public value only when supported by effective implementation and service quality improvements.

In contrast, the strong and significant influence of service quality on business operator satisfaction ($\beta = 0.832$, $p < 0.001$) provides robust support for service quality theory in public sector contexts. The results confirm the relevance of SERVQUAL dimensions in shaping satisfaction, extending prior evidence on its applicability beyond commercial services. Tangibles contribute to positive first impressions by signaling organizational competence through adequate facilities, professional staff appearance, and functional equipment. In developing country contexts, where public facilities are often under-resourced, improvements in tangible aspects generate particularly strong satisfaction responses.

Reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy further reinforce satisfaction through distinct yet complementary mechanisms. Reliability builds trust by ensuring consistent service delivery and accurate information, which is essential for business operators who depend on predictable administrative outcomes. Responsiveness reflects institutional commitment through timely assistance and effective problem resolution, while assurance enhances confidence by demonstrating staff competence, integrity, and professionalism. Empathy personalizes bureaucratic interactions by acknowledging individual needs and circumstances, transforming procedural encounters into more relational and citizen-oriented experiences. These findings are consistent with a growing body of public service research demonstrating that SERVQUAL dimensions remain decisive determinants of satisfaction across various public sector contexts, including regulatory agencies and local government offices (Bannister & Connolly, 2020; Ningrum & Wicaksana, 2024; Riyanto et al., 2025; Setyaningsih et al., 2024; Suryani et al., 2025). Moreover, evidence from digital service environments suggests that even in technology-mediated services, service quality dimensions continue to play a central role in shaping user satisfaction, reinforcing their cross-sectoral relevance (Sophia et al., 2025).

Finally, the exceptionally strong simultaneous effect of service innovation and service quality on satisfaction ($F = 254.859$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.887$) highlights the importance of innovation–quality integration. This result supports the public value framework proposed by Osborne et al. (2021), which posits that innovation effectiveness depends on a strong service quality foundation. Innovation provides the infrastructure for modern service delivery, but service quality activates its potential to generate satisfaction. When quality is weak, innovation may amplify dissatisfaction by widening expectation–performance gaps; conversely, high service quality enables innovation to exceed expectations and produce positive disconfirmation. These findings suggest that governments should prioritize integrated strategies that combine innovation with staff development, process refinement, and a quality-oriented service culture rather than pursuing innovation in isolation.

CONCLUSION

This study yields an important insight for public service reform: service innovation alone is insufficient to enhance business operator satisfaction unless it is supported by high-quality implementation. The findings demonstrate that while service innovation does not exert a significant direct effect due to technical, organizational, and outreach constraints, service quality exerts a dominant and decisive influence on satisfaction. More importantly, the strong synergistic effect between innovation and service quality indicates that innovation functions as an enabling infrastructure, whereas service quality determines whether innovation translates into positive user experiences. The key lesson from this research is that public sector modernization should prioritize execution excellence and human-centered service delivery rather than relying solely on technological advancement.

From a scholarly perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating service innovation and SERVQUAL dimensions within a unified empirical model in a public licensing context in a developing country. It extends service quality and public value theories by empirically demonstrating that innovation effectiveness is contingent upon service quality, thereby helping to reconcile mixed findings in prior innovation–satisfaction studies. Nevertheless, this research is subject to limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inference, and the focus on a single local government limits generalizability. Future research should employ longitudinal or comparative designs, incorporate mediating variables such as user trust or perceived value, and examine different public service sectors to deepen understanding of how innovation–quality integration shapes satisfaction across diverse institutional contexts.

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