

CITIZENS' SATISFACTION WITH THE SERVICE QUALITY OF KHMER CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE MEKONG DELTA, VIETNAM

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Abstract: Civil servants are part of the human resources of the public sector. The contingent of civil servants is an essential component of human social resources whose contributions always play a significant role in the overall socio-economic development achievements of the country and the locality. In this study, the research paradigm “citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants” was used and converted with “the SERVPERF model.” Research data were collected from survey results by questionnaires from 596 citizens in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. SPSS 20 and AMOS 24 software are used to analyze and evaluate the scale. The results of the research structure show that there are six factors affecting citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, including competency, professional qualifications, profession, sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks, ethical qualities, working style; sense of organization and discipline; citizen service attitude; progress and results of task performance. From the research findings, the discussion proposes implications for public policy management to improve citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

Key words: satisfaction, service quality, civil servants, the Khmer, Vietnam

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INTRODUCTION

In the period of global economic integration and development, performing public administrative services and improving the quality of citizen services are essential tasks to build a clean and professional administration (Son et al., 2023). Accordingly, many new policies have been concretized in socio-economic development projects to attract investment and support the development of economic sectors (Van de Walle, 2018). It creates an excellent legal basis for investors' activities and improves citizens' lives. Improving citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants is the focus (Zhang et al., 2022). At the same time, it is also an important issue that requires coordination between individuals and organizations in many enforcement agencies (Boyer and Van Slyke, 2019).

Several studies have shown a relationship between operational efficiency, the quality of public service activities, and the improvement and enhancement of the quality of public services (Vigoda-Gadot et al., 2012). Service quality is an essential measure of the performance of administrative agencies (Wenene et al., 2016). Improving the quality of administrative services should be recognized as an essential goal to demonstrate the effectiveness of administrative agencies (Nguyen et al., 2020). Assessing the service quality of civil servants through service user satisfaction assessment is a new approach in administrative work in Vietnam (Hai et al., 2023). Citizens' satisfaction with civil servants and administrative agencies is a significant criterion for evaluating and ranking civil servants and administrative agencies across the country (Nguyen, 2019). In addition to serving citizens, civil servants in administrative agencies have to perform many other functions, such as supporting growth, adjusting the growth rate, and orienting growth for a locality or country (Neo et al., 2022).

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From the performance results of civil servants in Vietnam (Nguyen, 2022). It shows that the work efficiency of civil servants in some areas still needs to improve, and their work coordination needs to be synchronized. Too many administrative procedures are causing difficulties in many areas, including investment projects, business registration, and licensing, causing troubles for organizations and citizens (Blane and Daan, 2009).

The application of information technology and the quality management system in administrative agencies are flexible (Sun et al., 2021). This has directly affected people's problem-solving, reducing their trust in public administration and the state (Nguyen, 2022). Therefore, assessing the level of people's satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, is necessary. Evaluating citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants is actual content. It will help administrative agencies in Vietnam to develop strategies, improve the quality of public services and build citizens' trust in the state (Nurul et al., 2022). The above purpose is to improve and enhance civil servants' service quality in Vietnam. The specific objective of the study is to assess the citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Khmer people in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, have a large number and live widely in the region. Nearly 1.3 million Khmer people live in the region, accounting for nearly 7% of the population. By 2020, the number of Khmer civil servants working in local government from provincial to commune levels in the Mekong Delta provinces will be significant. Provinces with many Khmer people, including Tra Vinh, Soc Trang, Kien Giang, An Giang, Bac Lieu, and Ca Mau, have more than 14,000 civil servants, accounting for 11.01% of the total number of civil servants in the region (Hai and Ngan, 2022).

Citizen satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants can vary depending on many factors, and it is different in different regions of the world. Several important factors can affect citizens' satisfaction with civil servants, including Citizens' satisfaction with the quality of services they receive from civil servants. If civil servants work professionally, quickly and effectively, citizens may feel more satisfied (Bui, 2023). The behaviour of public officials can displease citizens and reduce satisfaction with public officials and public services.

There have been many studies concerned with Citizen satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants. Halimah et al. (2023) researched citizen perceptions and public servant accountability of local government service delivery in Malaysia. The study examined citizen perceptions and public servant accountability in delivering local government services. There are three concerns about accountability, including inadequate citizen participation in programs, actions related to complaints, and slow response in repairing deteriorating basic infrastructure (Halimah et al., 2023). The qualifications and ethics of civil servants affect citizen satisfaction. If civil servants are well-trained and adhere to professional ethics, citizens can have more trust. Improvements in administrative processes and reduced complicated forms and procedures can also increase citizens' satisfaction with civil servants (Bui et al., 2023).

Research factors affecting citizen satisfaction: Examining from the perspective of the expectation disconfirmation theory and individual differences by Chung-Pin et al. (2022). Research examining whether citizen satisfaction depends on objective policy factors has been conducted in the United Kingdom and the United States. The results show people's happiness in three policy areas: public safety, transportation and environmental sanitation (Chung-Pin et al., 2022). Low-paid civil servants can lead to poor work attitudes and reduce citizen satisfaction. Furthermore, evaluating the work of civil servants can ensure they always work effectively and reliably. Transparency in managing the work of civil servants and providing correct information to citizens is an essential factor.

According to Ju et al. (2023) study on citizen preferences and government chatbot social characteristics: Evidence from a discrete choice experiment. E-government is gaining popularity as artificial intelligence-based tools improve communication between government and citizens; investigation in China on applying e-government to people's preferences (Ju et al., 2023). The results indicate that conscientiousness significantly influences people's choices. Citizen satisfaction with the quality of Service provided by civil servants can vary considerably from person to person and region to region (Lei and Bo, 2023). To improve this satisfaction, the government should consider and enhance the above factors and take measures to prevent corruption and increase transparency in the work management of civil servants (Sun et al., 2023).

In addition, the study of civil servants' integrity in the public sector: The case of Nepal by Khanal et al. (2022). Public servants' integrity in delivering public services is at the worldwide heart of public sector governance (Khanal et al., 2022). Ensuring higher levels of integrity for civil servants is complex because many factors influence it. The study's findings show that citizens perceive the integrity of civil servants in public Service to be positively affected by civil servants' compliance with regulations, responsiveness in service delivery, Service on time, hassle-free Service, and satisfactory salary. While negatively affected by complicated procedures, public officials demand bribes to serve the public good. We should have proposals that focus on these factors to build and maintain the integrity of civil servants in public service delivery.

Civil servants and service quality civil servants

Civil servants refer to people working in organizations under the political system, according to the Law on Cadres and Civil Servants of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Civil servants are Vietnamese citizens; They are recruited and appointed to titles corresponding to employment positions in state agencies and socio-political organizations at central, provincial, and district levels. Civil servants receive salaries from the state budget.

Activities of civil servants contribute to social stability and economic development orientation. The activities of civil servants contribute to accelerating the national and regional socio-economic development goals (Falk et al., 2022). Civil servants' activities occur in many different areas and fields associated with the functions and tasks of agencies and

organizations in the public sector (Yuguo and Hindy, 2018). The activities of civil servants are of the management nature of state agencies, criticism of socio-political organizations, activities of providing public services, and public non-business units. All of them create different aspects of social life. Especially in state management, civil servants are the core force in formulating programs, plans, and organizing implementation to realize the state's policies (Giannoccaro et al., 2008).

State administrative agencies are the forces that regularly receive requests and recommendations, carry out administrative procedures and solve problems of organizations and citizens (Fan et al., 2022). If civil servants understand the law, have good capacity and qualities, and have professional manners, the legitimate rights, interests and necessary needs of citizens will be resolved. Thus, local socio-economic development issues and citizens' lives are improved (To, 2023).

The quality of the performance of civil servants determines the effectiveness and efficiency of state management and the effective use of local resources. State administrative agencies are public organizations representing the community to exploit and use national and local resources for different purposes in each period (Chan et al., 2021). At the same time, the state administrative agency is the direct subject of comprehensive impact, covering all areas of social life. However, state agencies are operated by specific civil servants of the state (Suzuki and Demircioglu, 2021). Therefore, when civil servants operate effectively, they will be the driving force for the activities of state agencies to be improved in efficiency and effectiveness (Arménio et al., 2010). National and local resources will be exploited adequately for development goals.

Satisfaction and civil satisfaction of service quality civil servants

Different concepts of general customer satisfaction exist, and a significant quantity of debate exists. Satisfaction is the difference between a customer's expectations and the actual perception they receive (Kotler and Keller, 2009). Satisfaction or disappointment after consumption is understood as the customer's response to the assessment by feeling the difference between the expectation before consumption and the actual product perception after consuming it (Chen et al., 2018). Satisfaction is a person's pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing the performance of the perceived product or service with the customer's expectations. If the product meets expectations, the customer is satisfied, and if the product exceeds expectations, the customer is delighted. Customer satisfaction depends on the performance one perceives from a product or a service when it provides value compared to buyer expectations. The buyer will be satisfied if the product's performance exceeds the buyer's expectations.

If its performance matches the buyer's expectations, the buyer will be satisfied. The buyer will be excited if its performance exceeds the buyer's expectations. Overall, satisfaction is the comparison between actual perceived benefits and expectations. The customer will be satisfied if the benefits are as expected. If the actual benefits meet the set expectations, the customer will be satisfied; if the actual benefits are higher than the customer's expectations, the phenomenon of higher satisfaction or satisfaction will be created (Gutiérrez et al., 2009).

Service quality and satisfaction are two concepts closely related to service research. Satisfaction is the degree to which a customer's requirements are met. According to Parasuraman et al. (1998), service quality is the gap between customers' expectations before using and their perception after using the service. Moreover, Zeithaml (2000) said that customer satisfaction is affected by many factors, such as product quality, service quality, price, situational factors, and personal characteristics (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). The reason is that service quality is related to service delivery, while satisfaction can only be assessed after using the service. Thus, service quality is the cause of satisfaction and satisfaction. Service quality and customer satisfaction are interrelated (Tran and Truong, 2021). High-quality service leads to increased customer satisfaction; service quality should only be measured by assessing customer satisfaction.

Measure citizen satisfaction with the service quality

In measuring service quality, Parasuraman et al. (1998) developed the SEVRQUAL model, which is cited a lot in the research on service quality and, in their studies, proposed to measure service quality through 10 factors. However, in the improved version, the service quality measurement factors to 5, including tangible means, reliability, service capabilities, responsiveness, and sympathy (Parasuraman et al., 1998). The SERVQUAL model measures service quality by calculating the gap between perceived service performance and expectations. Using this model helps to identify the factors and components that explain service quality, thereby helping managers know which factors need to be improved to meet customer needs better. However, according to Cronin and Taylor (1992), expectations are difficult to determine; customers need to set expectations. Therefore, more theoretical and practical support must be needed to calculate the gap between perceived results and expectations to measure service quality (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). They propose the SERVPERF model, which is a successor to the SERVQUAL model, to study service quality satisfaction. Research by Cronin and Taylor (1992) shows that service quality leads to satisfaction (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). This implies that, in public administration, managers need to focus on the satisfaction of citizens and the service quality of civil servants.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH STRUCTURE

Theoretical framework

There are many studies on citizen satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants. According to Gregg et al. (2015), in the study, service quality, administrative process, and citizens' evaluation of local government in the US. According to the author, researchers and public administration practitioners should clearly understand the process people use to form overall satisfaction assessments of the quality of local government services (Gregg et al., 2015). Accordingly, the author has built a satisfaction evaluation model including (1) Expectations are the consumer's or citizen's predictions or anticipations of the performance of a product or service; (2) Performance is hypothesized as an

exogenous variable as well and refers to the consumer's evaluation of various features or facets of the product or service, based on a recent consumption experience; (3) Disconfirmation again is the discrepancy between the anticipated quality of the good or service and the quality that was received or experienced. According author Ma (2017), in the study "Performance management and citizen satisfaction with the government: Evidence from Chinese municipalities", The author argues that performance management is widely adopted in the public sector today. In the study, the author used survey data and multi-level modelling to analyze the impact of multiple performance management components on citizens' perception of government performance across 19 cities in China (Ma, 2017). The results show that performance management has a positive impact on citizen satisfaction. In addition, citizen participation, performance feedback, accountability, and openness of information are positively related to people's satisfaction.

In the study "Citizen Trust in civil servants: A cross-national examination" by David et al. (2016). The authors acknowledge that citizen trust is a concept in the study and practice of public administration. Because it is presented as a primary justification and a potential outcome of efforts to reform modern worldwide. Citizens' attitudes towards public officials are essential because government officials interact with them (Obedgiu et al., 2020). The assumption of a link between government performance and trust is the basis of recent efforts to reform public administration (David et al., 2016). The results found that government performance is related to citizens' trust in public servants under the performance-trust hypothesis. It has also been found that citizen trust is lower in countries with a high tendency to corruption. Therefore, administrative reform efforts to improve public confidence must build capable public institutions and honesty and fairness (Trung et al., 2021). The national context dictates general attitudes about public officials, meaning that strategies to enhance public confidence must be tailored to address a particular country's specific challenges.

According to Nguyen et al. (2020) in the study "The determinants of citizens' satisfaction of e-government: An empirical study in Vietnam". The study aims to identify the factors affecting the satisfaction of e-government in Hanoi, Vietnam, and evaluate their impact. The authors analyzed six externally observed variables related to citizen satisfaction with e-government, including efficiency; faith; reliability; convenience; citizen support and transparency). Besides, it has four control variables (age, gender, education level, and frequency of Internet use) (Nguyen et al., 2020).

In the study "Impacts of cultural behaviour of civil servants on Citizens' Satisfaction: A Survey on licensing services of Indonesian local government agencies" by Ulung and Hyung-Jun (2021). The author believes that the low level of people's satisfaction with public services is one of the central problems in developing countries. The author used attitudes and behaviours of civil servants, including Strong ties to the community; Empathy attitude; Cooperative attitude; Obeying social norms; Keeping harmony; Honest and trustworthiness; Giving priority to duty as the factors affecting the quality of public services and the satisfaction of the people (Ulung and Hyung-Jun, 2021). The reform agenda to improve the quality of civil servants needs to consider cultural aspects, which are essential in determining how government services are perceived and evaluated (Zhang, 2012). Thus, the research on the service quality of civil servants; Citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants is rich and diverse. Previous studies have mentioned theory and practical experience on the service quality of civil servants; Citizens' satisfaction with them has become common in the world (Miao et al., 2018). These studies are essential for applying to the research model of citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

Hypotheses

Based on inheriting the SERVPERF service quality measurement model. We propose a model of Citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. It is shown in Figure 1.

Based on research theories, the following hypotheses have been proposed.

Hypothesis (H1): Citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants includes what factors?

Hypothesis (H2): What factors affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants that can affect citizen satisfaction?

H2.1: Factor Competency, professional qualifications, and profession affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants and can affect citizen satisfaction.

H2.2: Factor Sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks affects the service quality of Khmer civil servants and can affect citizen satisfaction.

H2.3: Factor Ethical qualities and working style affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants and can affect citizen satisfaction.

H2.4: Factor Sense of organization and discipline affects the service quality of Khmer civil servants and can affect citizen satisfaction.

H2.5: Factor Citizen service attitude affects the service quality of Khmer civil servants and can affect citizen satisfaction.

H2.6: Factor Progress and task performance results affect Khmer civil servants' service quality and can affect citizen satisfaction.

Research structure

Based on a theoretical framework combined with a practical survey on citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. The initial study hypothesized that there are six factors affecting the satisfaction of citizens on service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, including (1) Competency, professional qualifications, profession; (2) Sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks; (3) Ethical qualities, working style; (4) Sense of organization and discipline; (5) Citizen service attitude; (6) Progress and results of task performance. It is shown in Figure 1.

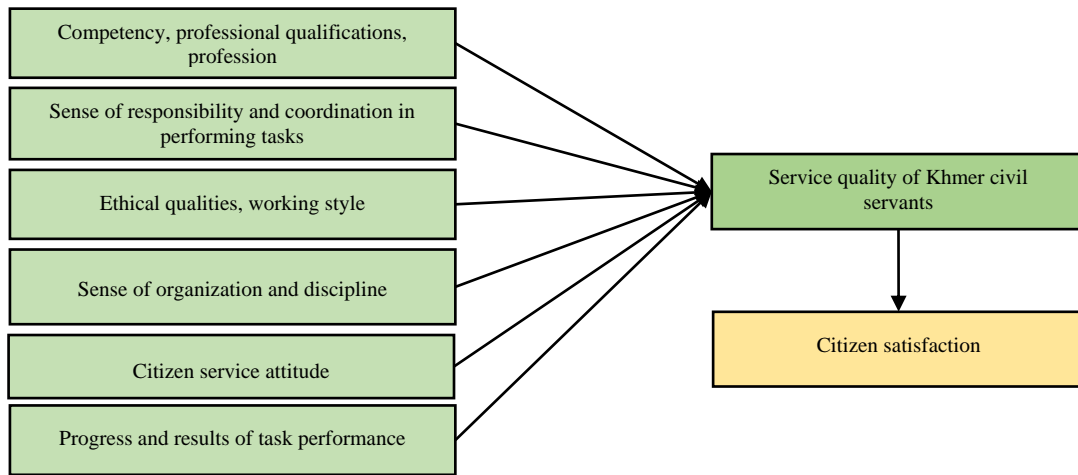


Figure 1. Research structure (Source: Authors, 2023)

Observable variables of factors in the research structure of citizen satisfaction about the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. It is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Observed variables in research structure (Source: Authors compiled from evaluation studies, 2023)

Factors in the research structure	Encode	Observed variables
Competency, professional qualifications, profession	CPQP	(1) good communication ability; (2) knowledge; (3) professional problem-solving skills; (4) taking responsibility for the work; (5) learning to improve qualifications.
Sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks	SRCP	(1) citizens easily connect with civil servants; (2) civil servants handle work flexibly and timely; (3) citizens' questions are satisfactorily resolved by civil servants; (4) civil servants understand the requirements of citizens; (5) relationships with colleagues.
Ethical qualities, working style	EQWS	(1) civil servants who have culture and role models; (2) friendly to everyone's community; (3) elegant and careful working style; (4) creativity, improving the working environment.
Sense of organization and discipline	SODI	(1) obey the law; (2) comply with the regulations of the agency where the civil servant is working; (3) comply with the discipline of working time; (4) perform assigned duties and tasks.
Citizen service attitude	CSAT	(1) be polite when dealing with the citizens; (2) be friendly when answering the citizen's questions; (3) clear instructions by regulations; (4) do not cause harassment or trouble to the citizens.
Progress and results of task performance	PRTP	(1) guaranteed work progress; (2) work completed on time; (3) the quality of each work is good; (4) the quality of performing assigned tasks.
Service quality of Khmer civil servants	SQCS	(1) working style, public service ethics; (2) qualifications, capacity, and working skills; (3) attitude, responsibility, and work results.
Citizen satisfaction	CISA	(1) satisfied with the service quality of civil servants; (2) satisfied with the service style; (3) satisfied when contacts; (4) highly appreciated for civil servants.

METHODOLOGY

To detect and evaluate the factors affecting citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. We have built the research structure on the theoretical framework combined with the literature study. The methods used include descriptive statistics, exploratory factors, and regression analysis to test the research model. The steps of the research method are shown in Figure 2.

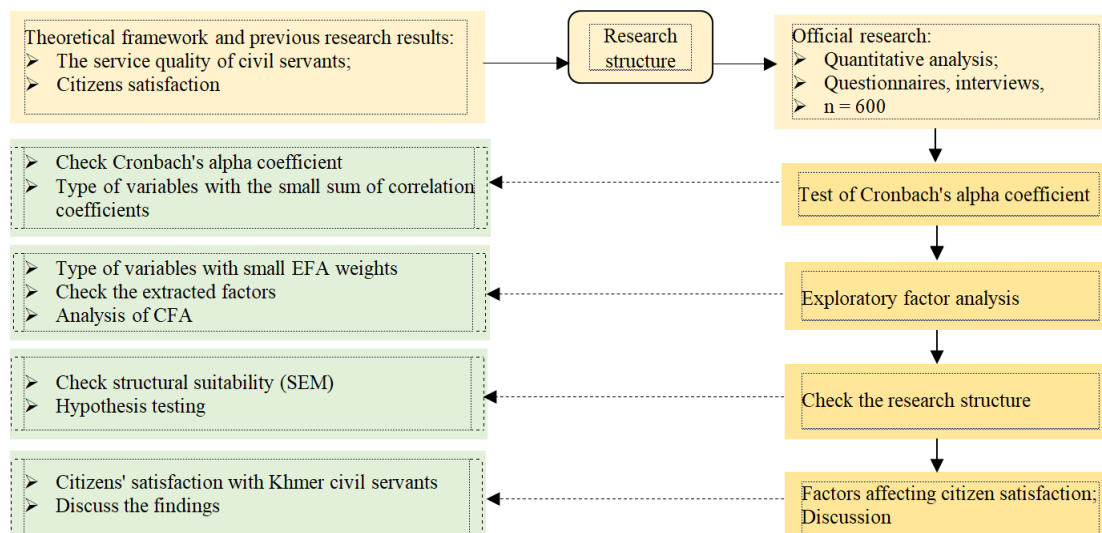


Figure 2. Flowchart of research methodology steps (Source: Authors, 2023)

Research area

In Vietnam, the Khmer are an indigenous people with a long history; they live mainly in the South of Vietnam. According to the 2019 Population and Housing Census, Khmer people in Vietnam have a population of 1,319,562 people; Khmer people live mainly in the Mekong Delta.

According to the principle of random selection, the study sample was taken from 8 localities in the Mekong Delta, including Soc Trang, Hau Giang, Bac Lieu, Can Tho, An Giang, Tra Vinh, Ca Mau, and Kien Giang. The study area is shown in Figure 3.

Research data analysis

Based on preliminary discussion results, a questionnaire was developed on citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Data collection took place from October 2022 to March 2023. The survey questionnaire has 39 Likert items, including demographic questions with information about the survey area, gender, occupation, age, education level, number of meetings to work with civil servants, and eight scales of citizen satisfaction on service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

The Likert scale is used with a range of values from 1 to 5 to measure the perception of survey subjects (1) disagree entirely, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) agree entirely. Respondents answered directly on the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to 600 citizens in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. A total of 596 valid responses were collected, as shown in Table 2.

Responses from the survey were coded and analyzed using SPSS software version 20 and AMOS version 24. Research on citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta Long, Vietnam, with steps included in assessing the scale's reliability. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Hypothesis testing by the linear structural model (SEM) on citizen satisfaction about the service quality of Khmer civil servants in Mekong Delta, Vietnam; and evaluate the influence of factors on service quality of Khmer civil servants; the level of citizen satisfaction about the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam.

RESULTS

The results of testing the reliability of the scales

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is used to check the close correlation of the scales. According to the researchers on the scale, it is possible to use Cronbach's Alpha coefficient > 0.6. The best scale is in the range of 0.8 to 1. In addition, variables with a total variable correlation coefficient < 0.3 will be lost and excluded from the research model (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The data processing results in Table 3 have shown that all eight scales have high reliability. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is > 0.8, and the total correlation coefficient is > 0.3 (Cronbach, 1951). They represent the appropriateness of the scale.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) for the scales

The KMO and Bartlett's test results in the KMO and Bartlett's test tables show that the KMO value = 0.851, proving that this discovery factor is suitable for the scale. Bartlett's test, value Sig.= 0.000 (< 0.05), proves that the

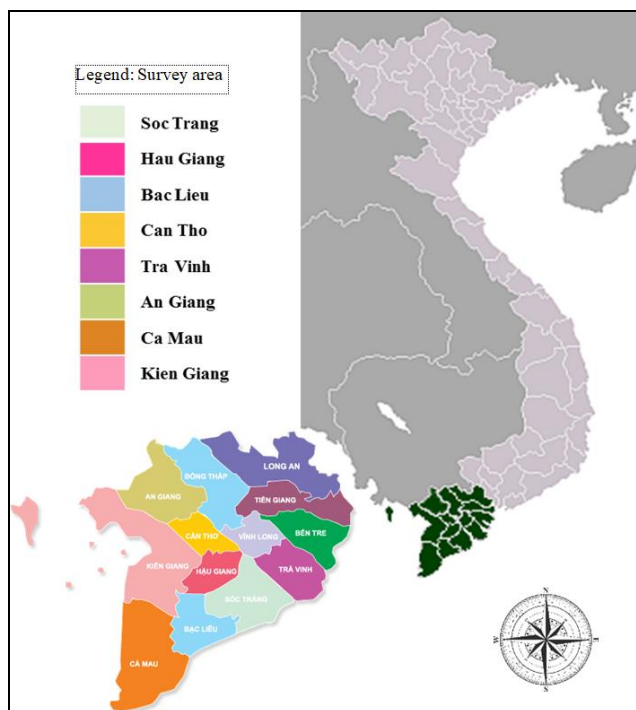


Figure 3. Survey area in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, Ratio: 1/250000 (Source: Authors gathered, 2023)

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the survey sample (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

Characteristics and survey area	Number of citizens	Percentage
1. Survey area	596	100%
Soc Trang	83	13.9
Hau Giang	77	12.9
Bac Lieu	48	8.1
Can Tho	65	10.9
Tra Vinh	58	9.7
An Giang	115	19.3
Ca Mau	58	9.7
Kien Giang	92	15.4
2. The gender	596	100%
Male	306	51.3
Female	290	48.7
3. Age (years)	596	100%
<30	137	23.0
30-40	147	24.7
40-50	164	27.5
>50	148	24.8
4. Education	596	100%
Master or PhD	25	4.2
College or Bachelor	199	33.4
Professional diploma holders	198	33.2
Other	174	29.2
5. Occupation	596	100%
State employees	54	9.1
Company leadership	67	11.2
Researchers	32	5.4
Business staff	116	19.5
Technical staff	58	9.7
Teacher	115	19.3
Freelance labor	58	9.7
Other	96	16.1
6. Number of meetings to work with civil servants	596	100%
1	137	23.0
2-3	147	24.7
4-5	164	27.5
>5	148	24.8

variables are correlated in factors. Parameter Eigenvalues ≥ 1 are kept in the analytical model. The analysis results showed that Eigenvalue = 1,002 (≥ 1) and eight factors were extracted with the best meaning of summarizing information. The sum of squares of the cumulative factor loading coefficient (Cumulative) is 77.933% ($\geq 50\%$), showing that the EFA model is appropriate (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, all eight factors are kept in the research model, shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Results of testing scales (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

Scales of measurement	Encode	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation range
Competency, professional qualifications, profession	CPQP	5	.886	.687 - .821
Sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks	SRCP	5	.875	.659 - .736
Ethical qualities, working style	EQWS	4	.857	.684 - .720
Sense of organization and discipline	SODI	4	.920	.764 - .861
Citizen service attitude	CSAT	4	.843	.590 - .812
Progress and results of task performance	PRTP	4	.928	.805 - .876
Service quality of Khmer civil servants	SQCS	3	.968	.914 - .947
Citizen satisfaction	CISA	4	.982	.949 - .962

The results of the rotation matrix in Table 4 show that 33 observed variables are classified into eight factors, all observed variables have Factor Loading coefficients greater than 0.5, and there are no terrible variables (Doll et al., 1994). Therefore, all eight factors are kept in the research model.

Confirmatory factor analysis in the research model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical technique of linear structural modelling (SEM). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to check the scales and the appropriateness of the research structure. Confirmatory factor analysis results are evaluated through the following criteria: reliability, convergence, and distinction. We tested Composite Reliability, Convergence, and Discrimination. It is shown in Table 5. Convergent validity tests include Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted. The test results show that the Composite Reliability (CR) > 0.7 means that the reliability of the scales is guaranteed; All Average Variances Extracted Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5 . Thus, both indexes show Guaranteed Convergence. The Discriminant validity test includes Maximum Shared Variance (MSV); The square root of the mean variance is extracted from the Square Root of AVE (SQRTAVE). The test results in Table 5 show that all Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) $<$ Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

In addition, Discriminant Validity is shown in the Square Root of AVE (SQRTAVE) $>$ Inter-Construct Correlations. Thus, Discriminant Validity is guaranteed (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996). Therefore, the test results for convergence and discriminant validity are shown in Tables 5, showing the combined reliability; convergent; discriminant validity was guaranteed at all scales.

Table 4. Rotated component matrix (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
CISA3	.970							
CISA1	.960							
CISA4	.956							
CISA2	.951							
CPQP5		.869						
CPQP3		.815						
CPQP2		.773						
CPQP4		.765						
CPQP1		.765						
SRCP4			.826					
SRCP3			.819					
SRCP5			.819					
SRCP1			.792					
SRCP2			.758					
PRTP4				.924				
PRTP2				.898				
PRTP3				.896				
PRTP1				.869				
SODI3					.905			
SODI4					.894			
SODI1					.851			
SODI2					.836			
EQWS3						.835		
EQWS4						.826		
EQWS2						.808		
EQWS1						.794		
CSAT4							.885	
CSAT2							.819	
CSAT1							.767	
CSAT3							.738	
SQCS2								.793
SQCS1								.791
SQCS3								.749

Table 5. Results of tests reliability and convergence (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

Factor construct	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	CISA	CPQP	SRCP	PRTP	SODI	EQWS	CSAT	SQCS
CISA	0.983	0.934	0.084	0.983	0.967							
CPQP	0.888	0.616	0.244	0.905	0.168	0.785						
SRCP	0.877	0.587	0.097	0.879	0.122	0.294	0.766					
PRTP	0.926	0.760	0.076	0.951	0.222	-0.022	-0.060	0.872				
SODI	0.921	0.746	0.160	0.927	0.096	0.343	0.243	-0.040	0.864			
EQWS	0.857	0.601	0.235	0.860	0.129	0.246	0.180	0.079	0.178	0.775		
CSAT	0.851	0.594	0.182	0.912	0.057	0.331	0.132	0.060	0.146	0.298	0.771	
SQCS	0.969	0.912	0.244	0.973	0.289	0.494	0.311	0.276	0.400	0.485	0.426	0.955

Result test of the structural model

To check the suitability of the research structure, the results of analysis of the linear structural model (SEM) in Figure

2 shows that it has Chi-square = 2.188; CFI = .968; GFI = .909; RMSEA = .045; TLI = .963; PCLOSE = .991, the coefficients just shown are acceptable (Doll et al., 1994). The linear structural model analysis (SEM) results in Figure 2 show the agreement in the studied structure. The results of testing the linear structure of the model citizen satisfaction on the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, are shown in Figures 4 and 7. The data show the Sig values of the scales CPQP = .000 (<.05), SRCP = .000 (<.05), EQWS = .000 (<.05), SODI = .000 (<.05), CSAT = .000 (<.05), PRTP = .000 (<.05), SQCS = .000 (<.05). The Sig values it has been shown that there is an impact relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

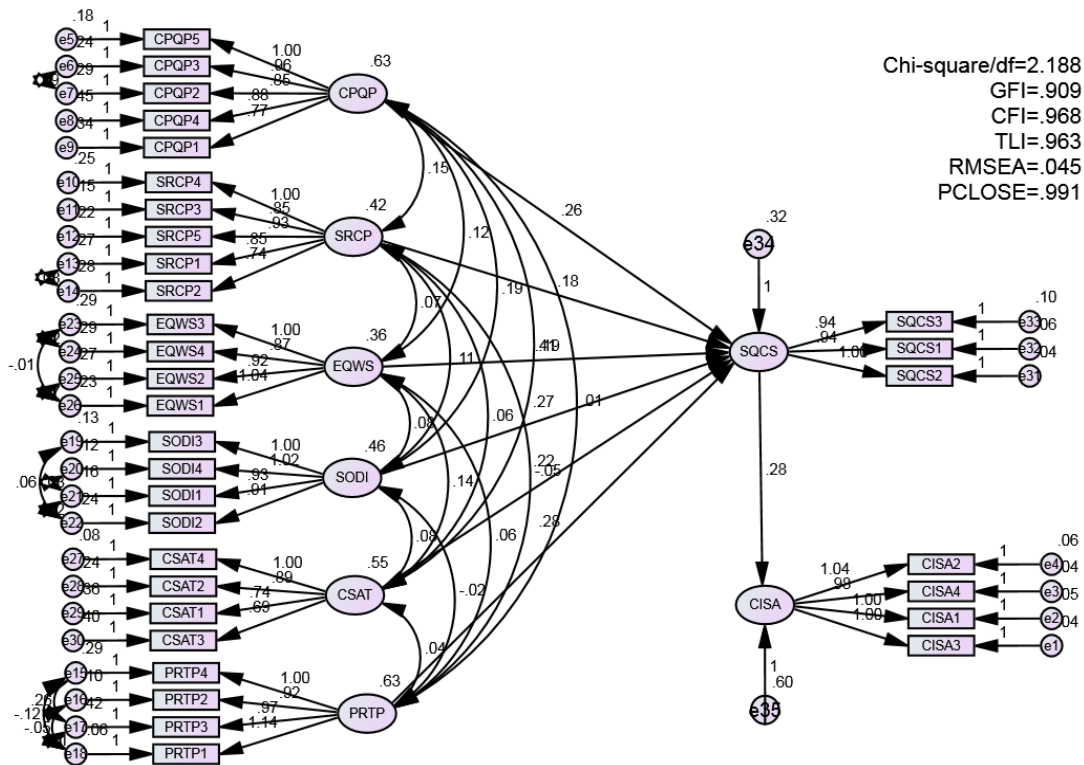


Figure 4. Results of test the structure of citizen satisfaction about the service quality of Khmer civil servants (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

Results of standardized regression coefficients Table 7, the larger the normalized regression coefficients, the stronger the impact of the corresponding independent variable on the dependent variable (SQCS). Factors affecting the service quality of Khmer civil servants include EQWS = .283, PRTP = .265, CPQP = .256, SODI = .214, CSAT = .193, SRCP = .124.

Table 7. Results of testing the relationship between research concepts (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

The relationship between direct effects	Estimates	Sig	Standardized estimates
SQCS <----- CPQP	.270	.000	.256
SQCS <----- SRCP	.166	.000	.124
SQCS <----- EQWS	.368	.000	.283
SQCS <----- SODI	.263	.000	.214
SQCS <----- CSAT	.222	.000	.193
SQCS <----- PRTP	.246	.000	.265
CISA <----- SQCS	.276	.000	.291

The results of testing the linear structure of the research model have R2 (Adjusted R Square) of SQCS = .544, which means that the regression model is suitable. The explanatory regression model is that the independent variables affect 54.4% of the model's dependent variable (SQCS) variation. In addition, R2 (Adjusted R Square) of CISA = .084 explains that the independent variables affect 8.8% of the dependent variable (CISA) variation in the model.

Table 8. The relationship of indirect effects by the intermediate observed variable (Source: Authors summary of survey data processing results, 2023)

The relationship of indirect effects	Estimates	Sig	Standardized estimates
CISA <----- SQCS <----- CPQP	.074	.002	.074
CISA <----- SQCS <----- SRCP	.046	.003	.036
CISA <----- SQCS <----- EQWS	.101	.001	.082
CISA <----- SQCS <----- SODI	.072	.002	.062
CISA <----- SQCS <----- CSAT	.061	.002	.056
CISA <----- SQCS <----- PRTP	.068	.003	.077

In the relationship of indirect effects by the intermediate observed variable Table 8, the independent variables affecting the dependent variable (CISA) through the intermediate variable (SQCS) have the value Sig EQWS = .001, PRTP = .003, CPQP = .002, SODI = .002, CSAT = .002, SRCP = .003. This shows significant impact relations between the independent variables affecting the dependent variable (CISA) and the intermediate variable (SQCS).

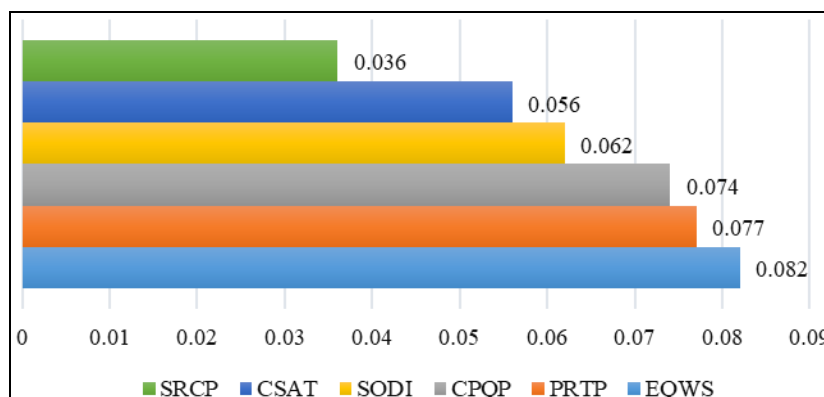


Figure 5. Citizen Satisfaction with Khmer Civil Servants (Source: Authors analyzed data from the survey, 2023)

Results of standardized regression coefficients Table 8, the larger the normalized regression coefficients, the stronger the impact of the corresponding independent variable on the dependent variable (CISA). Factors of indirectly affects citizen satisfaction, include EQWS = .082, PRTP = .077, CPQP = .074, SODI = .062, CSAT = .056, SRCP = .036. It is clearly shown in Figure 5.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Checking Hypothesis 1

Research results show that the scales are reliable and valid for model evaluation. The findings of the study show that there are six factors affecting the satisfaction of citizens about the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, including Competency, professional qualifications, profession; A sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks; Ethical qualities, working style; Sense of organization and discipline; Citizen service attitude; Progress and results of task performance.

Checking Hypothesis 2

Competency, professional qualifications, and profession directly affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants .256, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .074 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. The Competency, professional qualifications, and working style of civil servants significantly influence citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants. Therefore, public administration agencies should develop short-term and long-term training plans for Khmer civil servants. The training can be done at the agency so that civil servants can update new legal documents, acquire knowledge, and foster weak skills (Hai, 2022). Organizing learning experiences in localities with improved models or for civil servants to learn practically is advisable.

Sense of responsibility and coordination directly affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants .124, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .036 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. Civil servants' sense of responsibility and coordination is essential; it affects people's satisfaction. Raising the sense of responsibility of civil servants and the smooth coordination of the civil service apparatus will well handle administrative procedures for citizens. We should improve the strict requirements of the civil service process, and the civil servant's behaviour element should be enhanced (Ciobanu and Androniceanu, 2015). Therefore, public administrative agencies should have solutions to improve the service level of civil servants. In completing the assignment of civil servant management in the direction of clearly defining the tasks and powers of each position and job title and renovating the working methods of the coordinating agencies.

Moral qualities and working style directly affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants .283, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .082 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. The ethical qualities and working style of civil servants should be regularly trained. Public administration agencies should pay attention to well-implementing solutions to organize training in civil service ethics for civil servants (Rumambi et al., 2022). In addition, local authorities should develop a system to collect comments from the people. It is advisable to improve administrative discipline and discipline in association with improving public service ethics and the professional ethics of civil servants (Bouzas-Lorenzo and Mahou-Lago, 2015). We should be open and transparent in state agencies' activities and public officials' accountability and improve the mechanism of citizen supervision over the activities of public servants (Alkrajji and Ameen, 2022).

Sense of organization and discipline directly affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants .214, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .062 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. The sense of organization and discipline are characteristics of civil servants, expressed through the civil servant's attitude toward serving the citizens. We should monitor the activities of civil servants when they perform their official duties. Administrative agencies should develop a schedule to receive citizens and deal with the issues they care about (Nguyen et al., 2023). It is possible to set up

a hotline to connect with agency leaders for citizens to propose complex issues that have yet to be resolved by civil servants or that have not been satisfactorily resolved by subordinates for citizens (Saputra and Fajri, 2020).

Citizen service attitude directly affects the service quality of Khmer civil servants .193, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .056 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. A civil servant's attitude to serving citizens is the spirit, action and behaviour of a public employee working with citizens. Citizen service attitude requires that public officials should be respectful, polite, and enthusiastic in answering questions and assisting in meeting citizens' requests (Hai et al., 2023). Therefore, civil servants should improve their communication skills (Martin, 2015). Public administration agencies should organize training courses to improve communication skills for civil servants, such as persuasion skills, situational judgment skills, and decision-making on management procedures for citizens (Alkrajji, 2021). Civil servants should be trained in knowledge and skills to deal with problems. The service attitude of civil servants should be improved firstly in terms of awareness (Lin and Doong, 2018).

Progress and results of task performance directly affect the service quality of Khmer civil servants .265, and the indirect influence on citizen satisfaction is .077 by the service quality of Khmer civil servants. Progress and results of the performance of duties by civil servants, state administrative agencies must ensure that they give citizens appropriate instructions, helping citizens solve problems related to administrative procedures. Public servants must be held accountable to citizens if public officials wrongly advise them on administrative procedures (Christensen and Læg Reid, 2020). Currently, civil servants' service level is clearly and fully specified in the law on public service obligations of public servants (Awang et al., 2020). However, civil servants should work harder to achieve the required results or work in moderation, which means they have not completed their duties and have low service levels.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The hypothetical research model has been tested through the scales showing the suitability of the factors. The research results have verified the model of citizen satisfaction with the service quality of Khmer civil servants in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. There are six factors affecting the service quality of Khmer civil servants, including (1) Competency, and professional qualifications, profession; (2) A sense of responsibility and coordination in performing tasks; (3) Ethical qualities and working style; (4) A sense of organization and discipline; (5) Citizen service attitude; (6) Progress and results of task performance. In addition, the service quality of Khmer civil servants influences citizen satisfaction in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Thus, the results achieved in the study satisfied the set objectives.

It is necessary to study the factors affecting citizens' satisfaction with the service quality of civil servants. It will help state management agencies promote the positive aspects and limit the negative factors to improve the quality of public administrative services. This study aims to build and test a model showing the relationship between influencing factors and people's satisfaction using public administrative services. The proposed discussion helps administrators understand the relationship between independent factors with the service quality of civil servants and citizens' satisfaction with civil servants.

The study only focuses on a few typical localities, the sample size is relatively small, and several other factors may affect the service quality of civil servants and citizens' satisfaction. From these limitations, the research direction for future studies should expand the scope of comparative research between localities. Expand the research sample size and consider adding new factors to the research model to improve the explanatory power of the current model.

The quality of public service is an essential factor for the success of public services. The quality of civil servants' services contributes to improving people's trust and satisfaction in public services and, at the same time, helps improve public service efficiency and reliability. This topic is of interest to countries around the world to improve and enhance the quality of public administration. People's satisfaction with the quality of public servants' services is essential in ensuring the transparency and quality of public services. The findings in the study suggest that the government should pay attention to the factors to improve the service quality of civil servants. Regular assessment and improvement of public service issues will help to increase public trust and confidence in government and administrative agencies.

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