Client Satisfaction on the Service Delivery of PhilHealth Regional Office VII – Cebu City

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Abstract — This study explored client awareness, Citizen's Charter effectiveness, and service satisfaction for healthcare services at PhilHealth Regional Office VII – Cebu City during Calendar Years 2023-2024. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research analyzed responses from 4,612 clients in 2023 and 2,881 clients in 2024. Findings reveal that individuals are consistently the predominant client type, with growing young professionals' representation. Citizen's Charter awareness rose from 59.68% to 69.57%, while perceived helpfulness increased from 61.29% to 72.46%. Overall satisfaction also improved, with notable gains in responsiveness, access, cost, and outcome dimensions. Significant correlations were found between client age and type with both Charter awareness and satisfaction, highlighting the need for demographic-specific strategies. Based on the results, eight targeted awareness activities were recommended to further enhance service delivery and governance at PhilHealth Regional Office VII – Cebu City. The research examined PhilHealth Regional Office VII's client awareness, Citizen's Charter impact, and service satisfaction over 2023-2024. With nearly 7,500 respondents across two years, the study found a key shift in client type from businesses to individual citizens and improved awareness and satisfaction levels. Citizen's Charter visibility and helpfulness rose significantly, contributing to higher satisfaction ratings. Age and client type were strongly linked to both awareness and satisfaction, indicating the need for differentiated communication approaches. The results support targeted awareness initiatives as effective strategies for sustaining and enhancing service quality.

Client awareness activities on Service Delivery to reach varied client segments and further improve public engagement and satisfaction.

Keywords — Public Management, Citizen's Charter, Healthcare Services, Mixed Methods Approach, Cebu City, Philippines

I. Introduction

The quality of public service delivery represents a fundamental bridge between citizens and their government. As Fukuyama (2022) suggests, the perceived accessibility and effectiveness of government services directly shapes public trust and institutional legitimacy. This relationship forms the cornerstone of democratic governance, where regular interactions with public agencies often constitute the most tangible manifestation of the social contract between state and citizen. This study on client satisfaction and service delivery recognizes this critical relationship, particularly in environmental governance where public participation determines policy success.

Access to services, the standard of healthcare provided, responsiveness to client requests, and overall service delivery efficiency are all components of PhilHealth's customer satisfaction program. The public's growing need for better healthcare services amid national changes and a difficult economic climate has made customer happiness more important in recent years. PhilHealth has made significant progress in enhancing its service quality, especially in Region VII. Client views are greatly influenced by elements like as the effectiveness of claims processing, the scope of coverage, and customer service performance. For example, a structure for timely customer support can reduce the annoyances that arise while submitting claims. Research indicates that customers are more satisfied when they believe their issues are resolved quickly. Continuous progress requires this feedback loop (Guzman et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the Philippine Statistics Authority's Governance Survey revealed substantial regional disparities in service satisfaction, with rural and geographically isolated areas reporting satisfaction levels 17 percent below the national average (Camarillo & Bellotindos, 2021). Digital transformation, which involves adopting digital tools, automation, and data-driven systems, enables organizations to streamline processes and improve service delivery.

In Cebu City, digital transformation efforts have been particularly visible in the healthcare sector, with initiatives aimed at enhancing service accessibility and reducing administrative burdens. The adoption of digital platforms in hospitals and healthcare institutions has improved efficiency and patient experience. This thesis explores the pivotal role of digitalization in reshaping public service delivery, delving into its impact on client satisfaction and operational efficiency. It aims to assess how digital initiatives influence the quality of services, identify challenges in implementation, and propose strategies for sustainable and inclusive digital transformation.

The rapid integration of digital technologies in the workplace has transformed how organizations operate, enhancing efficiency, communication, and decision-making. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies' regional analysis noted that Central Visayas demonstrated the widest gap between service availability and public utilization among all regions, with health care resource services showing particularly low engagement metrics. This regional context presents significant implications for PhilHealth Regional Office VII operations, as the office must overcome both general service delivery challenges and sector-specific obstacles to public engagement.

The findings will contribute to implementing Republic Act 11032 more effectively while supporting broader governance objectives of transparency, accountability, and citizen empowerment. From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on public service delivery in developing contexts, particularly examining how formalized service protocols translate into actual client experiences in technically complex governance domains like health care management. The practical applications extend beyond PhilHealth Regional Office VII, potentially informing provincial and regional governance improvement initiatives across multiple sectors.

The research scope includes a documentary analysis of client awareness and perception of the Citizen's Charter as well as client satisfaction levels regarding service delivery in 2023 and 2024 using the PhilHealth Regional Office VII Client Satisfaction Measurement Form, a standardized measurement tool created in accordance with Civil Service Commission guidelines that provides quantitative metrics across service quality dimensions including staff responsiveness, process efficiency, outcome satisfaction, and facility adequacy. The study will be carried out during Calendar Year 2024–2025 with a focus on service delivery at PhilHealth Regional Office VII. The study does not address more general health care governance concerns outside service delivery; rather, it concentrates solely on patients who directly used PhilHealth Regional Office VII services within the designated time frame.

The study also recognizes the inherent difficulties in standardizing satisfaction measurements across various client demographics and service kinds, as well as possible limits in respondent recollection of prior service experiences. Given the non-experimental research design and the possible impact of uncontrollable external factors, such as more extensive governance reforms and administrative changes during the study period, the study also acknowledges its limitations in establishing causal relationships between awareness interventions and satisfaction outcomes.

This study addresses this gap by exploring these interconnections within PhilHealth Regional Office VII, ultimately developing evidence-based recommendations for enhancing client awareness activities that promote more effective, responsive, and citizen-centered health care governance.

Literature Review

Client satisfaction and service delivery at government agencies, with particular focus on health care service institutions and represents a fundamental bridge between citizens and their government. The literature reviewed for this study encompasses both conceptual literature and research literature that were compiled by the researcher, and covered study-related ideas, concepts, generalizations, and findings

Conceptual Literature

Client satisfaction assessment is an important component of public service evaluation, especially in specialized technical agencies such as health care services departments. Research on health care financing management services found that clear and defined service procedures and accessible information had a significant impact on client satisfaction levels, with services using simplified technical language showing approximately 27% higher satisfaction than those using complex bureaucratic terminology (Paradji & Asiri, 2024). Client feedback mechanisms enabled by Decision Support Systems (DSS) have proven effective in capturing and analyzing satisfaction data for service improvement, demonstrating that systematic collection and analysis can translate subjective client experiences into actionable administrative improvements, especially in technical service sectors with complex regulatory frameworks (Tapado et al., 2023).

According to Sarande et al. (2022) the relationship between service quality perceptions and client satisfaction in government agencies follows distinct patterns that differ from private sector service models. Assessment of perceived service quality in government insurance systems reveals that reliability and assurance dimensions have the strongest influence on overall satisfaction in government service contexts, suggesting that when agencies demonstrate consistent performance and convey expertise in their respective domains, client satisfaction remains high even when other service dimensions receive lower ratings.

Customer satisfaction with government services is increasingly impacted by digital transformation initiatives. Applications for utility company customer satisfaction surveys have shown promise in streamlining feedback gathering and facilitating real-time service modifications; when used, they can lead to up to 37% quicker problem solving and 29% higher customer satisfaction scores (Khairil, 2021). Information quality and system usability are important predictors of user satisfaction among internal and external stakeholders, according to evaluations of enhanced program monitoring and document archiving systems for healthcare initiatives. This suggests that digital systems can enhance client satisfaction and operational efficiency in health care governance programs (Pitao et al., 2022).

One of the most important tools for improving customer satisfaction and service transparency in Philippine government organizations is the Citizen's Charter. Communities are generally satisfied with services that have clearly communicated standards through citizen charters and related mechanisms, according to public satisfaction research with civil registration services.

These services receive satisfaction ratings that are 23% higher than those where standards are unclear (Harsoyo & Suparno, 2021). Transparent communication of service requirements and procedures is crucial, as evidenced by studies of user satisfaction with government services that consistently identify information accessibility and procedural clarity as important factors influencing overall satisfaction (Limbongan & Oktajayanice, 2023).

Kabir (2023) looked on customer happiness in restaurant service settings, highlighting how crucial it is to boosting sales, income, expansion, and general performance. The study's main goals were to identify the characteristics that influence customer happiness and investigate how Finland's Naan-n-Curry, a new restaurant, used these components in conjunction with technology to please patrons. The study, which used a survey approach with 50 respondents and 18 questions, discovered that variables related to food and service quality were the main reasons why frequent customers choose the restaurant. Based on repeated service experiences and certain quality aspects that satisfied their demands, frequent service users—especially office workers and students—developed unique satisfaction patterns, according to the findings.

There are a number of conceptual framework similarities between Alisemeza's (2024) study and the present research on PhilHealth Regional Office VII, especially the emphasis on certain service qualities and how they relate to customer satisfaction. Both studies acknowledge that service quality has several facets and that it is crucial to look at each one separately rather than viewing service as a single, cohesive idea. However, the current study looks at a government agency with public service objectives and regulatory activities, whereas Alisemeza's research was carried out in a private sector setting with profit-oriented results.

The main foundation of this research is the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), which offers a thorough framework for comprehending how expectations and perceived performance are compared to create satisfaction ratings (Sinha et al., 2019). EDT states that before interacting with service providers, customers establish expectations on the quality of the services they would receive. They contrast these earlier expectations with their actual experience (perceived performance) after service interactions. Performance that meets or surpasses expectations (confirmation or positive disconfirmation) leads to satisfaction, whereas performance that falls short of expectations (negative disconfirmation) leads to discontent. This cognitive appraisal process explains why clients with different expectations may have variable degrees of satisfaction from similar service experiences (Lee et al., 2022).

The SERVQUAL Model serves as the first supporting theoretical framework, identifying five key dimensions of service quality: tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance), reliability (ability to perform promised service dependably and accurately), responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service), assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence), and empathy (caring, individualized attention) (Raza et al., 2020). This model provides a structured approach to

measuring service quality through the assessment of gaps between customer expectations and perceptions across these dimensions (Tahir et al., 2022).

Research Literature

Local governance contexts and community characteristics influence client satisfaction with government services in distinctive ways. Research on community satisfaction with administrative services in local government units demonstrates that satisfaction levels vary significantly depending on community demographics, previous service experiences, and local governance traditions (Rahmad et al., 2023). Analysis of public satisfaction with government services indicates that cultural factors and community expectations shape satisfaction evaluations, suggesting that service delivery mechanisms should be contextualized to reflect local governance realities while maintaining core quality standards (Setiadi & Manafe, 2021).

The implementation of standardized satisfaction measurement tools enables more systematic improvements in government service delivery. Community satisfaction index analysis of public service malls indicates that standardized measurement tools provide comparable data across service types and time periods, facilitating more objective service improvement planning (Aprilia & Puspitarini, 2021). Studies of frontline services at universities demonstrate that satisfaction measurement frameworks that assess multiple service dimensions provide more nuanced understanding of client needs than single-metric approaches, highlighting the importance of comprehensive assessment methodologies in service evaluation (Pentang, 2021).

Shen (2021) studied healthcare service quality and patients' satisfaction under dual-capital operations mode at Shanghai General Hospital. The research proposed a link moderation model connecting independent and dependent variables through two mediating variables, arguing that the hospital's dual capital operation model enhanced team collaboration among physicians compared to single capital operations. This improved collaboration was hypothesized to enhance medical service quality, which in turn promoted patient satisfaction. The findings supported this hypothesis, demonstrating that dual capital operations positively influenced patient satisfaction through the mediating roles of team coordination and medical service quality. The study provided theoretical support for the effectiveness of dual capital operation systems in hospitals and recommended that Chinese public hospitals introduce additional capital sources to drive high-quality development.

While Cruz's (2015) study differs fundamentally from the current research in its focus on physical products rather than services, both investigations share an interest in understanding the relationship between quality and satisfaction. The current study of PhilHealth Regional Office VII examines service quality rather than product quality, focusing on intangible aspects of health care service delivery. This represents a significant conceptual difference, as service quality involves more subjective and interaction-based dimensions compared to the relatively objective metrics of product quality. Additionally, Cruz's examination of product safety has limited application to

health care services, though it suggests potential consideration of how safety and security dimensions might manifest in client interactions with government agencies. Despite these differences, Cruz's methodological approach to examining multiple factors influencing satisfaction provides valuable guidance for the current study's analytical framework, particularly regarding how to isolate and test relationships between specific quality dimensions and overall satisfaction with PhilHealth Regional Office VII services.

According to Kera's (2017) study shares significant methodological similarities with the current research on PhilHealth Regional Office VII, particularly in its application of the SERVQUAL framework to evaluate government service quality and its relationship to customer satisfaction. Both studies examine public service agencies with regulatory functions, providing a closer contextual match than studies of private sector services. The use of gap analysis to identify discrepancies between expectations and perceptions represents a valuable methodological approach that the current study can adapt to the healthcare governance context.

However, while Kera's research focused on revenue collection services with primarily financial transactions, PhilHealth Regional Office VII provides health care financing regulatory services with distinct technical dimensions and compliance requirements. This difference necessitates modifications to the service quality dimensions examined, with potentially greater emphasis on technical competence and health care knowledge in the current study. Nevertheless, Kera's findings regarding the consistent gaps between expectations and perceptions across all service dimensions offer important cautionary insights for PhilHealth Regional Office VII, suggesting that comprehensive service improvement rather than targeted enhancements may be necessary to substantially improve client satisfaction.

As noted by Katuti (2018), the research's thorough mixed-methods approach to service quality evaluation offers helpful methodological direction for the present study of PhilHealth Regional Office VII. Both studies look at public service organizations that employ qualified personnel to provide specialized services to a range of clientele. A model for the current study's method of gathering complete viewpoints on health care service quality may be found in Katuti's multi-stakeholder data collection strategy, which includes both service providers and recipients. Health care governance services, on the other hand, may require longer-term regulatory connections with distinct client expectations and demands, whereas health care services involve urgent human needs and direct physical encounters. The service parameters analyzed and their relative relevance in the context of Philhealth Regional Office VII must be modified in light of these contextual variations. However, Katuti's results about the importance of waiting time, staff friendliness, and competency probably have a direct bearing on health care services, indicating priority areas for investigation in the ongoing research of customer satisfaction with PhilHealth Regional Office VII.

Lei (2017) studied the effects of online reviews and waiting time on customers repurchase intention in the context of online food services. The research employed a 2×2×2 between-subject

experimental design examining how review sources (owner vs. consumer), promised waiting time (long vs.short), and objective waiting time (long vs. short) influenced customer repurchase intentions. With 208 university participants, the study found that while review sources and promised waiting time did not significantly affect expected service quality as hypothesized, promised waiting time significantly influenced service responsiveness perceptions and acceptable waiting time expectations. Short promised waiting times enhanced perceptions of service responsiveness, while longer promised waiting times increased waiting tolerance.

The study also demonstrated that acceptable waiting time serves as a critical reference point, with satisfaction significantly impacted when objective waiting time exceeds acceptable thresholds. The findings revealed that shorter objective waiting times drove higher satisfaction and repurchase intention than longer waiting periods.

II. Methodology

Research Design

This study employed mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluate client satisfaction and service delivery at the PhilHealth Regional Office VII for the period of 2023 to 2024. Specifically, the study utilized a sequential explanatory design, beginning with quantitative analysis of existing Client Satisfaction Measurement Forms followed by qualitative methods to provide deeper explanatory insights into the quantitative findings (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Study Locale

The study was carried out in Cebu City's PhilHealth Regional Office VII. In order to analyze the entire collection of available satisfaction measurement forms from the designated period, this study primarily used documentary analysis, concentrating on the Client Satisfaction Measurement Form data gathered by PhilHealth Regional Office VII during 2023–2024. The study used existing administrative documents as its primary data source.

Population and Sampling

This survey used seven thousand four hundred ninety-three (7,493) respondents composed of four thousand six hundred twelve (4,612) respondents for year 2023 and two thousand eight hundred eighty-one (2,881) respondents for the year 2024. The process of selecting a sample of data from a population in order to draw conclusions about the population is known as random sampling. This method works effectively when the researcher knows exactly what features or attributes they need to look into and wants to choose a sample that reflects those qualities. It also yields a quick study result that can yield important insights. Every responder was asked to fill out the survey forms.

Data Collection Instrument

The study used a questionnaire designed by the researcher based on the research objectives. It was separated into four parts: Part I: Respondent Profile. Part II: level of clients' awareness and perception of the Citizen's Charter. Part III: level of client satisfaction with service delivery of Philhealth Regional Office VII. Part IV: significant difference between the client satisfaction levels during 2023 and 2024. Part V: client awareness activities plan on Philhealth can be facilitated.

Likert scales were used for the Level of Client Satisfaction with Service Delivery. A score of 4.51-5.00 Strongly Agree SA) 3.51-4.50 Agree (A) 2.51-3.50   Neither Agree nor Disagree 1.51-2.50 Disagree (D) 1.00-1.50 Strongly Disagree (SD). Thus, percentage and frequency were used for the level of awareness and perception of the citizen's charter of the respondents in terms of awareness, level of awareness and perception of the citizen's charter of the respondents in terms of visibility and accessibility, and level of awareness and perception of the citizen's charter of the respondents in terms of perceived helpfulness. Moreover, the researchers used Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests to test the level of clients' awareness and perception of the citizen's charter

Moreover, the adviser and panel members professionally evaluated the questionnaire for clarity and applicability. Additionally, it was examined by instrumentation specialists to guarantee validity and dependability.

Data Collection Procedures

To provide a clear understanding of how the study was conducted the researchers analyzed the results using statistical tools followed by interpreting the findings in the context of the original research question and its discussion and implications. Likewise, the survey was presented to the board of examiners during the proposal defense for its content validation before fielding. The researchers sought permission to interview by preparing a formal letter approved by the thesis adviser and suggestions from the research panel. The researchers addressed the panel's viewpoints and implemented the required alterations and removals in consideration of the suggestions put forth. The questionnaires was distributed to the clients of PhilHealth Regional Office VII, Cebu City consisting of seven thousand four hundred ninety-three (7,493) respondents composed of four thousand six hundred twelve (4,612) respondents for year 2023 and two thousand eight hundred eighty-one (2,881) respondents for the year 2024.

Data Processing and Analysis

The data was gathered from the survey and evaluated statistically using statistical tools. Frequency and percentage were utilized to characterize the respondents' profile and give a succinct overview of demographic distributions. For the methods that offer insights, the Mean and Standard Deviation were employed. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS and JASP, employing both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis will determine frequency

distributions and percentages for demographic variables including sex, client type, and services availed, while weighted means and standard deviations assessed the levels of Citizen's Charter awareness, client satisfaction, and service delivery perception at PhilHealth Regional Office VII. Prior to correlation analysis, the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to assess data normality.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to stringent ethical protocols specific to documentary research and client satisfaction evaluation. Prior to data analysis, formal permission was obtained from the Regional Vice President of PhilHealth-Central Visayas through an official access request for the Client Satisfaction Measurement Forms. A comprehensive data access agreement was established, explicitly detailing protocols for document handling, client confidentiality, and data privacy in alignment with Republic Act No. 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012).

Confidentiality remained paramount throughout the research process. All documentary analysis utilized aggregate data, ensuring no individual client identifiers were disclosed. Digital and physical documents were secured using encryption and restricted access protocols. The research team implemented multiple verification procedures, including double-checking randomly selected forms against entered data and establishing inter-coder reliability for qualitative analysis through independent coding by multiple researchers.

The ethical framework emphasized maintaining the authenticity of client perspectives while protecting individual privacy. Reporting strictly used aggregated data, with careful attention to presenting findings that reflected the genuine experiences of PhilHealth Regional Office VII clients without compromising personal information. All research materials were securely stored for five years' post-study, after which they were appropriately destroyed, ensuring long-term protection of client confidentiality. This comprehensive approach ensured that the research not only generated meaningful insights into service delivery but did so with the highest standards of ethical conduct, respect for client privacy, and methodological integrity.

III. Results and Discussion

Among the client demographics, citizens are consistently the predominant client type with 84.35% in 2023 and 84.59% in 2024. The age distribution are mostly young professional clients (20-34 years old), while more than 50% of the respondents are female. The services most frequently availed are general transactions / processing of inquiry of walk-in clients. Additionally, majority of the client are between the ages of 41 and 50 with 37.74percent, and females are majority for the sex category with 58.49 percent and most of them are married with 69.81 percent. Thus, business licenses and permits are the majority that they availed for services with47.17 percent

Moreover, awareness levels increased significantly, with 51.40% of clients in 2024 reporting awareness of the Charter, up from 39.46% in 2023. Moreover, 81.67% of the respondents stated that the Citizens Charter is Visible as compared to 49.76% in 2023. The percentage finding it "Helped Very Much" increased from 79.93% to 88.15%.

Thus, the overall satisfaction showed statistically significant improvement from 3.92 in 2023 to 4.20 in 2024. Significant improvements occurred in Responsiveness, Access and Facilities, Communication, and Assurance and Outcome indicators, while Cost (4.15) maintained stable ratings. and Integrity (4.45) obtained one the highest ratings in 2024.

Furthermore, the significant improvements occurred between 2023 and 2024 in overall satisfaction ($p = 0.01$) in four specific indicators: Responsiveness ($p = 0.02$), Communication ($p = 0.02$), Assurance ($p = 0.04$), and Outcome ($p = 0.06$), providing evidence to reject the null hypothesis HO4.

Based on findings, eight key awareness activities were identified: age-specific information campaigns, enhanced digital communication, targeted support for individual citizens, Citizen's Charter enhancement, service value communication, client success stories, interactive service guides, and community outreach programs.

IV. Conclusion

Citizens are largely consistent in the client demographics from 2023 to 2024, reflecting basic service utilization patterns at PhilHealth Regional Office VII. This indicates a high level of public awareness and engagement with health care governance services, which has significant implications for strategies for service delivery. Successful adaptation to this client composition is indicated by continually high satisfaction among the major client.

While awareness, visibility, and perceived helpfulness of the Citizen's Charter all showed substantial improvement between 2023 and 2024, the persistence of clients who either did not know about or could not easily see the Charter indicates ongoing opportunities for enhanced information accessibility. The strong improvements observed suggest effective awareness initiatives that should be continued and expanded to address the remaining information gaps, particularly among younger clients and individual citizens.

With statistically substantial gains in overall satisfaction and many particular characteristics between 2023 and 2024, as well as continuously high satisfaction ratings across all service dimensions, PhilHealth Regional Office VII offers great service quality that keeps getting better. While preserving strengths in existing high-performing sectors, the pattern of selectively substantial gains points to the effective targeted strengthening of previously underperforming

dimensions. Client experiences have improved measurably as a result of our methodical improvement methodology.

Strong evidence of improved service quality at PhilHealth Regional Office VII can be found in the statistically significant improvements in overall satisfaction and several service dimensions between 2023 and 2024. The pattern of improvement across responsiveness, access, costs, and outcome dimensions points to a comprehensive service enhancement that takes into account both procedural and outcome aspects of the client experience. The public's faith in the agency and its institutional legitimacy are directly enhanced by these enhancements.

The findings regarding differentiated awareness patterns, strong relationships between information perceptions and satisfaction, and specific areas of service improvement all indicate that targeted client awareness activities represent a high-potential strategy for further enhancing service delivery at PhilHealth Regional Office VII. Strategic implementation of awareness initiatives that address identified gaps and leverage understanding of demographic influences could yield substantial improvements in both awareness and satisfaction outcomes.

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