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E-Government Service Quality: A Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract: As e-government becomes an essential tool for enhancing the quality of public services, research in this field has developed rapidly. Still, it remains fragmented, lacking systematic synthesis and clarity regarding its foundational knowledge structures. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis combined with a systematic literature review to provide a comprehensive

overview of existing research on e-government and public service quality, thereby identifying key research themes and suggesting future research directions in this domain. The study collected and analysed 84 peer-reviewed articles published between 2008 and August 2025, retrieved from the Scopus database. The data were processed using VOSviewer to analyse citation networks and keyword co-occurrences, and were combined with qualitative content analysis to identify the main research themes. The findings indicate that service quality is a key determinant influencing citizen satisfaction, trust, and the use of e-government services. The bibliometric analysis identifies four major research trends, while the systematic review highlights five themes: user satisfaction, trust, continuance intention, loyalty, and perceived value. These insights help shape the current knowledge structure and suggest directions for future research. The study contributes to systematising the existing body of knowledge, shaping prevailing research trends, and supporting policymakers in enhancing the effectiveness of online public service delivery. Beyond its academic contribution, the study also holds social significance by informing efforts to reduce the digital divide and strengthen citizen trust as a form of social capital that underpins inclusive and sustainable digital governance.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, citizen trust, digital inclusion, e-government, e-service quality, systematic review.

Introduction

The digital transformation in public administration has positioned e-government as a key driver of improved service delivery quality, enabling governments to deliver more efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric services. According to scholars, e-government refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly the Internet, by governments to achieve higher administrative efficiency (OECD, 2014; Rawat, 2020). This approach not only enhances administrative effectiveness but also promotes enforcement capacity, transparency, innovation, openness, citizen participation, and public trust (Norris, 2001, Sangki, 2018).

Beyond administrative efficiency, e-government also plays a crucial social role as a tool for social inclusion and inequality reduction. By expanding digital access to public services across geographic, socioeconomic, and demographic boundaries, e-government can help bridge service gaps between urban and rural populations, as well as between digitally advantaged and disadvantaged groups. When implemented inclusively, digital public services contribute to narrowing the digital divide and strengthening citizen trust as a form of social capital that supports more equitable and participatory governance. In addition, the implementation of e-government helps reduce administrative barriers, enhance governance efficiency, and strengthen transparency in public service delivery (Martins et al., 2023). Studies have shown that digital services can foster greater public trust in government, as citizens can interact directly with government agencies through technology (Alenezi et al., 2015; Alsarraf et al., 2023). However, to achieve this, governments must provide high-quality digital services and continuously improve their systems to

effectively increase citizen satisfaction and trust (Sharma, 2015). Therefore, service quality can serve as a key indicator for evaluating the success of a fair and accountable e-government system.

The quality of e-government services refers to the overall experience citizens receive when interacting with government services delivered through digital platforms (Abdulkareem & Mohd Ramli, 2022). This quality encompasses not only the technical performance of the system but also user satisfaction and trust in government-provided public service systems (Kanaan et al., 2023; Kumar et al., 2023). The capability to deliver effective e-government services is determined by various factors such as availability, efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness to citizens' needs (Aljukhadar et al., 2022; Windari et al., 2025). While digital governance through e-government offers numerous global benefits, substantial disparities remain among countries. Developing nations, in particular, often face challenges such as limited technical infrastructure, digital divides, and institutional resistance factors that hinder the implementation of effective e-government services (Acquah, 2024; Samsor, 2020). As a result, research on service quality in e-government has emerged as a key area of focus, given its critical role in fostering public trust and satisfaction.

To evaluate service quality in the digital context, several studies have adapted traditional service quality assessment models such as SERVQUAL (Al-Kaabi, 2023; Nguyen, 2023). However, most research in the field of e-government employs the EGSQUAL scale developed by Aljukhadar et al. (2022) or the E-GovQual model to measure service quality in online public service delivery (Papadomichelaki & Mentzas, 2012; Setyowati et al., 2024; Yuhefizar et al., 2024).

With the growing volume of e-government research, overview studies have emerged, aiming to systematize knowledge in this field. Notable examples include the study by Cui et al. (2025), which focuses on the impact of e-government on the digital divide among older citizens; Hussin et al. (2024), who analyze the use of social media by governments as part of their e-government strategy; and Sá et al. (2016), who conducted a comprehensive review of traditional, electronic, and e-government service quality, emphasizing the need for a localized framework to assess online public services. In addition, authors such as Al-Nidawi et al. (2018) have reviewed existing measurement scales for evaluating e-government service quality, while Halaris et al. (2007) provided a detailed classification and synthesis of the literature to lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive service quality evaluation model. Accordingly, this study seeks to address these gaps by providing a comprehensive and systematic synthesis of the literature on e-government service quality, clarifying its intellectual structure and advancing a more integrated research agenda for both scholars and policymakers.

Research Problem

Although the aforementioned studies have made significant contributions to clarifying various aspects of e-government and public service quality, most remain limited to isolated dimensions, such as user behaviour, mobile platform experiences, or service quality evaluation models. Therefore, it is essential to conduct a study that offers a more holistic perspective, thereby generalising the underlying knowledge structures and illustrating the academic linkages within this increasingly expansive and complex field.

Although e-government research has been underway since 2001, empirical studies specifically focusing on service quality in this domain have emerged only since 2008. Therefore, this study collected and analysed peer-reviewed articles indexed in the Scopus database, covering publications from 2008 to August 2025. This time frame enables a comprehensive reflection on the evolution of scholarly interest and the progression of research themes.

Research Focus

In response to this need, the present study was undertaken to combine bibliometric analysis and systematic review to provide a comprehensive overview of the relationship between e-government and public service quality. Specifically, the study aims to identify the main research themes, influential authors and countries, and to synthesise key empirical findings, while proposing potential directions for future research.

The objective of this study is to identify academic literature on e-government and public service quality. Specifically, it identifies the core research themes and key findings in the current literature on service quality in e-government, thereby proposing future research directions to further develop this field.

Research Aim and Questions

Specifically, this study aims to address the following three research questions (RQs):

RQ1: What are the publication trends in empirical research on e-government and service quality?

RQ2: What are the key findings from empirical studies regarding service quality in the context of e-government?

RQ3: What are the current research gaps and potential future directions in the field of e-government and service quality?

In the following sections, the study presents an overview of the research methodology, followed by the research findings and the discussion. Finally, the conclusion is provided. The outcomes of this study are expected to support policymakers in enhancing the quality of e-government services in ways that align with citizens' expectations.

Literature review

In the context of digital transformation, service quality in the e-government sector has become a matter of growing concern, particularly in developing countries. E-government refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) by government agencies to deliver services to citizens, improve communication, and enhance the efficiency of public administration (Ndou, 2004; Rawat, 2020). The need for greater engagement, transparency, and accessibility in public service delivery drives this transformation in governance. According to Ndou (2004), several components characterize an e-government framework, such as: (i) transformation domains (internal, external, relational); (ii) application areas of e-government (e-services, e-democracy, e-administration); and

(iii) the interacting actors (citizens, businesses, government agencies, and employees) and the relationships between them.

In developing countries, the implementation of e-government is widely recognized as essential for fostering citizen trust and streamlining governmental operations through digital applications, administrative simplification, and enhanced transparency (Al-Okaily et al., 2025; Nguyen et al., 2020). In this context, service quality refers to the extent to which public services are efficient, effective, and user-satisfying when accessed through digital platforms. Evaluating and improving service quality has therefore become a critical aspect of e-government development (Al-Okaily et al., 2025). Numerous studies emphasize that the success of e-government initiatives depends not only on the adoption of technology but also on the extent to which these platforms meet citizens' expectations regarding accessibility, reliability, and responsiveness (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988; Shareef et al., 2014).

From a sociological perspective, several theoretical frameworks help explain how e-government shapes broader societal outcomes. Social capital theory argues that trust, shared norms, and social networks facilitate coordination and collective action within societies (Putnam, 1993; Bourdieu, 1986). In the context of e-government, high-quality digital public services can strengthen relational trust between citizens and the state, thereby reinforcing institutional legitimacy and civic engagement. Closely related, institutional trust theory suggests that citizens' confidence in public institutions is influenced by perceptions of competence, transparency, and procedural fairness (Levi & Stoker, 2000). Efficient and responsive e-government systems may therefore enhance trust by signalling administrative capacity and accountability. At the same time, the digital divide framework highlights persistent inequalities in access to information and communication technologies, digital skills, and opportunities for meaningful use (Norris, 2001; van Dijk, 2006). Without inclusive design and supportive policies, e-government initiatives risk exacerbating social stratification and digital exclusion. Integrating these sociological perspectives provides a more comprehensive understanding of how e-government service quality influences social cohesion, equality, and the legitimacy of governance in digitally transforming societies.

From the perspective of service quality theory, Ishikawa (1991) emphasised the comparison between customers' perceptions and producers' offerings as the basis for determining customer satisfaction. Similarly, Parasuraman et al. (1988) highlighted the importance of assessing the gap between the actual and ideal product or service and proposed the SERVQUAL scale to measure service quality. However, in the context of electronic services (e-services), the factors influencing users' perceptions and satisfaction at the point of service delivery are more complex, typically involving availability, usability, and security. Consequently, instead of applying the traditional SERVQUAL scale used for physical services, the E-S-QUAL scale developed by Parasuraman et al. (2005) has been more widely adopted for evaluating electronic service quality.

In the field of public administration, approaches to measuring e-government service quality tend to focus on portal-based evaluation and citizens' overall satisfaction (Halaris et al., 2007). Papadomichelaki and Mentzas (2012) note that many studies assess the quality of e-government

services by collecting user feedback on government portal web interfaces, particularly regarding design and user experience. In addition, several studies have adapted service quality measurement tools originally developed for e-commerce, such as the E-S-QUAL scale, to capture users' perceptions and evaluation criteria within e-government environments. At the same time, the application of the SERVQUAL model and its variants in evaluating e-government service quality has become increasingly common. These studies typically modify the core SERVQUAL dimensions - reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles—to better align with the digital context, while incorporating additional factors such as system security, ease of use, and digital reliability (Akinci et al., 2010; Alanezi et al., 2012). As a result, specialised measurement scales have been developed specifically for the e-government domain, including the EGSQUAL scale (Aljukhadar et al., 2022) and the E-GovQual scale (Papadomichelaki & Mentzas, 2012). According to Dwivedi et al. (2017), service quality in e-government is closely linked to broader governance outcomes at the macro level, including citizen participation in administrative processes, social inclusion, and the legitimacy of public institutions. Therefore, improving service quality in e-government not only enhances user experience but also strengthens national governance capacity in the digital transformation era.

Research Methodology

General Background

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating two widely recognised techniques in literature analysis: bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review (SLR), to comprehensively synthesise existing knowledge on e-government and public service quality. This methodological combination aims to achieve two key objectives: (i) to explore the intellectual structure of the research field, including dominant research streams and the academic network that shapes the discourse on public service delivery; and (ii) to conduct an in-depth content analysis of influential publications in order to identify major arguments, academic gaps, and potential directions for future research. The integration of bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review allows the study to leverage both the breadth of large-scale data analysis and the depth of qualitative content evaluation. This combined approach provides a comprehensive, structured understanding of the relationship between e-government and public service quality in the context of ongoing digital transformation.

Participants / Sample

The bibliometric data were extracted from the Scopus database using a combination of core keywords, including “e-government” or “digital government” and “service quality” or “e-service quality,” searched within titles, abstracts, and keywords. The Scopus database was selected due to its broad coverage, high reliability, and strong representation of scholarly work from emerging economies, particularly in Asia and Latin America (Harzing & Alakangas, 2016; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). In addition, Scopus data are highly compatible with bibliometric analysis tools such as

VOSviewer (Zupic & Čater, 2015) and have been widely used in recent studies (Donthu et al., 2021). For the systematic literature review, the time frame for literature selection spans from 2008 to August 2025. The sample includes peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and review articles written in English and directly related to both e-government and service quality.

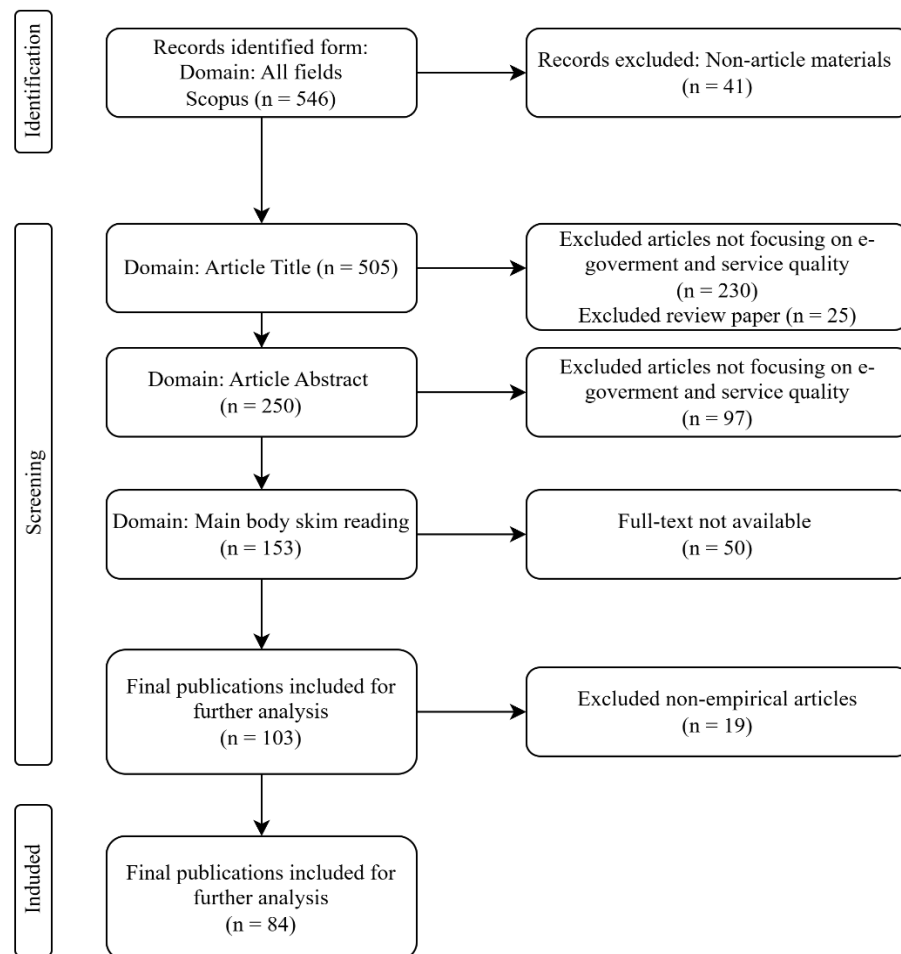
Instrument and Procedures

The bibliometric method was implemented in accordance with the guidelines of Donthu et al. (2021), employing techniques such as citation analysis and bibliographic coupling to construct a science map of the research domain. The VOSviewer software was employed to visualise the intellectual networks and identify prominent thematic clusters within the field. At the same time, this study follows the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021) to conduct a systematic literature review, ensuring a rigorous and unbiased analysis of the existing literature. This approach is consistent with the recommendations of Tranfield et al. (2003). The review process is illustrated in Figure 1 (PRISMA flow diagram). Content analysis was applied during the systematic review stage.

Inclusion criteria were: (i) Language: English only; (ii) Time period: 2008 to August 2025; (iii) Document type: Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and review articles; and (iv) Topical relevance: The document must simultaneously relate to “e-government” and “service quality” (including relevant concepts such as citizen satisfaction, trust, usability, etc.). Exclusion criteria were: (i) Studies that do not address e-government or are not related to service quality or end-user experience; (ii) Non-scholarly publications (e.g., books, book chapters, newsletters, reports, retracted articles, errata); (iii) Non-English language publications; (iv) Papers that are highly technical or focused exclusively on technologies (e.g., AI, blockchain, XML) without addressing public service quality evaluation; (v) Studies focusing on internal government operations (G2G), macro-level policy or legislation, without relevance to the end-user perspective; and (vi) Non-empirical studies, including conceptual papers, opinion pieces, theoretical essays, untested models, or articles without empirical data.

Figure 1

PRISMA Diagram of the Study Selection Process



Source: Authors' own development based on PRISMA 2020.

Data Analysis

Bibliometric analysis was conducted using citation analysis and bibliographic coupling to map the intellectual structure of the research field. VOSviewer was used to visualise scientific networks and identify thematic clusters. For the systematic literature review, qualitative content analysis was applied to synthesise major arguments, identify academic gaps, and propose future research directions. The integration of bibliometric analysis and SLR enables triangulation of findings and enhances the robustness of the research outcomes.

Results

Results from bibliometric analysis

This section addresses Research Question 1 (RQ1) on publication trends in empirical studies of e-government service quality, based on an analysis of 84 reviewed articles.

Publication Trends

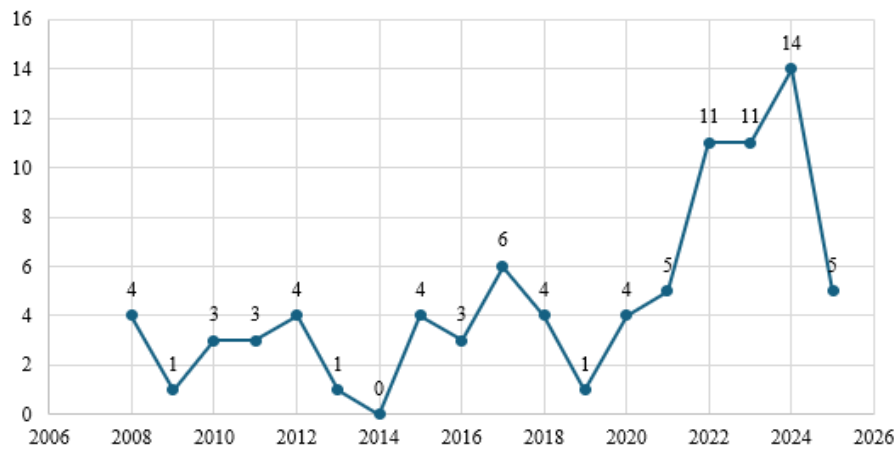
Although e-government research has emerged since 2001, empirical studies that combine e-government and service quality have only begun to appear since 2008. The publication trends in Figure 2 show a significant increase since 2020, particularly in recent years. In 2024, the highest number of publications (14 articles) was recorded, indicating growing academic interest in user experience and public service performance amid digital transformation. This upward trend also underscores the urgent need to enhance the quality of public services through digital technologies, particularly in developing and emerging economies.

Publication trends based on the country

Based on the collected data, Table 1 presents the countries with at least three publications on e-government service quality in the dataset. Among them, Indonesia leads with the most publications (13 articles), indicating growing national interest in improving public services through digital technologies. However, Indonesia’s total citation count remains relatively low compared to countries with fewer publications.

Figure 2

The number of annual published papers from 2001 to 2025



Source: Analysis results from VOSviewer software

In contrast, China stands out with 456 citations across eight articles, demonstrating a high level of international scholarly impact. A particularly notable case is Greece, which, despite having only four publications, recorded 269 citations and the highest total link strength (30), underscoring its strong academic connectivity. Jordan ranks second in the number of publications (12 articles), reflecting a positive research trend in e-government in the Middle East.

Table 1

The countries with the highest contributions

Rank	Country	Publications	Citation	Total link strength
1	China	8	456	8
2	United States	6	397	26
3	Saudi Arabia	8	353	21
4	Thailand	7	346	22
5	Jordan	12	327	20
6	Greece	4	269	30
7	India	8	203	22
8	Oman	3	153	17
9	Malaysia	6	152	3
10	Indonesia	13	132	24
11	United Kingdom	4	102	11
12	Viet Nam	4	53	8
13	Kuwait	3	21	7
14	South Korea	3	18	2
15	United Arab Emirates	3	4	5

Source: Analysis results from VOSviewer software

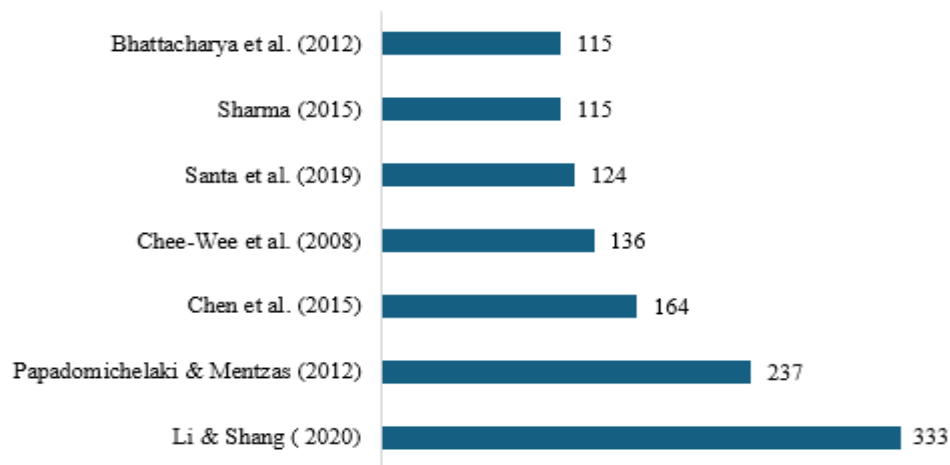
Regarding Vietnam, although it contributed only four articles, totalling 53 citations, its inclusion in the top 15 highlights the growing presence of Vietnamese scholars in digital government research. This provides a promising foundation for future, more impactful contributions. Lastly, countries such as Oman, Malaysia, South Korea, and Kuwait, although they have fewer publications, still demonstrate a degree of academic integration, as indicated by their Total Link Strength, suggesting that research groups in these countries are gradually integrating into the global academic network.

Citation analysis analysis

Figure 3 presents the most highly cited articles in e-government service quality research. Leading the list is Li and Shang (2020) with 333 citations, indicating a highly influential study that has been extensively referenced by the academic community—possibly due to its strong theoretical foundation or rich empirical data drawn from the Chinese context. The following is Papadomichelaki and Mentzas (2012), a foundational work with 237 citations that introduced the E-GovQual measurement scale, which has since been widely adopted in numerous studies assessing e-government service quality.

Figure 3

The citation analysis



Source: Analysis results from VOSviewer software

Notable contributions also include Chen et al. (2015) and Chee-Wee et al. (2008), with 164 and 136 citations, respectively, both focusing on critical factors such as citizen trust and satisfaction, and on the application of TAM and IS-Success models. Other influential works include Santa et al. (2019), Sharma (2015), and Bhattacharya et al. (2012), each with citation counts ranging from 115 to 124, reflecting their importance in expanding measurement frameworks and applying them in developing-country contexts. The citation analysis reveals several pivotal works with strong academic influence that have helped shape theoretical frameworks and measurement approaches in e-government. These studies frequently serve as foundational references for emerging research, particularly in countries that are actively advancing digital transformation in public service delivery.

Bibliographic coupling

Figure 4 illustrates the results of the bibliographic coupling analysis, in which the size of each circle represents the number of times other documents in the dataset cite a publication. Larger circles indicate studies with broader influence, serving as foundational works in the field of e-government service quality.

Prominent publications on the map include Li and Shang (2020), Papadomichelaki and Mentzas (2012), Chen et al. (2015), Chee-Wee et al. (2008), Bhattacharya et al. (2012), and Santa et al. (2019). These works are recognised as core contributions that have significantly shaped the trajectory of subsequent research in this domain. There are four distinct research trends illustrated in Figure 4, which can be detailed as follows:

Red Cluster (Cluster 1): Research Trend on User Satisfaction, Trust, and Continuance Intention. This cluster comprises several authors who have published in recent years, including Nguyen et al. (2020), Kanaan et al. (2023), Nam et al. (2024), and Hooda et al. (2023). The studies in this group primarily focus on measuring user satisfaction, trust, and continuance intention toward online public services, with empirical data collected primarily from developing countries. This trend reflects efforts

to extend established theoretical foundations and apply them to emerging contexts, including the COVID-19 pandemic, digital transformation, and the analysis of digital citizen behaviour.

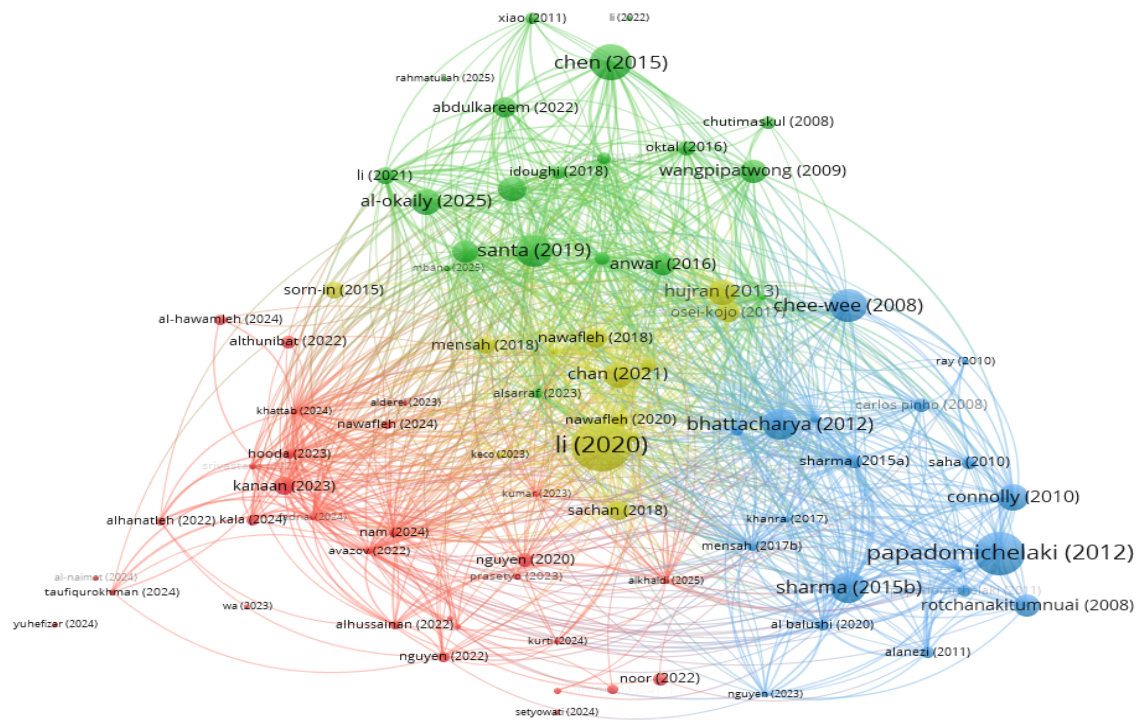
Green Cluster (Cluster 2): Application of TAM and IS Success Model in E-Service Quality Research. This trend centres on studies that adopt prominent theoretical models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the DeLone & McLean IS Success Model, or other models designed to assess e-service quality. Key contributors in this cluster include Al-Okaily et al. (2025), Chan et al. (2021), Chen et al. (2015), and Santa et al. (2019). Research in this group emphasises not only service quality but also explores the impact of technological factors, perceived value, and trust on user satisfaction and long-term usage intention.

Blue Cluster (Cluster 3): Research Trend on Service Quality Measurement. This cluster represents foundational and classical studies in the field, including the works of Chee-Wee et al. (2008), Connolly et al. (2010), Papadomichelaki and Mentzas (2012), and Sharma (2015). Characteristically, these studies focus on developing evaluation models for e-government service quality, proposing measurement instruments such as E-GovQual and E-GovSQual, and empirically validating the relationships among service quality, reliability, and user satisfaction. This cluster forms the core theoretical foundation upon which subsequent research clusters have built and expanded.

Yellow Cluster (Cluster 4): Bridging Foundational Theory and Empirical Research in Contemporary Contexts. Contributions distinguish this cluster from authors such as Chan et al. (2021), Li and Shang (2020), Mensah (2018), and Nawafleh (2020). These studies act as “knowledge bridges”, connecting foundational theoretical research (blue cluster) with more recent applied studies (green and red clusters). Research within this group tends to integrate multiple theoretical models, including TAM, the IS Success Model, and E-GovQual, while incorporating empirical insights from developing countries such as China, Vietnam, Jordan, and Indonesia. These works play a crucial role in contextualizing and operationalizing theoretical constructs in real-world digital government service environments. The results of the bibliographic coupling analysis reveal a clear stratification within the field of e-government research, ranging from foundational works that establish core theoretical frameworks to applied and empirical studies conducted in specific national contexts. These prominent research trends reflect a diversity of methodological approaches and geographical coverage, offering a comprehensive overview of the knowledge network shaping this domain.

Figure 4

Bibliographic Coupling Analysis



Source: Analysis results from VOSviewer software

Findings from content analysis

This section addresses Research Question 2 (RQ2) by reviewing key findings from empirical studies on e-government service quality. The content analysis reveals that studies in this area primarily focus on several interrelated themes and dimensions that shape users' perceptions and evaluations of e-government services.

The theme of the quality of e-government service

E-service quality has emerged as a central theme in e-government research. It is widely recognised as a key factor that directly and profoundly influences several critical outcomes, including user satisfaction, trust, continuance intention, perceived value and loyalty from the citizen's perspective. Table 2 presents a summary of the key thematic areas related to e-government service quality, providing an overview of how different studies conceptualise and measure this construct across various empirical contexts.

Table 2

The theme concerns the quality of e-government services.

No.	Theme	Findings	Author
1	User Satisfaction	- High-quality information fosters a perception of usefulness, which leads to user satisfaction and continuance intention. - Reliability and trust are the strongest predictors of user satisfaction. - Service quality significantly influences the perceived ease of use of digital health systems. - Service and system quality are the most important factors in enhancing user satisfaction and perceived benefits. - At immigration offices, service quality and information quality positively affect user satisfaction. - High-quality information is a key factor in driving user satisfaction. - Satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and trust. - Efficiency is the most influential factor contributing to user satisfaction. - Transparency, reliability, and citizen support are also critical factors in shaping satisfaction.	Aji et al. (2024); Nguyen et al. (2020); Pham et al. (2023); Setyowati et al. (2024); Taufiqurokhman et al. (2024); Windari et al. (2025)
2	Trust	- E-service quality has a substantial impact on public trust and satisfaction. - Service quality affects both user satisfaction and trust. - Satisfaction acts as a mediator between service quality and trust.	Abdulkareem and Mohd Ramli (2022); Hooda et al. (2023); Pham et al. (2023); Pramuditha et al. (2024); Taufiqurokhman et al. (2024)
3	Continuance Intention	- High-quality information fosters perceived usefulness, which contributes to user satisfaction and the intention to continue using the service. - Management recommendations include a strong commitment to implementing digital systems and recognizing key success factors to sustain user engagement.	Kala et al. (2024); Mbano et al. (2025); Windari et al. (2025)
4	Perceived Value and Loyalty	Service and system quality are the most critical factors in enhancing user satisfaction and perceived benefits.	Alkraiiji and Ameen (2022); Nawafleh and Khasawneh (2024); Pham et al. (2023)

Source: Authors' synthesis

User satisfaction is the most extensively studied outcome in relation to e-government service quality. Numerous studies have confirmed that service quality is a key determinant of user satisfaction when citizens engage with e-government platforms. It is often treated as a central outcome variable in service quality models or as a mediating factor that influences continuance intention to use public digital services. In addition to satisfaction, trust is a critical mediating variable

in the relationship between service quality and usage behaviour. For instance, a meta-analysis by Hooda et al. (2023) found that service quality significantly affects citizens' trust in digital government services. This finding is supported by various empirical studies, including Abdulkareem and Mohd Ramli (2022), Pham et al. (2023), Pramuditha et al. (2024), and Taufiqurokhman et al. (2024). These studies consistently emphasise that trust acts as a mediator not only between service quality and user satisfaction but also between service quality and the effective use of e-government services. Furthermore, service quality has been identified as a key factor influencing continuance intention. Studies by Windari et al. (2025) and Mbano et al. (2025) provide empirical evidence that improvements in service quality significantly encourage users to continue using e-government systems over time.

In addition, loyalty is another important behavioural outcome closely linked to service quality. Pham et al. (2023) demonstrated a sequential relationship: from service quality to perceived value, then to user satisfaction, and ultimately to user loyalty. This pathway is further elaborated by Alkrajji and Ameen (2022) and Nawafleh and Khasawneh (2024), who emphasise the mediating role of trust in linking service quality to citizens' loyalty toward digital public services. Lastly, perceived value is a subjective evaluation by citizens of the benefits derived from e-government services and is directly influenced by service quality. Among the reviewed studies, Pham et al. (2023) stands out for its in-depth examination of this relationship in a developing country. Their findings reveal that when citizens perceive tangible value in digital public services, they are more likely to continue using them and recommend them to others, reinforcing both adoption and public trust.

The reviewed studies collectively underscore that e-service quality in the context of e-government is a foundational determinant of nearly all key outcomes in e-government evaluation models, ranging from user satisfaction and trust to loyalty and continuance intention. Thus, e-service quality should not be perceived merely as a technical aspect; rather, it is a critical factor shaping citizens' perceptions, behaviours, and the quality of interaction between governments and citizens in the digital environment.

Key theories underpinning the quality of E-Government

Most studies on service quality in e-government tend to adopt a multi-theoretical approach, combining different frameworks to structure constructs and justify the relationships among them. Several key theories frequently employed in this context are summarised in Table 3. Among them, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) stands out as a foundational theory widely applied to explain users' technology acceptance behaviour. When integrated with other models, such as the Information Systems Success Model (ISSM), TAM enhances the explanatory power regarding user behaviour and citizen satisfaction in the context of e-government services.

The IS Success Model, in particular, is a well-established framework for assessing the effectiveness of information systems. It emphasises three core dimensions - System Quality, Information Quality, and Service Quality, all of which are essential for evaluating the success of digital public service platforms.

In addition to the commonly used models mentioned above, many studies have adopted alternative theoretical frameworks to provide a multidimensional understanding of the phenomenon. The HOT-Fit Model has been applied to evaluate the alignment among the Human, Organisation, and Technology elements in the digital transformation process (Windari et al., 2025). The Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) is employed to explain the relationship among initial expectations, satisfaction, and citizen trust (Pramuditha et al., 2024).

Moreover, theories such as Cognitive Theory and the Affect Infusion Model have been utilised to explore the influence of emotions and cognitive processing on citizens' decisions to use e-government services. These approaches highlight the increasingly nuanced and behaviorally oriented direction of research in the field.

Table 3

Key theories underpinning the quality of E-Government

Theory	Objective	Representative Studies
TAM	Explaining technology acceptance behavior	Kala et al. (2024); Windari et al. (2025)
IS Success Model	Measuring system quality and success	Hooda et al. (2023); Rahmatullah et al. (2025)
UTAUT / TRA / TPB	Analyzing the influence of perceptions and social norms	Nguyen and Tran (2022)
Expectation Confirmation	Measuring satisfaction and trust	Pramuditha et al. (2024)
Public Value Theory	Assessing the public value created by e-government	Alhanatleh et al. (2022); Hien et al. (2024)
Cognitive Theory & AIM	Analyzing the role of cognition and emotions	Patergiannaki and Pollalis (2024) Srivastava and Teo (2021)

Source: Authors' synthesis

Discussion

The results of the bibliometric analysis and systematic review of 84 studies on e-government service quality are consistent with recent literature reviews by Sá et al. (2016), Al-Nidawi et al. (2018), Abdulkareem and Mohd Ramli (2022), and Halaris et al. (2007), all of which underscore the significance of e-government service quality and emphasise the importance of citizen-centric evaluation approaches.

Most studies converge on the view that service quality has a direct and significant influence on citizen satisfaction (Nguyen et al., 2020), a finding that holds across various public service contexts,

including public hospitals (Windari et al., 2025) and local administrative services (Setyowati et al., 2024; Taufiqurokhman et al., 2024). This reinforces the argument that service quality measurement models such as E-GovQual and EGSQUAL can be effectively applied across diverse domains of e-government services to evaluate user satisfaction from a citizen perspective.

Although service quality is recognised as a core factor influencing citizens' satisfaction, trust, and intention to use e-government, systematic analysis reveals several important research gaps that remain underexplored. At the same time, this opens up promising future research directions, including: (1) expanding the scope and diversity of target groups, (2) employing mixed-methods approaches, (3) integrating contextual and mediating factors, (4) conducting longitudinal studies, and (5) enhancing measurement models to ensure flexibility and contextual relevance. Specifically:

First, a notable limitation of current studies is their narrow scope, which often focuses on urban citizens or specific user groups. For example, Nguyen et al. (2020) collected data only from citizens in Hanoi, while Avazov & Lee (2022) focused on urban youth in Uzbekistan. Such approaches make it difficult to generalise the findings to the broader population or to other user segments such as businesses (G2B) or government employees (G2E). Future studies should broaden the sample base by incorporating cross-regional or cross-national comparisons to capture the diversity of perceptions and expectations regarding e-service quality.

Second, most current studies rely on quantitative methods, such as structured surveys. However, key constructs such as trust, perceived value, and security concerns are inherently subjective and require qualitative inquiry to achieve a deeper understanding. Authors such as Pham et al. (2023) and Rahmatullah et al. (2025) have emphasised the need for approaches such as in-depth interviews and observations of user behaviour to uncover the psychological and emotional factors influencing e-government adoption. Employing mixed-methods research would provide a more holistic picture of the user experience and enhance the explanatory power of service quality models.

Third, there remains a significant gap in integrating contextual factors - such as culture, technological readiness, social influence, and perceived risk into service quality evaluation models. Abdulkareem & Ramli (2022) suggest incorporating variables such as digital literacy and government policy to explain usage behaviour better. Additionally, Hooda et al. (2023) highlight that many existing models neglect important mediating factors, such as trust and perceived risk, both of which play crucial roles in shaping citizens' continuance intention to use digital public services.

Fourth, most current studies employ a cross-sectional design, collecting data at a single point in time. This approach limits the ability to assess temporal changes in user behaviour and attitudes, which are particularly relevant in the dynamic, rapidly evolving context of e-government. Scholars such as Khattab et al. (2024) and Srivastava & Teo (2021) emphasise the importance of longitudinal research to analyse the evolving relationship between user satisfaction and loyalty. Consequently, future research should adopt longitudinal designs to capture the formation and development of trust more accurately, as well as continuance usage intention over time.

Finally, although e-service quality measurement models such as E-GovQual, EGSQUAL, and SERVQUAL have been widely applied, they still require contextual adaptation to suit the specific types of public services and cultural settings in which they are implemented. For instance, Aljukhadar et al. (2022) proposed the EGSQUAL scale with seven dimensions: interface, information, aesthetics, usability, security, reliability, and support, but this model has only been pilot-tested in the context of the Canadian government. Meanwhile, Setyowati et al. (2024) found that not all dimensions have the same degree of influence on citizen satisfaction. This suggests the need for experimental testing and contextual calibration of the models to enhance their validity and reliability across various service domains such as healthcare, education, and public administration.

The findings of this study emphasise that improving e-government service quality requires systematic, integrated policy interventions. First, it is essential to develop a standardised evaluation framework for online public service quality grounded in empirically validated models, such as E-GovQual. This would provide a foundation for comparison, continuous improvement, and strategic long-term planning. Moreover, citizen-centric service design is imperative to ensure accessibility for all population groups, particularly older adults and individuals with limited digital skills. Investment in security infrastructure, user feedback mechanisms, and behavioural data analytics is also critical to strengthening public trust and satisfaction. Lastly, service quality indicators should be integrated into government performance evaluation systems (KPI frameworks), guiding public agencies to focus on tangible outcomes from the citizen's perspective.

Beyond managerial considerations, the social implications of e-government service quality are profound. High-quality digital public services can help reduce social inequality by expanding equitable access to essential services and minimising administrative burdens that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. Conversely, poor service quality may exacerbate digital exclusion, reinforcing existing divides in digital access and skills and limiting participation in public life. Furthermore, consistent and reliable e-government services help strengthen institutional trust, which serves as a foundation for social cohesion and the legitimacy of public institutions in the digital era.

Conclusions and Implications

In the context of digital transformation in the public sector, e-government has increasingly played a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of public services and fostering citizens' trust in governmental institutions. However, the existing body of knowledge concerning service quality in e-government remains fragmented and lacks a systematic structure. This study addresses this gap by conducting a combined bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review of 84 empirical studies published between 2008 and 2025, retrieved from the Scopus database.

The results from the bibliographic coupling and content analysis reveal four major research trends currently shaping the field: (i) A growing body of research focusing on user satisfaction, trust, and continuance intention; (ii) The application of established theoretical models such as TAM and the IS Success Model in evaluating e-service quality; (iii) The development and refinement of specialized measurement instruments for public e-service quality, such as E-GovQual and

EGSQUAL; and (iv) An emerging trend that seeks to bridge foundational theories with contemporary empirical research, in response to digital transformation and rising public expectations.

In addition, the content analysis identifies five dominant themes that underpin this field: User Satisfaction, Trust, Continuance Intention, Loyalty, and Perceived Value. These constructs are not only standard outcome variables in service quality models but also serve as critical foundations for developing effective and sustainable strategies to enhance public e-services.

Finally, the study highlights five key future research directions that should be prioritized to deepen and broaden our understanding of service quality in e-government: (i) Conducting more studies in developing countries and among vulnerable populations (e.g., the elderly, low-income groups) to ensure inclusivity and capture diverse user experiences; (ii) Integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to measure general trends while exploring the underlying motivations, perceptions, and barriers faced by users; (iii) Embedding contextual factors such as culture, public policy, digital infrastructure, and citizens' technological readiness into analytical models to better understand how these variables interact with service quality outcomes; (iv) Employing longitudinal designs to track changes in perceptions, trust, and user behavior over time, thereby offering a more dynamic and comprehensive view of e-service effectiveness; (v) Developing context-sensitive measurement instruments that are adaptable to specific countries, user segments, and stages of development, to enhance the accuracy and practical applicability of research in this domain.

Limitations of this study

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the bibliometric analysis was conducted exclusively using the Scopus database. Although Scopus provides extensive coverage of peer-reviewed publications, relevant studies indexed in other databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, or regional repositories may not have been captured. This may limit the comprehensiveness of the mapped intellectual structure. Second, the study relies primarily on bibliometric techniques combined with a systematic literature review, without incorporating empirical validation or primary data collection. As a result, the findings reflect trends and patterns in existing scholarship rather than direct assessments of practical implementation outcomes. Finally, the study does not explicitly account for cross-country contextual differences, such as variations in digital infrastructure, governance capacity, regulatory environments, or socio-cultural factors, which may affect the generalizability of the conclusions.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should broaden both methodological and contextual perspectives on e-government service quality. As the field continues to evolve rapidly alongside digital transformation processes, more integrative and forward-looking research designs are necessary to capture its complexity. Expanding literature searches to include multiple academic databases would enable a more comprehensive and globally representative synthesis of knowledge, thereby strengthening the robustness of bibliometric and systematic review findings. Such efforts would also help uncover underexplored regional contributions and emerging thematic trends.

Greater emphasis should also be placed on comparative and country-specific investigations, particularly in developing economies where institutional and technological conditions vary considerably. Variations in digital infrastructure, governance capacity, regulatory frameworks, and socio-cultural conditions may significantly shape the implementation and perceived effectiveness of e-government services. Future studies should therefore examine how service quality interacts with institutional trust, digital inclusion policies, and socio-economic inequality across diverse governance contexts, thereby linking micro-level user experiences with macro-level governance outcomes.

Moreover, as digital governance expands into new technological domains, emerging areas warrant closer scholarly attention, including AI-enabled public services, smart city governance, digital identity systems, and the integration of e-learning and local e-commerce platforms within digital public service ecosystems. Employing longitudinal and mixed-method research designs would provide deeper insights into how improvements in service quality influence citizen satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and continuance intention over time. Collectively, these research directions would contribute to stronger theoretical refinement and enhance the policy relevance of scholarship in the evolving landscape of digital governance.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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