

COVID-19 OUTBREAK: THE IMPACT OF CITIZEN'S DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES ON SATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT DURING MCO 1.0

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1. INTRODUCTION

All governments worldwide strive to achieve public satisfaction; nevertheless, this is a difficult task, as evidenced by the previous literature on citizen satisfaction, which including citizen expectations, experiences, past attitudes, and prior attitudes toward government. As a result, various administrative reform agendas have directly linked the need to reform public services to become more client-oriented to promote citizen satisfaction with public services to increase citizen satisfaction with public services (Van de Walle, 2018). The Malaysian government has implemented a comprehensive reform program throughout the last three decades, and it continues now. However, and in a contradictory manner, service delivery performance has continued to fall short of public expectations (Faiez & Rao, 2019). Failing public service delivery attracts the attention of the media, the scrutiny of political leaders, and the displeasure of the public (van den Bekerom et al., 2021). Fitch Solutions reported that the Covid-19 outbreak had increased political risks in Malaysia as more citizens become increasingly dissatisfied with the government's handling of the Covid-19, which will harm policymaking and policy continuity, as well as social stability, because of the pandemic (Mung, 2021, June 8). Previous researchers acknowledged that the level of citizen satisfaction was not thoroughly investigated throughout the crisis and that further research was required. As a result, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between citizen demographic characteristics and satisfaction during the first phase of the mobility control order during the Covid-19 epidemic.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Descriptive Data

This study population consisted of Malaysian citizens that were volunteer to take part in this research. The respondents were from diverse backgrounds. This study surveys 346 citizens in Malaysia. A total of 345 samples were received and used for the analysis after data cleaning. The authors developed an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The authors sent the google form to his/her contacts, and participants will be requested to roll out the online questionnaires to as many people as possible through the WhatsApp platform until it reaches the appropriate sample size. Data collection took place on 15 June 2020 and lasted for two weeks. The current study employed the non-probability sampling category, namely, snowball

sampling technique, to reach citizens due to the movement control order implemented by the Malaysian government during a pandemic. In this study, we select public service users and non-user because both tend to have different views about public services (Van de Walle, 2017). In terms of sample size, several scholarly suggestions some guidelines (Hair et al., 2018; Jackson, 2003; Kline, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). After considering their suggestions, we considered 300 samples.

2.2 Analysis of Different between the Medians of the Independent Groups

In this study, the analysis of variance was used to assessing the difference of satisfaction overall government performance in delivering citizen-centric service during Covid-19 between several demographic variables. Firstly, the normal distribution of the data should be conducted to choose between parametric or non-parametric statistical tests will be used. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was whether the data followed specified distribution, including the normal distribution (Öztuna et al., 2006). The test's insignificant ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$) indicates that the null hypothesis was supported and concludes that the data follows a normal distribution. In the non-parametric statistical test, the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks was used to determine whether three or more independent groups are the same or different on some variable of interest when the data were ordinal or interval or ratio level of measurement (Israel, 2008). The Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks test was used as the test does not require normality assumptions (Chan & Walmsley, 1997). This test was a more flexible, convenient, easy-to-use, and powerful technique like a parametric one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Israel, 2008).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondent that contributed to this study were female, with 70.4 %, while only 29.6% were male. Most of the respondents were single, with 73.3%, 26.4% were married, and only 0.3% were others, such as widowed or divorced. The majority of the respondents had STPM/Matriculation/Diploma as their education level with 58.6%, followed by SPM and Degree level with 17.1% and 16.8%, respectively. Lastly, most of the respondents, with 69.8%, came from the other sector, 18.3% public sector, 7.8% private sector, and 4.3% were self-employed.

Table 1: Respondent's Demographic Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	243	70.4
	Male	102	29.6
Marital Status	Single	253	73.3
	Married	91	26.4
	Others	1	0.3
Education Level	SPM	59	17.1
	STPM/Matriculation/Diploma	202	58.6
	Degree	58	16.8
	Master's Degree	24	7.0
	PhD	2	0.6
Sector	Public	63	18.3
	Private	27	7.8
	Self-employed	15	4.3
	Others (includes those who are not working or those who are still studying	240	69.8

3.2 Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality for Satisfaction Overall Government Performance

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and result of the normality test for variable satisfaction on overall government performance in delivering citizen-centric services during the Covid-19 outbreak using a 7-point Likert scale. On average, the respondent's level of satisfaction is 5.84, and 50% of the respondent's rate more than 6.00 as their level of satisfaction while another 50% of respondents rate less than 6.00. The minimum value of the level of satisfaction was 3.00, and the maximum value was 7.00. Based on the results of significant value in Table 2, the null hypothesis of normality is rejected as the p-value is less than 0.05. This indicates that the satisfaction variable is not normally distributed, and non-parametric statistical testing should be conducted for further analysis (Fitzgerald et al., 2001).

Table 2: Result of Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Statistic	df	Sig.
Satisfaction	345	5.84	6.00	3.00	7.00	0.254	345	.000

3.3 Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks

The Kruskal-Wallis test was a nonparametric alternative of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Ghoojdani, 2016), and it will tell us the differences between the groups were so large that they were unlikely to have occurred by chance. The variable of satisfaction level on overall government performance in delivering citizen-centric services during the Covid-19 outbreak was testing if there was any significant median difference between the respondents' demographic characteristics such as marital status, education level, and working sector. Table 3 shows the result of the Kruskal-Wallis test of the median comparison for satisfaction between marital status, education level, and working sectors. The significant value for each comparison is less than 0.05, indicating no significant median difference between each group; thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. Thus, the median level of satisfaction overall government performance was different between the group of marital status, education level, and working sectors of the respondents. When the result of the Kruskal Wallis test leads to rejecting the null hypothesis and concluding that there was a difference in the groups, a further question arises on groups that were naturally different from others. The next step is the Mann-Whitney to test a significant difference between all the possible pairs of groups (Daniel, 1990). A significant value that less than 0.05 indicates a median difference between the pair of the group compared.

Table 3: Result of Kruskal-Wallis Test

Variable	Category	Frequency	Mean Rank	Chi-squared value	Degree of freedom	Significant value
Marital Status	Single	253	157.07	28.967	2	0.000
	Married	91	218.35			
	Others	1	77.00			
Education Level	SPM	59	169.18	11.749	4	0.019
	STPM/Matriculation/Diploma	202	162.59			
	Degree	58	198.47			
	Master's Degree	24	198.23			
	PhD	2	295.50			
Sector	Public	63	209.23	19.808	3	0.000
	Private	27	179.63			
	Self-employed	15	229.87			

Others (includes those who are not working or those who are still studying) 240 159.19

3.4 Mann-Whitney Test for Comparison each Group

The Mann-Whitney test was conducted for all each pair for each category of the variables to get further findings, which groups lead to the conclusion that there is a median difference of satisfaction level on overall government performance. Table 4 shows the summary of results for the Mann-Whitney test, which is only for a significant comparison between each pair of the variables. The significant value that less than 0.05 indicates a significant median difference of satisfaction level between single statuses and married only. Besides that, there was a significant median difference of satisfaction level between STPM/Matriculation/diploma and degree level of education. In addition, there was also a significant median difference of satisfaction level between others with the public sector and others with the private sector.

Table 4: Result of Mann-Whitney Test

Variable	Category 1	Category 2	Z-value	Significant value (2-tailed)
Marital Status	Single	Married	-5.284	0.000
Education Level	STPM/Matriculation /Diploma	Degree	-2.622	0.009
Sector	Public	Others (includes those who are not working or those who are still studying)	-2.729	0.000
	Private	Others (includes those who are not working or those who are still studying)	-3.696	0.000

This study compares the impact of demographic attributes on citizen satisfaction during the first wave of the Covid-19 catastrophe. There have been increasing calls for citizen satisfaction in crisis contexts (Venetoklis, 2021). The result shows a significant difference among various citizen backgrounds, which is in line with past studies (Psomas et al., 2020; Song et al., 2020). This study indicates that single and married respondents tend to have a significant difference in satisfaction. Meanwhile, those who have tertiary education have a significant difference in satisfaction. In addition, these differences are apparent to the one who worked in the public and private sectors. While these effects are not significant when focusing on respondents from others' categories in demographic profiles. Thus, the actual government performance has a significant impact on citizens' satisfaction during the Covid-19. This paper offers empirical results from the citizen's satisfaction during the first movement control order implemented by the Malaysian government during the pandemic outbreak. Besides, this study enables researchers, public managers, and others to better understand citizen satisfaction in this situation and continuously improve governance, public information provision, and service delivery.

4. CONCLUSION

The study's main aim was to compare the level of satisfaction overall government performance for several demographic profiles of the respondents. This study discovered a significant median difference for satisfaction overall government performance during the Covid-19 outbreak according to respondents' marital status, level of education, and sector. It has known that a satisfied citizen is essential for the long-term stability of any political system in which it operates (Wu et al., 2021). It indicates the quality of governance; citizens' satisfaction with their government is also a good indicator of its approval. Citizens' assessment can aid in the improvement of government performance and public services. Furthermore, when citizens are satisfied with the performance of their governments, they become more satisfied with their lives and are happier as a result. However, the value of this relationship in supporting the government's decision in combating pandemic outbreaks is unclear. We believe that gaining a better knowledge of this process will provide greater and more detailed insights into a citizen evaluation process. The result of this study cannot be generalized because it used a non-parametric sampling technique; thus, the sample was limited and did not represent the whole Malaysian population. As a recommendation, future studies might consider using probability sampling to extend the result to the population. As the sample size increases, hopefully, more analysis on parametric can be conducted.

5. REFERENCES

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