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THE ROLE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN SERVICE QUALITY: A SURVEY OF A SAMPLE OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS

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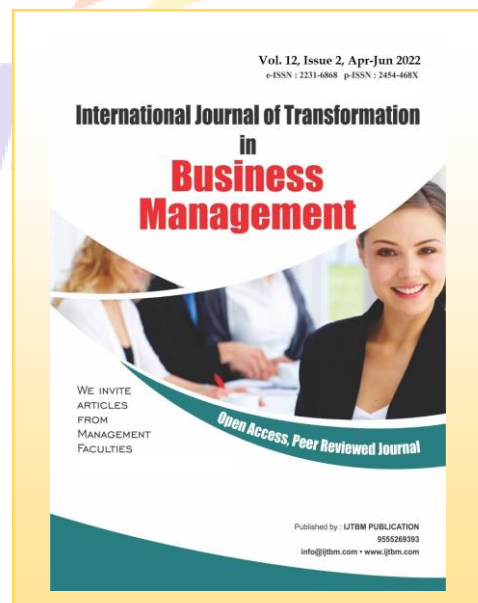****Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Authority, Iraq**

ABSTRACT

The research problem includes in its content a variety of research motives that serve the health sector, which is witnessing great competition from internal and external environments. On the development in modern marketing methods in developed countries that provide the same health services, but according to methods, tools and material components that contribute greatly to the enhancement of the services provided to attract the customer, in addition to the lack of awareness of electronic governance among the employees of health institutions, the descriptive research approach was adopted. The health sector was chosen for a group of health institutions in Baghdad. The research reached a set of results, the most prominent of which is the presence of a clear weakness in our health institutions for the possibility of applying electronic governance, and the results also showed that the possibility of applying the non-electronic aspect in providing services contributes to providing high quality to achieve satisfaction the customer.

Keywords*: e-governance, service quality, health institution*

INTRODUCTION

The field of communications and information technology faces rapid change and environmental challenges fraught with risks at the local and global levels, in addition to that, the increase in demands on the services provided, and the difference and diversity of tastes and needs of customers and beneficiaries, which led organizations to search for the secrets of competitive success through orientation towards the customer. The customer is the main criterion for the success of organizations and that knowledge of the customer is the main focus of competitiveness between organizations.

Today, competition has become intense between organizations in the Iraqi business environment in general, especially in the field of communications and information technology, and this was confirmed by the axes and priorities of the government program, specifically the third axis of them, which provides for encouraging the transformation towards the private sector and increasing its role in the field (communication, internet, information technology, and the field of Post), which led to the entry of new organizations in this field, which contributed to bringing about major transformations in the Iraqi economy after it was the monopoly of public organizations, Which prompted it to search for ways and means that contribute to enhancing competition between local markets by providing and improving service operations and reviewing its strategies in orientation towards the customer by improving the quality of services and designing services that correspond to the customer's need and

increasing and constantly improving the knowledge balance, and then increasing profits achieved and enhancing its market position, and through the researcher's practical observations and his knowledge of the reality of telecommunications companies, and in light of this competition between them, it requires knowledge of strengths and weaknesses, facing challenges and exploiting the available opportunities. Its impact on services in the light of which effective decisions are taken.

This research is also an intellectual and practical contribution to direct the attention of the top management in the researched companies to focus on knowledge management and work to fill this gap by providing a systematic review of the literature related to this research, showing the importance of research in this subject through real identification of the capabilities of organizations working within the field of Information and communication technology in the Iraqi business environment in order to sustain knowledge management and ensure its success, and enhance its competitive capabilities by knowing the strengths and weaknesses in the quality and design of services in order to restore customers' confidence, creating critical success factors for knowledge management and following a scientific and practical approach in improving services and customer orientation

An attempt to achieve positive results, the current research aims to diagnose the level of importance and the nature of the relationship between critical success factors and enhance the quality and design of customer service in telecom companies in Iraq, by testing the causal relationships between the research variables and its dimensions and proving the validity of its hypotheses, and because the nature of this research is descriptive so it was Using the descriptive approach to describe, interpret and derive research results.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

First: The Research Problem

Service organizations today, in order to keep pace with the rapid development of technology and maintain their position and reputation, need to adopt modern management methods, because the old administrative methods cannot meet the expectations of society due to the presence of complexity, red tape and bureaucracy. Among those modern methods is electronic governance, which can be enough to eliminate the negatives that accompanied the traditional management style. Our health institutions suffer from the weakness of the required procedures and routine in completing transactions and administrative work, as the organization that represents the field of current research depends in completing its transactions on traditional

management and what This is accompanied by a waste of time and effort, in addition to that, it cannot adapt the data of its internal environment to changes in the external environment, which is represented by technological and digital development and the extent of its impact on improving job performance, increasing productivity and continuous improvement of the organization in general.

And after reviewing the practical reality of the organization in question, as well as the researcher's knowledge of the theoretical aspect of the research topic, which was reached by previous studies. The research problem is embodied in the poor awareness of most of our health institutions of e-governance, add to this the challenges facing these departments in applying e-governance dimensions in the field to improve job performance in a way that contributes to facilitating procedures, accelerating and improving the quality of services provided to citizens, and improving the reputation of the organization in general.

Among the most important field research questions are the following:

A- To what extent are the managers and employees of the health institution aware of the concepts and mechanisms of applying e-governance?

B- Is the functional staff in the health institution ready to activate the role of e-governance in the organization in question?

C- Are the requirements for applying e-governance available in the health institution?

D- What is the size of the gaps that exist between the requirements for applying electronic governance and the actual reality of the organization in question? What are the ways to address these gaps?

Secondly: The Importance of Research

The research deals with one of the important scientific data represented in e-governance to know how important it is to invest and move away from traditional management, especially in light of the rapid technological progress in communications, and then it has become necessary to invest this progress in the service of our institutions and in a way that contributes to the performance of its work at the lowest material costs and human effort, in a way that reduces From the citizen's troubles and limiting administrative corruption in these institutions. We can point out the importance of the research as follows:-

1- The research stands on the importance of e-governance and its contribution to the positive impact of administrative functions.

2- The research helps to enhance the concepts and applications of electronic governance and how to invest in this field, especially since our service institutions lack the investment of modern technology in the field of administration.

3- The research attempts to invest the data of e-governance in finding mechanisms to develop job performance and the quality of services provided in our health institutions.

4- This research can lead to an increase in the technological awareness of society in general, thus facilitating the provision of electronic services and facilitating the easy exchange of public information and data between individuals and organizations.

Third: The Research Objectives

The research seeks to achieve goals that meet the interests of organizations and are compatible with their modern concerns, in order to manage all aspects of the work of these organizations through the application of e-governance, and to establish a modern scientific and administrative basis for

management. Therefore, the research objectives are as follows:-

1- Shedding light on the advantages of e-governance and the positive role it plays in enhancing and raising the level of service quality in our health institutions.

2- Evaluate the current situation of our health institutions and the extent to which information and communication technology is used.

3- Diagnosing the size of the gap between the requirements that must be met for the implementation of electronic governance and what is the actual reality in health institutions and determining how to address this gap and reduce it to the maximum extent possible.

Fourth: The Hypothesis of the Research

As a result of what was put forward in the research problem, its importance and basic objectives, a hypothetical structure was formulated and designed in Figure (1), which expresses the nature and type of basic and sub-relationships between the research variables.
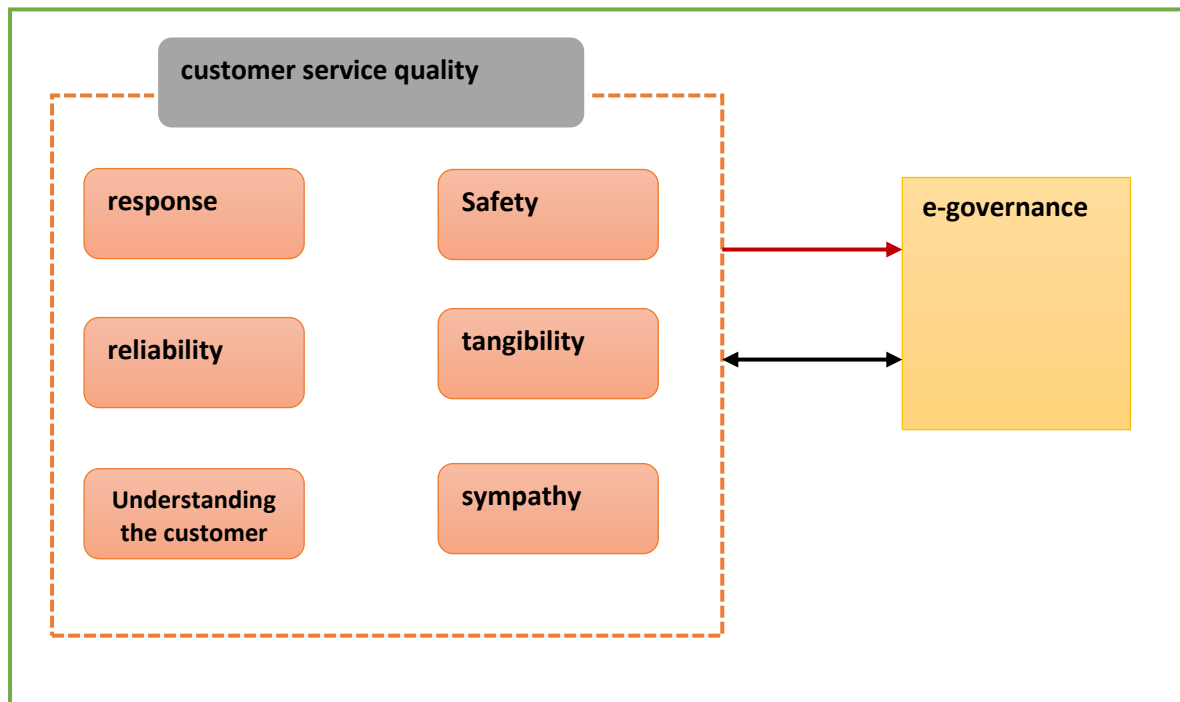
Figure (1) The research hypothesis model

THE SECOND TOPIC: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH

First: E-Governance

1: The emergence and development of e-governance

In the nineties of the last century, governance practices in public administrations appeared in the relationship between organizations as they sought to develop their own policies. The conclusions of the "Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government" indicate that its goal was to introduce experiences in restructuring government and to seek a framework and strategy for future innovations in governance. Strengthening cooperation between government, the private sector and civil society organizations to improve the quality of governance at the national and local levels, as well as discussing the main issues related to participatory governance and transparency that would achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and identifying potential areas for cooperation at the local, national and international levels to enhance the capacity of countries to Participatory management, transparency, meeting the challenges of globalization, laying the foundation for a global network of reinvention that connects the major players in governance - government, business, and civil society (Pina

& Acerete, 2007:584). And the way in which e-governance passes in order to provide electronic services from the government to citizens and the beneficiary public in general goes through several stages, namely: (Najm, 2004: 122).

The first stage: the birth stage (the era of the computer) This stage dates back to the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, when the computer was introduced in the field of various administrative works, and at this stage work systems were developed within the various organizations through programs that greatly facilitated the work of employees, e-governance. It has the ability to change the traditional relationship between government and citizens by creating a new virtual interface between government and citizens. The possibility of e-government transforming public administration has been announced at several points throughout the past half century.

The second stage: the stage of escalation (the era of information systems) and this stage dates back to the seventies and eighties, with the prediction of some government officials and commentators that information technology will revolutionize the public administration. (Automize) some services and through which citizens obtained services through information systems. With the spread of advanced information and communication technology on a large scale

in all organizations during the eighties and nineties of the twentieth century, politicians struggled with demands for credit for the "information age movement".

Phase Three: Peak Phase (Internet Age) By the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the increasing use of the Internet, claims regarding the transformative capacity of information and communication technology became similarly enthusiastic. Regarding the performance of the government or the employees' performance of their work within the various administrative departments or the environment to contact employees with these governments or departments, e-governance, and the adoption of Internet-based technologies to provide and manage government services, has become a global trend in public administration.

The history of computing in government organizations can be traced back to the beginnings of computer history, and that "information technology in government" goes back at least to the 1970s. This literature relates to the use of information technology within government (Grönlund & Horan, 2005:714)). The past two decades have witnessed the emergence of a wide practice Scope is to put the letter 'E' in front of words like government, democracy, commerce, business, politics, war, etc. Any domain with 'E' is whether the impact of information and communication technology

(ICT) such as change and/or improvement The field in a fundamental way, and this term has been popularized for more than a decade, but it has gained momentum in recent years, as it is used, such as digital and transformational government, as an alternative or replacement for the term "e-government", but this use is not limited in any way to any country .

2: The concept of e-governance:

With the advent of the "Internet", a framework of interaction appeared between the sender and the receiver from inside and outside the organizations for the purpose of dealing with information and governmental tasks. Two-way or two-way communication and seeks to reach the satisfaction of all beneficiaries, while the e-government is a one-way communication protocol (Al-Zuhairi and Al-Quraishi, 2018158). E-governance has known several different definitions due to the different viewpoints of researchers, as some see it as an economic activity that undertakes the tasks of the relationship of public and private services in an integrated electronic form, and adding real value that the beneficiaries feel, as well as forming an interactive relationship with the entities associated with it, whether individuals or other organizations by providing them Services commensurate with the privacy of individuals, their needs and desires (Al-Alaq, 2004257:).

E-governance is "the application of information communication technology from the government to enhance accountability, create awareness, and ensure transparency in the management of government business." It also states that e-governance can be considered a political strategy for the government through which its activities can be presented to the public (Ojo, 2014:79). As for (Ayo, 2014:76), e-governance is defined as "the rule of a state/state using information and communication technology", and this indicates that e-governance is the application of information and communication technology in the implementation of government work, from the previous definitions, the researcher notes that e-governance is a process of using Information and communication technology in the operations of government organizations, and the shift from the traditional way of carrying out government activities in a hierarchical, linear, and port manner to the organization's use of the Internet, which enables the public to request information at a time that suits it, and not actually have to visit the office in person and this is consistent with the proposals.

3: The importance of e-governance:

Khanna & Khanna, 2018:1 believes that the importance of e-governance helps in improving management, enhancing more transparency and accountability, providing a

friendly environment for citizens, and helping to provide better service. Eliminating corruption is not an easy task, but rather requires great exceptional efforts, and e-governance has shown As a promise in this regard, through which corruption in the provision of public services can be eliminated or at least reduced, active public participation is required to make e-governance successful. (Dhindsa et al., 2013: 121) added that e-governance facilitates globalization by means of information technology. And communications, as we witness an increased exposure to external influences that have profound effects on our culture and identity by using ICTs, such as information creation, manipulation, storage and retrieval. Efficient and effective bilaterally between citizens and governments.

Also, e-governance achieves importance through the following: reducing government spending, achieving a diversified economy with a competitive impact based on knowledge, and creating a new image of government by simplifying government work and eliminating red tape (Al-Hamela, 2016): 8, and e-governance can provide information And communications, which provide three main possibilities for change, for good governance for development, to achieve the following:

1. Automation: The replacement of existing human processes that involve accepting, storing, processing, outputting or transmitting information. For example, automating existing clerical jobs.

2. Information: Supporting the current information processes implemented by individuals, such as supporting the current processes of decision-making, communications, decision implementation, quality and ease of use of information and electronic services provided by the government to citizens.

3. Transforming: creating new information and communication technology-related processes or supporting new information processes implemented by individuals, such as creating new ways to provide public services, and providing the government with securing transactions with a high level of authorization through Internet networks (11: 2013 Salam). These potentials for change can, in turn, bring about five major benefits individually or collectively to governance for development, and can add efficiency gains to government activities by:

a. E-Governance is less costly: producing the same outputs at a lower total cost.

b. E-governance does more: produce more outputs at the same total cost.

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c. Faster governance: producing the same outputs at the same total cost in less time.

d. Efficiency Gains: Governance that Works Better: Producing the same outputs at the same total cost at the same time, but to a higher level of quality (Heeks, 2001:3-4).

4: Challenges facing the implementation of e-governance

Despite the increasing importance of implementing e-governance, which helps the accountability process, and ensures awareness and transparency in the management of government business (Ojo, 2014:79). It will also lead to simple, ethical, responsible, responsive and transparent management (SMART). As well as an efficient and rapid process of disseminating information to citizens and other agencies, enhancing the performance of administrative activities both internally and externally, as well as promoting good governance, however, we do not rule out the existence of challenges that would be alien to any government policy but we feel that there are things that should be taken care of. It is necessary before we expect much from e-governance policy in the public service, as follows: The practice of e-governance must face strong opposition from bureaucratic parties in the policy, and the majority of

public officials are likely to use their positions to thwart the effective application of e-governance, while there is another challenge related to The state of the country's energy supply, which is said to be intractable and erratic in terms of supply, has posed great challenges to achieving e-governance goals, and sometimes generators lack the capacity to provide sufficient power for ICT facilities (Abasilim & Edet, 2015:35-36).

SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool used to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in any project, whether a commercial or service project, or in any other situation that requires a decision. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats are discovered. This is a technique to assist management teams in formulating strategy. A SWOT analysis consists of the following two activities: Assessing strengths and weaknesses as individuals (human resources), characteristics, processes and products, and evaluating opportunities and threats posed by the external environment such as Environmental factors (political factors, economic factors, social factors, and technological factors) (Hussian, 2013:95).

Political Challenges:

Political aspects related to e-governance are for example, political stability (democracy or

dictatorship), laws and legislation, leadership, decision-making processes, finance issues and international affairs.

1. Social Challenges:

Social aspects related to e-governance, education level, employment, employment, income, digital divide, "mental" divide: general resistance to change, rural versus urban, rich versus poor, literacy, poor or limited IT skills, high population, Increasing urbanization, defying favouritism, or tribal kinship

2. Economic Challenges:

The economic aspects related to e-governance are the most important challenges it faces, namely financing, cost savings, high maintenance costs, equipment reuse, and (data) portability.

3. Technological challenges:

Technology will be a bottleneck for e-governance in developing countries, including technological aspects, software and hardware, inadequate support for computer and telecommunications infrastructure, telecommunications, IT specialists, maintenance, safety, and security.

As for the challenges related to human resources in e-governance, it has been recognized that human capital and enabling structural mechanisms are among the most important factors in the effective implementation of e-governance. The main human resources challenges are outlined:

a. Human energies: The availability of human resources with the required competencies greatly decreases the requirements, at the present time, as this human resources gap is filled through an employment policy that forms consulting companies or information technology companies directly on short-term contracts, and ambitious goals within the framework of the plan which requires an increase in human resources within a short period of time.

B. Lack of Institutional Structures: While several countries have succeeded in improving their ability to manage the transformation in the field of e-governance through a capacity building plan, it is not supported by clearly defined organizational structures with clear roles and authority, responsibilities and accountability.

C. Building human capacity: The main challenges in relation to capacity building are the absence of institutional training and a learning framework for e-governance, assessment of training needs, development of training strategies, and the lack of trained staff. The training in e-governance should be reorganized as one of the in-service specializations related to career advancement on the all levels of government, enhancing

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the number of permanent jobs and building employment capacity (Sapru & Sapru, 2014:324-325).

Second: The Quality of Customer Service

1: The concept of service quality

Quality is not born today, but rather its roots extend back to before the industrial revolution and the developments that occurred on the issue of quality were during the last century, in addition to that, the quality of services is one of the important issues in our time that occupies governments and society. Through achieving quality that seeks customer satisfaction and happiness, and quality became linked to the strategic goals of the organizations, and thus the organizations were forced to reconsider their strategies and quality became one of their competitive priorities to achieve their goals successfully (Li, 2011: 16).

The concept of service quality is one of the concepts that aroused the interest of researchers in administrative thought in recent times, in line with the widespread opinion that the current era is the era of services, as researchers were interested in studying that concept and determining its dimensions. Accordingly, we mention some of the researchers' opinions and definitions

Service quality represents the customer's judgment to serve the organization through his overall experience of receiving the service, and service quality can be defined as the congruence between the level of service provided to customers with their expectations.

Service quality is considered superiority and excellence or the absence of defects in the service provided, and it can be said that it is the amount of customer awareness of the service against his expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2009: 789).

Service quality constantly ensures customer expectations and may exceed these expectations, as well as providing the service system in accordance with performance standards in all service delivery processes. The requirements of customers and the areas that require administrative procedures, and there are many points of view in presenting the concept of service quality in a clear way, as the nature of the service has a clear impact on quality, as (Palmer, 2005) refers to service quality as the criterion for service delivery that emerges from the customer's expectations. Service quality can be defined as "consistency of service levels with customer expectations", and Sattari. & Peighambari, 2008) states that service quality is an important factor in facing competition between organizations that provide services as a result of modern trends that focus on the customer rather than the product.

In general, there are many views of researchers about the concept of service quality in a relative way, and the researcher concludes that the quality of service can be defined as fulfilling the customer's desire in a way that guarantees his acceptance of the service in return for the price he pays, or by another definition it is to achieve a match between reality and imagination in order to realize what the customer desires.

From the foregoing, service quality lies between the customer's perception and expectations, and it is the heart of customer service operations. Figure (2) illustrates the concept of service quality.
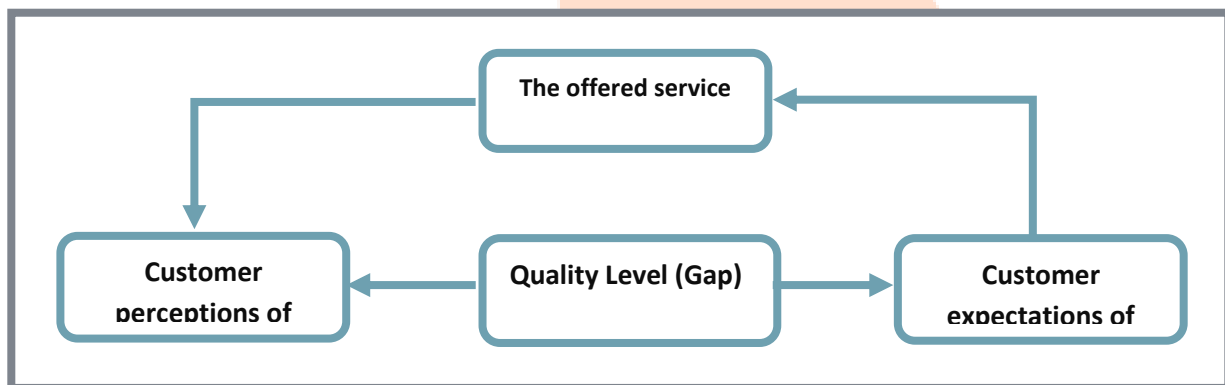

Figure 2: The concept of service quality

Source: *(Al-Haddad, Awad, 1999 "Marketing of Banking Services" Suez Canal University, Al-Bayan Corporation for Printing and Publishing, first edition, p. 273).*

The importance of customer service quality

Organizations attach great importance to the quality of service, because it aims to achieve success and stability. With the satisfaction of employees and customers together, so the importance of service quality lies in the growth of the service field due to the increasing number of organizations that provide services. There is intense competition between them, so relying on the quality of service will give these organizations many competitive advantages, in addition to that, the customer needs attention and good treatment, as well as providing quality service and reasonable price, and finally the economic significance of service quality, as service organizations at the present time focus on competition and expanding its market share, so organizations seek to maintain existing customers more than they seek to gain new customers. To achieve this, more attention should be paid to the level of service quality (Amanda & Katiuska, 2014:364).

3: Dimensions of customer service quality

(Hernon et al, 2015) indicated that service quality is a complex concept that has dimensions that go beyond content (obtaining materials or information) or context (experience or performance). The

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difference between goods and services in their characteristics gives services different dimensions from the dimensions of goods.

The opinions of researchers and writers have varied as a result of the link between the quality of service and its value to the customer himself, and among these dimensions the most important is safety, as it refers to the ability to perform the service in an appropriate manner in a reliable manner. (Zeitham, et al, 2006) sees it as the commitment when providing the service according to the specified time, and the organization's ability to perform the service accurately and without errors from the first time tangibles (Tangibles), as it refers to the appearance of material elements such as equipment, equipment, material facilities and the appearance of workers, sympathy (Empathy), as it shows the personal attention and care of the employees of the organization to the customers, the response (responsiveness) is the desire and readiness to provide assistance and immediate service to the customers, the reliability (Assurance) refers to the knowledge possessed by the employees and the respect they show to the customers and their ability to show honesty, trust and safety to the customer. Finally, understanding the customer, as it shows the organization's desire to identify the customer's need and study his desires in order to determine his expectations regarding the organization's level of performance.

4: Determining factors of service quality from the customer's point of view.

A number of researchers believe that the criteria on which the service quality is evaluated are determined by the customer from the service. The researchers also identified nine criteria that the beneficiary uses in judging the quality of the service provided to him. The first five represent the quality of the final benefits that the customer derives from the service, which is reliability. The extent of service availability in terms of time and place, safety, credibility, degree of understanding of the service supplier and the remaining criteria indicates the quality of the service delivery process, namely, responsiveness, merit, tangible things, and communications (Werrier & Gillen, 2011: 211).

From the foregoing, the researcher believes that the quality of services shows the extent of the organizations' success by providing good and acceptable services by customers and working to improve them constantly, because services are directly related to the lives of individuals and their requirements, in addition to that, improving the quality of services leads to an increase in profits, local product and growth economic and improving the standard of living of the community.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

By studying the research variables, which included (e-governance, health service quality), it was found that there is poverty in the application of e-governance in our service institutions, especially health ones, due to the complexity and high commitment that employees must show. Therefore, health institutions management should pay attention to strengthening e-governance. In the work of these institutions, as well as the high attention to the quality of services provided to patients in accordance with international standards and methods to ensure the sustainability of the health system in a manner commensurate with the Iraqi environment and according to international standards. and operations to become able to excel in performance, enabling them to enhance their competitive capabilities and help them to survive and grow in the local and global competitive markets.

There is no doubt that these ideas are still in the process of development and formation, and what was presented is not considered a complete formation on this subject, so it needs a lot of time to appear in a way that researchers will benefit from in the coming years.

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