

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SECTOR: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN JAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

The quality of public service is a means to restore public trust to the government that declined due to the global crisis. Indonesia reform has been rolling since 1998 and demanded that the government understands the importance of improving the quality of services to its people. The improvement of government services is aimed not only to provide a conducive climate for the national business world but also to increase the attractiveness of investment flows to Indonesia due to the increased credibility and accountability of government as parts of good governance, democratization and transparency. However, until now, public services in government offices in Indonesia are still under the spotlight, especially in the Ministry offices. The research is carried out to know what aspects are complained by customers and how to implement the service excellence in the Ministry offices. To obtain a clear point of view from the participants as they experienced the phenomenon, in-depth interviews were employed in this study. This study also employed questionnaires to triangulate the instruments. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain the perception of the participants on the service delivery while questionnaires were distributed to support the data gained by interviews. The research proved that service excellence has not been implemented well in the Ministry offices and urgently needs to be reformed.

Keywords: Service excellence, public sector, customer.

INTRODUCTION

Public service is a basic pillar of society-based governance. Efforts to build an understanding to create public services in accordance with good governance corridors need to be internalized to every bureaucrat by emphasizing the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, responsibility with the new paradigm that has changed bureaucracy as the ruler becomes a servant of the community.

There are two bodies that manage public services, namely the State Ministry of Administrative Reform that is responsible for the regulations governing state administration and the National Personnel Board that is formally responsible for the implementation of public service legislation by issuing the rules in acceptance, dismissal and promotion, and regulate the number of services.

The society as a party who receive the service, of course expect good and satisfactory service. According to Moenir (2002) public services that are generally desirable are: (1) the ease of handling something with fast service, (2) to obtain reasonable services without leading to a request for something, either official or welfare reasons, (3) to get equal treatment in the service of the same interests, and (4) honest service. However, until now it is perceived that service in government offices ranging from the level of the ministry to the sub-district is still

poor and far from the word “satisfactory”. Ministry as the headquarters of the government that administers the administration of each section at the national level is still not able to provide services that fit the excellent service standards.

In implementing the public services, the Act on Public Service No. 25/ 2009 and the Decree of Minister of Administrative Reform, No. 63 / KEP / M.PAN / 7/2003 have formulated the principles and standards of public service. It aims at improving the quality of public services. Even the government has also issued the Decree of Minister of Administrative Reform, No 25 / M. PAN / 2004 on general guidelines for the preparation of Public Satisfaction Index of Government Institution service units. However, until now it is perceived that public services implemented in government agencies especially in ministry offices have not improved significantly.

Therefore, this study was conducted with the objectives of knowing: 1) What causes the community to have many complaints related to services in the ministries and 2) How to apply service excellence in the ministry’s offices?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Public Service

Public agencies have an obligation to provide maximum services to the public. Public service is any form of service provided by central or regional government in order to fulfill society needs in accordance with prevailing laws and regulations (Decree No. 81/1995). In order to make it happen, Service Excellence should be applied. According to the Decree of Minister of Administrative Reform No 63 / KEP / M.PAN / 7/2003, public service is any service activities undertaken by public service providers as an effort to meet the needs of service recipients and the implementation of the legislation provision. In addition, Act No 25/ 2009 pertaining to Public Service states that what is meant by public service is an activity or series of activities in the context of fulfilling the needs of services in accordance with the laws and regulations for every citizen and residents of the goods, services and administrative services provided by public service providers.

The government is essentially a servant to the community. The government is manifested to provide services to societies not the society who serves the government. A professional public service can be realized by the government if there is accountability and responsibility of the service provider, in this case the government apparatus themselves.

One of the most important government tasks is to provide public services to the community as well as possible. However, not all government officials realize the importance of such service. Services are provided by the government through its apparatus (officers) to fulfill the public or individual interests, which are based on the basic rights of citizens. It is in the form of oral service, written service and the service in the form of deeds. These three forms of service are interrelated whose outcomes are expected to meet the needs and satisfy those served (Moenir, 2002).

Government as a service provider for the society is required to provide quality services. In the era of regional autonomy, the quality of the government services will be increasingly challenged to be optimum and able to answer the higher demands of society, both in terms of quality and in terms of quantity of service. In developing countries we can see the quality of public services is a problem that often arises, because in general, the demand for services far

exceeds the ability of the government to meet it, so that the government services provided to the society are less fulfilled both in terms of quality and quantity.

Sinambela (2006) states that the quality of service is closely linked to a systematic and comprehensive service known as the concept of service excellence. The quality of public service is the service quality of bureaucrats to the society that is able to fulfill the expectations or needs of the customer.

Lonsdale and Enyedi (1984) for example, interpret service as assisting or benefiting individuals through making useful things available to them. While public service is given a meaning as something made available to the whole of the population, and it involves things that people cannot normally provide for themselves i.e. people must pact collectively. Thus it can be said that public service is an effort to help or provide benefits to the public through the provision of goods and or services needed by them.

According to Philip Kotler (1995) the concept of service is :

“A service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. It’s production may or may not be tied in physical produce.”

Service is any action or exercise which may be provided by a party to any other party which is essentially indicative of unreal and does not result in power over all matters. The results of this service may or may not be associated with physical products. Kotler's view can be understood that essentially service is any beneficial activity in a collection or unity, and offers satisfaction even if the result is not bound to a product physically.

According to Zeitham et al (1990), there are five dimensions that can be used to evaluate the quality of service, namely: Direct evidence (Tangibles), which includes physical facilities, employees, equipment and means of communication. Physical facilities referred to here are like office buildings, waiting rooms for customers, telephones, computers, and others. Responsiveness is a characteristic of suitability in human service, as the willingness of staff to assist people, and provide service with good responses, for example the willingness of the bureaucratic apparatus to provide information related to time of service. Reliability is the ability to provide services presented immediately and satisfactorily. This can be seen from the ability and skill of the bureaucratic apparatus in performing the tasks that are charged quickly according to the time they promised. Assurance includes the capability, courtesy, and credibility of staff, free of danger, risk or doubt. It is like the certainty given by the bureaucratic apparatus to make the service user feel confident that the task will be free from mistakes. Empathy includes the ease of making good communication links and understanding the needs of customers. It is like how the bureaucratic apparatus creates external communication to improve the quality of its service.

Service Excellence

When dealing with the government, citizens expectations among others to be treated with courtesy and respect, to have more and easier access to government services, to be serviced faster, services that are timely, efficient, and accurate , communications that are timely and easily understood, services at lower fees, to partner with governments to help improve their service experience, greater transparency, etc (Thawani, 2015).

Service Excellence is always associated with customer satisfaction, given the size of the services provided is customer satisfaction. Satisfaction of service based on Decree of Minister of Administrative Reform No.25 / M.PAN / 2/2004 is "result of opinion and public appraisal to service performance given by apparatus of public service provider". Customer satisfaction is conceptualized by Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins (Tjiptono and Chandra, 2005, p.197), as "the feeling that comes after evaluating the product usage experience". Customer satisfaction by Oliver (Tjiptono and Chandra, 2005, p.198), is "an evaluation of the inherent surprise in the acquisition and / or product consumption experience". This is reinforced by Cravens (Flowers, 2009, p.30), that "consumer satisfaction is influenced by product delivery, product or service performance, corporate / product / brand image, price value associated with value received by consumers, employee performance, advantages and disadvantages of competitors. Thus the behavior of officers is instrumental in generating customer satisfaction, such as the statement of Heskett et al. (1997) that the behaviour of the employees had much in common with the so-called "satisfaction mirror" which posits the relationship between employee and customer as being based on mutual feelings of loyalty and satisfaction.

Islamy (2002: 4) argues that service delivery should be based on several principles of service excellence as follows:

- (a) Appropriateness. Each type, product, and quality of service provided by the government shall be relevant and significant in accordance with what is required by the society.
- (b) Accessibility. Each type, product, process and quality of service provided shall be as close as possible by the service user.
- (c) Continuity. Each type, product, process and quality of services provided by the government shall be continuously available to the service user society.
- (d) Technicality. Each type, product, process and quality of service provided by the government shall be handled by officers who actually possess technical skills of the service based on clarity, stipulation and stability of rules, systems, procedures and standard instruments of service.
- (e) Profitability. Each type, product, process and quality of services provided by the government should really provide economic and social benefits to the society.
- (f) Equitability. Each type, product, process and quality of services provided by the government should be available and accessible and provided equitably to all members of the society without exception.
- (g) Transparency. Each type, product, process and quality of services provided by the government is transparent so that the service user can use the rights and obligations of the service properly.
- (h) Accountability. Each type of product, process and quality of service provided by the government must be implemented successfully and efficiently and in accordance with the costs and benefits as desired by the society.
- (i) Effectiveness and Efficiency. Each type of product, process and quality of service provided by the government must be implemented successfully and efficiently and in accordance with the costs and benefits as desired by the community.

Vincent Gaspersz (1997) states that the improvement of quality of service includes the following dimensions: First, the timeliness of services related to waiting time and service process. Second, quality related to the accuracy of service. Third, quality of service related to the courtesy and hospitality of the officers. Fourth, quality of service related to the responsibility in handling customer complaints. Fifth, quality of service related to the number

of officers serving and other supporting facilities. Sixth, quality of service is related to location, room where service is provided, parking area, availability of information and manuals. Seventh, quality of service related to environmental conditions, cleanliness of waiting room, and other facilities.

The implementation of the concept of Service Excellence in the environment of government apparatus as described in the Decree of Minister of Manpower No. 81/1993 which is also reinforced by Presidential Instruction No 1/1995 pertaining to improving the quality of government apparatus to the public. It is affirmed that quality service to the society should be in accordance with the principles as follows:

1. Simplicity, in the sense that the procedure of service is carried out easily, smoothly, quickly and not convoluted and easy to understand and implemented.
2. Clarity and certainty, concerning: procedures of public services, general service requirements, whether technical or administrative, work units or officials responsible for providing public services, details of tariffs of public services and procedures for payment, rights and obligations of both the grantor and the recipient of public services based on the receipt of the application / equipment as a means to ensure the processing of public services, and officials who receive customer complaints (community).
3. Security, in the sense of process and the result of public services is able to provide security and legal certainty.
4. Disclosure, in the sense that procedures, requirements, work units / officers in charge of service providers, completion time and cost / tariff details and other matters relating to public service processes shall be publicly informed and understood by the public.
5. Efficient, public service requirements are limited to matters directly related to the achievement of service targets while keeping in mind the integration between the requirements and the products of public services provided. Also prevented from repeating the fulfillment of the completeness of the requirements.
6. Economical, paying attention to: the value of goods or services of public services by not demanding high costs beyond the fairness, condition and ability of the customer (the public) to pay in general, the provisions of applicable legislation.
7. Equitable, in the sense that coverage or scope of public services should be cultivated as widely as possible with equitable distribution and fair treatment.
8. Timeliness, in the sense that the implementation of public services can be completed within the specified period.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The participants for in depth interview consists of 6 customers/visitors of 3 Ministries (2 customers from each Ministry), to gain information about their experience on services they perceived, 6 staff consist of 2 categories, namely 3 junior staff who have worked in the Ministries between 1-3 years and 3 senior staff who have worked over 5 years, to dig deeper their perspectives on how to serve customers and what they know about service excellence. Three representatives of Secretariat General (1 official from each Secretariat General) were interview to gain information on the policies and implementation of the service excellence in the Ministries. The total number of participants for in depth interview is 15 people. The questionnaires were distributed to 30 (thirty) customers (10 customers in each Ministry's office) to obtain information regarding their perception on public service. Moreover, researcher conducted the questionnaires to quantify the qualitative data of interviews. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to the customers/visitors coming to the Ministry offices.

METHODOLOGY

According to Moleong (2007) qualitative research is research that intends to understand the phenomenon about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc holistically, and by way of descriptions in the form of words and languages, in a specific, natural context and by utilizing various natural methods.

This study used semi-structured interviews, because it can direct the interview more closely, to have a pre-determined set of questions while simultaneously allowing the interviewees sufficient flexibility to shape the flow of information given (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). The semi-structured interview gives the interviewer the freedom to probe beyond the answers in a manner which would appear prejudicial to the aims of standardization and comparability. It is also adaptable, flexible, and relatively unstructured and open ended (May, 2001). The interviewer can ask more questions, if the answer does not come up to expectations (Robson, 2002). In addition, Robson (2002) also says that it is appropriate to use the interview when the individual perceptions of processes within a social unit are to be studied.

Beside in depth interview, this study also employed self-completion questionnaires as the instrument of data collection which served as triangulation and were distributed to 30 customers/visitors of 3 Ministry offices. It is a form of survey which involves written questioning in which it is delivered to the respondents by mail or handed to them personally by the researcher in their homes, at work, school or any other places as stated by Robson (2002) and Sarantakos (2005). Before the interview and distribution of questionnaires, the author piloted them to two staff, requesting their opinion and modifications were made accordingly. Questionnaire was designed in a semi-standardized one which contains a moderate structure and cut down open-ended questions to a minimum as well as Wisker (2001) suggested to put the most simple and obvious questions at the beginning and make them more complicated since this will keep the participants with us and not make them confused at the start. Then, it was known that the open ended questions should be limited to prevent misunderstanding of the meaning of each terminology. It was done to extent and ensure the validity of the study.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Customers' Perception

Interactive analysis is used in this study. In this analytical model, the three components of the analysis of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion or verification activities conducted in an interactive form with the data collection process as an ongoing process, repetitive, and continuously to form a cycle (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Furthermore, researchers only move between the three components of the analysis, thus forming a cyclic pattern. Data reduction can be defined as the process of selecting, focusing on simplification, abstraction, and transformation of dummy data that emerged from the written record in the field. Thus the data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, classify, direct, dispose of unnecessary and organizing data in a way such that its final conclusions can be drawn and verified (Patton, 1990).

Research shows that of 6 customers interviewed in 3 Ministry offices in Jakarta, all said that the service received is still very poor. A customer said that before coming to the office, he had already called to speak to someone he was looking for. However, after being picked up by someone, the phone was transferred up to three times and finally could be connected with the person I was looking for with a long waiting tone. "This has often happened to me. The person who picks up the phone often says "hello" whereas for all I know this word is not

recommended in office telephone handling. The impression is that Ministry staff are less professional. "

Another customer said that he had requested a letter to the Ministry, but it had been more than two weeks since he proposed it, the requested letter had not been completed. The reason was that the letter has not been signed by the Director General.. "This is just an illogical answer. I think people know that if a leader has to go abroad then there must be a temporary official who can substitute his duties. It shows a very inefficient way of work and drop the image of the Ministry office."

"The two answers are very much in line with Zeitham et al. (1990) that there are five dimensions that can be used to evaluate the quality of service, two of them are *Reliability*, i.e. the ability to provide services that present immediately and satisfactorily. This can be seen from the ability and skill of the bureaucracy apparatus in performing the tasks that are charged and become their obligations quickly according to the time it is promised. The second is *Assurance*, which includes the ability, courtesy and credibility of the staff, free of danger, risk or doubt. It is like the certainty given by the bureaucratic apparatus to make the service user feel confident that the task will be free from mistakes.

Another customer I interviewed expressed his opinion that when he came to the Ministry office to ask for some information, he was very disappointed. "I came all the way from the region to get certain information from the Ministry office, but I was served by a very young apprentice and did not seem to understand the field which I wanted to know. "When I asked to meet his manager, he simply replied that "he is not available, if there is any other information you'd like to know, please find it in our website. This is very far from the word 'satisfying'."

Similar experience is also obtained by other customers. "I have sent a proposal for a courtesy call on the Minister since three months ago. But until now, I have not received a reply yet. I have called the office several times to find out the follow-up, but the answer is always " Still being checked." This morning I came to the Ministry office to ask for a confirmation. How surprised I was, when I learned that the officer could not find my proposal in the archive of his documents, then he simply said "Can you please resend the proposal? I'll process it immediately" This indicates that the service provided to the customer is very poor."

Another customer I interviewed was a Canadian citizen working in an international agency in Jakarta. When I asked him what he thought about the service delivery at the Ministry office, he smiled and said, "It is very hard to find an officer who can communicate in English so there is frequent miscommunication whereas a Ministry office deals not only with domestic affairs but also overseas. It is appropriate that the officers on the front line speak international language.

"The three answers are in accordance with the statement of Islamy (2002: 4) which suggests that service delivery should be based on several principles of service excellence, namely Technicality, where each type, product, process and quality of service provided must be handled by officers who actually possess the technical skills of the service based on clarity, stipulation and stability of rules, systems, procedures and standard instruments of service.

The next customer is a student. When asked what he perceived about the service at the ministry's office, he replied that as a student, he often gets unfair treatment. They never

addressed me like other visitors, nor pleased me to sit in the living room if I had to wait. This implies unfair treatment by officers at the Ministry, as what Islamy (2002: 4) says that every type, product, process and quality of service provided by the government must be available and accessible and provided fairly and equally to all society members without exception.

In line with the Decree of Minister of Manpower No. 81/1995, which is also reinforced by Presidential Instruction No 1/1995 that the quality of service to the society should be in accordance with the following principles: Simplicity, Clarity and Certainty, Security, Openness, Efficient, Economical, Equal Treatment, and Timeliness.

Staff's Perception

From the interviews with 6 (six) staff at the Ministry office, it was learned that until now there is no guidebook related to service excellence in their office. Three (3) junior staff working for about 1-3 years said that since the first time they worked in the Ministries, they have never got training related to service excellence. "When I first got to work, the HR department gave me a briefing about the job description I was responsible for but it was not specific about handling telephone, handling complaint, serving the customer, filing system, and so on. It is just a general briefing about the office hours, "

Meanwhile, from the interviews with 3 senior staff who have worked for over 5 years, it is known that the ministry has sent them to follow a training about service excellence organized by private training provider. After that they were asked to apply what they had got from the training in their daily work. "Unfortunately, not all staff were given the opportunity, so only those who have attended the course know about service excellence, while others work according to their own way."

When asked about what they know about Service Excellence, three (3) junior staff working between 1-3 years just said that Service Excellence is a technique of providing services to satisfy customers. But when asked what should be done so to provide Service Excellence to the customer, the three staff did not give detailed answers, just mentioned " We have to be polite and must provide clear information, and smile." While 3 senior staff gave more detailed answers related to the factors in the service excellence that must be applied, namely the timeliness, the accuracy of service, courtesy, handling customer complaints, , service places, completeness of information, and cleanliness of waiting rooms, and other facilities.

This is in line with what is stated by Vincent Gaspersz (1997) that to improve the quality of service includes the dimensions of: timeliness of service, service accuracy, courtesy officers, responsibility in handling customer complaints, number of officers serving and other supporting facilities, location, room where service is provided, parking area, availability of information, and other manuals, environmental conditions, cleanliness of waiting room, and other facilities.

From interviews with 3 junior staff and 3 senior staff, it is found that staff who have been working longer understand more about service excellence, but unfortunately it is still not standardized so that every staff conducts the jobs in accordance with their own way.

Officials' Perception

From the interviews with 3 officials at the Secretariat General, it is found that the service excellence was already set forth in Decree on Minister of Manpower No. 81/1995, which was also reinforced by Presidential Instruction No 1 / 1995 on improving the quality of

government apparatus to the society. In addition, the definition of public services has also been contained in the Decree No. 46 / KEP / M.PAN / 7/2003 of Minister of Manpower and Act No. 25 of 2009, but to date, not all staff in the Ministry's office have understood it.

When asked if there is any training on Service Excellence at the Ministry's office, 2 officials said that "We periodically send staff to the Training Provider to attend the Service Excellence Training. We hope that after the completion of training, they can apply the skills they got in daily work. However, we recognize that supervision in this office is still weak, so the implementation has not run well." While an official from another ministry said that "We have invited several resource persons to provide special training on Service Excellence for employees starting from staff, Supervisors, Head of Divisions, up to Head of Sub Directorates. The results are pretty good and there are significant changes.

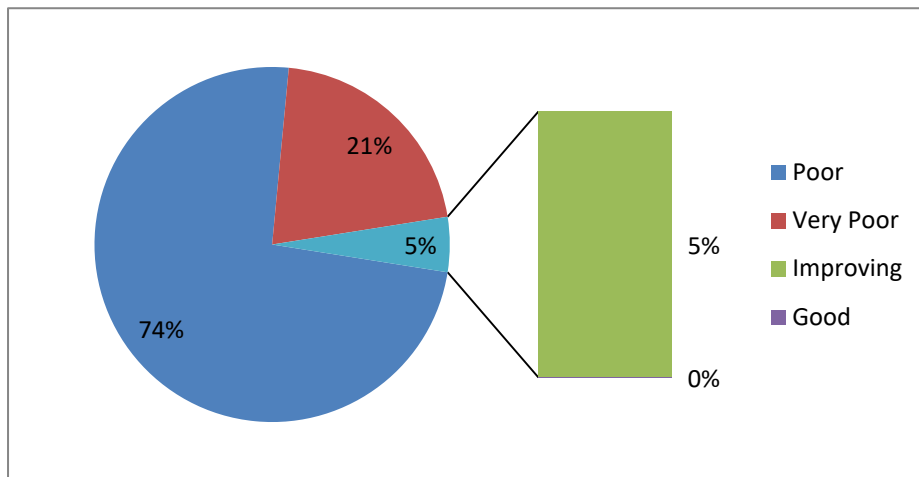
Although until now, not all staff have the opportunity to attend training, but at least there has been some improvement, especially in terms of timeliness of service, and the availability of information. "When asked about the strategy to implement service excellence in the ministry, all the three said that in addition to training for employees, it is necessary to establish a standard for each task so that all staff understand how to conduct the service. In addition, guidebooks and socialization also need to be standardized.

When asked when his agency conducted a survey or research related to customer satisfaction, two officials said that for the last three years survey has never been conducted and one of them said "Survey was done by Research and Development Department but it is not known exactly how the result is because we haven't got the report yet." This is unfortunate since the government itself has already drafted the Decree of the Minister of Administrative Reform. 24 / M. PAN / 2004 on general guidelines for the preparation of Public Satisfaction Index of Government Institution Service Unit. This Act is made with the purpose of knowing how far the satisfaction of services perceived by public so that it can be immediately evaluated what aspects have been the main complaints in the service delivery and can be improved so that the ministry's office can implement service excellence well as stated by Heskett et al. (1997) that the prime service is "the behavior of the employee" in terms of satisfaction mirror "which posits the relationship between employee and customer as being based on mutual feelings of loyalty and satisfaction."

Questionnaire Analysis

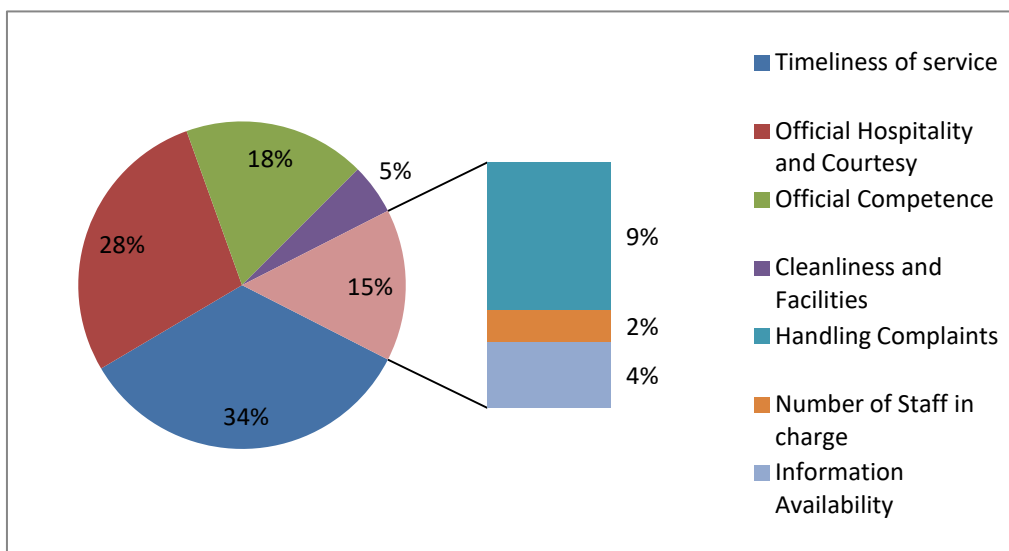
The questionnaires were distributed to gain the data to support findings from the interview as the main instrument in this study. The questionnaires were distributed to 30 customers who visited the Ministries. The main purpose of applying this strategy is to know about the perception of customers towards service excellence, and what should be done to improve it. It consists of ten questions in which they were a set of combinations of close-ended and open-ended questions. When asked about the satisfaction on the service delivery in the Ministries, 74% said that the service they received was "Poor". Another 5% said that there has been an improvement, and the rest 21% said that the service in the Ministry was "Very Poor". No one answered "Good" and "Very Good", as shown in the graphic below.

Figure 1: Customers' Perception on Service Excellence in the Ministries



When the research participants were asked about their perception about aspects must be improved in the Ministries related to service delivery (based on Vincent Gaspersz :1997) are as follows: 34% says the waiting time and service process are the most important factors to be improved as it serves not only for national but also international level. While in the second layer is courtesy and hospitality of the officers who turned out to also be a concern of customers who come to the Ministry (28%). The third most important is the competence of officers related to the accuracy of service (18%) considering that it is still often found the missing documents, the ability of foreign language is poor. While other aspects of cleanliness and facilities (5%), complaint handling (9%), Number of officers (2%) and Availability of information (4%).

Figure 2: Customers' Perception on parts of services in the Ministries should be improved



CONCLUSION

From this research, it can be concluded that not all Ministries have implemented service excellence in their daily activities. It is proven by the large number of customers who say that the service in Ministry offices is poor. From the interview, it is found that not all staff understand the meaning of Service Excellence, so there is no standard of service delivery

provided. From this research we also know that there are still Ministries which have never conducted a survey on customer satisfaction whereas this is an important factor to support administrative reform since Ministry is the face of government of a country that not only provide services at the national level but also international.

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