

Performance of Public Service Responsibility in Handling Customer Complaints of the Muara Tirta Regional Public Drinking Water Company in Gorontalo City

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to 1) . describe and analyze the ability of Perumdam Air Minum Muara Tirta Kota Gorontalo in responding to customers as. 2). describe the level of service speed applied by Perumdam Air Minum Muara Tirta in handling customer complaints in Gorontalo City. 3). explain the form of service accuracy carried out by Perumdam Air Minum Muara Tirta in the process of handling customer complaints. 4). describe the accuracy of officer service in responding to every complaint submitted by customers. 5). identify the extent to which timeliness of service is applied in handling customer complaints by Perumda Air Minum Muara Tirta. 6). know and analyze the ability of Perumdam Air Minum Muara Tirta in responding to customer complaints. The sub-focus of this study is 1). Ability to respond 2) Speed of Service. 3) Accuracy of Service. 4) Accuracy of Service. 5) Timeliness of service. 6) Ability to respond to complaints.

The method used is a qualitative approach, primary data obtained through in-depth interviews conducted with various informants including the Director, Customer Relations Manager, Assistant Manager of Subscription Services & Marketing and Assistant Manager of Distribution Transmission and Disturbances, customers, secondary data from journal books. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of classification, reduction, description and drawing conclusions.

The results of the study indicate that: 1) the ability to respond to customers is in the fairly good category through various communication channels, but is not yet consistent, especially in emergency reports. 2) The speed of service has been regulated through SOPs, but its implementation is not optimal due to limited personnel and technical constraints. 3) The accuracy of service shows efforts to adjust solutions to the type of complaint, but there are still inaccurate diagnoses so that problem resolution is not complete. 4) The accuracy of service is seen from verification and field checks before repairs, but there are still services that are rushed and give rise to repeated complaints. 5) The timeliness of service has not been fully achieved, because some complaints are handled longer than the promised time. 6) Perumdam Muara Tirta has followed up on complaints quite well, although there are still delays and inconsistencies in information. Overall, the most dominant sub-focus showing responsiveness is the ability to respond to complaints because it is the most consistent in recording complaints, providing follow-up, and implementing the principles of responsiveness and accountability even though there are still obstacles.

KEYWORDS: Responsiveness, Public Service, Customer Complaints, Public Service Responsiveness Performance in Handling Customer Complaints at Muara Tirta Regional Public Water Utility in Gorontalo City.

I. INTRODUCTION

Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services defines Public Services as an activity or systematic activity distributed to meet the service needs of every Indonesian citizen and the Public Service Community, as the response of government agencies to the performance of the nation's implementation (Kartini et al., 2020). Public services can be defined as the provision of services to meet the needs of individuals and residents who have needs from the Company in accordance with established regulations (Kurniawan in Riski Ramadani 2022).

Responsiveness is crucial in the clean water service sector because water is a basic need that directly impacts public health and well-being (Nugroho & Lestari 2021). Measuring public service responsiveness defines responsiveness as the willingness to help customers and provide services wholeheartedly, as well as the willingness to assist consumers and be responsible for the quality of service provided. The indicators used are the ability to respond to the public, speed of service, accuracy of service, accuracy of service, timeliness of service, and the ability to respond to complaints (Zeithaml in Rismawati 2015).

The Muara Tirta Regional Drinking Water Company (Perumdam) is a service company and a Regionally-Owned Enterprise (BUMD). Perumdam Muara Tirta's existence is essential to support the availability of clean water for the community. In the

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context of regional public services, the role of Regionally-Owned Enterprises (BUMD), such as the Muara Tirta Regional Drinking Water Company (Perumdam), is strategic in distributing clean water fairly and equitably (Sari & Yuliana, 2019). However, the quality of these services is often questioned when customer complaints persist, such as distribution disruptions, inflated bills, and lack of speed in handling complaints (Rahayu et al., 2023).

II. THEORITICAL REVIEW

A. Public Administration

The term "public administration" is an interpretation of the English word "public administration," which is often defined as state or government administration. Public administration can be defined as state administration or government administration, which is carried out in state institutions for public purposes. Essentially, this interview is the soul of public administration research, which has been developing since ancient times, aiming to provide services to the general public. (Igirisa, 2022)

According to Keban (2008), it is interpreted that the definition of Public Administration shows the role of the government as the first agent who has the power or regulator, continues to innovate and is active in managing and determining important and good initiatives and steps for the people because it is interpreted that the people are someone who is not willing, passive, and must obey and accept everything that is determined by the agency.

Keban Simplifies the very broad scope of Public Administration in 6 (six) strategic dimensions of public administration, where each of these dimensions is very decisive in achieving goals (Keban 2008). even if one element does not function well it will disrupt other elements. The six dimensions of public administration are: Policy Dimension, Organizational Structure Dimension, Management Dimension, Ethics Dimension, Environmental Dimension, Performance Accountability Dimension.

B. Management Dimensions

Management is literally the process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the efforts of other organizational members to achieve predetermined company goals. (Stoner and Wankel in Andie T. Purwanto 2023).

C. Public service

According to Law No. 25 of 2009, public service is an activity carried out by state officials to meet the needs of the community. According to Tohopi (2015), public service is a term for services provided by the government to its citizens, either directly through the public sector or by financing the provision of private services.

According to Pasolong (2014), service is an activity carried out directly or indirectly by individuals, groups, or organizations to meet the needs of others. Service is the process of fulfilling one person's needs through the activities of others.

According to Dwiyanto (2006), three concepts that can be used to assess the quality of public services are presented: Responsiveness refers to the response of service providers to the desires, hopes, expectations, and needs of the user community. Responsibility measures the extent to which public service provision complies with pre-established administrative and organizational principles. Finally, accountability indicates the extent to which service delivery meets the interests of stakeholders and prevailing societal norms.

D. Public Service Responsiveness

Responsiveness indicates the match between service programs and community needs. Therefore, this indicator is crucial for evaluating the performance of public organizations. The lower the responsiveness, the greater the mismatch between the services provided and the actual needs of the community (Tangkilisan, 2005). Zeithaml in Rismawati (2015) identified indicators such as: Responding to every customer/applicant who wants to get service, this indicator includes how service providers provide good attitudes and communication towards the community.

- 1) Ability to respond to every customer, especially with good attitude and communication.
- 2) Speed in providing services, which demonstrates the responsiveness of the apparatus in meeting the needs of the community.
- 3) Accuracy of service, namely minimal errors and suitability of services to community needs.
- 4) Accuracy in carrying out duties, including thoroughness, focus, and sincerity of the apparatus.
- 5) Timeliness of service, so that the public has certainty regarding the duration of service completion.
- 6) The ability to respond to complaints, namely providing access for the public to convey complaints and offer the best solutions to existing problems.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method to understand the meaning and subjective experiences of informants regarding public services at Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations of staff and customers, while secondary data came from documentation and related literature.

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Data collection techniques included non-participatory observation, structured interviews, and literature review. Data analysis was conducted descriptively qualitatively through classification, reduction, description, and drawing conclusions.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to evaluate the quality of service in handling customer complaints at Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City. The evaluation is conducted based on the responsiveness dimension according to Zeithaml (in Rismawati 2015), which includes 1) Ability to respond to customers, 2) Speed of service, 3) Accuracy of service, 4) Accuracy of service, 5) Timeliness of service, and 6) Ability to respond to customer complaints.

1. Ability to Respond to Society

Customer response time is a key factor in building satisfaction, loyalty, and a positive company image. In today's digital age, customers expect a fast and responsive response from companies. Complaint channels are available online, such as social media, email, the SIKOMPAK app, and in-office support. According to Hardiyansyah (2011), responsiveness is the ability of a public organization to recognize community needs, set service agendas and priorities, and develop service programs according to community needs and aspirations. In this study, Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City, has actually attempted to provide responses through various communication channels, but still found customer complaints indicating that these normative standards have not been fully implemented. This is in line with the opinion of Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990) who stated that responsiveness is the willingness of service providers to help customers and provide services quickly. This study shows that this aspect needs to be strengthened. Therefore, the researcher believes that efforts that Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City can take include strengthening the integrated service system with clear response time standards, implementing special SOPs for handling complaints, and conducting regular monitoring and evaluation of each customer report, accompanied by feedback to the reporter. Furthermore, Perumdam must improve the technical and communication competencies of officers, so that in addition to quickly resolving problems, officers are also able to provide clear and empathetic explanations to customers.

Speed of Service Fast service is intended to include the alertness and sincerity of officers in answering questions or requests from the public. (Riski Ramadani 2022) The speed of Perumdam Muara Tirta officers relates to the alertness and speed of service time officers in responding to customer complaints and grievances, from submission to handling of complaints and grievances. Therefore, officers must work according to the service time standards set by the Company to provide faster service. (Muhammad Fauzi 2014). According to Zeithaml, in Rismawati (2015) explains in detail that responsiveness is included in one of the dimensions of public service quality, one of which is fast service, which is intended to include the alertness and sincerity of officers in answering questions or requests from the public. Therefore, Perumdam Muara Tirta Kota Gorontalo must be able to provide fast service, which is intended to include minimizing the causes of service delays and improving facilities and infrastructure that support speed of service.

2. Accuracy of service

This dimension has the ability to respond and resolve customer complaints quickly and in accordance with community expectations. The speed of service at Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City, already has standards set out in the SOP, but its implementation is not yet fully consistent. From the internal side, the management emphasized that each work unit has a role to expedite the handling of customer complaints, starting from receiving reports, to technical follow-up. This indicates a series of coordination between sections that is the key to achieving fast service. However, from the customer's perspective, there is still a gap between the SOP and practice in the field. This is in line with the opinion of Hardiyansyah (2011) who stated that the responsiveness of public services is measured by the ability of service providers to respond to community needs quickly, precisely, and accurately. Thus, the slow handling of customer complaints indicates the still low level of responsiveness of Perumdam Muara Tirta. This of course can cause dissatisfaction among the community as service recipients as stated by (Tui, 2019) who stated that as service subjects, they no longer like complicated, long, and risky services due to long bureaucratic chains. People want fresh service, while also being able to understand their needs and desires and fulfill them in a relatively short time.

Based on these findings, in practice, Perumdam Muara Tirta strives to improve service speed by providing a multi-platform complaint service and establishing standard complaint handling procedures. However, from a customer perspective, service speed still needs to be improved, particularly in terms of final resolution of complaints requiring technical action. The differing perceptions between officers and customers regarding "speed" are a crucial aspect that must be addressed to improve service quality.

3. Accuracy of Service

Proper service means avoiding errors in both work and communication. This means that the service provided by officers must be in accordance with the public's wishes. (Riski Ramadani 2022). The accuracy of service at Perumdam Muara Tirta in Gorontalo City still faces challenges. There are cases where officers respond quickly, but the actions taken do not match the source of the problem, resulting in customers having to file complaints repeatedly. Situations like this demonstrate that speed is

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not always synonymous with accuracy, as the most important thing is the ability to resolve problems thoroughly. Accuracy of service is crucial, as fast but inaccurate service is tantamount to not resolving the problem. This aligns with Dwiyanto's (2006) opinion, which states that the responsiveness of public service is determined by the ability of officials to understand community needs and provide appropriate solutions. In this context, the role of SOPs is very strategic because they function as service standards that ensure consistency and reduce errors (Hardiyansyah, 2011). However, field results indicate that SOPs have not been fully implemented, resulting in customer complaints still being handled temporarily and repeatedly.

Based on these findings, Perumdam Muara Tirta needs to consistently implement SOPs to ensure that complaints are handled thoroughly and not merely temporarily. Staff capabilities also need to be improved through technical and service training, so they can provide prompt and appropriate solutions to customers. Regular monitoring and evaluation are crucial to ensure effective follow-up, while more open communication with customers can provide reassurance and a sense of appreciation. Furthermore, preventative measures through regular network checks and maintenance need to be strengthened to prevent similar complaints from recurring. These efforts will not only improve service consistency but also strengthen customer confidence in Perumdam Muara Tirta's overall performance.

4. Accuracy of Service

Accuracy in service delivery is essential to prevent errors that could harm the public. Accurate service means that officers remain focused and diligent in delivering services and meeting the public's needs. The Muara Tirta Water Company (Perumdam) in Gorontalo City demonstrates its efforts to improve the accuracy of its service in handling customer complaints by implementing clear operational procedures, recording complete complaint data, and coordinating between departments. Service officers strive to be thorough and careful in analyzing each complaint, especially in technical cases such as pipe leaks, water quality, and billing issues, where accuracy is crucial to avoid mishandling. However, customers expect a more consistent service in requesting detailed information from the outset and confirming follow-up actions. To this end, the Muara Tirta Water Company in Gorontalo City continues to conduct routine training, periodic evaluations, and improve internal communication to ensure faster, more accurate, and more satisfactory complaint handling.

The analysis results show that service accuracy still needs to be improved, because although some customers have experienced thorough service, there are still cases where officers appear to be rushed so that problems are not handled in depth and ultimately recur. Therefore, accuracy must be a primary concern so that the process of examining, following up, and resolving complaints can be carried out in more detail, carefully, and consistently so that customer satisfaction can be guaranteed continuously.

5. Timeliness of service

The meaning of timely service is that officers in serving the public are expected to complete their services within the specified timeframe. Timely service is defined by Hardiansyah (2011) as the implementation of public services that can be completed within the specified timeframe (Hardiyansyah, 2011). All customer complaints are responded to by officers. Timeliness of service is an important indicator in handling customer complaints at Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City. This requires officers to be able to organize their work schedules, prioritize handling, and ensure that the entire resolution process is in accordance with the time promised to customers. This study specifically examines the strategies and technical efforts undertaken by Perumdam to minimize delays in resolving complaints, including resource management, coordination systems, and the implementation of operational procedures. In addition, this study assesses the extent to which customer complaint resolution complies with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) regarding established service times. For customers, delays in resolving complaints are often a source of dissatisfaction with the services provided by Perumdam Muara Tirta, Gorontalo City.

According to the researcher, Perumdam Muara Tirta needs to streamline the duty schedule and prioritize the work of officers, implement a real-time monitoring system, strengthen field coordination, and strictly monitor the implementation of SOPs so that every complaint is handled according to the agreed time and customer satisfaction can be maintained.

6. Ability to respond to customer complaints

As a public water service provider, Perumdam Muara Tirta Kota Gorontalo is required to have the ability to understand each complaint received, both administratively and technically. The identification process is a crucial initial step to ensure that the response truly addresses the root cause of the problem, not just addressing superficial symptoms. However, the speed of response in the field and the thoroughness of handling still need improvement to ensure a sustainable community. Customer problem identification has been systematic, but it does not yet guarantee comprehensive handling.

According to researchers, Perumdam Muara Tirta in Gorontalo City aims to improve response speed and completeness in complaint handling by ensuring that every report is followed up thoroughly, both administratively and technically. Customer problem identification needs to be carried out more systematically and accompanied by thorough follow-up to prevent recurrence of complaints. Furthermore, transparency and accountability must be strengthened by providing clear and open information to customers regarding the complaint handling process. Improving the capacity of officers to identify and resolve problems appropriately is also crucial for more effective, faster, and customer-oriented service.

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CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the responsiveness of public services of Perumdam Muara Tirta Kota Gorontalo in handling customer complaints is in the fairly good category, indicated by the availability of various complaint channels, the implementation of SOPs, and the communicative skills of officers, however this performance is not yet consistent and still faces a number of significant obstacles. The main obstacle lies in the delay and inconsistency in the speed of response and follow-up, especially on technical disruptions, which often exceed the established time standards. In addition, the accuracy and precision of services are also not optimal, caused by the uneven technical capabilities of officers, inefficient coordination between departments, and the less than optimal utilization of digital channels, so that it is necessary to strengthen human resources, increase supervision, and consistent implementation of SOPs to achieve equitable and sustainable service quality according to customer expectations.

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