



The Position of Facility Management Services on Customer Loyalty on Malaysian Municipal Council Service Delivery

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Abstract: Government was established primarily to provide life Line services that will make life worth living to their customers. Accordingly, local administration as third tier government in Malaysia are fashioned to bring government closer to the local communities' at the grassroots and for development and transformation of lives at the rural level. Facilities management services One of the ways of bringing government closer to the people at the grassroots is through the delivery of public and social amenities as a satisfactory, timely, effective and adequate manner. This paper is therefore tried to review some existing literature on Local administration and Public and Social Service Delivery in Malaysia. It argues that the constitutional mandate of local council in terms of "functional performance" has not been translated into reality in many occasions. Thus, the paper after extensive review concludes and recommends that Local administration must attempt to prevail over the serious challenges that have bypassed their day to day performance. It is only by innovations this can be positioned to render cutting services in a timely, effective, adequate, prompt and satisfactory manner to justify their continuous existence and huge financial allocation to them. Customer responsiveness also gives a sense of satisfaction of the customers. The study recommends that there is needs for local administration to be facilities management strategies to makes the local administration more vigorous for enhancing the lives of inhabitants and to foster good relationship between the management, professionals and local people in the area. The study also gives recommendation of enlighten the local community on the important of community participation in provision and maintenance of public service delivery.

Keywords: Government, Public Services, Facilities Management, Local Community and Customer Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation trends have intensified the level of hostility in the national and international market. Not only does the internal macroeconomic organization and atmospheric setting need to be reinforced, however, fundamentals of the micro economy including the particular economic and social segments and local organisations' also need to be made more robust and resilient (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013). In order to improve and stimulate global, best practice and competitiveness, the machinery of law and order should

continue to promote the evolution to money value projects and activities in three key economic sectors, production, social services and agriculture (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2009; Jusoh, Malek, & Rashid, 2009). However, low level public social and welfare services are detriment to healthy and adequate customer satisfaction, Malaysia as a country of different and multifaceted culture and norms, their local government has been through a rapid developmental and infrastructural changes in relations to technological advancement (Bello, Juani, & Kasim, 2017a; Kaliannan, Puteh, & Dorasamy, 2014). The effectiveness of Facility Management in various local government and councils were ascertain through the local community expression of satisfaction (Bello *et al.*, 2017b; Bello *et al.*, 2017c). Customer satisfaction based on the commitment of the local government foster peaceful coexistence of different ethnic group in a given locality (Liu *et al.*, 2017; You & Yang, 2017). Therefore, customer satisfaction and Facility Management are key element of local government functionality (Shahraki, 2017; Soyinka *et al.*, 2016).

Concepts of the Study

The concepts of this study devolved on Facilities Management Services (FMS), customer loyalty and local administration. The concepts can be conceptualised and to show the relationship between FMS and local administration strategy in service delivery. A study of this nature is noteworthy in a number of respects. Firstly, the paper is timely and in accordance with national priority. Social service delivery since the inception of democratic governance in Malaysia has been a subject of national debate and concern. For instance, in attempt to improve service delivery of public institutions, (Jusoh & Rashid, 2009; Williams *et al.*, 2011) notes that as government actors dedicate ourselves to providing the basic services to which each customer is entitled in a timely, fair, honest, effective and transparent manner. Government commitment for improving public and social amenities and service delivery in Malaysia at Federal, State and local government levels should be listed as priority because Malaysian have for too long been feeling insufficient satisfaction by the quality of public service delivery by which decisions are not made without undue outside pressure, and files do not move without being pushed with inducements (Rabe, Osman, & Bachok, 2014; Ahmed, Abd Manaf, & Islam, 2017) and Sri Lanka (Fernando, 2019).

Secondly, the study is important because it will expand the frontier of knowledge by identifying factors influencing FMS and processes of public service delivery in Malaysian Local Authorities. Those factors when clearly acknowledged will go a long way in providing local people's answers to questions like why public service provisioning has not enhanced in Malaysian local administration despite huge financial allocations from the Federation Account. Furthermore, the research is justified on the grounds that its recommendations will enhance policy decisions of government agencies like the Local Government Service Commission. In addition, members of the public will find the paper an educative and resource material. Future researchers on service delivery in Malaysian Local Government Areas will find the study a rich resource material for their research. A study of this nature is a training ground for the conduct of cutting edge research in the field of Public Administration and Local Government Studies.

Conceptual frameworks of position of FMS on Customer loyalty for public service delivery

Position of FMS on customer loyalty has been extensively written by many scholars in the past (N. A. A. Rani, Baharum, Akbar, & Nawawi, 2015). Rani, Ryan, Griffin, & Ritter, (2015) stated that in local government administration Facilities Management (FM) plans assist in preserving public service delivery and customer loyalty. According to (Kathy Michell, 2013; Pearce, 2017). FM help the service providers to consider the service users need and wants before the services are provided, the concept inter relationship showcase the significant of achieving government target (Hashim, Samikon, Ismail, & Ismail, 2015). Aquino, Lück, & Schänzel, (2018) opined that in any social science research relationship between independent variables and dependent variable pave way for conceptual frame in FM operation. Local authorities' property management and development. Concepts and theories are the bedrock of any research analysis and results findings.

Hypothetical statements are product of conceptual framework (Lepkova & Žūkaitė-Jefimovienė, 2012; Williams et al., 2011).

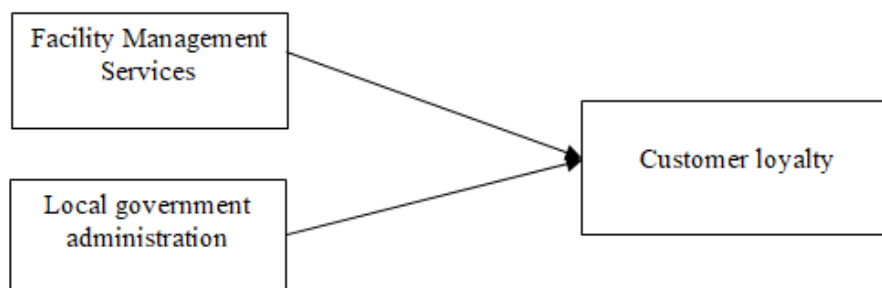


Figure 1: Conceptual frameworks of the Study

Facility Management as a Service Management

A portrayal of service management value is put forward by (McLennan, 2004). This implies that “the function of the service procedure manager includes the functions of both manufacture and marketing in an open scheme with the customer as a contributor. For services, the process is the product (McLennan, 2004). Facility management needs to be further directly aligned to a managing discipline to allow it to distinguish itself as it expands within the management sector. Management aspect of an organisation may be management of internal resources and contractual agreement with outside consultants for outsource services (Onwuanyi & Oyetunji, 2016), support services may be the area of facility management in an organisation in which core service and taken care of within the organisation but support services are contracted out (Hsieh et al., 2019; Lai, (2011) opined that facility management can be evaluated through the service users. Facility management services are classified based on the function of the organisation. In case of local authorities facility management services it ensures functionality of the built environment and day to date economic activity (Rabe *et al.*, 2014). Facility management deals with complex problems that hindered the development processes in the local authority (Hashim et al., 2015; Williams et al., 2011).

Customer Satisfaction with Facility Management Services in Local Authorities

The position of local administration in Malaysian Federalism is the lowest levels of government hierarchy, which is mandated for the provision of social services in the local or grassroots level (Mohamed Osman *et al.*, 2012). Customer wants and needs are to be met before any project that of insignificant to the local communities, to enhance people’s standard of living is the real thing that motivated them to participated with local government in service delivery (Adeyemi, 2013; Mohamed Osman, Nazihah Jusoh, Bachok, & Izzaty Bakri, 2012). Local communities have this hope. They want local councils to spend time and resources for their lives improvement. Satisfaction for and from services render by local government as different dimension i.e. tangible and intangible (Amin & Isa, 2008; Ghobadian & Ashworth, 1994; Jahanshahi, Gashti, Mirdamadi, Nawaser, & Khaksar, 2011; Li et al., 2012; Rozilah Kasim, Musa Alkali Abubakar, Bala, 2011). Both the local communities and service providers were in need of mutual cooperation for smooth running of local affairs. Meanwhile, satisfaction has a relationship with quality Facility Management. Customer or customer loyalty is very important for any organizational achievement most especially public sector (Amin & Isa, 2008; Ghobadian & Ashworth, 1994). Facility management services are paramount in service delivery in the lowest organ of government in Malaysia (Amin & Isa, 2008; Ghobadian & Ashworth, 1994; Mohamed Osman et al., 2012). Thus, municipal council establishment is not merely for profit making from their customers. In an increasing competitive and liberalized global quality service provisioning, the competition to attract and retain local and tourist customers and customers is likely to increase. In the future, more foreign

players are likely to enter into Malaysian service provisioning, thereby pushing local council to innovate and compete more aggressively in developing products and services. Although, there is a difference between municipal council and local authorities, they are nonetheless competing in the same market in terms of offering complementary products and services (Oscar Nigro & Elizabeth González Císaro, 2014). By declining the standard of living of customers below a certain brink, the development of the community starts to slow down, even to undesirable levels. So, it is concluded that the fundamental objective of municipalities is not economic success, but the wellbeing and satisfaction of their inhabitants (Nigro, 2012; Róka-Madarász et al., 2016).

Determinant of Customer Satisfaction with Local Authorities Services

Customer satisfaction determines the level of activeness of local government couple with customer awareness of Facility Management. Creations of activities and expansion of same lead local council to better place for residents. Local government service delivery process goes beyond simple activities, determinants of the services are associated with the area and the people living within the local government (Weilenmann, Seidl, & Schulz, 2017). But potential determinants are carefully chosen and grounded on extensive literature review from four categories: economic, social, demographic, and natural (Zhang & Su, 2016). To expedite economic development cities are forced to make attractive for investors and creativities by investing in infrastructure, facilities and the development of attractive sites for new business enterprises (Dollery & Johnson, 2005; Fuller, Bennett, & Ramsden, 2004; Mohammadi, Norazizan, & Shahvandi, 2011). Furthermore, the recognized determinants vary with cosmopolitans but present some similarities. Economic growth, industrial development, and economic structural transformation are the key economic determinants. Population and labor growth, population urbanization, and population structure act as essential demographic determinants (Ramlan & Zahari, 2016; Rezai, Shamsudin, & Mohamed, 2016). Primary social determinants include infrastructure construction, energy consumption, and real estate development, while dominant natural determinants are the amount and topology of available land (Newell & McGreal, 2017). In many cases customer satisfaction appears to be bottle neck to local administrators' as they showcase their ability to generates cordial relation with the inhabitants. are contributing to fragmentation and segregation, they are socially exclusive and barely leave space for non-commercial activities (Pitchay Muthu @ Chelliah *et al.*, 2016). Drastic changes in society: fast urbanization, changes in the relation between the urban and the rural, globalization, economic changes and the need for more sustainable solutions for spatial problems the themes of the other sessions in the conference all lead to new urban forms or new forms of urbanism (Ghazali *et al.*, 2014). The determinants for customer satisfactions were government sincerity, municipal awareness, facilities maintenance and timeliness of service provisioning (Oscar Nigro & Elizabeth González Císaro, 2014) Self-esteem, Optimism and innovation are the determinant of municipal service delivery success from management point of view, and policy awareness and community participation are prime factors for municipal service satisfaction from local community point of view (Wong, Musa, & Taha, 2017).

Provisioning of Quality Facility Management Services

The provision of quality Facility Management Services and utility should be regarded in terms of satisfying the demand of the inhabitants and supporting the growth of the local communities as well as contribution to the affordability of the precise township (Nigro, 2012). Quality Facility Management services and need to be adequately provided in good state of quality, sufficient distribution, and be of highly quality that uses the latest technology (Osman, Bachok, & Rabe, 2015a). The provision of quality Facility Management Service should be coordinated with the hierarchical level and function of the area (Jalil, 2012). In municipality areas, the supply of utilities such as drainage system and public toilet should be of sophisticated standard to meet the requirements of value-added and best practices (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2012). More again, these facilities need to have an effective level of management and facilities maintenance with good back-up services to reduce interruption during service (Islam *et al.*, 2017).

For an efficient municipal service delivery, the main strategy is to widen its coverage and improve the quality

of service by ensuring the sustainability and cost efficiently of maintenance. Major Facility Management such as refuse collection, sewerage disposal, drainage, cleansing and sanitation of public places should be provisioned widely and be of high standard (Yahaya *et al.*, 2009). This will improve the lives of inhabitants as well as increase the attractiveness of the municipal area. For more proficient and effective management of domestic run-off, the existing sewerage system needs to be improved in addition to the construction of new facilities (Hisham, Kamaruddin, & Nordin, 2010). The participation of the local community for municipal service needs to be fortified to assist the local authority in administering and managing the municipal area. Effective service delivery is the key function of the local council, even though, Malaysian government have already allocates resources to local government for smooth running of government at lower levels (Winters, Karim, & Martawardaya, 2014).

Utilities and infrastructures needs to be of high standard and lives of inhabitants be enhanced by providing services at appropriate time (Makanyeza, Kwandayi, & Ikobe, 2013), people's needs and wants are supposed to be of great important to local council target for efficient service delivery (Agba *et al.*, 2013). The expediency for the existence of local government anywhere in the world stems from the need to facilitate development at the grassroots. Within this understanding, local governments were created in Nigeria as a third tier of government to ensure effective, measurable and efficient service delivery to rural communities (Kersting & Vetter, 2013). Some of the services expected from authority include housing, water, rural electricity, roads and transport, health facilities. Local governments are also required to bring about local economic development through the implementation of various initiatives (Osman *et al.*, 2015b). As a consequence, local government authorities have to be able to identify and target the neediest communities, have systems in place to track expenditures on projects and be able to determine if the allocation of resources has had an impact on the lives of local inhabitants (Lay Hong, Boon Cheong, & Syaiful Rizal, 2016; Othman, Zahari, & Radzi, 2013).

The purpose of the paper

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of quality Facility Management on customer's satisfaction in Malaysian municipal council. This research is important in line with the obvious cross-cultural and awareness differences among Customers' and the process of delivering Facility Management services.

Material and Methods

It is universal agreement that there are two methods of data collection; primary source and secondary sources of data. In the case of this research, secondary data collection was used to gathered information. It was known globally that textbooks, thesis, journal articles, newspapers, statutory and non-statutory documents comprise the secondary sources for data collection. It is not different with this research study; all sources of secondary data collection were consulted rigorously to obtain enough data. Content analysis was used to analysed the data at hand. Special consideration was given to recent research articles on the relevant studies such as study of (Bakar *et al.*, 2016; Kanniah, 2017; Lazim & Misni, 2016; Mapar *et al.*, 2017). These are some of literatures consulted for proper understanding of the research context.

Discussion of Results

The results obtained from this results shows that many municipal councils in Malaysia provide services at satisfactory level but improvement is needed to attained the level of overall satisfaction of the Customers. This is in agreement with the study of (Ibrahim, Omar, & Mohamad, 2015; Midin, Joseph, & Mohamed, 2017). The results indicated that more efforts by the municipal councils are puts in place to achieved desire needs of the populace (Ho *et al.*, 2013) but it is not in agree with (Sen Gupta, Chandrasekaran, & Ibrahim, 2001), this may be in connection with years of findings. However, recent development in service delivery in many municipal councils revealed that Customers' needs and wants are being taking care of as opined in (Gopal & Malek, 2015; Malik, Abdullah, & Manaf, 2015; Rabe, Osman, & Bachok, 2016). Apparently, Customers' needs and wants is keep on changing due to time and socio- cultural advancement which makes municipal councils

administrators faced different challenges (Abidin, Singaravello, & Zakaria, 2015; Jalil, 2012). These results oppose the assertions that finances are the main problems municipal councils in Malaysia were encountered with (Nair, Chiun, & Singh, 2014; Osman *et al.*, 2015a), but most countries of the world most especially developing countries were faced with financial crisis to discharged their statutory functions (Hamid, Hamali, & Abdullah, 2016). The results of this research also revealed that quality Facility Management have an effects on customer satisfaction as supported in (Bello *et al.*, 2017c).

Conclusion

This research study concludes that Facility Management services delivery in Malaysia are satisfactory. The study also shows that there is relationship between municipal service delivery and customer satisfaction. Municipal awareness also gives a sense of satisfaction of the Customers. The effects of quality Facility Management services on customer loyalty are enormous as indicated above. Generally, Customers are of the opinion that quality Facility Management services give them sense of belongings with their municipals administrators. The study also concludes that municipal awareness on the rights and obligation of the Customers to participates in service delivery.

Recommendation

The study recommends that there is needs for municipal councils to be strategies to makes the service delivery processes more robust for enhancing the lives of inhabitants and to foster good relationship between the management and local people in the area. The study also gives recommendation of enlighten the local communities on the important of community participation in provisioning and maintenance of public service delivery. The study also recommends that customers participation in terms of presenting their complaints should be enhanced to enable the local communities contributes toward development of their locality. Municipal council's administrators should establish public complain office where the customers should be lodging them with complains on the service delivery. The research also recommends that proper record of inspection of facilities provided should be taken.

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