15A_THE ENHANCEMENT OF TELECENTER SERVICE QUALITY.pdf

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The Enhancement of Telecenter Service Quality:

Based on "Perception-Expectation Gap"

Penyusun :

• Erna Setijaningrum

The Faculty of Social and Political Science
Universitas Airlangga

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to enhance the quality of Telecenter service. Telecenter is a place for society to get any kinds of information based on technology, which has been established by the Government of East Java Province. One of the Telecenter's activities is to give technology information training to society for free. Unfortunately, almost all of the Telecenter in East Java have not been developed, even some of them are out of business. Therefore, it needs efforts to increase the quality of Telecenter service based on "Perception-Expectation Gap" by analyzing the gap between the perception of the staffs toward the service which they give, and the expectation of the society toward the service which they need. This research used descriptive qualitative method. The result of this research shows that there are four gaps between the perception of the staffs and the expectation of the society toward Telecenter service such as Gap I (knowledge gap), Gap III (delivery gap), Gap IV (communication gap), and Gap V (service gap). From those four gaps, there are five service aspects which have to be fixed to increase the service quality such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

A. INTRODUCTION

Digital and information discrepancy is an international issue in the forum of the World Summit on the Information Society of United Nations (UN) in 2003 in Geneva and in 2005 in Tunis. This conference set various flagship programs including the provision of telecommunications and internet infrastructure to connect villages and efforts to actualize information and communication technology literacy of half of the world's population.

In Indonesia, in 2003, UNDP with the National Development Planning Agency had a research entitled "Asia Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP)" about the use of information and communication technology for socio-economic development in Indonesia. In 2004, the study was continued with the title "Prepatory Assistance for ICTs for Human Development." The study recommends a range of strategies and projects Partnership

for e-Prosperity for the Poor (Pe-PP). Implementation of Pe-PP was the establishment of Telecenter in six provinces in Indonesia, including in East Java province.

East Java Provincial Government through the Department of Communications and Information Technology, in cooperation with the district/city governments facilitates the establishment of an information center called Telecenter. Telecenter is the computer facilities, internet network, supporting infrastructure to empower people through acquiring and disseminating information through information technology. The existence of Telecenter is expected to empower people through access to information such as market information, agriculture, trade, education, health, and others.

To facilitate society access to telecenter services, telecenter can be divided into several types:

1. Society-based telecenter; this type of telecenter is established and supported by the society.
2. School-based telecenter; this telecenter is located at the school and can be used as a computer lab as well as the local society use after school hours.
3. Health center-based telecenter; health center has a vital position to increase society's knowledge related to health.
4. Cooperative-based telecenter; this telecenter can provide information and communication services related to the development of the surrounding society business.
5. Post office-based telecenter; this telecenter can provide a variety of services in addition to financial transactions beside goods and letters delivery.
6. Library-based telecenter; an information service unit that was developed by information technology to support local learning needs.

Between 2005 and 2013, East Java had set up 40 telecenters which can be seen in the following table:

Table 1.
List of Telecenter in East Java

No	City	Telecenter Name	Established Year
1	Madiun	Muneng	2005
2	Lumajang	Semeru	
3	Tuban	Prameta	2006
4	Pamekasan	Global	
5	Situbondo	Pasir Putih	
6	Lamongan	Sunan Drajat	
7	Pacitan	Rumpintek	2007
8	Malang	Sakti	
9	Bondowoso	Mandiri	
10	Tulungagung	Planet	
11	Pasuruan	Agrotech	2008
12	Probolinggo	Bromo	
13	Bojonegoro	Angling Darmo	
14	Blitar	Bumi Penataran	
15	Sumenep	Bekisar Link	2009
16	Banyuwangi	Asriloka	
17	Kediri	Jayati	
18	Trenggalek	Hybrid	
19	Malang	Daragati	
20	Tuban	Meteor	
21	Bangkalan	Kraton	2010
22	Nganjuk	Tanjunganom Jaya	
23	Ngawi	Kertonegoro	
24	Magetan	Wisnu Murti	
25	Probolinggo	Banger	
26	Kediri	Bumi Kediri	2011
27	Kota Batu	Karunia Telecenter	
28	Malang	Lentera Buana	
29	Mojokerto	Mojopahit	
30	Ponorogo	Warok	
31	Surabaya	Ampel	
32	Sampang	Trunojoyo	2012
33	Gresik	Joko Samudro	
34	Sidoarjo	Jenggolo	
35	Jombang	Jombang	
36	Blitar	Bung Karno	
37	Madiun	Madumongso	
38	Pasuruan	Suropati	
39	Sumenep	Joko Tole	2013
40	Jember	Ajung Jember	

Source: Department of Communication and Informatics

Services provided by Telecenter are to provide information technology facilities so that the society can access all the necessary information. The establishment of telecenters is a program of local society development using information and communication technology which aims to:

1. Empowering communities with easy access to basic information such as information on market, agriculture, trade, education, health and others
2. Improving the ability of the society in terms of access to information technology through training
3. Encouraging people to boost the local economy with society development activities through the utilization of information and communication technology
4. Developing cooperation with relevant parties to build local communities

A total of 40 telecenters had been established in East Java between 2005 and 2013. It appeared that there were only 3 telecenters which can develop well; it is the successful Agrotech telecenter with agro tourism. Malang was success to have a collaboration with the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) as well as a successful telecenter in Bromo which sold travel programs. Meanwhile, other telecenters do not develop properly, and even many telecenters are no longer active.

Characteristics and trends of the problems faced by each telecenter in East Java are almost similar. Common issues faced by telecenters actually rested on the management telecenter are less than optimal. Management of optimal telecenter will be highly dependent on infrastructure such as computers hardware with adequate internet facilities and human resources which managed the telecenters.

The number of telecenters which is not developed in East Java needs an effort to improve the quality of services so that empowering people through information technology can be realized. Efforts to improve the quality of services at the telecenter should be viewed from two sides, namely:

1. External sides/society as Telecenter service users. Expectations of society as telecenter service users should be considered to obtain information on the services desired by the society.
2. Internal sides/staffs of Telecenter as a service provider. Various perceptions of telecenter staffs in the implementation of quality services need to be identified to determine the services that have been implemented.

By looking at both sides of this comprehension, the effort to increase the quality of services at the telecenter will be summarized in all the interests both from the internal side of organization and external side of service users. After the identification of the people's expectations and perceptions of staffs on Telecenter service quality, it is necessary to do a gap analysis between the two in order to find a solution as an effort to improve the quality of Telecenter service. Hence, the questions posed in this study are: (1). what are the perceptions of staffs to Telecenter services? ; (2) what are the people's expectations of the service in Telecenter? ; (3) how is the service quality of "expectation-perception gap"-based Telecenter enhanced?

B. METHOD:

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. The selection of qualitative methods in this study will describe how, when, where the atmosphere of something was studied (Bruce L Berg, 2000). The research was conducted in three 3 telecenters namely (1) Sunan Ampel Telecenter in Surabaya (renamed as BLC telecenter Ampel); (2) Sunan Drajat Telecenter in Lamongan (renamed as the creative communication center); and (3) Daragati Telecenter in Malang. Data were collected through three ways, namely observation, interviews, and documentation (Robert, 2010). In this study, the criteria of degree in the data checking are done by triangulation techniques, namely by comparing the observed data with data from interviews, and by comparing the results of interviews with the content of related documents (Lexy J Moleong, 2008). In order to get organized and systematic analysis of qualitative data, the researcher made three flows of activities that must be followed, namely data reduction, data presentation, verification or conclusion (Miles and Huberman 1992).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before using a particular service, someone must have expectation related to what they will get from such a service. According to Hill (in Nia 2009), expectation is what consumers think should be served by the service provider. Expectation does not appear by itself or is not a prediction of what will be provided by the service provider. According to Olson and Dover (cited in Zeithaml, et al, 1993), the expectations of customers are the customer confidence before trying or buying concerned products. According to Horovitz (in Nia 2009), consumer expectations can be formed due to four factors:

1. Requirement; every consumer, who has a need, always expects that their needs will be met by the manufacturer as suppliers of goods and services. Thus, producers must know the needs of consumers that provide the best service so that consumers' expectations can be reached.
2. Mass Media; one of the promotional tools used by most or even the whole company to compete promotions to attract the attention of consumers by giving promises to consumers. The promises raise expectation in consumers.
3. Past experience; if a consumer never enjoyed a satisfactory service somewhere before, then when the consumer using the same service, it will make consumers expect the same service as they experienced.
4. Mouth to mouth; if consumers feel satisfied with the service received, they will recount their experiences to friends or relations so that they would use these services and hope to have an enjoyable experience as well.

Quality of service can be known when the assessment of several kinds of gaps is associated with customer expectations, perceptions of management, quality of service, provision of services, external communications, and what is perceived by customers. In detail, these gaps can be identified in the image below:

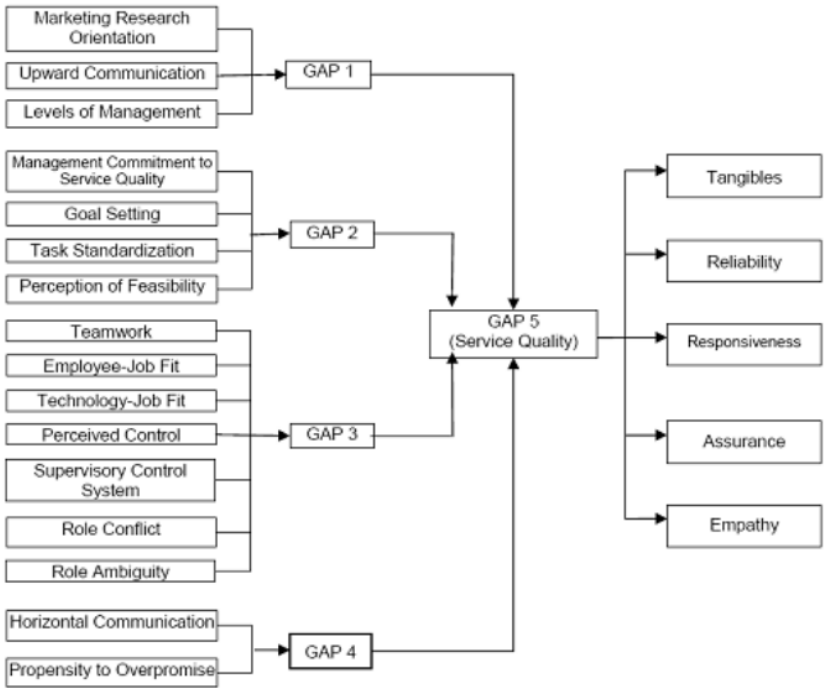
An assessment of the quality of service can be viewed from several different angles (Evans & Lindsay, 1997), in terms of:

1. Product Based, where quality of service is defined as a specific function with different measurement variables on the characteristics of its products.
2. User Based, where quality of service is the degree of conformity with the services desired by the customer.

3. Value Based, related to the usefulness or satisfaction overpriced.

In terms of assessment of service quality, Parasuraman et. al. (1985) defines service quality assessment as a global judgment or attitude associated with excellence (superiority) of a service. In other words, the assessment of the quality of service is the same as the general attitude of the individual and company performance. Further, he adds that the assessment of service quality is the extent and direction of the difference between perception and expectations of customers. The difference between perception and expectations that underlie the emergence of the concept of gap (perception-expectation gap) and is used as a basis of SERVQUAL scale, which is based on five dimensions of quality, namely:

Gambar 2
Model Kesenjangan dari Kualitas Pelayanan



Source: Delivering Quality Service, Zeithaml, et. al., (1990)

In service quality in the model (Servqual), an analysis of the gap 5 is as follows:

Gap I: the gap between the perception of the company and customer expectations (knowledge gap). To find out more about GAP I, three pieces of questions have been proposed to the instructor and the society, namely:

1. How do I determine the theme of training? Is it determined from the clerk or requests from the society?
2. What are the kinds of training in telecenters in accordance with the needs of the society?
3. Is there any kind of training which is actually much needed by society but not yet implemented at the telecenter? If yes, what kind of training is it? Are the problems encountered?

Gap II: Gap between perception of the company against the expectations of consumers and service quality specifications (standard gap). To find out more about the GAP II, two pieces of questions have been filed to the instructor and the society, namely:

1. What are the benefits for the society telecenter?
2. Has the training met the standard (there are props, module, instructors, facilities and supporting infrastructure)?

Gap III: Gap between service quality specifications and service delivery (delivery gap). To find out more about GAP III, four pieces of questions have been submitted to the instructor and the society, namely:

1. Is the existing technological equipment in telecenter sufficient? Is it still necessary to have additions? If so, what the addition is needed?
2. Are the activities/courses held in this telecenter (schedules, hours, instructors) in conformity with the wishes of the people?
3. Has the learning process been effective and efficient?
4. Are all the materials that could have been done planned?

Gap IV: Gap between service delivery and communications and external interaction (communications gap). To find out more about GAP IV, two pieces of questions have been filed to the instructor and the society, namely:

1. Is there any difficulty in communicating between participants and instructors? (E.g. because the level of society education, age, economic level, etc.)
2. Has telecenter socialization been prevalent in all communities?

Gap V: Gap between perceived service and expected services (service gap). To find out more about GAP V, two pieces of questions have been filed to the instructor and the society, namely:

1. What are the perceptions of the training within the Telecenter?
2. Is training in Telecenter as expected?

Table V. 10
Staff's Perception and Society Expectation: GAP 1 – GAP IV

No.	GAP Question	Staff Perception			Society Expectation		
		BLC Ampel Telecenter Surabaya	Creative Communication Center Lam-ongan	Daragati Telecenter, Malang	BLC Ampel Telecenter Surabaya	Creative Communication Center Lam-ongan	Daragati Telecenter, Malang
GAP 1 (*knowledge gap*)							
1	How to determine the theme of training	Determined by staffs	Determined by staffs by having a discussion with the partici-pants	Determined by staffs	Determined by society	Determined by staffs by having a discussion with the partici-pants	Determined by staffs
2	Types of training in telecenter has been suitable with the society needs	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable to participants' needs	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable to participants' needs
3	There are some types of train-ing which actually are needed by society, but it hasn't been done in telecenter	It still needs internship train-ing and internet continuity	It still needs online marketing	It still needs online marketing training, espe-cially for UKM participants	No need addi-tional training	It still needs online marketing	It still needs online marketing training, espe-cially for UKM participants
GAP II (*standard gap*)							
1	The function of telecenter to society	To know more about technolo-gy and develop theirselves	For UKM, to develop their business through the use of information technology	To develop theirselves in accordance with their profession	To use the information technology and apply it	For UKM, to develop their business through the use of information technology	To use the technology for developing them in accordance with their needs
2	The given training has fulfilled the standard (there are props, modules, instructors, support-ing facilities and infrastructure)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GAP III (*delivery gap*)							
1	Technological equipments in telecenter are suffice	inadequate	suffice	suffice	inadequate	suffice	suffice
2	The activities / courses which are conducted in telecenter (schedules, times, instructors) in accordance with the wishes of society	in accordance with the wishes of society	In accordance with the schedules of participants	The schedules adjusted to the spare time of society	The schedule is set up, but society can freely join the class which in accordance with their spare time	In accordance with the schedules of participants	The schedules adjusted to the spare time of society
3	Teaching and learning process have been effective and efficient	Effective and efficient	Effective and efficient	Effective and efficient	Effective and efficient	Still less effec-tive and efficient because the participants cannot come at the same time	Haven't effective yet because the participants are not discipline, and often come late
4	All planned materials have been conducted	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GAP IV (*communications gap*)							
1	There is a problem in commu-nication between participants and instructors	There is no problem in com-munication	There is no problem in com-munication	There is no problem in com-munication	There is no problem in com-munication	There is no problem in com-munication	Still needs to be communicated well so that the participants can be more disciplineand come on time
2	Socialization which is con-ducted by telecenter has been uneven in society	Socialization has been un-even in society	Socialization has been un-even in society	Socialization has been un-even in society	Socialization hasn't been uneven yet, there are people who don't know about it because of the location	Socialization has been un-even in society	Socialization has been un-even in society

GAP V (*service gap*)							
1	Perception to the training in telecenter	Society can use their skill after conducting the training to open the new business opportunity, looking for alternative business, and increasing income	Society can be skillful to conduct information technology in accordance with their interests	Society has applied information technology	Society has got knowledge about information technology/ internet, but they cannot apply it	Society cannot used it to develop and look for new alternative business	Society has not applied the training yet
2	Expectation toward the training in telecenter	As society's expectation	As society's expectation	As society's expectation	open new business opportunity, and increase profit	Can develop d look for new business opportunity and increase profit	n open new business opportunity, and increase profit

The table shows that the gap between perception and expectations of the society staff in the service of telecenters is as follows:

a. BLC Ampel Telecenter (Surabaya):
   - Gap I (Knowledge gap): there are two kinds of gap between the perceptions of the staffs with the expectations of society. Staffs consider that the theme of the training is determined by the staff to conduct the entrance test prior to placement level balance, but the society expects that the theme of training should be determined by the society. Meanwhile, the second gap is the staffs stating that they needed training in the form of internships and advanced internet, but people expect no online marketing training to create a website, and assistance as a follow-up training.
   - Gap IV (communication gap): there is still a wide gap between the perception of staffs and society expectations. Staffs consider that socialization was implemented equitably to all communities, but the people expect that socialization is still to be done again to the entire society, especially the remote location of the village because there are many people who do not know the whereabouts of telecenters.
   - Gap V (service gap): there are still 2 gaps between perception of the staffs and society expectations. First, consider that the staff can use his ability after training to open up new business opportunities, look for alternative businesses, and increase income, but in reality it has not been realized. Second, people assume that the training is provided in accordance with the expectations of society, but it is still not in accordance with the expectations of the people who want to open a new business and increase profits.

b. Creative Communication Center (Lamongan)
   - Gap III (delivery gap): there is still a wide gap between the perception of one staff and society expectations. Staffs consider that the training has been carried out effectively and efficiently, but people expect to be effective and efficient because all of this is still less due to the presence of participants which are not coincide.
   - Gap V (service gap): there are still 2 gaps between perception staffs and society expectations. First, staffs consider that the people can proficiently perform information technology in accordance with their interests, but in reality it has not been realized. Second, the staff considers that the training is provided in accordance with the expectations of society, but it is still not in accordance with the expectations of the people who want to open a new business and increase profits.

c. Daragati Telecenter (Malang)
   - Gap III (delivery gap): there is a wide gap between perception and expectations of society. Staffs consider that the implementation of the training was effective and efficient, but the people considered it not effective and efficient because of the lack of discipline of participants who often arrive late.
   - Gap IV (communication gap): there is a wide gap between perception and expectations of society. Staffs consider that the communication has been running smoothly with no problems, but the society expects that the communication is intensified in respect of discipline of participants.
   - Gap V (service gap): there are still 2 gaps between perception of the staffs and society expectations. First, the staff considers that the society is able to apply the information technology, but in fact it has not been realized. Second, the staff considers that the training is provided in accordance with the expectations of society, but it is still not in accordance with the expectations of the people who want to open a new business and increase profits.

Parasuraman (in Ratminto 2010) suggested five principles of society service so that service quality can be achieved, namely:

1. Direct evidence (tangibles); including physical fa-

cilities, equipment and means of communication of employees
2. Reliability; namely the ability to provide the promised service immediately, accurately, and satisfactorily
3. Responsiveness; namely the desire of the staffs to help customers and provide service with response
4. Warranty (assurance); including knowledge, skills, politeness, and trustworthy owned by the staffs, free from danger, risk or hesitation
5. Empathy; including ease of doing any type of relationship, personal attention, and understand the needs of customers (Pasuraman in Tjiptono, 1996).

To improve the quality of Telecenter service, harmonization between perception telecenter staffs to the expectations of society with the services is neessary to receive the five aspects of service quality. In general, it can be illustrated as follows:

1. To overcome Gap I (Knowledge gap): requiring poll to the society about the types of information technology training they want, according to their needs. In addition, after the society has finished the training, it requires poll back to follow up the next activity. Aspects of service which need to be improved are the responsiveness, assurance, and empathy
2. To resolve Gap III (delivery gap): requiring the rescheduling of training (days and hours of training), as well as the necessary society commitment to the training schedule. The aspect of service which needs to be improved is the responsiveness
3. To overcome Gap IV (communication gap): requiring a much more extensive outreach to the society. The aspect of service which needs to be improved is the responsiveness
4. To overcome Gap V (service gap): evaluation is needed to monitor the benefits of training as a follow-up activity such as mentoring or provision of special materials according to the needs of participant. Aspects of service which need to be improved are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy

D. CONCLUSION

To improve the quality of service, Telecenter is necessary to increase the five aspects of service consisting of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy to overcome the gaps (Gap I, Gap III, Gap IV, and Gap V) occuring between the perception of officials and people's expectations of the service of telecenters. In the future, the researcher should always do a survey to the society on a regular basis to get feedback about their expectations for the services they receive as an evaluation to always improve the quality of service of Telecenter.

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