



# TENANTS' COMPLAINT HANDLINGS SYSTEM TOWARDS THE PERFORMANCE OF SHOPPING MALL FACILITIES

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## **Abstract:**

Malaysia has been experience the increasing number of shopping mall which lead towards the focuses on facilities management. Property manager use complaint as a benchmark to enhance their product and quality of service towards the shopping mall facilities. Thus, complaint handling system play an important role to improve and review the performance of an organization. However, the inability of property manager and ineffective quality service delivery to deal with customer complaint give tenant bad perception to the property manager. The purpose of this study is to provide insight of complaint handling system related to the performance of shopping mall facilities. This study uses mixed method which comprises quantitative and qualitative method by distributing questionnaires to the tenants and conducting interview with expertise. Management reacts positively towards the complaint system where they agreed that all the essential component is being implemented while tenants responded the opposite way regarding the quality service performance of the facilities.

## **Keywords:**

Complaint handling; Tenant; Perfomance; Facilities

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Long term success of a business can be determined based on how a company handle the complaints (Roberts-Lombard, 2011). Effective complaint handling is important to a quality service. Although complaints seen as bad review to management, it helps detect errors and improve the quality and delivery of services (Schrank, 2011). The main issue here is professionalism where management has slow response time service to attend the complaint. Due to increasing number of shopping mall, there will have a high demand to increase facilities management service performance because tenants play an important role evaluating performance of FM services. Tenants nowadays are increasingly concern of their rights and demand for the best quality service. Besides, AEON in their 2017 annual report also recorded the number of complaint showed an increment of 23% compared to 2016. AEON will stand to lose and consequently management has to take this matter seriously by taking appropriate action to overcome this problem. Hence, the objectives of this study are to identify the essential components of complaint system, to find out tenant perception towards performance of shopping mall facilities and to validate and generalise the scope of complaint handling system in relation to shopping mall facilities

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

During the Seventh Malaysian Plan (1996-2000), Malaysia was introduced to facility management as the demand for maintenance contractor increase tremendously. This is due to the development and completion of mega projects such as KLIA and National Sports Complex Bukit Jalil in 1998. Organizations has started to promote the need for facilities management as part of their business needs (Syed Abdul Haris bin Syed Mustapa, 2008). BOVAEA defines facilities Management (FM) as to support and improve its primary activities by combining the processes of an organization. Over the years, shopping centre has experience a confusing identities with variety of names such as malls, markets, marts, mega-malls, outlets, shops, strips, villages etc.(Michael Pitt, 2008). The maturity of the industry has made variety types of centres go beyond the standard definitions. Shopping mall can be defined as a large building consists of many shop lots, restaurant and sometimes a cinema. It is a retail concept where there are many sub-retailers within one roof. The definition for hypermarket is also being used for supermarket and shopping mall by some researchers. Nowadays, hypermarkets could be considered as a modern retailing format that provides everything under one roof within a store of more

than 2,500 square meters to over 8,000 square meters which includes a free and large parking (Hassan, Rahman, & Sade, 2013). In a shopping mall, complaint is one of the tool for management to monitor performance. Complaints is an expression of frustration to the organization in relation to its products and services, or dissatisfaction on how the complaint is handled while complaint management is the process of how organizations report consumers' complaints by handling, managing and responding to complaints. Complaints handling is a key driver of tenants' perceptions of excellent or poor service (Stone, 2011). According to Noor and Pitt (2008), scope of work facility manager includes complaint handling which it becomes the responsibilities of facility manager. Hui, Zhang, and Zheng (2013) also stated that facility manager shall respond quickly to tenants' request and handle complaints in an effective way. Complaint system were identified through the components of commitment, facilitation, resourcing, learning and guidance (Lines, 2016).

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

Researcher has chosen hypermarket AEON Big Kuala Lumpur located at Section 5, Wangsa Maju. AEON Big Wangsa Maju or previously known as Carrefour was erected in October 1997. Researcher used AEON Big as case study because this hypermarket meet the criteria of shopping mall in terms of its size, concept and definition. Secondly, AEON has been serving the community with low price product since 1997 in Wangsa Maju until now. In the process of data collection, researcher collected the data using primary and secondary data. In primary data, researcher adopted mixed method where quantitative and qualitative were applied. In quantitative method, researcher used questionnaire to distribute to tenants non-randomly and management team.

Sources of literature review is used to design the questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into Part A and Part B. The population size consisted of 267 lots comprising 162 permanent tenants and 105 non-permanent tenants as well as population size from management team which is 50 staffs. Researcher distributed the set of questionnaires to permanent tenants. Of all 162 tenants, researcher targeted 120 lots as respondents but researcher only getting back 85 set of questionnaire from the tenants whereby it represented 71% from the targeted tenants. Meanwhile, 30 sets of questionnaire were distributed to 30 staffs from management. Researcher also conducted interview (qualitative method) with property managers to gain in-depth discussion regarding the relationship between complaint handling system and performance of shopping mall facilities. Meanwhile in secondary data collection, researcher used journals, books, and thesis, article and internet sources to gather all the relevant data.

### 4.0 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The data for Objective 1 and Objective 2 was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis to compute the accumulated data from the questionnaires while for Objective 3 was analysed using content analysis.

Table 1: Objective 1 (Essential components of complaint handling system towards shopping mall facilities)

Essential components of complaint handling system	Mean
Commitment	4.86
Facilitation	4.82
Resources	4.80
Learning	4.87
Guidance	5.00

Table 2: Objective 2 (Tenants perception towards performance of shopping mall facilities)

Tenants perception towards performance of shopping mall facilities	Mean	Relative Index	Rank
Ventilation system	4.74	0.9482	1
Supply of electricity	4.48	0.8965	2
Air-conditioning system	4.29	0.8588	3
Adequacy of lighting	3.82	0.7647	4
Cleanliness of walkway	3.68	0.7365	5
Security service	3.53	0.7059	6
Elevator and travelator	3.46	0.6918	7
Parking space	3.33	0.6659	8
Environment, health and safety	3.46	0.6612	9

Waste disposal	2.78	0.5553	10
Cleanliness and facilities of washroom	2.60	0.5200	11

Table 3: Objective 3 (To validate and generalise the scope of complaint handling system in relation to shopping mall facilities)

Validation and generalisation of scope of complaint	Details
Cost	Inadequate budget, investigate the purpose of cost needed,
Decision from upper management	Final decision must come from HQ and takes time to get approval from HQ
Attitude and behaviour	Vandalism caused by users' attitude and behaviour

Table 1 above shows that all the essential components of tenants' complaint handling is being adopted by management as the results derived from management perception showed that the mean value were higher. Meanwhile for Table 2, all of the above facilities, cleanliness and facilities of washroom and waste disposal shows its position at lowest rank which means the perception of tenants towards such facility is quite low. All respondents have excellence and intermediate satisfaction towards the other facilities which reflected property manager was maintained the facilities well.

This analysis has shown that complaint handling by management does helps to improve the condition of facilities to reach the satisfaction of tenants. However, it does not really work to certain facilities especially to the lowest rank facilities even though the management has identified the all elements were used in complaint. Therefore, Table 3 shows the result with property managers during the interview. He already put the effort to solve the problems by responding to the complaints but it is all depends to the decision and order of AEON headquarter (HQ). In relation to that, time constraint also have been one of the obstacles to resolve the problem such as time taken to get approval from HQ, time taken to wait for the contractors to come and cost consideration decided by HQ to carry out the maintenance activity. Last but not least, the attitude and behavior of people using the facilities itself. For instance, they vandalize the door lock and door hinge, damage the toilet fittings and not using the sanitary pad disposal bin properly.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The findings from this study highlight several positive contributions towards shopping mall manager by keeping the facilities in good state of condition. Property manager should not take complaints as a weakness but make them as a room for improvement for better facilities to the tenants. Comprehensive complaint handling system is significance to monitor the performance of facilities and determine the quality service of facilities in a building. Based on the findings, this study would recommend to change and improve the current approach of complaint management system due to these changing times. It is still relevant having this system implemented but due to the attitude and behavior of people using facilities nowadays, the approach on this complaint management system must be proactive to suit with current behavior of people. This study also would suggest to identify key problems of shopping mall facilities by conducting strategic maintenance such as cleanliness of washroom and waste disposal in order to retain and serve better quality service to tenants. Further research is suggested to study the tenants' complaint handling system towards the performance of shopping mall facilities in different types of shopping complex.

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