e-Aduan: A Solution to Improve the Quality of Services in UiTM Pahang on Management Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Feedback from customers is an effective method to identify the quality of services and facilities provided by a university. The effectiveness of making respond to customers' feedback also depends on an effective workflow. By having an effective method and workflow, the action from the management to improve the quality of services and facilities can be done immediately and effectively. To fulfill this purpose the researchers have developed an online system called e-Aduan. e-Aduan is a platform for the customers to complaint and comment on the services and facilities provided by university. Through e-Aduan the complaints can be retrieved immediately by the management. Through this platform the researchers have also identified workflow procedures to be followed by the management to address customers' complaints and comments. Customers also have an opportunity to view the status of each of their complaints and comments. This new scenario produces good impact to both customers and management; customers now have a platform to communicate their dissatisfaction and the management will be able to act immediately upon any customers' feedback. Researchers believe e-Aduan and the effective workflow can be applied to other sector nationally and internationally. The strength of this research is on the combination of the effective method (e-Aduan) and effective workflow.

Keywords: *comments, complaints, e-Aduan, quality services*

Introduction

The services and facilities available at a university are the determining factors in identifying its level of quality. UiTM Pahang management and staff always try to improve their quality of services and facilities to make sure their customers are satisfied. Customers have the right to complain or give comments on the services and facilities provided by university (Hande et al., 2008). Normally the customers will make their complaints directly to the university. Unfortunately, in most of cases customers face difficulties to channel their complaints and comments to the right party, resulting them in complaining to the media such as television and newspapers. This actually gives a negative impact to the university's reputation. Besides that, the customers also have difficulties in knowing the status of their complaints. For the university, the weaknesses of the complaint management process hamper them from taking immediate actions against any complaints forwarded. They also have difficulties in compiling the information regarding customers' dissatisfaction that can be used to improve their services and facilities. This study is undertaken to improve the current complaint management to benefit the university. The researchers have proposed the implementation of e-Aduan, an online system to channel complaints and comments to the university. For a start the researchers have identified a new complaint management process which includes a work flow process and a method. The method

complaints and comments to the university. For a start the researchers have identified a new complaint management process which includes a work flow process and a method. The method is a platform for the complaint management process and the working flow process that needs to be combined with the method.

What Is e-Aduan System?

e-Aduan is a web-based system developed as a platform for UiTM Pahang's customers to make complaint and comment on the services and facilities provided by the university. Customers here would comprise of students, parents, staff and any parties who deal with UiTM Pahang. The owner of e-Aduan system is 'Unit Korporat' and the users include:

a) Bahagian Pengurusan Fasiliti
b) Hal Ehwal Pelajar
c) Hal Ehwal Akademik
d) Pentadbiran
e) Unit Pentadbiran Kolej
f) Perpustakaan
g) Bendahari
h) Unit Kesihatan
i) Unit Perkhidmatan Teknologi Maklumat
j) Unit Keselamatan

e-Aduan can be accessed through the web by using web browser such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Netscape. The accessibility is not limited to UiTM Pahang network but it can also be accessed from anywhere in the Internet. e-Aduan consists of the interface for complaint and comment and a reporting tool for management usage. The interface for complaint and comment is for customers to complaint or to give comment on the services and facilities provided by the university. Customers can also view the status of the complaints through e-Aduan. With this feature the customers also can check on the action taken by the university. This feature has already solved issues customers complaints through telephone, letter or media and however, they have difficulties to follow up the status (Hande et al., 2008).

The reporting tool is another component of e-Aduan. Compiling and reporting data are very important for any organization, government or private sectors because through the data they will be able to retrieve valuable information to be used to make good decision or action. In this case, based on the reports, the university can proceed with proper action to handle the complaints and comments from the customers. The reports that available in e-Aduan can be retrieved based on a few of categories depending on the management requirement. The report categories are:

a) Full reports based on current date
b) Reports based on date
c) Reports based on department and unit
d) Reports based on categories of complaints
e) Reports based on type on complaints
f) Reports based on complaints status

The development of e-Aduan is not only depending on how the system works. It also depends on the working flow process that is being identified and needs to be implemented and

followed by the management. e-Aduan is a method, platform or tool to ensure that the complaint process is addressed properly by the management. The important factor that makes sure the success of the complaint process is the working flow process. Figure 1 shows the working flow process of e-Aduan.

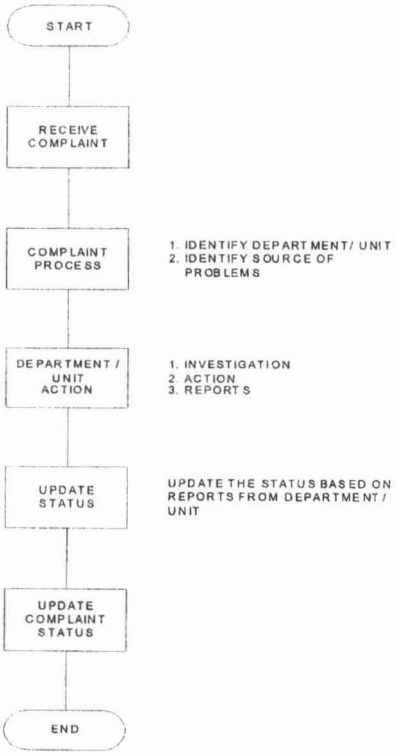

Figure 1: Working flow process e-Aduan system

Referring to Figure 1, there are five main processes that are identified. The first process is 'Receive Complaint' where the complaints will be retrieved from e-Aduan. The second process is 'Complaint Process'. In this process the complaints will be identified based on the source of the problem and the department or unit responsible to handle the complaints. The next process is 'Department / Unit Action' where those departments and units that responsible for the complaints will handle the complaints by investigating, taking action and reporting. After the departments and units execute their duties, they need to report the result to 'Unit Korporat'. In the final process 'Unit Korporat' will update the complaints status in e-Aduan based on the report from the departments and units.

With the explanation on the working flow process of e-Aduan, the next step is the design of e-Aduan system. The diagrams below show the data flow diagram of e-Aduan system where Figure 2 shows the context diagram of e-Aduan while Figure 3 shows the diagram 'O' of e-Aduan system.

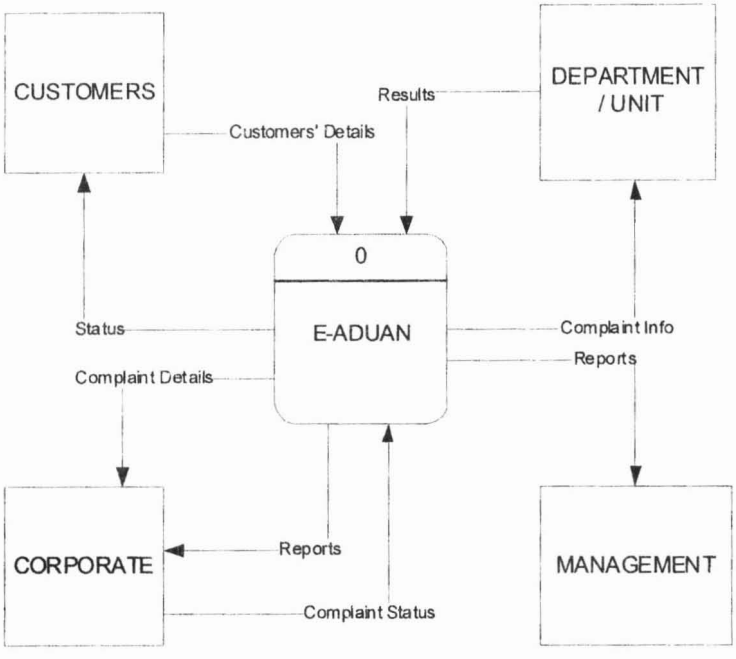

Figure 2: Data flow diagram e-Aduan system (context diagram)

Based on Figure 2, there are four external entities that are involved in e-Aduan system. The external entities are 'Customers', 'Department / Unit', 'Corporate' and 'Management'. The detailed process of e-Aduan system can be seen in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows two main processes and one data store that exist in e-Aduan system. The processes are 'Manage Complaint' and 'Produce Report'. The data store is 'Complaint' where all data that are retrieved for e-Aduan are kept in this data store. e-Aduan will produce information by processing the data in the data store. Both diagrams are showing the boundaries or scopes of the system and the information used in the system (Kendall & Kendall, 2008). With this it will be a guideline to the researchers while developing the e-Aduan system. This will also make sure the development process is not exceeding from the system scopes.

Based on the working flow process and the system design, e-Aduan system can be used effectively by the management in improving their services and facilities. The management can also immediately identify the complaints and comments from the customers and take an immediate action to handle the complaints. With this, the existing problems and issues that are faced by the management can be solved and thus increase the quality of services of the university.

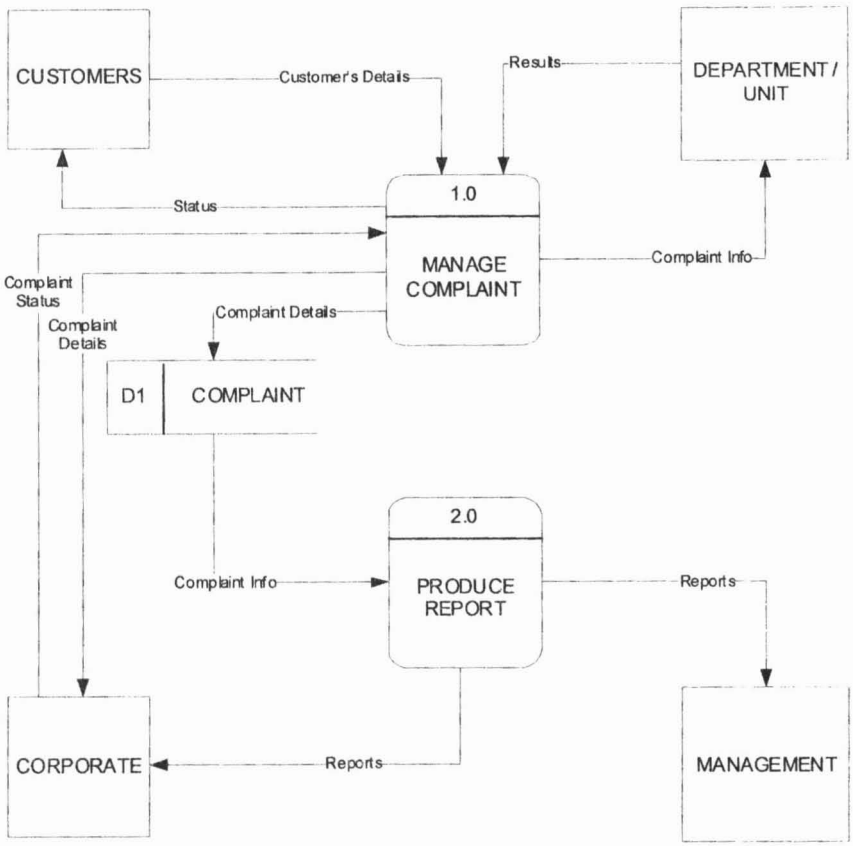

Figure 3: Diagram 'O' e-Aduan system.

Administration of the Current Process and Issues

UiTM Pahang staff and management are always looking for better solution to improve their services and facilities for the customers especially the students. Previously, complaints and comments from the customers are handled manually by using a complaint form and book. The complaints are handled individually by the departments and units. Each of the complaint form and book has different format depending on the departments and units. With this conventional method customers need to make complaints or comments directly to the departments and units that are responsible for the complaints. This exercise requires the customers to learn and understand the process of complaints in the university. Due to this constraint sometime the customers will complaint through the media such as television and newspapers. This gives negative impact and bad reputation to the university. Besides that, once the customers have complained to the wrong departments or units, the responsible departments or units have difficulties to handle the complaints. Through observation and study done, the researchers have identified four major issues that can be concluded in related to the current complaint

management. The issues are:

a) The accessibility of the complaints service
b) The quality of the investigations
c) The quality of responses
d) How well trusts learn from complaints and use this information to bring about improvements to services and facilities (Jane & Sandy, 2008)

Next, the customers also need to identify the department and unit that should be responsible to handle their complaints. If they are unable to do this, there would be possibilities that their complaints might not be addressed at all. This will eventually frustrate the customers and force them to use other platform such as television and newspapers which they learn as a more effective channel to direct the university's attention to their dissatisfaction.

The weakness of the complaint management also affects the quality of investigations on the complaints. Departments and units cannot carry out proper investigations if they receive complaints that are not under their responsibility. The delay of receiving the complaints also affects the quality of investigations. This will definitely affect the quality of response towards the customers. Responses that are inaccurate and do not meet customers' satisfaction will affect university's reputation as a whole.

Besides that, from the observation the researchers have identified that the university staff and management has not utilized the information they received from the customers' feedback to improve the quality of services and facilities. It was also observed that customers have repeatedly revised the same issues which indicate that appropriate action have not been taken to address those issues.

Benefits of Implementing e-Aduan

The benefits discuss here are related to the issues highlighted in previous section. The implementation of e-Aduan will solve all issues identified and will improve the complaint management for UiTM Pahang. Once the e-Aduan system is used as the platform for the complaint management together with the working flow process, the researchers believe in a certain period of time UiTM Pahang can improve its quality of services and facilities. Benefits on implementing e-Aduan system can be divided to:

a) Improved services
b) Better performance
c) More information
d) Better controls
e) Reduce costs (Shelly, Cashman, & Rosenblatt, 2008)

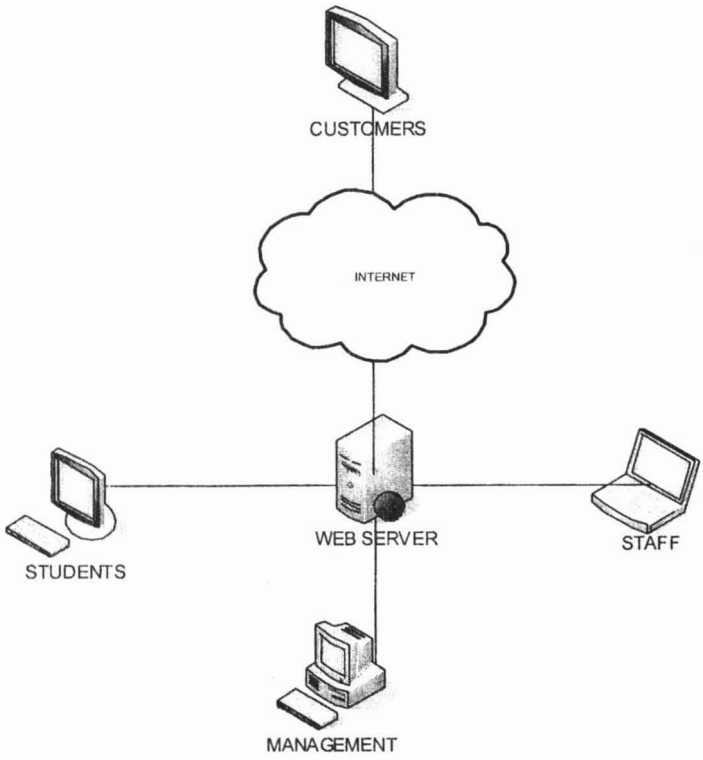

Figure 4: Client server concept for e-Aduan system

The implementation of e-Aduan system is based on client-server concept. Figure 4 shows e-Aduan system client-server concept. This concept is using centralized server to control all data and information of e-Aduan system. The clients of the server such as customers which include students, staff and the management can access e-Aduan once they have internet connection. Customers can access to make complaints and comments while the management can access e-Aduan system to retrieve the reports. The changes or modification on e-Aduan system will only involve the server. Once the server is updated the client will automatically get the latest version of interface and features.

The first benefit is related with the current manual process of complaint management. Previously, complaints and comments were made using forms or books. e-Aduan is a systematic system where all complaints and comments can be done online. Complaints will be centralized in the server and the responsible departments or units will be identified. Then the complaints will be accessed by the department or unit to handle the complaints.

The implementation of e-Aduan also gives better performance compared to the existing complaint management. By using e-Aduan the complaints can immediately retrieved. As explained earlier, e-Aduan uses client-server concept. Due to that, all complaints information is stored and centralized in one server. The maintenance can also be done easily and effectively. Once the server is updated the clients will get the latest features immediately when they are connected with the server.

A lot of information can be retrieved from e-Aduan system. The information is also more accurate compared to previous complaint management. This information is very useful for UiTM Pahang especially in increasing the quality of services and facilities provided by university. e-Aduan system also provides various types of reports depending on the management requirement. Each department or unit can view and retrieve related reports immediately for their usage. It also helps them in solving all complaints more effectively. Even the customers get the benefit from e-Aduan system where they can view the status of their complaints. Besides that, all the information will be stored in the server and can be retrieved anytime when they are needed.

e-Aduan system has stronger controls especially for the management usage. The reports produced by the system are only be accessed by authorized department, unit or management personnel. Each department, unit or management personnel will be given authentication access code, which only permits them to access information intended for their departments and units. In other words they will not be able to gain access to information intended for other departments and units. The privilege to access all the information in the system will only be given to top management personnel.

The last benefit that is being identified through this research is the cost. Implementing e-Aduan system will reduce complaint management cost. This is an online system, thus it is paperless. Previously complaint management process was being done manually. Complaints and comments need to be done through forms and books. With this, the university staff and management do not need to print forms or prepare books for customers to make complaints or comments. Besides that, e-Aduan system is also reducing time in producing reports, receiving complaints and comments from customers and handling complaints and comments.

Management Preparation On Implementing e-Aduan System

Implementation of a new system in an organization is not an easy process. The development team should prepare the planning from the beginning phase of the development process. Besides that, the most important thing is the support and co-operation from the management. Without management support any planning will face difficulties from the beginning of the process. Implementation of e-Aduan system needs a preparation on four main issues. The issues are:

a) Management support and co-operation (Razulaimi Razali et al., 2006)
b) Preparation on resources (Razulaimi Razali et al., 2006)
c) Staff awareness
d) Rules and policies (Razulaimi Razali et al., 2006)

The first and most important factor is the management support and co-operation. As mentioned earlier, without their support the implementation process will fail. This will also be an indicator that the project is not approved by the management. Therefore, once the management has given full support and commitment from the initial stage of the project, it will be executed and implemented without much constraint.

The second issue is the preparation of the resources. Resources here refer to hardware, software and technical staff. Again, the management plays an important role, in approving the budget for hardware, software and provision for technical personnel to be in charge of the system. These resources need to be identified at the early stage to ensure the development and implementation process run smoothly.

The implementation of the system has to be announced by the management to the staff and customers. This is very important to raise the awareness on the existence of the new system. This step will also prepare the staff to accept and be familiar with the system.

The last issue is related to the rules and policies. Normally, a new system implementation will involve the setting up of rules and policies which can support the system. These rules and policies can ensure not only the success of the implementation of the system but also provide the clients with clear guideline regarding the existence and usage of the system in the university.

Conclusion

The researchers have highlighted how the system works, who are the entities relevant to the system, the benefits of the system, and preparation of the management for implementing the system. This paper provides an overview of e-Aduan system and its functions. The implementation of e-Aduan will improve UiTM Pahang complaint management system thus easing all departments and units in managing and reacting to complaints and comments made by customers. More importantly the system will enable accurate and efficient access to information regarding customers' complaints and comments. The information can be stored more systematically and can be retrieved at all times. Development and implementation of this system will also give an opportunity to the researchers to improve skills and knowledge.

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