



**THE SERVICE QUALITY AT COLLECTION
COUNTER IN SYARIKAT SESCO BERHAD, SIBU
SARAWAK**

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Abstract

This paper is prepared to identify the level of customers' satisfaction at the Collection Counter of Syarikat SESCO Berhad, Sibul. Then, analyze the data collected in order to come out with the specific results, such as level of current satisfaction and suggested recommendations for improvement. The results are useful to assist the management of the company to improve the areas which found to be weak and where necessary need to construct and develop the new areas for the better of the company.

The study suggested that the customers' perceptions and expectations play an important role in recognizing the level of service quality. In order to measure the current level of efficiency in collecting the electricity bills by the employees, the data was collected internally for one year period. Based on monthly average of collection from period of September 2008 till August 2009, there were about 6,388 customers were served and about 5,996 customers @ 93.86% served within 1 – 15 minutes.

From the data collected, it was found that customers were highly satisfied with the services provided (represented about 83% from the respondents received) by the employees. The quality of service was scored higher on the responsiveness, service reliability, assurance and empathy with least scored on the tangible dimension (the surrounding environment of the collection counter).

From the feedbacks received, a lot of improvement shall be done at the collection counter, especially on the physical environment. It's also discovered that training is necessary for the employees to enhance their working skills and performance reward is important to motivate the employees to maintain and to improve on the necessary areas.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Background of Syarikat SESCO Berhad

The Sarawak Electricity Supply Corporation (SESCO) known as Electricity Supply Department was born in 1921 under the auspices of the Public Work Department period of the advent of modern technology and others.

The name of SESCO was acquired in 1932 after the ownership of the Electricity Department was taken over by the Sarawak Electricity Supply Company Limited. The Sarawak Government and the United Engineers Company Limited jointly owned the Company.

The expansion to Sibu started in 1934 with the approved allocation of \$1,250 for the extension of to the distribution system with the objective to provide supply to the prospective customers. The initial office was at Island Road (rented building), thereafter moved to Jalan Deshon in 1990 (own building). SESCO was firstly privatized in July 2005, soon after in July 2007, acquired by Sarawak Energy Berhad as a subsidiary.

Company Vision

To become a world class utility which is acknowledged as ;

- Excellence driven
- Result oriented
- Customer and community sensitive

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Service Quality

Service quality is one of the most researched topics in the area of service marketing. Service quality has been defined as the difference between customers' expectations for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received (Asubonteng et al., 1996). When performance does not meet expectations, quality is judged as low and when performance exceeds expectations, the evaluation of quality increases. Thus, in any evaluation of service quality, customers' expectations are keys to that evaluation. Moreover, Asubonteng et al., (1996) suggest that as service quality increases, satisfaction with the service and intentions to reuse the service increase.

Traditionally, service quality has been conceptualized as the difference between customer expectations regarding a service to be received and perceptions of the service being received (Grönroos, 2001; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In some earlier studies, service quality has been referred as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis & Mitchell, 1990; Dotchin & Oakland, 1994). It is also conceptualized as the consumer's overall impression of the relative inferiority or superiority of the services (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1990).

According to Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff (1978), service quality is a measure of how well the services (as received) match expectations (as preconceived). The notion of service quality involves more than the
