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Public Service Quality

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Abstract

The limited quality of public service given by PT. PLN District Soc as electricity supplier for people who live in Regency of Southern Timor Tengah arouses customer's dissatisfaction. The electricity's power outage or blackout will disturb and annoys customer's activities, because electric power is one of many basic necessities in our daily lives for cooking, lighting, as energy source for some electronic equipments, supporter for health services and lots more. The purpose of this research are: (1) How does the quality image of National Electricity Company services in Regency of Southern Timor Tengah. (2) What factors that constraint and support service quality of National Electricity Company in the Province of Southern Timor Tengah. This research is held at working area location of PT. PLN District Soc for three months started from January to March 2016. The method of this research is Descriptive Qualitative, with purposive sampling as its sample collection's technique. Data source was taken from primary and secondary data by using research instruments of questionnaire, interview, observation, and documentations. The result of analysis shown that the quality of its public service is less than satisfactory because of too many blackouts for compensating insufficient electric power. Slow responses in service occur because of insufficient manpower, many stealing of the electrical cable and electricity selling prize. As for supporting factor is physical facility. However, electricity is needed by our society, if there exists limited or poor quality in electricity services, the impact will make customer trust reduce to minimum level.

Keywords: Service Quality, Electricity

Introduction

Electricity is one of many basic necessities in our daily lives for cooking, lighting, energy source for some electronic equipment, supporter for health services and lots more. This is the reason of our dependency in electricity existence. It is absolute that electricity becomes energy source needed by human in every situation for supporting human activities. The human dependency to electricity happens because its flexibility, easy to transform into other shapes of energy for running many industrial equipments, households, and other appliances. As electricity supplier for Indonesia's society, our government then assigning PT. National Electricity Company or PT. PLN (Lid) as electricity supplier for our society, this decision is made with purpose to be arranged in a fair condition for mutual benefits to avoid monopoly action about this interest and hopefully makes the service deliver in maximum efforts.

As mention inside the Regulation of Indonesia's Republic No. 30 Year 2009 about Arrangement of Electricity Power stated that electric power has a very important and strategic roles for achieving national development goals, hence efforts in electrical power provider is in the hand of Indonesia's government. Its supply must be increase to align with development progress for assuring enough electrical power that will be equally spreading throughout Indonesia's territory with excellent quality. Any electrical development must have benefits and assuring those results (from its development) should be utilize as maximum as it can be for the prosperity and the welfare of Indonesia's society.

The position of PLN from marketing perspective is still considered to be *seller's market*, in which there is a monopoly aspect in market domination. Although their marketing activities may not be too rapid like other companies' marketing strategy, but PLN must also consider larger marketing expansion by giving excellent service such as being responsive to customer's complaints. PT. PLN as one of provider in public service should giving a maximum service to society because every PLN electricity user is expected to receive better service and have a guarantee about its continuity and its quality. However, at the service operation, it is unavoidable to have some administration mistakes or technical disturbances that occur many times.

The essence of service is a series of activities made for service processes that ongoing by simultaneously and regularly for every society's element. Whereas every human needs service in daily basis, or to be extreme, it can be said that service can not be separated from human life (Sinambela, 2014). One of the factors that determine customer satisfaction is customer's perception to service quality which focused on five dimensional service quality namely as physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Due to electricity blackout without notice or any warning makes bigger costs for buying other alternatives lights such as candles. Besides, many electronic types of equipment are damage because of this blackout. Many people also complain about some delayed jobs and loss because of electricity went out, one reason that makes business run in staggering walk

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The essence of service is a series of activities made for service processes that ongoing by simultaneously and regularly for every society's element. Whereas every human needs service in daily basis, or to be extreme, it can be said that service can not be separated from human life (Sinambela, 2014). One of the factors that determine customer satisfaction is customer's perception to service quality which focused on five dimensional service quality namely as physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Due to electricity blackout without notice or any warning makes bigger costs for buying other alternatives lights such as candles. Besides, many electronic types of equipment are damage because of this blackout. Many people also complain about some delayed jobs and loss because of electricity went out, one reason that makes business run in staggering walk

because electricity is their prominent assets.

To find out the quality of services that delivered by PLN District Soe, the researcher construct the problem of study as follows: 1. How is the image of service quality of National Electricity Company in the Regency of Southern Timor Tengah, 2. What factors that obstructs and supports the quality of service given by National Electricity Company in the Regency Southern Timor Tengah.

Review of Related Theories

National Electricity Company or abbreviated as PLN is one of State Owned Corporation that runs in electrical business field in Indonesia. This company is the only electricity company belongs to government which made PT. PLN (Ltd.) has monopoly right of any electricity selling throughout Indonesia's territory. It has duties as transmission manager, system operation and electrical power transactions with world class quality which able to convey expectations from stakeholder, and give great contribution in the improvement of society's welfare. Therefore PLN must able to give the best service to society from rural areas to megapolitan cities in Indonesia (PLN, 2014).

Quality is the adjustment movement to requirements or demands, or suitability for applications, ongoing improvement or perfectness, free from damage/flaws, fulfillment of customer's need from very beginning, and every time the customers ask, do every activity correctly from the start, and something that can satisfy the customer (Tjiptono, 2012). Quality is to keep the promise of giving a good service to make customers feel satisfied and beneficial. To increase quality is every employee's responsibilities within an organization. While (Tjiptono, et al, 2012) define quality with statement : "A suitable or appropriate quality that fitness for use under a definition that a product or services must be able to fulfill the expectation of users" .

A service in fundamental definition is a series of activities filled with service processes which do simultaneously at routine basis that covers entire human living in their social lives. Basically, every human needs service, where to the extreme point, can be said that services are inseparable to human lives (Sinambela, et al, 2014). While Moenir, 2010 gave a statement that service is an activity that done by individual or group of people with certain fundamental theories applied through system, procedures and special methods in order to make efforts in fulfilling other interests that align with their right. According to (Sinambela, et al 2014) a public service is defined as service giving (to serve) to other people need or interest or for society that have certain interests to the related organization, where service will be given according to the principal rules with method or established procedures that agreed by these parties. (Harbani, 2014) also giving the definition of public service as: every activity that conduct or do by government to certain people in which for every activity will brings benefit in collections of it or in a whole, and offers satisfactory result even the result physically will not be attach to certain product. While Harbani et al, 2014 said that a public service is "a service deliverance (to serve) for certain people or society who have interest in that particular organization according to the principal rules and established methods". From Government Regulation No.25 Year 2009 about Public Service, it said that the meaning of public service is: activity or series of activities held in order to fulfill or complete any services need according to the regulations, for every citizen and people, for belongings, services, and or, administrative services performed or provided by public service implementer.

According to Zeithaml, Berry and Pasuraman in (Kridawati, 2012) which have conducted some researches about several areas of services and manage to identify 5 characteristics of service dimensions which used by customers for evaluating the quality of services that they have accepted. These are: (1) *Reliability* as the ability in giving service at prompt, satisfy, and suitable as has been promised, (2) *Responsiveness* as the ability to help customer and willingness to serve customer in good manners, (3) *Assurance* as act that covers knowledge, decency and good manners that must be owned by personnel, free of any danger, risks, or hesitations about their jobs.(4) *Empathy* as their care to *give* attentions as individual for their customers, understanding the customer's need also easy to call or contact (5) *Tangibles* (direct evidence) as physical facilities, employee's equipment and communication media.

Dimensions of service quality as stated by Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman are having big influence to customer's expectation and the service that they accept in reality. When in reality customers accept services beyond their expectation then they will say that the services have a good quality, but if the customers accept services below their expectation then they will say that the services have poor quality or unsatisfactory. Customer expectations are similar with customers desire that will be determine by information that they accepted from words of mouth, personal needs, pastime experiences and external communication by looking at advertisement and promotion.

Research Methods

The location of this research is in the Regency of Southern Timor Tengah at Brach Office of PT. National Electricity Company of that region. The regency of Southern Timor Tengah is one of many types of regency in the province of Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia. The deliverance of services are giving by using Procedural Operation Standard or SOP (*Standat Operational Prosedur*). For research method is using a descriptive qualitative

method because it fits with the research that has explanatory characteristic. The population of this research is customers or electricity users of PLN in Southern Timor Tengah Regency who use prepaid kwh metre and postpaid kwh metre. Then, sample is taken from this population by purposive sampling or maybe known as judgmental sampling, which is sampling collection based on judgment to respondents that fulfill many criteria's to be use as sample of this research.

Result of The Research

This is a research with descriptive characteristic about the quality of public service implementation in PLN District Soe. The researcher wants to observe, reveal then describe about its quality. Based on the result of this research that was taken from interview and observations, the explanation is as follow:

The Quality of Public Service of PLN District Soe

The administrative regional of Southern Timor Tengah Regency composed by 32 (Subdistrict) divided in 12 Division of Subdistrict and 266 villages. The population of their people in 2015 is 459315 local people. Majority of them are having professions as farmers and employees. It covers area approximately 3947, 1 km, with many interesting and fabulous tourism resorts which have not been explored in optimum. The electricity power for Southern Timor Tengah Regency is supplied from single source of power plant in PLTD Soe which use isolated system. As in effect, when there was disturbances occurred in an area then automatically one action of electricity blackout will be accepted for some areas of this regency. On May 2016, PT. PLN is operating electricity lines from *Gardu Induk* / GI (Main Power House) Nonohanis with the amount of 1 x 20 Mega Volt Ampere (MVA) and High Voltage Air Channel with the expectation of be able to reduce blackout occurrences.

Public service in this present day becomes basic part of every society's element necessity. Each public bureaucracy must put huge effort to give their best service quality to society as their public service's users. The public service of PLN District Soe these days must be repaired and improved. By efforts to improve the quality of its public service to be better is a way that must be due to create more effective and efficiently services according to the needs and people's aspiration. Taking from interview result with informant of this research, customers were not pleased by services given by PLN District Soe. Part of their reason is about the electricity blackout that happened many times. The blackouts are continue to happen 4 up to 7 times in a month whether on schedule or outside the schedule. In fact, these activities can happen anytime. It is the cause of many disturbances in society's daily activities. One effect of this blackout is bigger expenses for people in this region. They must buy other alternatives of power source such as candles. Next, this blackout is disturbing children's study activities at night time. Another impact of this sudden blackout is damaging many hardware parts of personal computers, due to scratch on hard disc plates that suddenly stop when it is still moving. Other equipment that broke is power supply. It is the main part for PC computer that responsible to directly accept electric current that can be unstable when electricity is going off and on. With unstable power after the blackout it will make the part of power supply becomes vulnerable. Other equipments such as household appliances are also easy to have broken components such as: television, washing machine, refrigerator, et cetera.

Slow response (Long Time) of Services in Sub District

The slow response when there are complaints from customers is caused by too limited employees in their Sub District. Total amount of employees in this office is 6 people who have responsibility to cover entire district. Services provided from this office are: 1) new installment of electric power that usually takes time less than 10 days turns to be 2 weeks long for finishing this new installment, 2) trouble service. However, where trouble occurs in one of customer's house where suppose to be fixing within a day, PLN employees need longer time for about 2 days for fixing the trouble. This slow response also affected the working performance of employee which impacted on the service given for its customers. 3) Credit token calculation that is not according to the real value without any explanation. There is no explanation from PLN District Soe about the calculation of token credit that they buy, make customer confused and feel dissatisfied about the product. Although the users of this prepaid credit token are increasing today and make society able to apply energy sufficiency living methods for themselves as well as actively participate in monitoring electricity usage in their own homes, at the same time, this smart electricity development creates a problem. Majority of prepaid credit token users have been complaint about lessen content of kwh (electric power). For those who are familiar with prepaid electricity power must be heard about the term of *token*. When user buy this electric *token* (voucher) for refilling the electricity power in their homes they will get one payment receipt where inside of it written certain code numbers to verify the amount of electric power that will be added to electricity power (kwh) at their homes. These numbers must be inserted in the number column at their electricity box. Then, electric power is added and it ready to be use according to the amount of money that you spend to buy it. When the electric power almost runs out, a red lamp as the sign will on and produce beeping sound as warning.

In brief, there are some factors that obstruct and support the quality service perform by PT. PLN District Soe. Some constraint factors are: 1) the limited energy source due to downtime of power plant generator. This downtime occurred because insufficient facilities provided for the people's needs. At peak time where the highest

workload achieve, the energy needed by PLN in Kupang's area (central area that monitoring PLN District Soe and 7 other districts around that regency) is only 57,90 MW whereas the electric power owned by PLN is only 52 MW and resulting power shortage in this area. Then, as a compensation of this shortage there will be blackout for some times in certain parts of the regency. 2) Nature factor such as bad weather that can not be predicted before like strong wind that tear down tree braches or landslide or ground avalanche, where all of those can cause electricity blackout. 3) People awareness in relation to public service. There are some stealing activities happening today. Some electrical cables and other electric facilities are stolen and causing electric current or flows working unstable or not normal. Finally, 4) the limited apparatus or employees, limited electrical facilities, and delayed new electricity installment because of its difficult terrain and manpower limitation.

The supporting factors of public services in PLN District Soe are as follow: 1) Physical facilities owned by PLN District Soe such as comfortable service room. By this adequate facility, it will accelerate services and give comfortable feeling to their customers and increasing customer's satisfaction. 2) Human resources, where in this discussion is their employees, as one factor that gives good services to their customers. They are reliable to strong responsiveness and able to give service assurance to their customers, able to express empathy and immediately giving direct services when needed.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusions

1. The quality of public service at PLN District Soe is less satisfactory due to electricity blackout that happen in many times.
2. There are supporting and obstructing factors of public service at PLN District Soe.
The supporting factors are physical facilities which consider being adequate for their customers and employees that ready to serve their customers. Whereas the obstructing factors are the lacking of energy source which force series electricity blackout happen by schedule, natural cause such as cable cuts by tree branches and landslide, stolen cables and other facilities, also limited manpower or employee that force them to do double work shift and in the long run will slow down their working performance.

Suggestions

According to the summary that stated above, suggestions that able to give by researcher for improving the public service quality of PLN District Soe are:

1. In practical, government must involve with serious actions by making some developments of new power plant generator or doing reparation of those damage power plant generators immediately to assure the fulfillment of electricity demand that increase these days in the Regency of Southern Timor Tengah. The local government can make business negotiation with PLN to seek alternative power sources to convey electricity demand such as the usage of windmill.
2. For PLN District Soe. Their public service quality must be increase more by reducing electricity blackout or making this blackout according to the schedules that has been setting up before. Also, to minimize factors that obstruct services and adding facilities that will support the service given.
3. From academic perspectives, a further research from other aspects that influences public service of PLN will be useful by focusing on the government's role and strength-weakness-opportunity-and treat of PLN which will influence their public services.

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