



**THE IMPROVEMENT OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON
SERVICES OF SHIPPING AGENCY IN SHIPPING COMPANY -
A SURVEY OF PT. SAMUDERA PERDANA
SELARAS SEMARANG, INDONESIA**

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Abstract:

Sea transportation system in this era of globalization has developed significantly. Ship as a sea transportation facility has an important role in transportation system. Therefore, in order to conduct safety navigation at sea, the necessity of good skill, expertise, and professionalism are extremely demanded. From the first observation, it shown that there was problem appeared in the process of improving the services of the shipping agency. This study aimed to know the quality of public services of PT. Samudera Perdana. Besides, it also tend to know the quality services (problems, responsiveness, courtesy, empathy, and physical evidence) have effect toward customer satisfaction. This is a qualitative study. The respondent of this study was taken from staff and checked were conducted to some customers of PT. Samudera Selaras Perdana. On the other hand, the data collection techniques of this study were through observation, interview and documentation. For the data analysis technique, the writer used a data reduction, display data, then conclusion. From the result of this study it can be concluded that by using 5 dimension of customer service quality which is proposed by Zeithaml, that the quality of customer service in PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras has indicated as a good service, however, there were some aspects needed to be improved in order to increase the quality service and also to extend and provided parking area for customer.

Keywords: improvement, customer satisfaction, services

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1. Introduction

Sea transportation system in this era of globalization has developed significantly. Ship as a sea transportation facility has an important role in transportation system. Our country that has a lot of islands, sea transportation services is needed very much. Therefore, the smoothness of sea transportation by means of sea ship has to operate properly, which means it is seaworthy. In terms of seaworthy, some factors such as human resources cannot be ignored. Further, in order to conduct safety navigation at sea, the necessity of good skill, expertise, and professionalism are extremely demanded.

It is impossible for the company which has good and proper planning and monitoring system to get maximum achievement, if it does not be supported by competent human resources who conduct their task and duty with full of responsibility. Even if the ship's condition is good, when it did not operated by skilfull, well-trained and open minded personnel related to the shipping regulation and rules, the performance itself will not be optimal.

On the regulation no. 17/2008 about the Shipping Regulation, it is stated that domestic transportation via sea transport has to be done by National Shipping Company with Indonesian flag and crew of Indonesian citizenship to support, promote, and empower the local sea transportation sector and the supporting industry.

As an archipelago country with a very vast sea territorial, Indonesia only has one regulation which regulates the use of the sea. The intended regulation is Regulation no. 21/1992 about shipping regulation amended by Regulation no 17/2008. They are used for controlling and monitoring all activities in Indonesian sea territory.

In the general terms of Shipping Regulation, it is mentioned that shipping is the unity system consisting of sea / water transport, port, safety and security, and also marine environment preservation. Shipping activities generally include transporting goods or passengers from one spot to the other spot, or from port to port, conducting safety navigation, and marine environment preservation from sea pollutants originating from vessels.

From the first observation, it shown that there was problem appeared in the process of improving the services of the shipping agency. PT. Samudera Perdana Putra Selaras Semarang found some problem while improving shipping service agency which caused vessel delay, some ship's needs are not fulfilled, and make low employee welfare. It is very detrimental to the owner and ship charters and PT. Vinici Inti as the agency.

According to explanation above, the writer wants to conduct research entitled The Improvement of Customer Satisfaction on Services of Shipping Agency in Shipping Company (A Survey of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras Semarang).

2. Statements of the Problems

- 1) How is the quality of customer services in PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras?

- 2) Does the service quality (reliability, responsiveness, guarantee, empathy, and physical evidence) have effect or influence toward the customer satisfaction?

2.1 The Objectives of the Research

- 1) To find out the quality of public services of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras.
- 2) To find out whether the quality service (reliability, responsiveness, guarantee, empathy, and physical evidence) have the effect or influence toward the customer satisfaction.

2.2 Benefits of Research

2.2.1 Theoretical Benefit

This study is expected to be able to deliver conceptual contribution to the staffs of sea transportation services to increase customer satisfaction on shipping agency service in the shipping company (survey PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras Semarang).

2.2.2 Practical Benefit

Practically, this study is expected to be able to give some benefit as follows:

A. Theoretical Benefit

Theoretically, the significance of this study is to contribute the development of knowledge of the agency field. The outcome of this study considered to be able to give some suggestion or input for the workplace about the importance of collaboration or cooperation to attain the expected goals.

B. Practical Benefit

In this research arrangement, the writer hoped it can give some advantages as mentioned below:

- 1) For the writer. Enhancing and expanding the insight of agency especially in improving shipping agency services of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras Semarang
- 2) For the industry. The result of this study can be used as consideration and suggestions for the related party/company for the shipping agency services which has been done so far.
- 3) For the readers. This study can be used as references for the reader to understand about the problem related to the shipping agency services, to get some information and knowledge that can be used as the matrix of the further study.

3. Literature Review

Customer satisfaction emerged after they consumed or used the product or services they have tested. The customers generally evaluate their experience of using certain product to decide whether they will use the same product again or not. Satisfaction (kepuasan) derived from Latin word "satis" and "factio". Simply, it can be interpreted as the effort of fulfilling something or make something adequate (Tjiptono, 2005, p.349).

According to Kotler (2005, p.70) customer satisfaction is the expression of happiness or disappointment toward a product after they compared thoughtful product achievement toward the expected product achievement. If the performance of the product meets the expectation, it means the customer is satisfied. However, if the performance of the product exceeds the expectation, it means the customer feel very satisfied. Simamora (2003, p.18) states that customer satisfaction is the experience result of certain product. It is a customer feeling after he/she compared between “expectation” and actual performance.

Based on those two definitions, it can be concluded that satisfaction is function of impression of performance and expectation. The customers will not satisfied only if the performance is under the expectation. But, if the performance fits the expectation, it can be said that the customer is satisfied.

This definition can be formulated as below.

$$\text{customer satisfaction} = f(\text{expectation, performance}) \quad (1)$$

Lupiyoadi (2001: 158) states that in determining the level of satisfaction, there are five main factors that must be considered by the company, namely:

- a) Product quality: customers will be satisfied if the results of their evaluation show that the products they use have a good quality.
- b) Service quality: especially for the service industry, customers will feel satisfied if they their expected service.
- c) Emotional: customers will feel proud and get confidence that other people will be amazed at him when using products with certain brands that tend to have a higher level of satisfaction. Satisfaction obtained is not because of the quality of the product but the social value or self-esteem that makes customers satisfied with certain brands.
- d) Price: products that have the same quality but set cheaper prices will provide higher value to their customers.
- e) Cost: Customers do not need to spend additional costs or do not need to waste time to get a product or service tend to be satisfied with the product or service.

Kotler (1999: 54) suggests that there are four methods for measuring customer satisfaction, namely:

- 1) System of complaints and suggestions: every customer centered company needs to provide an opportunity for its customers to submit their suggestions, opinions and complaints. This information flow provides many good ideas and the company can move quickly to solve problems.
- 2) Customer satisfaction survey: companies cannot assume that a system of complaints and suggestions can fully describe customer satisfaction and disappointment. Responsive companies measure customer satisfaction by conducting periodic surveys.
- 3) Ghost Shopping (shadow buyer): this method is implemented by employing a number of people (ghost shopper) to act as customers or potential buyers of

competing companies' products to report the strong points and weak points they experienced when buying company products or competing products. Ghost shopper can also observe how to handle each complaint.

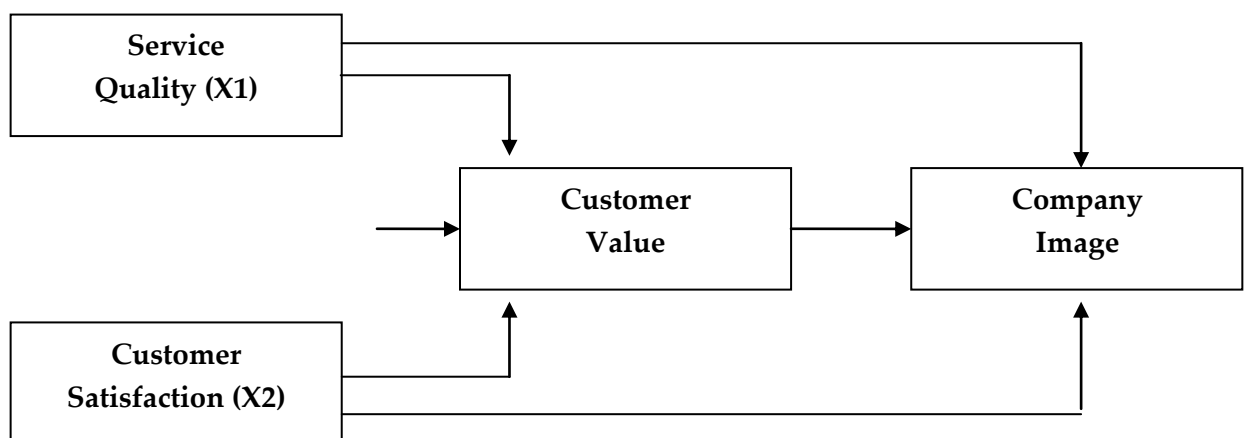
- 4) Lost customer analysis (switching customer analysis): companies should contact customers who have stopped buying or who have moved into other suppliers in order to understand why this happened and so that they can take the next policy of improvement or refinement.

The definition of service management according to Moenir (2000: 204) is a management process whose activities are directed specifically at the implementation of services to meet the public interests / interests of individuals, through appropriate methods and satisfying the parties being served.

Zeithmalh, et al (1990: 23) states that in assessing the quality of services / services, there are ten measures of service / service quality, namely:

- a) tangible;
- b) reliability;
- c) responsiveness;
- d) competence;
- e) access;
- f) courtesy
- g) communication;
- h) credibility;
- i) security;
- j) understanding the customer.

4. Theoretical Framework



5. Material and Methods

This descriptive qualitative research method is carried out on independent variables and without making comparisons or connecting with other variables, based on these descriptions, later it can describe the real conditions of an object / subject under study and then used by researchers to draw conclusions.

5.1 Research Subject

The research subject of this study is the agency services in this case are employees of the PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras and checks the answers of employees to consumers who use the services.

Data collection techniques:

- interview;
- observation;
- documentation.

5.2 Sources of the Data

Data is obtained from two sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources.

a) Primary data source

Primary data sources are respondents or people who are directly involved with the object of this research. In this case, the data is obtained directly from the source, namely the scholarship recipient student.

b) Secondary data source (Istiyanto, 2005, p.38)

Secondary data sources are reports, documents, brochures, library books that contain discussion about the object of research, meaning that the author obtains information indirectly.

5.3 Data analysis

Data analysis according to Patton (in Moleong, 2003: 103) in (Yulia, 2008: 48) is a process of organizing data, sorting data into patterns and categories of basic descriptions so that themes can be found and working hypotheses can be formulated as suggested so that information can be obtained deeply.

After the data was processed, then the next step was to analyze the data in order to answer the research problems and draw conclusions. Data analysis used in this study was qualitative analysis methods. This analysis contains detail description (describing) and size of something that will be investigated and experienced by researchers in the field (Faisal, 1990: 82 in Yulia, 2008: 48). The process of data analysis was started from the results of observations and interviews, and then those data were classified and sorted for data display.

6. Results and Discussion

Based on the theory developed by Zeithaml et al. Service quality is determined by five dimensions, namely Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. The results and qualitative analysis of each dimension of service quality can be described with the following explanation:

A. Tangible Dimension

In this study, tangible includes the following: physical appearance of employees, facilities, equipment and facilities at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras which is utilized in the implementation of public services to all consumers of this company. The tangible dimension is determined by some indicators, namely the appearance of employees when carrying out service tasks, convenience of service facilities, ease of service requirements, employee discipline, service, easy access to the location of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras, and the use of computer aids in providing services to consumers.

Quality of public services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras has a tangible dimension based on data from the indicators used in the study. It can be said to be good if almost all of the indicators in the tangible dimension are good. The good thing in this dimension is the neatness of the employees of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras, ease of service process, employee discipline, ease of access and use of technology in services. In this study, especially in the tangible dimension this shows a good thing.

Although the weight of the tangible dimension is not as heavy as the weight of a human or actor providing services. When prepared properly like a book, the cover immediately looks beautiful and attractive, so it can make consumers or prospective customers come and enjoy it as long as the transaction occurs. Many factors can cause tangible dimensions of services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras considered as a good service. First, tangibles are easily managed and conditioned well, so that it is not as complicated as managing people or employees. In addition, the ease in managing products in this dimension makes PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras can be more focused on concentrating time without thinking for things that are more crucial without leaving the appearance. Second, the company's high commitment to improve all tangible aspects it has. The Improvements in the condition of the aspects of the company are addressed to consumers. In addition, the tangible aspect has a direct impact on the results obtained.

B. Reliability Dimension

Reliability is the ability to provide a precise promised service, according to standards, abilities and expertise in using tools in public services carried out by PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. The reliability dimension is determined by accuracy indicators, service standards, the ability to use tools, and expertise in using tools.

The series of qualitative analyzes conducted on the reliability dimensions of the quality of public services at the office of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras is good. Because the indicators used in this study were met very well. These indicators include the accuracy of officers in serving customers at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras where the

service system of this company has supported by technology, service standards using Service Excellent, and there is no doubt to the ability and officers' skill in operating service tools by employees. The existing employees already have the ability and good skills to serve consumers. The Employees can operate and master the technology in the public system very fast.

On the dimension of reliability, it shows good results too. In this dimension there are two important things, first, the ability of company to provide services as promised and the ability of company to provide services accurately or without errors.

It will be of no use without being supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure and competent human resources. The available facilities at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras are good, as expressed in the tangible dimension. Whereas for competent of human resources it have included the qualifications needed during the recruitment process of its employees. In addition, this dimension is also influenced by the organizational culture within this company as stated in the frames placed in each room, banners, including: vision, mission, and added value of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras.

C. Responsiveness Dimension

Responsiveness is the willingness and awareness to respond to every consumer with a fast, precise, careful service, and responding to any complaints submitted by the service applicant at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. The responsiveness dimensions in this study are determined by indicators that respond to each consumer from this company quickly, precisely, on time and responds to consumer complaints PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. The employee of this company which gives a warm greeting to every consumer regarded as good thing in the public service system. This greeting can make every consumer feel more valued by the employees. Related to the ability possessed by employees of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras, all the employees have the ability, skills and competencies in their fields.

However, the indicator of customer complaint is not optimal. It can be seen from the lack of customer participation in criticizing the services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. There are several factors which cause the lack of consumer participation, for example the location of suggestion box is less strategic, there are no facilities that support customer participation, because there is a suggestion box but there is no form for the customers to fill out the critics or suggestions, on the other hand, the distribution of the critics and suggestion is still conducted manually and it causes critics and suggestions are not optimally accepted by the company.

The series of qualitative analysis which carried out on the dimensions of responsiveness can be explained as follows; the results of the quality of public services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras from the responsiveness dimension view is good because two out of the three indicators of this dimension showing the positive effect. Two positive things in this dimension are the employee's response to consumers of the company, employees greeting for every customer at Perdana Selaras is very excellent, precise and very responsive to provide a good customer services such as the absence of

a buildup of queues of consumers who request service. But in response to consumer complaints for the company is less, this is due to lack of consumer participation in filling out the suggestion boxes provided by the company. In this dimension of responsiveness, a service is as expected by the community and always increases over time. In addition, there is participation of ideas from the community in giving advice and input to PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras which aims to create services that meet the customers' expectation and needs. Good results on this dimension are indicated by PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. This happens because of the attitude of employees who show attitudes of alertness and sincerity in answering questions or consumer requests. All of the above are not enough without the support of a comfortable, clean and tidy service room that make time efficiency while waiting for the services.

D. Assurance Dimension

Assurance is the ability of the apparatus to provide guarantees, both in terms of timeliness, costs, legality, and certainty of costs in the process of public service at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. This assurance dimension is determined by some indicators; namely guarantees on time, fee guarantees, legality guarantees, and assurance guarantees of costs services in accordance with consumer demand. Assurance in the public service system of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras can be seen from the company's opening hours of service displayed. It shows how certainty given to consumers of this company to request service. In addition, the guarantee of service costs in each consumer is certain as included as the standard costs used in the service.

In providing assurance of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras also guarantees to every consumer who requests delivery services. It is realized in the form of the types of the given shipping packages offered to the consumers. Besides that, there is also a guarantee of insurance for every consumer.

The entire set of analyzes on the assurance indicator can be explained as follows; the quality of public services at the Klaten Post Office is very good. The indicators in this dimension that exist in this study are all positive and good for consumers. Wherein the PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras provides a guarantee to consumers who use the services of this company.

The assurance dimension in this study shows good results. The assurance dimension contains of confidence giving and trust building in consumers to continue to use PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras' services. The things that cause good dimensions include, first, competitive employees, employees who serve kindly and able to create a good first impression for consumers. Creating a good impression can build a sense of trust between consumers and PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras, so that it becomes an important thing in a service. Second, credibility of every service. In every service of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras there must be receipts that contain records of transactions carried out by this company. With the receipt, consumers are assured that they will be able to make a claim in the event of an accident or failure in every service performed by the company. And the last is security service. PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras is able to provide security in every service. There is safe consideration because PT. Samudera

Perdana Align honestly in transactions. Employees will record and report all the transaction.

E. Empathy Dimension

Empathy is the attention given to all consumers of public services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. This dimension is indicated by the willingness to prioritize the interests of applicants for services at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras, being friendly, polite, and highly appreciative of every service applicant of this company. The empathy dimension is determined by indicators: prioritizing the interests of customers, friendly service attitudes, politeness, and no discrimination.

Employees of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras see customers as users who support the existence of this factory and customers must get satisfactory service. It can be seen from the priority services given to each consumer in accordance with the vision, mission and added value of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras to consumers who are committed to providing quality and on time services. The employees' attitude of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras is also good. This can be seen from the greetings uttered by them to their customers and receives consumers by standing up and reaching out to have shaken hands. The series of qualitative analyzes on the empathy dimension can be explained as follows; see the nature of the service providers at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. The indicators in this dimension are all good, but there is one thing that must be underlined. Where the service is still unable to eliminate patron / kinship, close people and known people. And that makes the priority services for these people. Emphaty dimension is considered good, but there are some things that need to be underlined because of the slight discrimination in service at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. This dimension makes a great opportunity to provide surprised services. The surprise that will appear in this dimension is like a double-edged knife. In which on one side it has a good impact on service, while on the other hand it create negative things. As if, a waiter serves a customer who is close to the service provider. It will create a positive for those who are given the service but it creates a negative view for other customers, because of the intimacy they do not feel. From the whole discussion about the dimensions of service quality, all are indicated as good services. Almost all of these dimensions are carried out professionally and competently by PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. On the other hand, the company itself does not need to repair buildings because it is still considered feasible to use.

5. Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations are given as follows:

- 1) It is expected to be able to add a special room for customer service
- 2) Providing training to employees in order to improve employee competencies and skills in customer services
- 3) Improve the maintain needs to be done on facilities and infrastructure to support customer services.

- 4) Expand the parking area owned by the company
- 5) It is hoped that it can always follow the current developments of technology.

6. Conclusion

These considerations include aspects that are used to see the quality of services of PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras. If it is elaborated on aspects of service dimensions, conclusions will be obtained based on the five dimensions used in this study:

- 1) The quality in the Tangible dimension is quite good even though there is a slight disadvantage, namely the ease of customer access in the service request at PT. Samudera Perdana Selaras where for some services which have to wait from the head office to provide services.
- 2) In the reliability dimension, all the indicators used show the good result.
- 3) Responsiveness dimension, there are two indicators which are considered good, but there is one indicator that still needed to be improve, namely the less participation of the customers to give their critics and suggestion for the company through the available critics box.
- 4) Assurance Dimension shows the good result in which every indicator indicates positive things.
- 5) Empathy Dimension also shows the positive results.

From the description above, the conclusion of the customer service quality in this study can be obtained through the descriptive qualitative research which was conducted to the customer services of PT Samudera Perdana Selaras. By using the five dimensions of customer service quality proposed by Zeithaml et al, it can be said that the quality of customer service at PT Samudera Perdana Selaras is good.

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The author is a lecturer of Politeknik Maritim Negeri Indonesia, as a lecturer the activities which are carried out must be related to the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, besides teaching, other activities are complete two other dharma in the form of research and community service. The Author's educational background is Port and Shipping Management, but in the past 7 years the author has worked in the maritime institution and interested in exploring, something related the maritime world, which encouraged researchers to conduct research in the maritime world.

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