



RESEARCH ARTICLE

An Analysis Of Public Service Delivery At Perumda Tirta Hidayah Bengkulu City

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Published online: 5 December 2022

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the level of public service responsiveness at Perusahaan Umum Daerah (Perumda) Tirta Hidayah in Bengkulu City, with a focus on new water connection services. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, using in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis as data collection techniques. The findings indicate that the current level of service responsiveness is suboptimal. Customers reported delays in connection installation, inconsistent information, and slow responses to complaints. The main contributing factors include limited human resources and the absence of an integrated service system based on information technology. The analysis draws on Dwiyanto's theory of public service responsiveness, which highlights five key indicators: customer complaints, bureaucratic attitudes, feedback utilization, corrective action, and the role of citizens in the service system. The study recommends a comprehensive reform of the service system, enhancement of human resource capacity, and increased community involvement to achieve responsive, transparent, and citizen-oriented public services.

Keyword: Responsiveness, Public Service, Perumda, Water Connection, Citizen Complaints

Introduction

Clean water is a fundamental human need that is non-substitutable. In the context of a developing country like Indonesia, which geographically has quite large water resource potential, water management is a strategic instrument in realizing public welfare. The Indonesian Constitution explicitly mandates that state control over natural resources, including water, must be directed towards the greatest possible prosperity of the people (Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, 1945). Therefore, effective and accountable clean water services are an integral part of a quality public service system. The Regional Public Company (Perumda) Tirta Hidayah of Bengkulu City, as a Regionally-Owned Enterprise (BUMD) entity, plays an important role in providing clean water services to the community. The presence of this Perumda is in line with the mandate of Presidential Regulation Number 54 of 2017 which emphasizes the strategic role of BUMD in fulfilling basic public needs through efficient and responsive governance (Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 54 of 2017). However, in practice, Perumda Tirta Hidayah faces complex challenges along with the increasing need for clean water due to population growth and expansion of service areas (Perumda Tirta Hidayah, 2023). Internal company data shows a significant increasing trend in the number of requests for new connections, especially in the period from May to July 2023. This phenomenon indicates increasing public trust in Perumda services. However, the increase in demand also has a direct impact on the technical workload, especially related to limited human resources and service infrastructure (Perumda Tirta Hidayah, 2023). Although normatively Perumda has provided a complaint system and service communication channels, in its

implementation a number of public complaints are still found, especially regarding the slow response to requests for new connections. These complaints indicate a gap between customer expectations and the actual capacity of available services (Perumda Tirta Hidayah, 2023). This indicates that the public services provided have not fully adopted the principles of responsiveness and orientation towards customer satisfaction. Responsiveness, in the context of public services, refers to the ability of service providers to detect, understand, and follow up on community needs and complaints in a timely and accurate manner (Dwiyanto, 2006). This aspect is a key indicator of service quality, because it reflects the level of sensitivity of the public bureaucracy to the aspirations and rights of the community as service users.

Based on these problems, this study is formulated with the main question: How is the service analysis at Perumda Tirta Hidayah, Bengkulu City, especially in terms of responsiveness to requests for new connections? This problem formulation underlies efforts to explore various technical and administrative aspects that affect the quality of public services provided by Perumda (Research Team, 2023). This study aims to evaluate the quality of public services provided by Perumda Tirta Hidayah, Bengkulu City with a focus on the responsiveness dimension. In addition, this study aims to identify structural and technical barriers that interfere with service effectiveness, as well as to compile recommendations based on empirical findings to improve the service system to be more efficient, adaptive, and user-oriented (Research Team, 2023).

In the context of public service theory, responsiveness is positioned as the main indicator in assessing the performance of modern bureaucracy. According to Sinambela (2014), good public service must place the community as the main subject, not just a passive object. Therefore, fast, precise, and community-oriented services are the main essence of a reformist and accountable bureaucracy. As a theoretical basis, this study uses the public service responsiveness approach proposed by Agus Dwiyanto. This model emphasizes five important indicators in assessing service quality, namely the frequency and character of customer complaints, the attitude of service implementers towards complaints, the use of customer

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input for improvement, the resolution actions provided, and a service system that positions customers strategically (Dwiyanto, 2008). This approach allows for a more comprehensive and contextual analysis of clean water service practices by Perumda Tirta Hidayah.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate to explore in depth the phenomenon of public services in the context of local government organizations, especially in terms of responsiveness to requests for new clean water connections. A qualitative approach allows researchers to understand contextually and interpretively the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of service implementers and users (Creswell, 2014). With a descriptive method, this study does not attempt to test hypotheses, but rather describes the real conditions of service at Perumda Tirta Hidayah based on field data.

Data collection techniques in this study include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were made of the service process at the Perumda office and the field activities of technical officers. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with key informants, namely customer service employees, field officers, and customers who applied for new connections. The selection of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting research subjects deliberately based on the criteria of direct involvement in the service process (Sugiyono, 2016). Meanwhile, documentation was obtained from internal Perumda reports, customer complaint data, and service procedure documents.

The data obtained were analyzed using an interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is done by filtering information that is relevant to the focus of the research, then presented in narrative and thematic form. Drawing conclusions is done inductively based on patterns that emerge from the data. To ensure the validity and validity of the data, this study uses triangulation techniques of sources and methods, namely by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure consistency of findings. With this method, the study is expected to produce a complete and in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities for increasing the responsiveness of public services at Perumda Tirta Hidayah.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study show that the services provided by Perumda Tirta Hidayah Kota Bengkulu, especially in terms of installing new connections, still face various challenges, especially in terms of responsiveness. Based on the results of interviews with customers, most respondents stated that the process of submitting new connections tends to be slow and is not accompanied by clear information regarding the estimated completion time. Customers complained about the lack of certainty about the installation time even though they had completed the documents and made payments. This reflects the suboptimal service system that is oriented towards user satisfaction.

Internal documentation data shows that the number of requests for new connections increased significantly in mid-2023, especially during the dry season. However, this increase was not balanced by the readiness of human and technical resources. The number of field technical teams is limited, resulting in a buildup of service queues. This is reinforced by the recognition from management that limited personnel and logistics are the main factors in the delay in the installation process. In addition, the absence of a technology-based monitoring system makes it difficult to track and follow up on customer complaints quickly.

In terms of handling complaints, Perumda has provided a complaint channel via WhatsApp and a direct service desk. However, the effectiveness of this channel has not been fully felt by customers. Several customers stated that their complaints often did not receive a quick response or no response at all. This indicates a weakness in customer feedback management, which should be the basis for continuous service improvement.

Field officers interviewed also said that they were often overwhelmed in completing connection installations due to the high daily workload. Not infrequently, they had to handle more than five locations in one day, with quite a distance between customers. This workload had a direct impact on the quality of interaction between officers and customers, which ultimately affected the public's perception of the institution's professionalism and commitment.

From a managerial perspective, the interview results showed that Perumda was aware of the limitations in the current service structure. Management acknowledged that internal procedures were still manual and had not been fully digitized. The absence of an integrated customer service information system made the process of monitoring, tracking complaints, and distributing technical tasks less efficient. This strengthens the finding that the problem of responsiveness is not only a matter of officer attitudes, but also a result of the weakness of the existing support system.

Overall, this study found that the responsiveness of Perumda Tirta Hidayah Kota Bengkulu's service was in the suboptimal category. Delays in service, lack of transparency in information, and slow handling of complaints indicate a gap between the service standards expected by the public and actual performance in the field. Although there is good faith from the management to improve services, the implementation of these improvements has not been carried out systematically and sustainably. These findings provide an illustration that service improvements in Perumda must be carried out not only in technical aspects, but also concerning work system reform, increasing the capacity of officers, and implementing information technology. Thus, responsiveness of public services that are fast, precise, and on the side of the public can be realized in real terms.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the level of responsiveness of public services organized by Perumda Tirta Hidayah, Bengkulu City is still in the suboptimal category. The phenomenon of delays in installing new connections, accompanied by slow handling of customer complaints, shows an imbalance between the expectations of the community as service users and the actual capacity of the institution in meeting these needs. This is in line with the view of Dwiyanto (2006) who emphasized that responsiveness is an important indicator of the success of public services, because it represents the organization's ability to respond to the needs and aspirations of citizens quickly, accurately, and consistently.

The initial dimension of service responsiveness lies in the existence and character of public complaints. In the context of Perumda Tirta Hidayah, public complaints are mostly related to service waiting times, limited information, and low procedural certainty. The increasing frequency and intensity of these complaints indicate that the service system is not fully responsive and adaptive to the surge in demand and the developing social dynamics. The irregularity in handling complaints indicates that the complaint system has not been integrated into the service evaluation cycle systematically.

Furthermore, in terms of bureaucratic disposition or service implementer attitudes, this study found that the majority of officers, both in the administrative and technical lines, face a fairly high workload. This has an impact on the low quality of responses given to customers, which tend to be reactive and procedural. The low capacity of available human resources, both in terms of quantity and customer service competence, causes the bureaucracy to be unable to be proactive and solution-oriented. This condition is contrary to the principles of modern

public service which demand openness, empathy, and speed of response (Sinambela, 2014).

The next aspect that is the focus of discussion is the extent to which institutions utilize complaints as a basis for service improvement. In this case, Perumda has not shown a systematic system in managing, analyzing, and following up on complaint data as a whole. The absence of a feedback processing mechanism based on information technology causes public complaints not to be absorbed as strategic input for improving service quality. Mardiasmo (2009) emphasized that professional public service must be accompanied by a management information system that is able to provide accurate and real-time data as a basis for decision making.

Furthermore, resolution or corrective actions against complaints submitted by customers are still sporadic and uneven. Some customers reported getting a quick response, while others had to wait an indefinite amount of time. This unfairness in the distribution of services creates a discriminatory perception, which in the long term can weaken the legitimacy of the institution in the eyes of the public. This inequality also shows the absence of standardization of services and complaint handling procedures based on the principles of justice and equality of service.

The placement of the community in the service system, as another important dimension, has also not been optimally realized. The community is still placed in a passive position as an object of service, without participatory space in the planning, evaluation, or supervision of services. This lack of involvement results in a low sense of belonging to the services provided by public institutions. In fact, within the framework of participatory public services, the community should be placed as an active partner who has the right to be heard and involved in the service management cycle.

From the results of this analysis, it can be concluded that the problem of responsiveness in Perumda Tirta Hidayah is not just a technical issue, but also concerns structural, cultural, and systemic aspects. The low quality of service response is a reflection of weak institutional design, limited human resource capacity, and the lack of integration of the complaint system with the mechanism for continuous service improvement. Therefore, efforts to improve service quality must be directed at managerial transformation and digitalization of a more adaptive and data-based work system. The implications of this finding emphasize the need for reformulation of service strategies in BUMD environments such as Perumda Tirta Hidayah. The application of good governance principles, such as transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness, is an important foundation in building quality and competitive public services. Without fundamental improvements, public institutions will continue to face social resistance and lose legitimacy as providers of basic public services.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study examines the responsiveness of public services at Perumda Tirta Hidayah, Bengkulu City, with a focus on new clean water connection services. Based on empirical findings and theoretical analysis, it is known that the level of responsiveness shown by service providers still does not meet public expectations. Various obstacles were identified, including delays in service, inconsistent information, and slow handling of customer complaints. This phenomenon shows that the existing service system is not yet optimally oriented towards the needs and satisfaction of service users.

The main factors influencing low responsiveness are limited human resource capacity and the lack of integration of the service system with information technology. Services are still manual, with customer feedback mechanisms that have not been managed systematically. The absence of a complaint tracking system and data-based task distribution also slows down the organization's response to public complaints. This indicates structural problems in service governance, which have an impact on the organization's performance in responding to the dynamics of public needs adaptively.

The theoretical framework of public service responsiveness proposed by Dwiyanto (2006) is the basis for understanding this problem. Based on indicators such as the existence of complaints, officer attitudes, corrective actions, and the role of the community in the service system, it can be concluded that responsiveness at Perumda Tirta Hidayah is still at the procedural stage, not yet leading to substantive responsiveness that makes customers the center of service orientation. Improving service responsiveness is not enough through technical improvements alone, but requires comprehensive institutional reform. Changes are needed in aspects of organizational structure, information management, service culture, and community involvement mechanisms. Only by strengthening these aspects can public service providers improve their effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability in fulfilling the community's basic rights to access clean water.

The suggestions are:

- 1) Increasing Human Resource Capacity and Proportional Task Distribution
Perumda Tirta Hidayah needs to strengthen human resource capacity, especially in technical service units and front office. Competency-based training for public services, increasing the number of officers, and periodic workload evaluations are important to prevent the accumulation of tasks that result in service delays.
- 2) Development of a Digital-Based Service Information System
Digitalization of service procedures needs to be a priority, including a customer request tracking system, complaints, and technical schedules for installing connections. With the implementation of an integrated information system, service transparency can be increased and responses to public complaints can be significantly accelerated.
- 3) Establishment of a Special Complaint Handling and Service Evaluation Unit
A functional unit needs to be formed that is specifically tasked with handling customer complaints, analyzing complaint trends, and compiling recommendations for service improvements. This unit also functions as a customer satisfaction data center and material for periodic service performance evaluations.
- 4) Compilation of Transparent and Accountable Minimum Service Standards (SPM)
Perumda is expected to compile SPMs that are clear, measurable, and published openly to the public. This standard should include estimated service time, customer rights and obligations, and complaint handling procedures. This transparency is the first step towards increasing public trust.
- 5) Strengthening Community Participation in Service Planning and Evaluation
A mechanism for community involvement is needed in consultation forums, periodic satisfaction surveys, and service evaluations. The community needs to be positioned as strategic partners, not just service recipients, so that their aspirations and needs can be absorbed more representatively in service policies.
- 6) Organizational Culture Transformation Towards Responsive and Adaptive Bureaucracy
Efforts to improve services need to be accompanied by a change in the mindset of the apparatus, from a procedural orientation to a solution-oriented and empathetic public service orientation. Internalization of the values of excellent service and professional ethics must be part of a comprehensive reform of the institutional work culture.

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