

Relationship Between Waste Disposal and Public Satisfaction in Local Authorities in Kedah

LA RELATION ENTRE L'ELIMINATION DES DECHETS ET DE LA SATISFACTION DU PUBLIC PARMIS LES AUTORITES LOCALES INTRUIT DU KEDAH

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Received 29 June 2011; accepted 10 July 2011

Abstract

This paper explains the relationships between waste disposal and customer satisfaction in local government functions. Due to public complaints rising in waste disposal and cleanliness and poor services given by the local authorities nowadays lead to this study. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the customer's satisfaction on waste management provided by local government in Kedah. Instead of that, the study also aims at examining the relationship between independent variables with public perception towards services provided by the council. This study used Descriptive Statistic and Pearson Correlation for data analysis on hypotheses which insignificant relationships in findings. Recommendations were proposed to increase better performance by its councils. In future research, local authorities should be more active collaboration with the focus groups including business communities and public at

large in boost up the performance in its services.

Key words: Local government; Environmental functions; Waste disposal

Résumé

Ce document explique l'élimination des déchets des relations et la satisfaction du client dans les fonctions du gouvernement local. En raison de la hausse des plaintes du public dans l'élimination des déchets et la propreté et de mauvais services donnés par les autorités locales mènent aujourd'hui à cette étude. L'objectif principal de cette étude est d'enquêter sur la satisfaction du client sur la gestion des déchets fournis par le gouvernement local à Kedah. Au lieu de cela, l'étude vise également à examiner la relation entre les variables indépendantes avec la perception du public envers les services fournis par le conseil. Cette étude a utilisé statistique descriptive et de corrélation de Pearson pour l'analyse des données sur des hypothèses qui est des relations significatives dans les résultats. Des recommandations ont été proposées d'augmenter de meilleures performances par ses conseils. Dans des recherches futures, les autorités locales devrait être une collaboration plus active avec les groupes de discussion, y compris les communautés d'affaires et grand public à booster les performances de ses services.

Mots clés: Le gouvernement local; Les fonctions de l'environnement; L'élimination des déchets

Zaherawati Zakaria, Nazni Noordin, Mahazril 'Aini Yaacob, Kamarudin Ngah, Mohd Zool Hilmie Mohamed Sawal, & Jamaludin Mustaffa. (2011). Relationship Between Waste Disposal and Public Satisfaction in Local Authorities in Kedah. *Canadian Social Science*, 7(4), 53-57. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/j.css.1923669720110704.042>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/J.css.1923669720110704.042>

INTRODUCTION

In 1976, the Local Government Act 1976 (Act 171) in

Malaysia was promulgated providing a consolidated framework for local authorities. The enlargement of urban areas also means an increase in the problems, needs and complexities relating to urban governance. Local Authorities (LGAs) hold a large number of facilities that place demands on resources. They have a responsibility to use and maintain a wide range of property assets including classified and heritage buildings, single purpose facilities and state of the art multipurpose facilities. Thus, this research try to reveal the user's perception in demanding new approaches, strategies as well as practical and effective answers and solutions for waste disposal and cleanliness functions provided by local government in Malaysia by referring to Kulim, Alor Star and Sungai Petani as a case to be studied. The question on what is meant by performance in the public service context, and how can it best be measured always arise due to lack of services and human resources and often times, due to poor management and incompetence and not mention sheer arrogance, fraught with problems (Hazman Shah, 2006). Since local authorities are at the level of government that is close to the people, they also face increased pressure for more accountability for better transparency. Because of this, the community is becoming more vocal in voicing their grouses over the services provided by their local authorities. Their also demanding clearer and greater accountability for the way the local authority makes decision.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the years, some of these district councils have been upgraded to a higher status. These include the Alor Star City Council, Kulim and Sungai Petani Municipal Council in Kedah Local Authorities. The functioning of local government is based on the principle of ultra-vires and general competence (Norris, 1980).

In spite of what have been written, local authorities in Malaysia have been given wide powers within the The mandatory functions include all critical functions such as refuse collection, street lighting and activities pertaining to public health. Discretionary functions include all development functions such as providing amenities, recreational parks, housing and commercial activities (Phang Siew Nooi, 1997).

Additionally, Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996); Swan (1995) conducted mail questionnaires with responses from 108 local authorities to examine the controversial role played by CCT in these developments. This analysis was subsequently followed up by Clark (1997). On top of this, the role of the tendering process within the wider

leisure industry has also been the subject of a number of international case studies collated by Sayers (1997).

In 1993, the Government of Malaysia initiated the privatization of urban solid waste disposal. That concept called for a feasible privatization plan for solid waste management, including storage, collection, transportation, processing and disposal of solid wastes. The stated objective was to provide an integrated, well-planned, well-managed, efficient and effective, technologically advanced solid waste management system in order to enhance the quality of the environment as part of Vision 2020. The thrust of the system is on waste reduction and the use of technology to recover resources from waste (recycling, composting, incineration etc.), thereby minimizing the need for final disposal, which is expected to become burdensome in the future. In fact, before the privatization exercise, some local authorities had already been contracting the waste collection service to a number of contractors. In other instances, the local authorities managed solid wastes by using their own staff and resources (MHLG, 2007).

2. METHODS

Quantitative method used by this study in order to have better understanding on the functions provided by local government. The population was among residents in Alor Star City Council, Sungai Petani Municipal Council and Kulim Municipal Council in Kedah. The study used simple random sampling to select the respondent, in which every person of the population has a chance of being selected. The data was collected using questionnaire. Questionnaire is a written set of question to which respondent record their answer (Sekaran, 2006). Every each of these sections represents the identified variables. In order to analyze the data, the statistical techniques used are Pearson Correlation and Descriptive Statistic.

3. FINDINGS

The study makes outline of the finding about the profile of the respondent and in relations of the hypotheses to see whether the hypotheses can be rejected or not to be rejected. In the profile of respondents, the researchers discuss about the respondents demographic such as gender, age, marital status, race, monthly salary and level of education. Based on the Table 1, majority of the respondents are female which representing 50.88% (n=116). Meanwhile, males are the minority which representing 43.42% (n=99).

Table 1
Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	99	43.4	46.0	46.0
	Female	116	50.9	54.0	100.0
	Total	215	94.3	100.0	
Missing	System	13	5.7		
Total		228	100.0		

As indicated in table 2, Respondents are categorized into four age groups which range from less than 20 years old, 21-29 years old, 30-39 years old, 40-49 years old and more than 50 years old. From the table, majority of the respondents' age are 30-39 years old which representing

37.67% (n=84), followed by 29.60% (n=66) under group of 40-49 years old, 23.32% (n=52), 6.28% (n=14) under group of more than 50 years old and 3.14% (n=7) under group of less than 20 years old.

Table 2
Age of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 20 year	7	3.1	3.1	3.1
	21- 29 year	52	22.8	23.3	26.5
	30 - 39 year	84	36.8	37.7	64.1
	40 - 49 year	66	28.9	29.6	93.7
	More than 50 year	14	6.1	6.3	100.0
	Total	223	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.2		
Total		228	100.0		

Based on the Table 3, majority of the respondents are married which representing 71.93% (n=164). Meanwhile 25.00% (n=57) of the respondents are widow or

widower. Minority of the respondents are bachelor which representing 3.07% (n=7).

Table 3
Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor	57	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Married	164	71.9	71.9	96.9
	Widow/Widower	7	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	228	100.0	100.0	

In the Table 4, majority of the respondents are Malay which representing 84.65% (n=193), 8.33 % (n=19) representing Chinese respondents, 5.26% (n=12)

representing Indian respondents and 1.32% (n=3) representing others.

Table 4
Race of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Malay	193	84.6	85.0	85.0
	Chinese	19	8.3	8.4	93.4
	Indian	12	5.3	5.3	98.7
	Others	3	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	227	99.6	100.0	
Missing	ystem	1	.4		
Total		228	100.0		

As indicated in the Table 5, most of the respondents' current income are between RM1000-RM1500 representing 38.57% (n=86). Meanwhile the other

respondents' current income are less than RM1000 which representing 8.52% (n=19).

Table 5
Monthly Salary

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than RM1000	19	8.3	8.5	8.5
	RM1000 - RM1500	86	37.7	38.6	47.1
	RM1501 - RM2000	56	24.6	25.1	72.2
	RM2010 - RM2050	40	17.5	17.9	90.1
	More than RM2500	22	9.6	9.9	100.0
	Total	223	97.8	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.2		
Total		228	100.0		

In the Table 6, majority of the respondents' education level are SPM which representing 45.78% (n=103), 35.56% (n=80) representing STPM/Diploma/A Level,

10.22% (n=23) representing Bachelor Degree, 3.56% (n=8) , 2.67% (n=6) representing Master Degree, 1.33% (n=3) representing PhD. and 0.89% (n=2) representing Primary School.

Table 6
Education Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary School	2	.9	.9	.9
	SRP/PMR	8	3.5	3.6	4.4
	SPM	103	45.2	45.8	50.2
	STPM/ Diploma/ A Level	80	35.1	35.6	85.8
	Bachelor Degree	23	10.1	10.2	96.0
	Master Degree	6	2.6	2.7	98.7
	PhD.	3	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	225	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.3		
Total		228	100.0		

The Pearson Correlation obtained for the eight intervals scaled variables shown as indicated as follows (Table 7):

Table 7
Significant Difference Among the Users' Perception on Waste Disposal

	Users Perception	Waste Disposal
Pearson Correlation	1	0.300(**)
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
N	222	222

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 1:

H1: There is a significant difference among the users' perception on waste disposal.

H0: There is no significant difference among the users' perception on waste disposal.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations were made to the local government, local society, environmental services provided by local authorities and future research.

4.1 Environmental Services Provided by Local

Authorities Environmental services provided by the local authorities should be upgrade for better services. Upgrading the environmental services is very crucial to make sure that users are satisfies with the environmental functions provided by the local government functions

provided by Local Government will be positive and more satisfied about it. Waste management should be more effective to address in daily activities because the highest of complaints was made the public is comes from this matter. Therefore, the local authorities should introduce better system in collection and transportation in neighbourhood, town and traditional area.

4.2 Future Research

As for future research, local government can determine the other important environmental functions that influence the users' perceptions of environmental functions provided

by local government. In future research, this study should be focused on the effective ways in tailored the other environmental functions provided by local government as well. Thus, the system in local services will be worked effectively and increase the customer satisfaction at large. The preparations and action plans implemented are predicted to act positively in environmental functions with the future of the council.

CONCLUSION

The ability to identify the possibilities of challenges that will be faced by the Local Authorities in this country needs high level of sensitivity and awareness among top management in running the environmental functions as needed by the public. Due to public demands nowadays should be more concerned by the councils in increasing the customer's satisfaction in its area. In this context, the councils had proved that the functions given were running well even some of the public were not satisfied but they already comply with the task given. From the findings, it shows there is a relationship between user perceptions with waste disposal provided by the councils. Even the significance was there but the value of public perceived should be increased in future. The councils should enact through scientific and systematic process to overcome the issues of public complaints of this functions by the focus group. It can be presented by all staff, entrepreneurs, politicians, state administrative, NGOs, professional associations, community associations and the public.

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