**DEFINING THE ROOT CAUSE OF JAKARTA MBA STUDENTS’ COMPLAINT USING 5-C TQM MODEL OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the competitive world of education, there are many universities competing to improve the quality of education services, employee performance, and produce graduates with integrity and professional skills. One of them is SBM ITB Jakarta which is the location for the research. The purpose of this study was to determine the root causes of the quality of MBA ITB Jakarta services by using a qualitative approach and “5C TQM of academic excellence” model as a guideline to improve the quality of education services. While for the technique of collecting data and analyzing qualitative data using interviews with respondents, the respondents in the study were university staff, lecturers, SBM ITB Jakarta management, and students. The results of the study concluded that there absence of such clear role from every unit involved (in this case SBM ITB Jakarta staff, lecturers, and management) as the root cause of student complaints related to the service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta. Miscommunication and misperception cannot be avoided because every unit has different perceptions and expectations toward each other.

Keywords : TQM Model, MBA Students, Academic, Excellence

**CHAPTER 1.INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Industrial Background**

Universities as one of the educational service providers are responsible to fulfill government expectation in producinghumanresourcesthatcancompetewith theglobalmarket.The need of management experts have also been increasing as a result of the implementation of Indonesia’s economic development strategy; the stronger interdependent between technology and management; the importance ofinnovationandentrepreneurialspirit, and the importance of having ethical entrepreneurs and social responsibility.

There are many good universities are competing to offer only the best educational service quality to their prospective students. Especially since the emphasis on quality service has been increasing over all types of business, and higher education institutions have been no exceptions in this regard. SBM ITBitself is considered as a new comer since it’s only established in 2003 in Bandung and 2007 in Jakarta.

Through this paper the research is conducted to help SBM ITB in particularly SBM ITB Jakarta to evaluate its service quality from this very early year to be able to compete with other prominent incumbents that already well known and have good reputations so that SBM ITB could emerge to be the best of business school in Indonesia.

* 1. **Problem Identification**

Being endorsed by SWA as the best business school in Indonesia 2009 offers a good opportunity to increase the reputation of SBM ITB. At the same time, it offers challenge for SBM ITB to work harder to keep building its reputation, since logically there is no other way from “top” but to go “down” and the fact that the room for improvement in service quality in particularly SBM ITB Jakarta is still considered large.

* 1. **Research Question**

The research question will be based on the problem identification. On one hand SBM ITB has been awarded as the “best” business school, yet on the other hand the word of “the best” has not yet felt by students in regard to the service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta.

Therefore the research question will be based on; “*why do students still feel inadequacy toward service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta?”*. This is based on the assumption that there is no perception mistake from the students’ side toward service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta as a reason why Parasuraman method is not in line in this study.

* 1. **Research Objectives**

The objective of this paper is to define the root cause of MBA ITB Jakarta’s service quality using a combination of qualitative approach and “5C TQM academic excellence” model developed by Sakhitevel, Rajendran, and Raju that serves as a guideline in improving the quality service of education.

**CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

* 1. **Reputation in Educational Institution**

Two elements internal and external shareholder groups affecting and affected by school’s reputation. They have direct effect in reputation’s construction, perseverance and strength in educational institutions. Therefore it is possible to classify administrators, teachers, students, officers and other servicemen as internal shareholders. Internal shareholders are the most important group that affects school reputation, in other words the corporate identity. Since they are in direct contact with customers meaning external shareholders, their attitudes and behavior have an important affected on the corporate reputation (Turgut, 2008).

Despite students are perceived as external customers benefiting from school’s education-instruction service, yet they affect and are affected by school’s reputation as much as administrators, teachers and other staff by living in the some environment with school employees for the academic year. Therefore it is more appropriate to evaluate students in internal shareholder group instead of outside customers group (Turgut, 2008).

* 1. **Reputation and Service Quality**

These elements can be analyzed in seven dimensions which are quality of training, quality of management, financial soundness, workplace environment, emotional appeal, social responsibility, and corporate ethic.One of the components is staffs and student’s pleasure that relates to service quality as it has been considered as a factor that may influence satisfaction of the customers or in this case is students. Subsequently, measurement and evaluation of students’ perceptions of service quality is extremely valuable (Raju et al, 2010).

* 1. **Education Service Quality**

Service quality is defined from users’ perspective as consistently meeting or exceeding customer expectations, while the perceived service quality is defined as "a global judgment, or attitude, relating to the superiority of the service"(Choon, Teck, and Hoi, 2010).

Despite there is no consensus in the extant literature pertaining to the development and definition of the determinants of the students' perceived service quality in higher education, the concept of what dimensions constitute quality in the area of higher education (Raju et al, 2010).

* + 1. **SERVQUAL**

There are five key dimensions of the SERVQUAL model in which can be used by consumers to evaluate perception of the perceived service quality. These dimensions include reliability, assurance, tangibles, responsiveness and empathy (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004:408) :

Gap1: Customers’ expectationsversus management perceptions.

Gap2: Managementperceptionsversusservicespecifications.

Gap3: Servicespecificationsversusservicedelivery.

Gap4: Servicedeliveryversusexternalcommunication.

Gap5: Thediscrepancybetweencustomerexpectationsandtheirperceptionsoftheservicedelivered.

Gap6: Thediscrepancy between customer expectationsand employees’ perceptions.

Gap7: Thediscrepancy between employee’s perceptions and managementperceptions.

* 1. **Quality Management**

It is important to note that the key success factor of any of these programs depends on how well a specific quality improvement program is integrated with the overall business strategy.There has been interesting research developed that proposed a TQM Model with five variables that measure different dimensions of service quality in an instrument of higher learning, and they suggest that these variables will increase student satisfaction; 1) Commitment of Top Management, 2) Course Delivery, 3) Campus facility, 4) Courtesy, and 5) Customer feedback and improvement(Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004: 433).

This model is very useful because not only it identifies the critical quality dimensions of TQM in specific educational environment but also serve as a guiding principle for the universities toward academic excellence. Hence, this 5C model is considered very relevant to the purpose of this paper to study the service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta as one of educational institutions.

**CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY**

* 1. **Research Methodology**

There are two types of data used in this research; those data are primary and secondary data. Primary data source are individuals, and focus group. On the other hand secondary data source are company background, rules that are gathered from organizations document.

* 1. **Data Collection**
     1. **Qualitative Approach**

1. The purpose of this paper is to find out the root cause of the students’ complaint then in-depthinterviewsareaneffectivemethodofobtainingqualitativeinformationbecause theyprovidegreatdetailandgiveinsightintowhatindividualsthink.
2. Researcher can observe the respondent’s body language that represents the emotion and expression.
3. Qualitativeresearcheris close enoughtothepeopleorsituationsunder study, soit is possible for depthanddetailedunderstandingaboutthethingsgoing on.
4. Numberof respondentsis not the case,butthe potential ofeachrespondent iscasetoprovidea bettertheoretical understandingof theaspectsbeing studied.
5. As the researcher is part of the students it fulfills one of the requirements of qualitative researcher is to participate in the observation of the related study.

Limitation of in depth interview;

1. Asaconversation, interviewopensthe possibility offorgery, fraud, exaggeration, anddistortion(distortion). It can bea biggapbetween whatis saidanddone by respondents.
2. Peoplesayanddodifferent thingsin different situations.
3. Researcher might choose biased respondents.
4. The access to some respondents is limited in term of time spent allocated for interviewing.
5. People are not equally articulate and perceptive.
6. As this research is to collect students’ perception based on what they have experienced, therefore the last experience had by student might have greater affected on their perception toward organizational service quality.
7. Few numbers of the issues identified might not be relevant to current condition where some improvements are made after the interview takes place.
   * 1. **Mechanism of Data Collection**
8. Primary data source is the respondents and the interviews are mostly held in SBM Jakarta, the most strategic place to meet the respondents like students, staffs, lecturers and management.
9. Language selection is very important, as not to hinder interviewee from explaining and interviewer from capturing the thingsthatactuallyhappened. For this reason, Indonesian language is used in conducting interview with all of the respondents.
10. Researcher records information using tape recorder and handwriting for further input in developing this research.
11. In doing interview researcher will not lock the respondents with a rigid order of questions and with specific wording as this flexible approach allows interviewee responses to guide the interaction and helps shape the order and structure of the interview.
    * 1. **Background of Respondents**

For the simplified qualitative method, the respondents consist of students who are still studying and registered as students at SBM Jakarta. Correspondents’ profile are divided into four different groups based on the status like students, staffs, lecturers, and managements.

* 1. **Data Analysis**
     1. **Research Questions**

The variables that are used in this research is based on 5c model by Raju et al (2010), they are; course delivery, campus facility and courtesy. Course delivery is broken down into two parts which are “lecturers” and “material”. Courtesy is represented by the word of “staff”. Campus facility represents physical and tangible facilities like library, books, classroom, canteen, whereas access to only system is represented by a separate variable called “system”.

Adjustment on variables used in this case are only the matter of providing greater details for both research and respondents on identifying issues related to service quality of SBM Jakarta.

* + - 1. **Students Interview**

Table 3.1 Research Question and Objectives

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interview Question** | **Purpose** | **Relation to the Research Objective** |
| What do students think of the service quality at SBM Jakarta? Is there anything that needs to be improved | To identify “on top of the mind” issues. |  |
| Is there anything that needs to be improved from the lecturers’ side? | To comprehend students’ opinion toward lecturer’s performance. | To identify students’ issues toward the quality of the lecturers. |
| Is there anything that needs to be improved from the materials’ side? | To comprehend students’ opinion toward the content of material and preparation. | To identify students’ issue toward the quality of the materials. |
| Is there anything that needs to be improved from the staffs’ side? | To comprehend students’ opinion toward staffs’ performance. | To identify students’ issue toward the quality of the staffs. |
| Is there anything that needs to be improved from the access to online system facilities? | To comprehend students’ opinion toward the access to online system facility? | To identify students’ issue toward the quality of the staffs. |
| Is there anything that needs to be improved from campus facilities’ side Including Online system facilities? | To comprehend students’ opinion toward campus facilities. | To identify students’ issue toward the service quality of campus facility. |

* + - 1. **Staffs, Lecturers, and Managements’ Interview**

All the issues identified from students’ point of view are to be proposed to staff, lecturers, and management to gain overall understanding of the situation in SBM Jakarta. In-depth interview is used in this process to reveal the root cause of the problems, hence recommendation can be proposed accordingly for service quality improvement in SBM ITB Jakarta.

*“What are the problems faced by staffs and management in SBM Jakarta related to service quality”?* Is asked and the use of follow-up questions, often referred to as *probes*, is also used here to gain a greater deal of information from the respondents (Ivanovich, 2009).

* 1. **Steps in Processing Information**

At this stage all the data (issues) collected is then summarized, codified, key words are identified and finally creating cluster from each of the variable.Data reductionis aform ofanalysis thatsharpens, classify, directed, discardthe unnecessary, andorganizedatainsuch a waythatfinal conclusionscan bedrawn.

Presentation ofdatais used here where collection ofinformation iscompiled, giving the possibilityofconclusionswithdrawalandtakingaction accordingly (Ivanovich, 2009). In the end, the process produces a list of different kinds of issues. The list of issues is then proposed to staffs, lecturers, and management of SBM ITB Jakarta as to find out what are the challenges they are facing in delivering an excellent quality service.

**CHAPTER 4. PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

* 1. **Problem Description**
     1. **Problem between Students and Lecturers**

Implementing case teaching method with combination of practitioners has been one of the reasons for students to choose this program. Such expectations drive students’ need toward more sharing experience with practitioners and field trip programs that are at the moment still considered inadequate. The sameexpectationrelates tothe role ofpractitionersthatshould bemore towardssharingexperiencethanontheoreticalexplanations. Sharing experience is not only expected from practitioners but also from lecturers. Lecturers are expected to have enough industrial background so that sharing experience can be more optimal, especially given the fact that lecturers composition are bigger than the practitioners. As a consequence, this situation might present challenge for some lecturers who might not have enough industrial background yet.

Finally expectation from students toward some lecturers associated with teaching activity needs also to be considered by the study program. Some of the lecturers are expected to be able to deliver the material in a more interesting way both from the content side and from the emotional engagement side.

**4.1.2 Problem between Students and Material**

The impact is quite significant as it relates to the quality of the program as a whole. This situation cannot be underestimated because not only can it lead to another problem but can also accumulatively create a bigger problem if not handled properly, as below;

1. This late modules has made some students to come to the class without adequate preparation.
2. The module itself under normal situation is already hard to read, not to mention too many assignments that can force some students to do them in the class during lecturing time or group presentations.
3. Additional material outside the module plus late cases from the lectures and guest lecturers are just overwhelming for some students to cope with.

Finally, lack of diversity in term of students’ industrial background is another case that needs attention from the study programs. This is because sharing experience as part of MBA program can only be optimally achieved if the diversification itself is adequate.

* + 1. **Problem between Students and Staffs**

One of the problems associated with staffs is related to inconsistency in schedule arrangement. In reality it is often found that students need to come to the class in every single week of the month even for only having exams in between the lecturing weeks. Seemingly, the part of having exams outside lecturing time was either not clearly communicated or anticipated by the administrators.

Socializing new procedure that are often carried out by calling student one by one not only considered as inefficient but also ineffective. One of the examples of this is where new online registration was implemented not long time ago. Despite the guidance given through email, the staff insisted on calling the student one by one to give the instruction by phone. Yet some students who did not want to be disturbed insisted on trying on their own based on the instruction given. What happened was that for those people who tried it on their own mostly made mistakes and they had to make correction and redo it again with staff guidance on the other side of the line. Obviously, this situation not only had given hard times to student but also to the staffs on the other hand.

* + 1. **Problem between Student and Online System**

Being famous for its technology school as what ITB stands for has not been reflected well from the online system facility that is still considered limited. Despite the on-going improvement on some of the online systems, apparently it cannot be optimally utilized yet and this presents problem automatically. For example, the website that is supposed to provide materials to be accessed by students from a distance has occasionally led to disappointment for several reasons. One reason is because the content or the material is incomplete and the other reason is because the website itself cannot be opened anytime. Unstable internet connection is one of the most popular problems that also require a proper management from SBM ITB Jakarta, especially with the growing number of students.

* + 1. **Problem between Student and Campus Facility**

For students, campus facility might not be seen as an important as to the regular students. It is very seldom for executive students to spend time around campus, as the nature of executive students is professionals who are mainly busy. Yet this should not be an excuse of not providing students with a better access to some basic needs like adequate book supplies and proper library environment. Among the other problems associated with campus facility, catering is another problem that has also persistently existed from time to time that needs proper attentions from SBM ITB Jakarta as well.

* 1. **Problem Discussions**

**4.2.1 Staff Problem Discussion**

Based on the problem discussion, it shows that staffs are still struggling with a situation where they have to deliver a-student tailored need approach under limited system. System that covers human resource development, automation and clear roles and commitment from other unit involved like lecturers, management at SBM Jakarta and SBM Bandung.

**4.2.2 Lecturers Problem Discussion**

Based on the problem discussion, it shows that different perceptions exists among the lecturers, everyone has their own standard in teaching, grading, preparing material that has not been well communicated to students, staffs and management. In other word, lecturers are still unsure of what they roles are in teaching an MBA Jakarta program. The absence of adequate guideline from the management in providing, clear set of standard, adequate training and control system is considered responsible in this case.

* + 1. **Managements Problem Discussion**

Based on the interview with management of SBM ITB Jakarta, it is identified that;

1. Some of the problems are already well acknowledged by the management and considered as good recommendations for service quality improvement, that are related to the following;
2. Additional field trip and practitioner to invite.
3. Limited online access that consists of access to website content, library system, internet connection.
4. Limited campus that consists of book supplies, library room and location.
5. Dependency toward building management toward class facility and catering.
6. Indonesia business case development.
7. Student diversification in term of industrial background.
8. Some other problems that already identified by staff and lecturer is also shared by the management;
9. Delayed module distribution that has beenpartlycontributedbySBMITBBandung role in issuing the lecturer appointment letter.
10. Commitment is needed from Support staff, lecturer and management (SBM ITB Bandung) to solve miscommunication issue, delayed module distribution and socialization issue.
11. Unstandardized grading system participation.
12. The rest of the problems are associated with unclear roles and expectation from each of the internal shareholders that covers; staffs, lectures, management and the students.

This particular problem is linked to the same situations faced by lecturers and staffs, where unclear roles are also a problem that leads the researcher to next stage of finding the root cause of the students’ complaint.

* 1. **Finding of the Root Cause**

Among all the problems perceived by the management, defining clear roles is the most important problems that need to be solved. The biggest percentage of the identified problemis mostly as a result of unclear roles and expectation toward each of the internal shareholders that does not only involves staff, lecturers, management but also students. Result shows that each of the internal shareholders has their own roles that have not been clearly communicated toward each other as consequence miscommunications are likely to take place as in the case of SBM ITB Jakarta. In further, the absence of clear roles has also been considered as the trigger to the problems faced by staffs, lecturers that require proper attention from the management of SBM ITB as a whole, which does not wholly rest to the hand of SBM ITB Jakarta but also rests in the hand of SBM ITB Bandung since most of the policies and decision making are still made centrally.

**CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

* 1. **Conclusion**

Being awarded bySWA magazine asnumber one in achievingthe highestratingby a factor ofqualityandreputationasthe Best BusinessSchools2009, is not a reason to becomplacent. SBM ITB still has many weaknesses to cover, androom forimprovementis stillverylarge. Problemsperceivedbystudentsisa reflectionofinternal problemsinSBMITBJakarta that covers staffs, lectures, students and management, as illustrated below;

1. From the staffs’ side, they are still struggling with a situation where they have to deliver a-student tailored need approach under limited system. System covers human resource development, automation, clear roles and commitment from every unit involved.
2. From the lecturers’ side, there has not been clear roles of what they should do and what are expected from them to teach in an MBA SBM ITB.
3. From the students’ side, there has not been clear roles of what they should do and what are expected from them to be part of MBA student at SBM ITB Jakarta.
4. Finally the unclear roles from each of the internal shareholder are resulted from the absence of clear roles between SBM ITB Bandung and SBM Jakarta to anticipate this matter.

Based on this illustration, miscommunication and misperception are inevitable since every shareholder involved has different perceptions and expectations toward each other. Finally all this problem discussion has led the researcher to the conclusion that the absence of such clear roles from every unit involved that covers, staff, lectures and SBM ITB Management as the root cause of the students’ complaint in association with the service quality of SBM ITB Jakarta. Itisimportanttonotethatalthoughthis paper islimited totheareaSBMITBJakarta, yetsome ofproblems have clearly indicated the associationwithSBMITBBandung. As a consequence, further research is needed that shall include the SBM ITB Bandung side togain the overallunderstanding ofthe real situationfacedbySBMITB Jakarta.

* 1. **Recommendation**

1. Management
2. Commitment of Top Management as in this case is SBM Bandung is essential to bring the improvement on the service quality at SBM ITB Jakarta.
3. Creatingaclearframeworkagreementtogether is necessary betweenSBMBandung and Jakartathat involves representatives from bothschools andshall take into accountdifferences inlocation, cultureand business environment.
4. Creatingawell-integratedSOP that again requires the involvement ofrepresentativesfromeachschool, whichshallleadtodefiningclearrolesofeachinternalshareholdersuch as management, lecturers, staffadministratorsandstudents.
5. Defining clear roles shall be followed up by strong commitment from each of the internal shareholders that can be translated into job desk description.
6. Regular meetingis requirednotonlytodiscuss thenewSOP, buttodiscussproblems thatmayoccurin theimplementation and tofindthe bestalternativesolutionforbothschools.
7. Regular implementation of internal audit or internal control is required as part of quality assurance program to guarantee successful translation of ideals into practice.
8. Adequate automation shall be provided from SBM ITB Bandung to reduce manual job and increase efficiency at SBM ITB Jakarta.
9. Lecturers;
10. Clear roles and expectation shall be provided to the lecturers that includes standardized role in grading and material preparation.
11. Regular training and couching shall be provided to the lecturers to develop their skills that take place in Jakarta to facilitate lecturers who mainly live in Jakarta
12. Regular meeting shall be provided between management and lecturers to discuss any problems encountered and to find the best solution together.
13. Quality control shall be provided to evaluate lecturers’ performance from both the content and delivery side.
14. The role of guest lecture shall also be clear where lecturers’ coordinator shall be responsible in making sure what are expected from them are met.
15. Staffs;
16. Adequate training for the staffs is essential to improve and develop skills both soft and hard skills.
17. Commitment to better manage the available online access and system as to reduce human interference and increase efficiency.
18. Providing a clear system and procedure to channel students’ feedback as constant feedback from the students leading to continuous improvement in the process is the key to achieving excellence (Raju et al, 2010).
19. Quality control shall be provided to evaluate the performance of the staff.

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