

A STUDY ON SERVICE QUALITY IN RELATIONS TOWARDS CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION AMONG EXPRESS BUS CUSTOMER IN KUANTAN

NOR FILIANIE BINTI AZIZ

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ABSTRACT

This study is an overview of the service quality and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan, Pahang. The aim is also to get feedback on the user's perception of quality express bus service provided and the level of satisfaction with the service. Besides that this survey is designed to measure the quality of existing services and improvements. Therefore, to identify the problems related to survey with 200 respondents in Pahang was conducted to obtain information about problems that occur. The location of the research will be conduct at Kuantan Central Terminals. It is because the location very suitable to get information about the bus service and many person at that location. Some of the method the research use to get problem statement is from respondent conversation. That response stated that consumers who use express bus service for their travel experience problems dissatisfaction. This is because the factors affecting the service quality and management provided by the service. This situation has attracted researcher to conduct a study on service quality in relations towards customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan. This review will focus on several dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction means to measure and evaluate the service quality of the relationship. At the end of the study, the researchers propose some suggestions that the authorities concerned are more responsible for improving the quality of express bus service so that users get the convenience to use public transport. This study will be evaluated and analyzed to obtain the results. Further, this study will be conducted and the data selected at the 15-19 November 2013. After that researcher analyze the data to SPSS software. Then the data show that have significant relationship between service quality (assurance, tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness) with customers satisfaction. While the researcher writes the report and all of the research can be use for the reference and next researcher.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini megambarkan tentang kualiti perkhidmatan dan kepuasan pengguna di kalangan pengguna bas express di Kuantan. Tujuan kajian ini juga untuk mendapatkan maklum balas terhadap persepsi pengguna kepada kualiti perkhidmatan bas yang disediakan dan tahap kepuasan dengan perkhidmatan tersebut. Selain daripada itu kajian ini direka untuk mengukur kualiti perkhidmatan yang sedia ada dan penambahbaikan. Oleh itu, untuk mengenal pasti masalah berkaitan, tinjauan dengan 200 responden di Pahang telah dijalankan untuk mendapatkan maklumat tentang masalah yang berlaku. Lokasi kajian yang dijalankan adalah di Terminal Sentral Kuantan. Ini kerana lokasi tersebut sesuai untuk mendapatkan maklumat tentang perkhidmatan bas dan ramai orang di lokasi tersebut. Antara kaedah penggunaan penyelidikan untuk mendapatkan pernyataan masalah adalah dari perbualan responden. Tindak balas bermula apabila pengguna yang menggunakan perkhidmatan bas express mengikut pengalaman perjalanan mengalami masalah ketidakpuasan. Keadaan ini kerana factor yang disebabkan oleh kualiti perkhidmatan dan pengurusan yang disediakan. Keadaan ini menarik pengkaji untuk menjalankan kajian terhadap kualiti perkhidmatan hubungan terhadap kepuasan pengguna dikalangan pengguna bas express di Kuantan. Kajian ini akan memberi tumpuan kepada beberapa dimensi kualiti perkhidmatan dan kepuasan pengguna bermakna untuk mengukur dan menilai kualiti perkhidmatan hubungan. Pada akhir kajian ini, penyelidik mencadangkan beberapa cadangan bahawa pihak berkuasa yang berkenaan lebih bertanggungjawab untuk meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan bas ekspres supaya pengguna mendapat kemudahan untuk menggunakan pengangkutan awam. Kajian ini akan dinilai dan dianalisis untuk mendapatkan keputusan. Seterusnya, kajian ini akan dijalankan dan data di ambil pada 15-19 November 2013. Selepas itu penyelidik menganalisis data ke perisian SPSS. Kemudian data tersebut menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang ketara antara kualiti perkhidmatan (jaminan, barangan ketara, kebolehpercayaan, dan responsif) dengan kepuasan pelanggan. Walaupun penyelidik menulis laporan dan semua kajian yang boleh digunakan untuk rujukan dan penyelidik akan datang.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The transport system is of paramount importance to all of society. Transport refers to a vehicle carrying someone or something from one place to another place, usually over long distances than if on foot. Technology has introduced a variety of vehicles, including land, water, and air. However, through the technology rapidly development division vehicles have become a necessity for connecting people from one destination to another. However, the increasing number of vehicles from time to time cause the number of vehicles on the road is increasing. This situation has caused a traffic distraction and road accidents that cause discomfort to the users themselves. Thus the existence of the public transportation system is an alternative to the scenario that existed. The public transport system in place has been a positive and negative impact on the consumer, the economy and the country. However, the availability of public transportation can reduce traffic error, the risk of accidents and to save costs to consumers.

The public transport system covering all transport systems in which passengers do not move using their own vehicles. Although these terms are generally taken to include rail and bus services, wider definitions can include scheduled airline services, ferries, taxis, and others. (Public transports system). In addition, public transportation is a vehicle that is shared with other users when boarded to go to any one destination. Public transports are usually regulated as common carriers and are usually configured to provide scheduled service on fixed routes without reservation.

Most of the passenger transit move within the local area of their homes and places of work, shopping or education. Public transport services also regarded as one of the alternatives for help and traffic congestion, especially in the cities. Therefore, the use of this service should be enhanced to help reduce road congestion and road accidents. However, there are other factors that cause people choose public transport.

In Malaysia, there are many types of public bus services company to the community for connect them to the place of choice. However, public transportation in Malaysia is claimed by the customers as unsatisfactory. This situation because of the services quality rendered lower than those obtained satisfaction. Services quality is closely related to the satisfaction of the users themselves. This situation occurs because the current user transaction services in general will make an evaluation of the service rendered such service whether positive or negative impact on the customer according to their speed and ease of transaction has been completed. Meanwhile, the services quality can also be defined according to both what and how the product or service being delivered. Gronroos distinguish between "technical quality" and "quality of work". Technical quality is concerned with the results of the product or service being delivered. Customers using the service quality attributes such as reliability, efficiency, performance, durability, and others to assess the technical quality. Then, quality function has more to do with how the technical quality is transferred to the user. Service quality attributes such as responsiveness and access will be important in helping to judge the quality customer service meeting function.

Therefore, a study a study on service quality in relations towards customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan will be conducted. This review will focus on several dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction means to measure and evaluate the service quality of the relationship. .At the end of the study, an analysis is performed to determine the cause and effects of the problems that occur to give the results to the relevant authorities, bus operators, public, and students of this survey already yet.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

There are various types of public transport in Malaysia. In general, transport can be defined as a vehicle or a tool that brings an individual or facility of an article from one place to another and usually from a distance than if on foot. There are various types of transportation now, for example, cars, motorcycles, buses, motorcycles, trucks, and others. Transportation works to facilitate communication system in the City of society whether or remote areas. However, transport can be divided into two private transport and co-transport. Private transport vehicles owned by individuals without sharing them with others for example, cars, motorcycles and bicycles (individual titles). During transport vehicles shared with others for example, public transportation such as taxis, buses, and others.

If see the comfort and convenience of the user, prefer to use their own transport as compared with the existing public transport. However, problems occur when the number of vehicles increased from time to time. Among them is the problem of traffic congestion and accident rates increase when there is a growth in the use of the vehicle. This resulted in users experiencing problems of time, cost of gasoline, dissatisfaction, and so that limited daily activities and cause users to experience problems to destinations such as work and education institutions. Therefore, as an alternative to avoid the incident users have chosen to use public transport relentless and express bus (travel distance) to avoid the problems that occur and to save costs. But the attitude does not stop there, this situation because when services are used not achieve the desired level of customer satisfaction will make an assessment in order to improve the level of satisfaction.

There are various factors that influence consumers in making an assessment, including quality of service. This is because, basically related to service quality and customer satisfaction. If the quality of services rendered in good condition and problems related to high will not happen. Therefore, this study will examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan. Service quality dimensions will be measured using factors such as assurance, tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness.

However, this study will reveal the express buses, long-distance travel. Conditions for long-distance travel can be seen more clearly satisfaction to determine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction among express bus customer. Among the types of express bus service in Malaysia are Sani Express, Perdana Express, Plusliner, Mutiara Express, Bulan Restu, Transnasional, Nice, Ones Express, Shamisha Express, Konsortium Express, and others. However, different quality of service provided and customer satisfaction is not the same. Therefore, to identify the problems associated with surveys and interviews were conducted to obtain information about problems that occur. Interviews response states that consumers who use the express bus service for their travel experience problems dissatisfaction. This is because the services quality provided do not reach the maximum level of customer satisfaction.

Therefore, a study on service quality in relations towards customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan will be conducted. This review will focus on several dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction means to measure and evaluate the service quality of the relationship. At the end of this study will make assessment and analysis of information obtained through surveys.

1.3 PROBLEM OF STATEMENT

The main focus of this study is on bus transport services the long-distance express buses, where users often encounter problems such as security, and management. These conditions include the quality of the service provided. This is because there are very few drivers to be negligent, not even the safety of consumers think companies take opportunity to earn money to raise fares when they school holidays and the festive season. Users are also often faced with timeliness of management problems to reach the destination. If service quality is in good condition the customer will get greater satisfaction in using the service. However, in this case the passenger experience dissatisfaction to find weaknesses in the quality of services provided during the transport.

Meanwhile, to solve the problems of a study on service quality in relations towards customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan will be

conducted. This review will focus on several dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction means to measure and evaluate the service quality of the relationship. Therefore, the evaluation and analysis will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the study.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- i. To identify the relationship between service quality (assurance, tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness) with customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.
- ii. To determine the factor analysis that contributes customer satisfaction.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

- i. What is relationship between service quality (assurance, tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness) and customer satisfaction?
- ii. What is the factor analysis that contributes customer satisfaction?

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

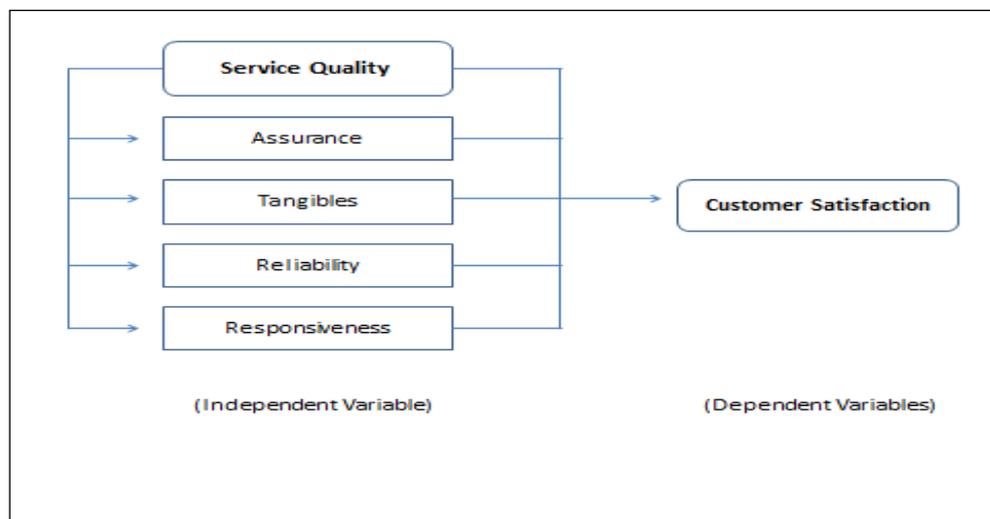


Figure 1.1 : Theoretical framework of service quality on customer satisfaction.

The figure 1.1 shows the theoretical framework of service quality on customer satisfaction. Where in the figure the show the service quality (assurance,

tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness) as the independent variables. Then, customer satisfaction as the dependent variable.

1.7 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- i. Hi 1 : There a positive relation between service quality and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.
- ii. Hi 2 : There a positive relation between assurance and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.
- iii. Hi 3 : There a positive relation between tangibles and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.
- iv. Hi 4 : There a positive relation between reliability and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.
- v. Hi 5: There a positive relation between responsiveness and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan.

1.8 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study will be conducted in Kuantan, Pahang. The scope of this study was to identify the relationship between services quality (assurance, tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness) on customer satisfaction among express bus customers in Kuantan. This study will focus on relationship between the dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. This study will be conducted using a survey of 200 express bus customers. The method will be use is questionnaire. While the data will be randomly selected and analyse.

1.9 SIGNIFICANT OF STUDY

Services quality is important to create comfort to the customers. Through this study we will know the quality of express bus services (travel-long distances) and improve the quality of service to a higher level to ensure customer satisfaction when get service. If the quality of services offered in good condition it will be well received by consumers and make the express bus service as an option to launch their journey from one destination to another. This condition can reduce traffic congestion and reduce accidents when reduced uses of private vehicles like cars and

motorcycles. Therefore, this study will identify the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction among express bus customer in Kuantan for creating user comfort in getting the best service to launch daily activities. The significance can be divided into four main sections as follow:

i. Responsible Parties

Parties involved are those responsible on road safety as JKRJ, RTD, and SPAD with involved in the management of public transport. Research it is hoped this will help the authorities to make improvements in the safety and satisfaction guarantee users of public transportation specifically express bus. In addition, the responsible party can make an assessment on the same bus company operators have standard safety set by the government.

ii. Bus operators transportation company

Through this research, bus operator can make plans for the safety of consumers to ensure consumer safety and satisfaction guaranteed is increased. In addition, it can be a line guide to specific companies to improve the system management and quality of service.

iii. Public

From the results of this research, the public can find out how the importance of public transports as one of the beliefs, particularly their daily transportation systems in rural areas. In addition, it can help the community in meeting their demand for the quality of bus services.

iv. University students

This research can help students to make reference and analysis related to aspects of public transportation specifically public bus while facilitating students get clearer information.

1.10 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Terms used in this paper relate to the specific terms relating to the study. The use of this term is to avoid the perception of understanding of the different studies as where required in a study.

i. Service quality

Differences between customer's expectations of services provider's performance and their evaluation of the services they received.

ii. Customer satisfaction

This overall satisfaction has a strong positive effect on customer loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service categories.

iii. Assurance

The feelings of trust and confidence in dealing with express bus services. This reflects the knowledge, experience and their ability to build self confidence as well as confidence in the customers themselves.

iv. Tangibles

Physical facilities, equipment, and the physical appearance of on employee of express bus services.

v. Reliability

The ability of express bus services to accurately achieve its services in the proper time and according to the promises it has made to its clients.

vi. Responsiveness

The tendency and willingness of service providers to help clients and satisfy their needs, immediately reply to their inquiries, and solve their problems as quickly as possible.

1.11 EXPECTED RESULT

The first chapter has described the introduction, background of study, problem statement, the objectives, the research questions, theoretical framework, research hypotheses, scope of study, the significance of study, and operational definition. In this chapter we can understand what is actually to be discussed and studied by researchers. This is with reference to the statement problems, objectives,

research questions and research hypotheses. Through limitation of the study, researchers gave focus of study in detail.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is part of synthesis about literature review that was finding is related with thus topic that got from articles, journals, and model of service quality gaps from previous research based on the theories of service quality and customers satisfaction. The aims of this chapter to identify the service quality, customer satisfaction, dimension of the services quality, and the relationship both of the variables. So, this chapter will be conducted based on the hypothesis and theoretical framework. Then, from the chapter can know more detail about the previous study.

2.2 SERVICES QUALITY

Quality of service was defined as the evaluation can focus that reflects the customer's perception of a particular service dimension reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles. Satisfaction, on the other hand, is more inclusive, it is influenced by the perception of service quality, product quality, and price as well as situational factors and personal factors (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003). For example, if users believe they have used express buses service, they will get comfort, safety and high quality service while utilizing the service. Then, services quality is critical to create comfort to the user. This situation because of the quality of service associated user satisfaction. If the quality of service provided in good user satisfaction also in good condition.

Through this study, in making public bus transportation system that benefits the users of public buses should have a high quality of service to satisfy the needs of customers using the service (Oliver 1980) and (Anable 2005). Therefore, the service quality of a good public bus is an important element for creating user comfort.

While Yong (2000) claims that it is important in reviewed the definitions and understand the concept of service. He also described the five of dimensions of SERVQUAL which is:

- i. Tangibility refers to physical facilities and facilitating goods.
- ii. Reliability refers to the ability perform promised service dependably and accurately.
- iii. Responsiveness refers to the willingness to help customer promptly.
- iv. Empathy refers to ability to approachable and attention the firms provide its customer.
- v. Assurance refers to ability to convey trust and confidence by showing respect to the customers.

2.3 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a feeling or attitude towards a product or service after it is used or possessed (Solomon 1986), (Wells and Prenskey 1996) , in (Metawa and Almossawi 1998). While Satisfaction from the comparison of the performance of individual products, compared to what is expected, and satisfaction occurs when what is predicted to exceed the expected level (Oliver 1980 in Stafford, Stafford and Wells, 1998). But customer satisfaction can be measured through various perceptions by each individual whether satisfaction is positively or negatively oriented toward service. At that consumers usually give positive feedback will be satisfied and repeat use of the product or service and deliver a positive message about the next thing to recommend to others to use. For users who give negative feedback will act otherwise and the matter will also be publicized through word of an individual to another individual, the matter will adversely affect yarn products and services provided. Therefore, customer satisfaction is very important in establishing a continuous

quality of service that each service rendered will get a positive response and help users get the service.

From the study in another concept of customer satisfaction is a condition in which the desires, hopes and needs of its customers. A service will be evaluated when the services are able to meet customer needs and expectations. Customer satisfaction measurement is an important element in providing better service, efficiently and effectively. When customers are not satisfied for a service that is provided, then the service is determined to be ineffective and inefficient. This is especially important for the express bus service. Level of customer satisfaction with services is an important factor in developing a strong service delivery system to the needs of our customer's, reduce costs and time as well as maximizing the impact of services to the target population. Customer satisfaction measurement is an important element in providing better, more efficient and more effective. When customers are not satisfied for a service that is provided, then the Services is virtually certain to be ineffective and inefficient. This is especially important for the express bus service.

2.4 BUS SERVICES QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The term service quality in the transport literature context has long been investigated and has been defined in many forms. It has been defined as; the quality criteria and the accurate measures for which the providers are responsible to provide, the measurement process of how the service quality level delivered matches the customer satisfaction, the measurements that reflects users` perceptions towards the service,, the pre-defined standard of service attributes relative to the actual service quality , the measuring of customer expectation on a constant service standard base. These definitions have opened the door for further in-depth analysis of the quality process in the context of bus transit service.

2.4.1 Quality loop

In order to understand and monitor bus service quality, the process of quality monitoring must be broken down into manageable items and the correlation between these items must be investigated. Based on that fact, (CEN 2002) has developed and

proposed the service quality loop which explains the process of quality management. The quality loop has identified three basic aspects which influence the overall quality process including; quality, satisfaction, and management. Furthermore, the quality loop has introduced in-depth analysis for these three aspects. This analysis has identified four different types of quality aspects, two levels of satisfaction, and different proposals for quality management processes.

However, (CEN 2002) and further has identified the different correlations between the quality loop aspects. This correlation analysis has revealed sixteen different correlations. Firstly, (CEN 2002) identified the positive correlations between the individual items of the service quality, on one hand, and the correlations between the overall service quality and these items – desired, targeted, delivered, and perceived quality on the other hand. (Nathanail 2008) identified the positive one direction correlation between the overall service quality desired, perceived, targeted, and delivered and the overall user satisfaction. (While, Lai and Chen 2010) broke down this conclusion into more detailed analysis in which they have identified that, service quality has a positive correlation with perceived quality, and overall quality with perceived quality have a positive correlation with user level of satisfaction. Users` satisfaction has a major impact on both level of involvement and user loyalty (behavioural intentions).

2.4.2 Quality gaps

The transport literature has identified several gaps associated with bus service quality loop. These gaps include the issues of identifying the level of satisfaction for potential and current users, the difference between operational and physical quality measurements, and the integration between strategic policy direction and targeted quality. Several studies have been generated in attempts to overcome and address these issues. (Eboli and Mazzulla) proposed a methodology to evaluate the service quality through the division of subjective and objective measurements. (Iseki and Taylor) identified the effect of an individual service attribute on the overall level of satisfaction.(Lai and Chen) explored the relation between passenger intentions and the different service attributes.

Out of all these studies five individual gaps not previously combined in one study have been identified within the service quality context including; the lack of physical and operational measurements the lack of individual attribute impact on the overall level of satisfaction, the lack of policy integration within the targeted quality, the dilemma of perceived and desired level of satisfaction for both current and potential users, and the lack of integration between transport dynamic and detailed complexity. Although these gaps have been identified from previous studies in bus transit service quality context, each study has investigated only individual gaps without taking into consideration the effect of other gaps on the overall quality process.

2.5 MEASURES OF SERVICE QUALITY FOR PUBLIC

At the first place, in service quality there have an interaction between the customers and service providers. Customers give a comment to the service provider whether the service brings satisfaction to them. There are many techniques of evaluation on measuring service quality in different methods such as asking customer perception about the service quality, asking expectation from the customers on what their expected from service provider or asking both at the same time.

In the previous study, Randheer et.al (2011) conducts a research on measuring commuters' perception on service quality by using SERVQUAL scale. In this study, the researcher using survey methods collects the data from the respondents. They are taking 534 respondents randomly and the researcher finalized to get final analysis and the results found that the service quality delivery meets perception of commuters. Researchers construct about 28 questions through understanding of conceptualization and operationalization of service quality in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The questionnaire are made relating to the tangibility factors, reliability factors, responsiveness factors, assurance factors, empathy factors and the last factors relating to cultural factors.

In order to measure service quality and SERVQUAL dimensions the researcher can use statistical analysis, this technique will evaluate whether the hypotheses that have been made accepted or not. The data was analysing using

statistical software tool which called SPSS. Calculating will be made on Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson Correlation, Descriptive Statistic and Multiple Regression analysis. So that, the questionnaire that will distributed randomly to the respondents will be evaluate to find the whether the question are relevant or reliable and understand by the respondents. The Pearson Correlation analysis is obtained intervals scaled variables in order to finds whether the hypotheses is rejected or not rejected.

2.6 DIMENSION OF SERVICES QUALITY

Ladhari, (2009), it is recommended that the SERVQUAL model is a good scale to use when measuring service quality in various specific industries but that it is appropriate to choose the most important dimensions of this model that fit to that particular service being measured in order to assure reliable and valid results. In this regard, we will use this model because it takes into account customer's expectation of a service as well as perceptions of the service which is best way to measure service quality in service sector (Shahin, 2005).

2.6.1 Assurance

Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Where it relates to security. Customers will feel free of danger, risk, or doubt including physical security, financial security, and privacy.

2.6.2 Tangibles

The term of tangibles or "physical quality" is refer to the appearances that focuses on physical facilities, tool and equipment, personnel, communication material or physical features used to provide the service. Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1991) divided their physical products into two categories which is physical products and physical support. Physical products is refer to good or goods consumed during the service production process whether physical support is refer to the framework that enables or facilities the production of the service. Parasuraman et al. (1988) suggested using physical appearances in order to measure service quality in public transportation.