

## THE DEMANDING GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: CLIENT'S EXPECTED AND PERCEIVED SERVICES AT ONE WINDOW

### SERVICE OFFICE (OWSO) OF DOUNKEO CITY, CAMBODIA

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### ABSTRACT

The paper appraised the clients' Expected Services (ES) and Perceived Services (PS) on service quality at One Window Service Office (OWSO) of Dounkeo City, Cambodia as observed by clients. It also explored the challenges of the OWSO to recommend possible guidelines for improving service delivery of the OWSO. The components of SERVQUAL were used to measure clients' expectations and perceptions for the service quality. The quantitative data were collected from two different groups of clients (n=150), while the qualitative data were collected from both clients (n=15) and OWSO officers (n=15) through in-depth interviews and a group discussion. The findings from the survey questionnaires indicated that clients were significantly satisfied with the OWSO of Dounkeo City for delivering the services. Statistically, it showed that there was evidence from the positive gap score ( $\bar{X}=.42$ ,  $SD=.05$ ). Depending on the results achieved from the interviews and discussion, it was clear that there were some shortfalls still existing in the OWSO. All in all, the study has suggested three main points of modification to the OWSO board of managers to take into account of the integrity and morality of service delivery at OWSO to be better.

**KEYWORDS:** One Window Service Office (OWSO), Service Quality, SERVQUAL, Client's Expected Services, Client's Perceived Services

### INTRODUCTION

In 2015 is the year that ASEAN countries will be integrated as ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). After the integration, the community will try its best to enrich ASEAN with one same vision, mission, and destiny. For Cambodia, reformations in service delivery are very important in this country to adapt itself beforehand. Over a decade, the Royal of Government of Cambodia (RGC) headed by Samdech Akheamohasanapadei Decho Hun Sen has been trying to determine how to improve the service quality in both the public and private sectors. Administrative, legal, and judicial systems have been carefully reformed to strengthen the rule of law, human resource development, good governance, democracy, sustainable macro-economic growth, and anti-corruption efforts and most importantly to meet the requirements of ASEAN constitution as well as those of the AEC charter. As we noticed, the two local-level democracy systems of the RGC namely Decentralization and De-concentration (D&D) were carefully applied in Cambodia in 2001 and 2008, but they were reformed during 2009-2012 (Niazi 2011). Its vision is to make better of the structures and administrations of the local

governments and to achieve good public service delivery. Moreover, demanding for good governance to reduce poverty of people in Cambodia, the OWSO is a new mechanism office providing public service delivery which was implemented in 2008. However, in Dounkeo City it was implemented in 2011, still its operation is really interesting. Therefore, this research paper decided to compare the clients' expectations and their perceptions on service quality's level and explored the challenges of the OWSO of Dounkeo City for providing public services.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### One Window Service Office (OWSO)

In Cambodia, the Single Window (SW) system being adapted and implemented as a new mechanism for public service delivery is now known as One Window Service Office (OWSO), a facility that brings together of the government services or information for citizens in order to reduce the amount of their time and effort and to achieve the services they need. Citizens were very satisfied with the services provided (R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. 2002). The OWSO in Cambodia was established in 2008 with four major goals to strengthen the demand for good governance for local government by: (1) responding to the needs of citizens, small businesses, local authorities, civil servants at different levels, and the RGC; (2) providing public services to citizens for certain administrative services to be delivered with time limit, transparency, accountability, responsibility, and efficiency; (3) Contributing an avenue for mediating complaints and concerns of citizens and small businesses regarding the city administration, and (4) promoting awareness and participation of citizens and small businesses in decisions, policies, programs of local governments, and city governments (OWSO 2014). Currently, the OWSO is being operated in 36 cities/khans among 23 provinces and in Phnom Penh, a capital city of Cambodia.

### Service Quality

Gronroos (1982), Lewis and Booms (1983), A. Parasuraman, Zeithml, and Berry (1985) defined service quality as clients' access to a firm's service quality by comparing their perceptions of the services they received (Perceived Services, "PS") with expectations for the services (Expected Services, "ES") (Leonard L. Berry; Jeffrey S. Conant; A. Parasuraman 1991). In 2001, Brysland and Curry notified that service quality is about providing something intangible in a way that not only pleases but also gives values to its clients. In common, service quality is like the extent of a service to meet its clients' needs or expectations (Lewis, B.R. and Mitchell, V.W. 1990). By A. Parasuraman et al., (1985), Lewis and Mitchell (1990), considered Service Quality can thus be defined as the difference between clients' expectations of services and their perceptions. If the expectations are greater than performances, then perceived quality is less satisfactory and hence clients' dissatisfaction occurs (Wisniewski 2001). Depending on the theory, we concentrate on clarifying the service quality of OWSO of Dounkeo City, Cambodia by its performance of providing public services to citizens whether it significantly meets its clients' expectations.

### SERVQUAL

The model of the service quality SERVQUAL is a service quality framework which was developed in 1985 by Parasuraman et al. The model is used for clients to evaluate the service quality. It has five overall dimensions and with 22 items for accessing perceptions of clients. The five of service quality identified by Parasuraman, Zeithamland Berry (1988) are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Leonard L. Berry; Jeffrey S. Conant; A. Parasuraman 1991). Service quality represents the extent to which an organization's performance perceived by clients meets or exceeds

their expectations. Accessing service quality involves measuring the extent and direction of the gap between clients' perceptions and their expectations along with the five of service quality (Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Barry 1988).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Sample

The field survey is conducted to two different groups of 150 participants (expected services and perceived services) at Dounkeo city, Takeo Province, Cambodia country. Convenience sampling was applied because the researcher selected the sampling according to citizens who went to OWSO from July to October in 2014. Each sample took approximately 15 minutes for questionnaire completion. Among all the participants, 10 percent of them were randomly selected, and 80 percent of OWSO's officers were purposely selected for interviews and a group discussion to clearly indicate their mental conceptions on service quality of the OWSO at Dounkeo City.

### Limitation and Validation

The study takes place in one region in Dounkeo City, Takeo province of Cambodia. The study focuses on the clients' expectations and their perceptions on service quality of the OWSO in Dounkeo City and finds out the challenges of the OWSO, giving some recommendations to board of managers of the OWSO. The validation of the study is in the year of 2014.

### Research Instruments

The study of both deductive and exploratory approaches was used for this research. For quantitative data collection, SERVQUAL was developed by A. Parasuraman et al in 1985; Expected Services (ES) and Perceived Services (PS) questionnaires were developed. The questionnaires were arranged into 5-service dimensions which are: (1) *TANGIBLES*-appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials; (2) *RELIABILITY*-ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately; (3) *RESPONSIVENESS*-willingness to help clients and provide prompt service; (4) *ASSURANCE*-knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence; (5) *EMPATHY*-caring, individualized attention that the OWSO provides to its clients. The questionnaires consist of 22 items (A. Parasuraman 1985) with score on a 5-point liking scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Moreover, in order to find out more clearly on the ES and PS of the clients and some challenges of the OWSO of Dounkeo City, in-depth interviews and a group discussion were engaged for data collection.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

### Service Quality of the OWSO of Dounkeo City

For the finding of the study of the service quality's level of the Dounkeo City OWSO, pair *t-test* was used to compare means of Expected Services (ES) and Perceived Services (PS) by using SPSS and EViews7 applications for analysis as we can see in (Table 1).

**Table 1: Overall Score of Clients' Expected Services (ES) and Perceived Services (PS)**

Paired Differences								
				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2- Tailed)
	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>SD Error Mean</i>	Lower	Upper			
Overall PS	.42	.05	.004	.41	.43	93.87	149	.000
Overall ES								

Depending on Table 1, it showed that the overall service quality gap was found to be positive at statistically significant difference .004 by  $mean = .42, SD = .05, P = .000$  and  $n = 150$ . The evidence clarified that the clients' perceived services exceed clients' expected services. Moreover, it also identified that clients were received more than they expected from the OWSO of Dounkeo City. Furthermore, according to the observation, interviews and a group discussion showed that the OWSO is a facility that has many kinds of service provision accomplished with sociability, transparency, quickness, time limit, accountability, less corruption, time and money saving for citizens, small businesses, local authorities, civil servants at different levels as well as the Royal Government of Cambodia to pursue poverty reduction policy by demanding good governance for the local government. However, the OWSO still has a few challenges for its operational process (Da, Director of OWSO of Dounkeo City, Cambodia 2014).

#### The Challenges of the OWSO of Dounkeo City

According to our careful and thorough observations, interviews, and discussions, we found that OWSO of Dounkeo City faces four main issues which were the root problems of proving the best quality of service delivery to its clients as following:

- **Lack of Human Resource**

For more than one year, an officer who was responsible for legalization at front desk office quitted, and there was no replacement for the position. After releasing the result of the National High School Examination, high school graduates seeking to have their certificates identified and issued by the OWSO of Dounkeo City were not happy due to the lateness of the service and staff's indifference. Therefore, the two other front desk officers responsible for this kind of work tried really hard despite much workload. Otherwise, the back desk officers were then delegated by line agencies such as Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, Ministry of Education Youth and Sports, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Land Management Urban Planning and Construction, Ministry of Industry and Handicraft, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, and Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries. There was only one back desk officer from each ministry assigned to work in the OWSO. They completed their tasks as assigned by the ministries and provincial offices. That they had to be responsible for much workload was a challenge. Especially, when someone went busy, got sick, or had a mission to complete, the OWSO working processes were significantly affected.

- **Lack of Budget and Financial Autonomy**

Since 2014, the operational cost is controlled by municipality of Dounkeo City, and the revenue collected were transferred to provincial treasury and controlled by the Ministry on Interior and Ministry Economy and Finance.

Equipment, facilities, and materials which were provided from municipality are neither on time-limited nor enough for the OWSO operations. In addition, no incentive was provided to the officers, and low salary was the main reason for making officers unwilling to work prudently and properly.

- **Bureaucracy**

For construction, tourism, health, public works and transportation, and vital record sectors were very complicated for clients. They had to wait for a long time and spend much money due to bureaucracy of tax, custom, or fire protection institutions which affect the above sectors. Also those institutions themselves require many complication cases making the progresses slow.

- **Operations**

Till now, the OWSO faces a remarkable problem. Some people are still not familiar with the information and public service delivery of the OWSO and its office yet. This has become another noticeable problem needed to be solved as soon as possible by spreading the information to those people through any means (Da, Report of OWSO 2014).

## CONCLUSIONS

One Window Service Office (OWSO) is a new mechanism of a slogan “to serve citizens to be better”, which is the result of demanding Good Governance (GG) for local government services by widely spreading the services which were provided by the municipality. Providing administration services at one place makes it easy, quick, effective, full of quality, transparent, accountable, simple, cheap, and responsive for citizens. In addition, it has provided many advantages to citizens, small businesses, local authorities, civil servants at different levels, and the RGC (MoI 2008). It is also an application to achieve the GG for local government by significantly reducing poverty in Dounkeo City as well as the whole nation of Cambodia (Da, Director of OWSO Dounkeo City 2014). Even though there were some deficits considered as a major challenge of the OWSO of Dounkeo City, the reviews of observations, interviews, group discussion, and statistical analysis clarified that the clients, who received the services provided by the OWSO, are satisfied. All in all, we noticed that the RGC headed by Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has been paying great attention to the reforming administrative system management. What it has been developing, He is always flexible to serve Cambodian people to be better from year to year.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

From our point of view, we would like to suggest the OWSO management team at municipality, in Dounkeo City, as well as other OWSOs in Cambodia to keep their good working habit and promote priority activities for public service serving for people for the betterment by concerning the following:

**Human Resource Management:** knowledge, skills, ability, possibility, and willingness are important criteria to become a staff of OWSOs, so pre- and in-service trainings should be conducted. Also, salary and incentives should be highly considered because the two can motivate the staff's effort, increase their work quality, minimize corruption, and make them satisfied in term of their needs.

**Administrative and Financial Management:** E-Governance is more reliable than traditional ways of management. Therefore, E-Governance for good governance should be quickly promoted for both administrative and financial management systems to be effective, transparent, accountable, and acceptable.

**Operational Processes:** Operational planning is very important. In addition, financial autonomy is needed for healthy operational costs and effectiveness in OWSOs. More importantly, the cooperation from all stakeholders should be deliberated for smooth and efficient operational processes. Information, broadcasts, and good relationship are very necessary. Due to these reasons, operational research should be done to minimize the negative impacts on OWSOs.

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