

Roles of Generic Requirements and Flexibility towards Customer Satisfaction of Internet Service Providers in Indonesia

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Abstract:

The study is designed to explore the roles of generic requirements and flexibility towards customer satisfaction of internet service providers in high-growth market like Jakarta, Indonesia. The construct flexibility was considered as a new determinant for customer satisfaction. 200 data were collected using a Five-Likert scale of questionnaires. The study finds that generic requirements flexibility plays important roles towards customer satisfaction of the internet service providers. The current research has taken into account two new variables which are generic requirements and flexibility in measuring customer satisfaction in a high-growth market such as Jakarta.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, Generic requirements, Flexibility, Internet service provider, Jakarta.

I. Introduction

Handling customer in the 21st century is no longer about providing basic service to customer. Customer today is knowledgeable and have more bargaining power resulted from high competition among the service provider. Internet was introduced in last two decades and the evolution of the services increase tremendously beyond the control of service provider. Customer for example during the old days relied on SMS for alternative to cellular voice call. Mobile service network earn profit from the basic cellular GSM package. Today the voice package is almost left behind as customer used voice over internet for almost everything. People live in the 21st century used internet for entertainment, daily activities such as email, ebanking, ewallet and as a medium of communication using FaceTime, WhatsApp and many others. Internet also becoming one of the working tools for office and business usage. SMS is almost obsolete while message through internet getting popular. For the young people, social media is one of the platform to connect with people. Business owner used the internet and social media to promote their product and services. There are also a group of people who earn money using internet to promote their own video for income. All the above change the lifecycle of people in the 21st century.

As the lifecycle and routine change, the needs and demand also changes according to the trend. Customer is choosier in

selecting their internet package. There are requirements that mobile service provider need to accommodate in order for them to register for the package. Generic requirements are the basic necessity that customer will ensure provides by the mobile service provider. Generic requirements basically is focusing on the basic needs to meet the current customer requirements in order to communicate through internet. On top of that, customer also looking for a package that is flexible. Customer is looking for a package that can change according to their needs and demand. Mobile network providers need to study the requirements from customer in order not to lose their market share. At the same time customer expectations is high as they have been exposed by the so many choices and services provided by other mobile network providers. As a result, mobile network provider faces tough time to meet the customer satisfaction level with a greater demand and expectations.

II. Literature review

Customer satisfaction

There are many studies related to factors or determinants of customer satisfaction. There are also studies that measure the role of customer satisfaction as a control variable towards customer loyalty (Nguyen, Nisar, Knox, & Prabhakar, 2018). It shows that customer satisfaction is very important as another step of service providers to achieve another level of customer that is being categorized as loyal (Nguyen et al., 2018). The first level of customer that is important to any

service provider is customer satisfaction. The challenge behind the relationship of variables factors towards customer satisfaction is uncertain. Results found in other industry could be not similar or associate to other industry or product (Mohd Farid Shamsudin, Esa, & Ali, 2019). The change of trend, pattern and change of economy situation may result in a different result as compared to other previous empirical studies (Razak & Shamsudin, 2019).

Customer satisfaction according to (Kotler, 1994) is an overall feeling of customer upon experience the consumption of a service or products. It means that satisfaction derived based on customer total experienced of a service or use of products (Hassan & Shamsudin, 2019). The initial feeling that lead to the benchmark of customer conclusion is actually very subjective. The satisfaction level can only be achieved once the customer concluded that the service received is at or more than customer expectation (Berry, Parasuraman, & Zeithaml, 1985; Hirata, 2019; Kim, Cho, & Kim, 2019). Customer may become dissatisfaction should the service level received is below the customer expectations (Gerdt, Wagner, & Schewe, 2019; Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019; Zhang, Zhang, & Zhang, 2019).

In an internet service for example, customer is expecting the service quality is always at the top or maximum speed. Customer expect that they will enjoyed a smooth streaming without hang or interruption. Customer become dissatisfaction once the end result is beyond their expectations (M. F. Shamsudin, Razak, & Salem, 2018). The questions raised is why it is important for service provider to meet the customer expectations? Customer is the main reason why business entity exists (Broetzmann, Kemp, Rossano, & Marwaha, 1995). Customer is the source of revenue. The transaction between service or products against customer currency is the objective of the business.

One of the reason why all business must strive the level of customer satisfaction is because loyal customer is a treasure that business need to keep and hide from the world or competitors (Borishade et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2019). In any business there is not a single rules or agreement to forced customer to be satisfied or loyal. Customer can in a split second change their mind and go anywhere else. Past research stressed that loyal customer might switch to other service provider should they offered a new interesting services with no switching barrier (Chicu, Pàmies, Ryan, & Cross, 2019; Davras & Caber, 2019; Hirata, 2019; Rita et al., 2019). Another research also indicates that satisfied customer may switch although there is a switching barrier (Kumar, Scheer, & Kotler, 2000; Ojiaku, Nkamnebe, & Nwaizugbo, 2018). Based on the statements, customer

satisfaction is actually subjective based on many variables. Satisfied customer is considered a treasure to the service company. (Kotler, 1992; Lindgreen, Palmer, & Vanhamme, 2004) indicates that satisfied customer have high tendency for repeat purchase. (Panozzo, 2008) also concluded that satisfied customer is important to the business as they behave differently from the new customer or those who enjoyed different customer experiences.

Having satisfied customer according (Chicu et al., 2019; Davras & Caber, 2019; Hirata, 2019) to helps service provider to be more outstanding compared to competitor. Satisfied customer will normally stay with the service provider until the day come for the customer to change their mind. (Rita et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2019) revealed that a satisfied customer could also become the promotional agents to service providers. A satisfied customer who initially does not put high hope on the service level may be surprised by the service level given by the service provider. Happy customer (Broetzmann et al., 1995; Zhang et al., 2019) will communicate their feeling using the word of mouth or others. It was said that satisfied customer will talk to 9 – 20 family and friends (Famiyeh, Asante-Darko, & Kwarteng, 2018). The same family and friends at the same time will communicate to the rest of their circle. The same process repeated and that is one of the way that service provider can earn profit, increase sales or profit.

The benefits of customer satisfaction to the service provider is that they can have a greater customer loyalty. Satisfied customer will repeat purchase. The longer they stay in the cycle may lead to loyal. Satisfied customer is reported by (Ahmed, Tarique, & Arif, 2017; Janahi & Al Mubarak, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2018; Yilmaz, Ari, & Gürbüz, 2018) contribute to the growth sales. Satisfied customer will not switch to other product or service provider. The more service provider has satisfied customer, the more that the service provider can get a repeat purchase from the current customer (Mohd Farid Shamsudin et al., 2019). Satisfied customer will also talk good about the brand. Satisfied customer have the tendency to promote and introduce the product or service to other people.

Satisfied customer according to (Liu et al., 2019) may help the service provider from being worried about competition. A strong service provider with large database of satisfied customer may stand out from competition (Chicu et al., 2019; Davras & Caber, 2019). At the same time, the service provider should focus on customer retention. Keep the satisfied customer and it will help the service provider to reduce the acquisition cost. (Ahmed et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2018; Yilmaz et al., 2018) reported that satisfied customer helps the service provider to enhance the customer experience. Existing customer may provide solutions or suggestion that may help

the service provider to revised their current process for enhancement(Eberle, Milan, & Dorion, 2016; Forsythe, 2016; Kant & Jaiswal, 2017). The feedback provided by customer should be acceptable because they suggest based on their experiences.

Customer satisfaction can represent point of difference(Moghavvemi, Lee, & Lee, 2018). Existing customer is the one who will talk good about their experiences and the benefit that they enjoyed(M. F. Shamsudin et al., 2018). Peer to peer recommendation is more trusted as compared to advertisements by the supplier. Indirectly satisfied customer helps the service provider to grow, (Ahmed et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2018; Yilmaz et al., 2018) suggested that service provider to understand customer in order to get customer satisfaction. Service provider need to understand their customer especially the group of segment that they are belong. Service provider to evaluate and ask more questions about the products or service and try to improve the services. (Pizam, Shapoval, & Ellis, 2016; Worsfold, Fisher, McPhail, Francis, & Thomas, 2016; Zobnina & Rozhkov, 2018)stated that only by understanding customer may help the service provider to find similarities and those features that liked by them.

Generic requirements

For many people or even business, internet is becoming among the mandatory requirements or a must have items. The important of internet is that some business perhaps is not functioning if the internet connection is not available (GSMA Association, 2014; Stanton, 2004). Household at the same time use internet as their communications and entertainments solutions (Nakamura & Chow-White, 2013). This research is to study the relationship of generic requirements of the internet package towards customer satisfaction. Among the important criteria or features that customer is looking or must have to fulfil customer needs is the coverage availability (Jung, Qiu, & Kim, 2001; MacLean, 2000). Customer expect that all places that they explored is covered with the service. Such high expectations are difficult to fulfil but it can be compensating with other services that may still attract the customer (Abd-elrahman, Hassan, El-borsaly, & Hafez, 2019; Ruiz Díaz, 2017). Customer in rural areas normally did not enjoyed the services due to coverage limitation. As such mobile network providers must clearly have informed the customer their territory or zone that is covered to avoid service failure or interruption at the end user side (Lien, Cao, & Zhou, 2017).

Another important criterion that customer is looking as part of their basic requirements is the speed provided (GSMA Association, 2014). Speed is important especially for business

user. Slow speed due to service disrupt may cause losses to the business owner (Stanton, 2004). To some customers, speed is the most important factor when determining in selecting the mobile service provider. customer always want the fastest internet that they can get in their area (Giovanis, Zondiros, & Tomaras, 2014; Lien et al., 2017; Sharma & Sharma, 2019). The coverage is basically based on location that the mobile service provider managed to penetrate (Nakamura & Chow-White, 2013). Location that are not covered could be due to many reason known to the mobile service provider. Some areas are less population that may incurred more cost in providing the services (Hapsari, Clemes, & Dean, 2016; Shafei & Tabaa, 2016). Some other areas may due to licensed or territorial issues. As far as the mobile service provider is concern they are willing or at least aims to covered the whole nation since that could be their revenue.

Customer is also looking for a better internet plan. Today all information related to services provided by market player is available for customer to compare (Muhammad, Farid Shamsudin, & Hadi, 2016). There are even a BlogSpot that give free advice to customer prior purchase any package. The package has been designed to cater all level of people in the nation. Most of the time, the package split into customer segment (Butts, 2009). There is package for students, business owner, online seller, office purposes, sharing, mobile usage and modem for Wi-Fi. Customer need to compare carefully and select the best that they thin k can suit their requirements (Ahmed et al., 2017; Famiyeh et al., 2018; Janahi & Al Mubarak, 2017). It is also recommended that customer to check the speed that is being advertised. It does not mean the speed that customer be receiving (M. Shamsudin et al., 2015).

Competition in the industry lead mobile service provider to reduce their margin and managed customer at their best to sustain in the industry (Jusoh, Zakuan, Bahari, Ariff, & Hayat, 2012). Report indicated that most of mobile service provider have losses their glory time where they can make money from the services. Today, package was breaks into segment at very minimum cost (Shafei & Tabaa, 2016). The package offered today is to match the speed with the cost. High speed with no capping of usage may lead to high fees. Limited usage may be cheaper but customer may not able to enjoyed the service once the capacity given meet the threshold (Lympelopoulous, Chaniotakis, & Soureli, 2013; Wang, Du, Chiu, & Li, 2018).

Past research indicates that type of connection is also important to customer. mobile service provider started by introducing 2G followed by 2.5G and now the world is preparing for 5G (GSMA Association, 2014). The speed is important especially for business purposes such as banking, stock exchange and those things that may involve direct communications related to machine to machine (Shafei &

Tabaa, 2016). Customer who used internet as a medium of entertainment or games. Customer is very concern about the upload and download criteria provides by the mobile service provider.

Customer is also concern about reliability of the service. Customer need to make sure to select only a reliable mobile service provider. Strong and big mobile service provider may provide better service with less service failure (Hapsari et al., 2016). Internet also being used as a medium of learning in the education industry. Selection of reliable mobile service provider will ensure smooth operation and service delivery to the end user. Good customer service is a measure of how fast they can help get you back up and running. Most businesses can't wait several days for new hardware to be shipped to them. They require a higher level of service and a good service provider understands that.

Flexibility

In the early days of internet there are not many options given by the mobile network service provider to customer to choose (Jusoh et al., 2012). During that time internet is still new, not many competitors and have been treated as a luxury business facility (Muhammad et al., 2016). Not many options given and most of the time customer pay the mobile network service provider for the things that they did not make fully used. Today, things work differently where customer have ample options of data package that is suitable based on what they required (Stanton, 2004). Some package is for individual only but there are also available for business or sharing purposes. mobile network service provider gives options to customer to choose their usage either by daily, weekly or monthly (Giovanis et al., 2014). There are also pay per use basis that only chargeable when customer used (Thaker et al., 2020).

Customer have been given flexibility on the selection not only related to usage by speed and size. Each may not similar in cost but carry a unique service that most probably can meet the demand for everyone in Indonesia. flexibility can be categorized as an organization's ability to change its policies, practices, or procedures easily and quickly in order to adapt to different and changing environment demands (Abd-elrahman et al., 2019), Past research (Hapsari et al., 2016; Phong, Khoi, & Nhat-Hanh Le, 2018; Shafei & Tabaa, 2016) indicates that flexibility lead to customer satisfaction. The flexibility provides positive impact to mobile network service provider (Izogo, 2017). On top of the package plan, mobile network service provider also provides options to customer in terms of value added services. The services differ from one package to another but normally bundle together with the package selected (M. Shamsudin et al., 2015).

Report stated that flexibility shows that mobile network service provider is concern about customer and may lead to customer satisfaction (Jusoh et al., 2012). It shows that mobile network service provider is concern about customer and becoming customer centered in providing their services. There is also inter-functional coordination provided in the services given. Most of mobile network service provider provides almost similar or identical services (Mannan, Mohiuddin, Chowdhury, & Sarker, 2017). Such situation give advantage to customer as they have ample choices.

The flexibility is important not only related to mobile network service provider but to almost all service industry (Liang, Ma, & Qi, 2013). Today customer behavior change and the same goes to mobile network service provider. Service provider need to move parallel together with the customer fast demand and technology in order to survive.

III. Methodology

This is a quantitative research where survey questionnaire was used as a medium to collect data. The questionnaire is split into 2 sections. Section A is related to respondent profile and section B is on the items used to measure the relationship between the independent variable towards dependent variable. The questionnaire was developed based on adaptation from past studies (Razak & Shamsudin, 2019; Mohd Farid Shamsudin et al., 2019). Reliability and validity was conducted to ensure the items used are valid. The scope of study is related to customer of mobile network providers. Only customer who used internet is approached. All together there are 240 questionnaire distributed all over telecommunication outlets in Jakarta but only 200 usable for data analysis. Normality test was still being conducted as to ensure the data are not too far from normal bell curve. Normality test result shows that the skewness and kurtosis reading meeting the range of -2 and +2

IV. Data analysis

Table 1: Respondent profile

Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender or respondents		
Female	67	34%
Male	133	67%
Total	200	100%
Age of respondent		
Under 18	57	29%
18-24	67	34%
25-34	38	19%

35-49	19	10%
50-64	17	9%
Above 65	2	1%
Total	200	100%
Monthly budget for Mobile		
USD 10 and below	25	13%
USD 11 - USD 20	55	28%
USD 21 - USD 30	64	32%
USD 31 - USD 40	28	14%
USD 41 - USD 50	17	9%
More than USD 50	11	6%
	200	100%
Occupation		
Student	98	49%
Employees	27	14%
Business owner	51	26%
Others	24	12%
Total	200	100%
Experience of using Internet		
Less than 1 year	8	4%
1 - 2 years	48	24%
3 -4 years	88	44%
More than 5 years	56	28%
Total	200	100%

Table 2: Summary of statistics of questionnaire survey

Constructs	Number of Items	Mean	Sd
Generic requirements	12	3.134	1.204
Flexibility	6	4.234	1.420
Customer satisfaction	6	4.565	1.078

Table 2 above indicates the details of items according to the constructs together with the mean value. The results show that all items means was more than 3. With standard deviation from 1.078 – 1.204.

Table 3: below shows the rotated factor loadings and their eigenvalue and Cronbach alpha value. The results indicated that calculated alpha value is more than 0.7 that reflects a good consistency among items.

Table 3: Result of factor analysis

No	Functional service recovery	Technical service recovery	Customer satisfaction
GR 1	0.921		
GR 2	0.962		
GR 3	0.923		
GR 4	0.940		
GR 5	0.782		
GR 6	0.765		
GR 7	0.812		
GR 8	0.732		
GR 9	0.904		
GR 10	0.810		
GR 11	0.788		
GR 12	0.712		
F 1		0.833	
F 2		0.876	
F 3		0.765	
F 4		0.962	
F 5		0.756	
F 6		0.925	
SAT 1			0.888
SAT 2			0.765
SAT 3			0.961
SAT 4			0.876
SAT 5			0.850
Eigenvalue	6.954	3.932	1.823
Cumulative percentage of explained variance	37.106	58.321	71.431
Cronbach alpha	0.796	0.824	0.791

Table 4 shows the AVE values for constructs ranged in between 0.55 to 0.79 indicating good reliability. The table also shows that all values are above the threshold value 0.7. It means that all the constructs have high reliability value.

Table 4: Measurement model results

Constructs	Standardize d loadings	t statistics	CR	AVE
GR 1	0.901	21.306*	0.81	0.72
GR 2	0.915	22.417*		
GR 3	0.922	21.503*		
GR 4	0.930	22.328*		

		*		
GR 5	0.742	16.637*		
GR 6	0.714	16.203*		
GR 7	0.919	22.318*		
GR 8	0.904	16.627*		
GR 9	0.912	16.203*		
GR 10	0.913	21.503*		
GR 11	0.928	22.338*		
GR 12	0.737	16.647*		
F 1	0.836	20.606*	0.85	0.70
F 2	0.877	20.724*		
F 3	0.764	14.302*		
F 4	0.966	21.718*		
F 5	0.757	14.418*		
F 6	0.922	21.305*		
SAT 1	0.780	14.316*	0.80	0.65
SAT 2	0.866	18.401*		
SAT 3	0.860	18.819*		
SAT 4	0.977	21.213*		
SAT 5	0.881	18.211*		

** indicates significant at $p < 0.01$ level

Table 5: Correlations between constructs

	Generic requirements	Flexibility	Customer satisfaction
Generic requirements	0.72*		

Flexibility	0.08	0.70*	
Customer satisfaction	0.28	0.45	0.65*

*Diagonal elements are AVE

The AVE value for flexibility is 0.70 while the squared inter-construct correlations estimates value is 0.45. AVE for generic requirement is 0.72 and the squared inter-construct correlations estimates value is 0.08 for flexibility and 0.28 for customer satisfaction. Table 5 is the final results of the path analysis. Both hypothesis is supported

Table 5: Path analysis of structural model

Casual path	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t-stat	Results
General requirements → Customer satisfaction	H1	0.305**	3.15	Supported
Flexibility → Customer satisfaction	H2	0.202**	3.41	Supported

** indicates significance at $P < 0.01$ level

V. Conclusion and recommendation

The result indicates that both generic requirements and flexibility is equally important towards customer satisfaction in the internet service provider. One of the items in the generic requirements is the ability to connect smoothly. The connection issues have been a major complaint from many years ago. Recently there are much better perhaps because of technology or new system. Customer is less complaint on the connection issues. The fact is that customer cannot tolerate on the connection matters. They want to enjoyed a smooth video streaming as well as video call. Connections issues is a major thing that manages at the service provider need to consider for a long term strategic planning.

Second item tested in the research is good quality output, Customer expect that they can enjoyed not only a smooth connection but high quality video call and voice call. Today, customer no longer used GSM to make call but make used of the VOIP to communicate all around the world. The technology provides a greater cheaper cost. As a result, there could be intermittent during the usage dependable on the duration and time used. Manager need to communicate to all users that making call using VOIP especially international call may depends on a few parties involved. It could be due to the WhatsApp platform or any other mobile apps that faced difficulty during connection.

As for the flexibility, customer is looking forward for a various choice to be selected. Mobile service provider may provide few packages for internet such as for light user, medium and heavy user. Another possibility is providing the package based on the internet usage size such as 1Gb or 500MB or below. Such options provide more flexibility to customer.

As a conclusion, customer is very concern about their spending on mobile cellular. The result indicates that customer will choose the mobile service provider than can provide their generic requirements and flexible offering.

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