

Service Quality of Shipping Container at Merlex Transport Co. Ltd.

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Abstract - The research on service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. attempts to evaluate factors that have influence on service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. Questionnaires were used as a tool to collect data from 100 customers. Statistics used here for data analysis are frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, and One-Way ANOVA. The study revealed that most of the respondents are female aged 31-40, working as employees, type of service used is mostly cold container truck, and period of using the service is more than 6-8 years. Factors affecting service quality of shipping container are in the medium level overall. Tangibility is in the medium level, reliability is in high level, responsiveness is at the medium level, assurance is in high level, and empathy is in medium level. Regarding satisfaction in shipping container service of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd., it is found to be in medium level in general. Hypothesis test result showed that service quality in dependability and confidence aspects have effect on customer satisfaction on customer satisfaction at a statistical significance level of 0.05. Recommendation from the study suggested that CEO should pay attention to improvement of quality of delivery trucks in service to have modern technology, checking of trucks condition, applying new technology to enhance service quality, provide an effective 24-hour call center, and expand the transportation route nationwide.

Keywords: Service quality of shipping container, Merlex Transport Co., Ltd.

I. INTRODUCTION

Transportation of goods is a very necessary activity since manufacturing sites and consumers are located in different geographical areas. Manufacturers have to send their products to the place where there are needs. Customers tend to need more of quality products with larger volume of consumption and their needs of product are more likely in prompt manner. For this reason, manufacturers try to cope with this trend by improving product quality and availability. It is commonly known that apart from the product itself, service is the next most important element that comes along the product. Good service will improve customer satisfaction [2] with the product. Transportation also needs to have quality to satisfy customers. Delivery of the goods has to be done with minimal transportation cost [1]. "Logistics" is

the first service sector of Thailand that will move on to Asean Economic Community (AEC) by allowing foreign companies to come in to compete with local service providers and increase investment proportion. However, as we are coming close to AEC, we could see ineffectiveness in logistics [3] of Thailand. Logistic is the service that needs effective communication with customers and hence they seek quality of the service. If customers are not satisfied with the service, they may change to use other service providers. Therefore, transportation companies have to prepare in all respects to serve logistics needs that are increasing and they should improve effectiveness of logistics system along with improvement of service quality [4].

Transportation is the heart of all business whether domestic, import, or export. For this reason, this small company had started in the name Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. with expertise in maintenance and repair of dry container and reefer unit. The company has highly experienced and skilled personnel that continuously and intensely trained in accordance with international standard and now it is having UKAS ISO 9001: 2008. The company has the following significant policies: goods & container damage insurance of 10 million Baht; 24-hour call center; sophisticated computer program to manage goods delivery; 24-hour personnel for container handling; more than 80 trailers each is equipped with electricity generator; large area of container yard for stocking of containers; and numbers of electricity supply outlets to support cold container. Apart from all these, the most important thing in service is to create satisfaction to the customers. From the above reason, the researcher is interested to study service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. in order for future improvement and development of service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In 1988 Parasuraman et al. gathered the concepts they suggested in 1985 to become more precise by referring to further study conducted later causing their elements of service quality to reduce to 5 elements consisting of the followings. Tangibility

is physical facilities, equipments, and appearance of personnel. Reliability is ability to give the service as promised, trust, and accuracy. Responsiveness is enthusiasm and promptness to serve/ assist customers. Assurance is understanding of customers' needs, friendliness, and ability to make customers confident. Empathy is giving special care and attention to customers.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study factors affecting service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd.
2. To study customer satisfaction on service quality of shipping container at Merlex Transport Co., Ltd.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Instrument used in the study is questionnaire which could be divided into 4 parts:

Part1 contains 5 multiple choice questions about personal data of the respondents regarding gender, age, work position, type of service used, and number of years using the service of the company.

Part2 contains close-ended 5-level rating scale questions about factors affecting service quality of shipping container trucks in 5 aspects including assurance, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, and empathy.

Part 3 contains close-ended 5-level rating scale questions on satisfaction on service quality of shipping container trucks.

Part 4 contains open-ended questions for the respondents to express their ideas and suggestions. Inferential statistics used for this research to test the hypothesis are Independent t-test, and One-Way ANOVA.

Conceptual Framework

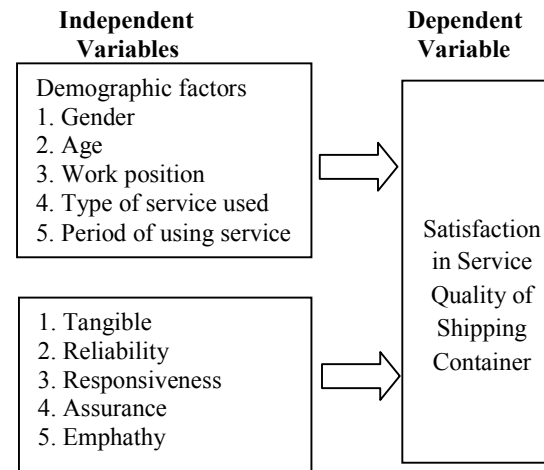


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Findings

From the study on 100 samples, it was revealed that most are female aged 31-40, working as employees, type of service used is mostly cold container truck, and period of using the service is more than 6-8 years.

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF CUSTOMERS HAVING DIFFERENT SERVICE QUALITY FACTORS AND THEIR DIFFERENT LEVEL OF SATISFACTION ON SERVICE OF SHIPPING CONTAINER TRUCKS

Satisfaction on transportation service		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Result
-Reliability	Between group	2.182	8	.273	2.218	.033*	different
	Within group	11.191	91	.123			
	Total	13.374	99				
-Assurance	Between group	3.402	8	.425	3.248	.003*	different
	Within group	11.915	91	.131			
	Total	15.316	99				

Table I indicates that customers with different factor of reliability have effects on satisfaction in the service quality of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. at 0.033 meaning reliability perceived by customers have effect on their satisfaction on the service. For assurance, it shows the value of .003 meaning that if customers are assured in the quality of the service of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd., they would be satisfied and vice versa.

Factors affecting service quality of shipping container trucks

From the study, it is found that opinion on factors affecting service of shipping container trucks for all five factors are in medium level as shown in figure 1.

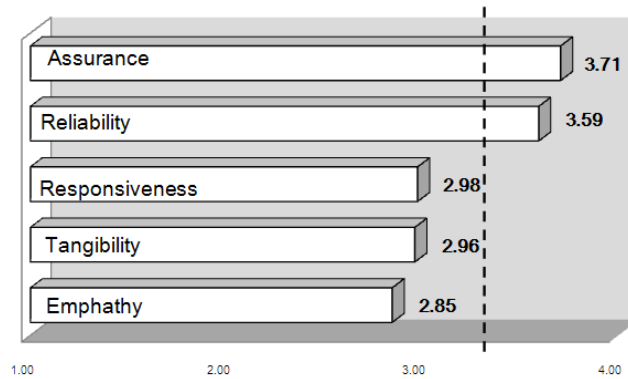


Figure 2. Factors affecting transportation service

Satisfaction on service quality of shipping container trucks

The study found satisfaction on service quality of shipping container trucks of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. generally in medium level as shown in Figure 3.

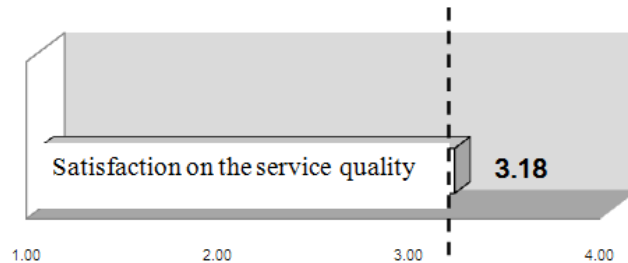


Figure 3. Satisfaction Analysis

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study of service quality factors of shipping container trucks of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd., the researcher has the following suggestions. CEOs should pay attention to improvement of service quality *i.e.*, standard of the trucks should be in proper condition and equipped with high technology devices; regularly check condition of the trucks; install GPS system for tracking, train all level of employees to focus on service quality and become caring assistance/advisor to the customers to ensure tangibility. CEOs should also: arrange personnel in 24-hour call center; expand the transportation route nationwide; increase number of trucks to serve increasing customers' needs promptly; apply document control system to prevent human mistakes; reduce number of inefficient employees and maintain the good one; and try to apply more computer programs to work in replacement of human. CEOs should prepare personnel with good communication skill to respond to problems or suggestions from customers and also delegate works to related organization systematically and effectively.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This independent study is part of MBA course of KasemBundit University. It is completed with assistance of Dr. Chinnaso Visitnitikijawho sacrifice his time advising, guiding, and correcting the mistakes in detail. The researcher would like to thank Assistant Professor Ing-on Tanphan for her advice about concepts and theories used in this study as well as guidance for appropriate ways to study and correction of mistakes.

The researcher also feels obligated to the customers of Merlex Transport Co., Ltd. who cooperated in answering questionnaires and giving all required information making this study succeed. Results from this study shall be applied as guidelines for improvement of the organization and for further studies.

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