



## DRINKING WATER SUPPLY SERVICE QUALITY IN CENTRAL BENGKULU DISTRICT (Case Study at PERUMDA Drinking Water Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency)

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

Received: 31 May 2023

Revised: 10 June 2023

Accepted: 28 June 2023

Available online: 9 July 2023

### KEYWORDS

**Quality, Public Service, Tirta Raflesia  
Regional Water Supply Company  
(PERUMDA)**

### CORRESPONDENCE

**Master of Public Administration**

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### A B S T R A C T

*The Drinking Water Company is one of the companies that produces water services to the community, but in providing services to the community there are still many problems including the distribution of stagnant water and dead water distribution. This study aims to find out how the service quality of the drinking water supply system at the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency. This research use descriptive qualitative approach. This study uses data techniques through observation, interviews and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the services provided by PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, have been running sufficiently because the service facilities are sufficient, although there are still some deficiencies that must be corrected. The problems in PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia include jammed water distribution, where the biggest problem is no water. Efforts to improve services carried out by PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia, namely providing complaint services in the form of PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia's official social media, carrying out routine checks once a month, implementing a culture of employee discipline so as to create good service quality.*

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.31186/IJPPA>

Available at : <https://ejournal.unib.ac.id/index.php/ispaj/index>



## INTRODUCTION

In Central Bengkulu Regency itself, there is a Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) named PDAM Tirta Raflesia which was established based on Regional Regulation of Central Bengkulu Regency Number 11 of 2013 concerning the Formation of Regional Drinking Water Company of Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, and Central Bengkulu Regency Regional Regulation Number 10 of 2020 dated August 14 2020 concerning Changes in the Form of Legal Entity for the Regional Drinking Water Company of Tirta Raflesia to become the Regional Public Company of Drinking Water of Tirta Raflesia, which was previously named the Regional Drinking Water Company (PDAM) Tirta Raflesia to become the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) of Drinking Water of Tirta Raflesia. Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) is a company that manages and supplies clean water needs for the Central Bengkulu Regency area.

PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia is a company engaged in the provision of clean water services in Central Bengkulu Regency. One of the objectives of the formation of PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia itself is to meet the community's need for clean water, including the provision, development, service of facilities and infrastructure and distribution of clean water, while the other objective is to participate in developing the economy to support regional development by expanding employment opportunities, as well as seek profit as the main source of regional financing.

Based on the phenomenon that occurs in the community, there are complaints from customers about the quality of service from PERUMDA, such as the lack of infrastructure owned by PERUMDA where the water distribution does not flow for several days due

to a ruptured PERUMDA water pipe, the small diameter of the pipe to drain the water, besides there have been many public complaints about pipes that have been installed but the flow of water flowing is only small and not in accordance with the needs of the water usage needed by the community, meanwhile the monthly bills are fixed and these complaints are not being taken seriously by PERUMDA. This is a serious problem and must be addressed by the Central Bengkulu Regency Government.

Public services provided by PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia can meet the needs of the people of Central Bengkulu Regency, so of course good service quality is needed, because quality is the totality of the characteristics of a product (goods and or services) that supports the ability to meet needs, or in words quality service anything that satisfies a customer or conforms to a requirement or need. Quality of Service The drinking water supply system aims to determine the quality of service that is perceived by consumers in real terms.

## MATERIALS AND METHODE

In this study, researchers will conduct According to Sugiyono (2012: 32) explains that the focus of qualitative research is holistic (comprehensive, cannot be separated) so that qualitative research determines its research based on the overall social situation studied which includes aspects of places, actors and activities that interact synergistically. In this study the focus of the research is how the quality of public services at the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency, what kinds of problems are faced by customers regarding the services of the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) Drinking Water Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, what just the efforts made by the Regional Public Company (



PERUMDA) Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency to improve services to the community. The theory used to measure these three problems is the theory of Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry in Sinambela (2011) which explains that the indicators for the quality of public services are:

1. Direct Evidence (tangible) The physical appearance of the service provision which is the facilities and means in the service delivery process.
2. Reliability
3. Responsiveness
4. Assurance
5. Empathy

In qualitative research, the informant is the source of the research data. To narrow the focus of the research, the researcher conducted research limitations and used research samples. According to Sugiyono (2009: 215) the sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by a large population, and it is impossible for researchers to study everything that exists because of limited funds, time, and time, so researchers use samples from those taken by that population. Research on the quality of drinking water supply services in Central Bengkulu Regency (Case Study on Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia Central Bengkulu Regency), the determination of informants is purposive, that is determined by adjusting to research objectives or certain goals. The following are the number of informants in the study, namely:

1. Director of the Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water Regional Public Corporation, Central Bengkulu Regency.

2. Head of General Affairs and Finance Division of Perumda Drinking Water, Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu
3. Head of Subdivision for General Affairs and Personnel of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency.
4. Head of Water Supply Subdivision Subdivision Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency
5. Head of Water Supply Engineering Division, Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency
6. Head of Production and Distribution Subdivision of Drinking Water Regional Public Corporation, Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency.

According to Sugiyono (2012: 63) explains that in general there are 4 kinds of data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, documentation and triangulation. In this study, researchers used a triangulation data collection technique that combines 3 data collection techniques (observation, interview and documentation).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Quality of Drinking Water Provision Service at Perumda Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency

To measure the quality of service provided by Perumda Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water to the Public, researchers used service indicators according to Sinambela, L.P:

1. Direct Evidence (tangible)  
Direct evidence with the physical appearance of the provision of services, both





facilities and means in the process of providing services to consumers or customers. Availability of public facilities and facilities which are supporting factors in providing services, besides that it can illustrate the existence of the company to external parties in providing real services. This is in accordance with the employees of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia related to direct (tangible) evidence which is one of the indicators in measuring the quality of the services provided.

According to MA as the Director of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, said that: "The facilities of Perumda Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water are quite adequate, for the most part all the equipment is there to improve the quality of Perumda's services to consumers or customers, in this case services to the people of Central Bengkulu Regency, although there are still some parts that still need improvement and additional facilities." (Interview with Director of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

Based on the results of the interview above for services to customers of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, it is considered that the room owned by PERUMDA is adequate, the payment counters provided are convenient for making payments. In the results of this study the researchers observed that equipment such as computers were also available at the desks of employees working, besides that the parking space owned was also quite adequate for parking consumer and employee vehicles.

## 2. Reliability

Reliability is an employee's ability to provide services that are understandable to customers and precise, reliable in accordance with the promised time so as to gain the trust

of customers. The reliability of employees at work can also increase customer satisfaction, in this case the community does things related to Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency.

According to EM, as the Head of General Affairs and Finance of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, said that:

"The employees of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, they will explain what should be prepared in relation to service to customers who come to the PERUMDA Office, and employees are also required to be professional in serving customers whether they want to pay bills or new installations. If the customer does not understand, the employees will explain properly. (Interview with Head of General Affairs and Finance of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

## 3. Responsiveness

Responsiveness is the willingness of employees to provide their services responsively and with full responsibility from employees in providing services. Water is a basic need of the community that cannot be separated from their daily needs, with low responsiveness from employees when problems occur, especially in the field, it will be very detrimental to the community because of the difficulty in obtaining water.

According to KR as the Head of Water Supply Engineering Perumda Tirta Raflesia, said that:

"Yes, it was immediately responded to, for example there was a leaking pipe before the road meter was the full responsibility of PERUMDA but if after the meter it is borne by the customer. If a customer comes to the office to ask for help from a technician, that is permissible but must pay wages or the customer seeks a handyman to repair it.".

Doi : <https://doi.org/10.31186/IJPPA>



(Interview with Head of Drinking Water Perumda Engineering Division, Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

From the results of these interviews it can be seen that the responsiveness and ability of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, can resolve complaints submitted by customers. Perumda can also communicate well in solving problems and trying to fix problems faced by customers with a sense of responsibility.

#### 4. Assurance

Assurance or assurance in this study is related to the knowledge, courtesy and ability of employees to foster a sense of trust and confidence.

According to EM, as the Head of General Affairs and Finance of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, he said that:

"Employees who were placed in the service department had previously conducted training. We want employees who are placed in the service department to have more knowledge so that it makes it easier for customers to ask questions and be able to understand what customers need. In terms of dressing we set rules and dress neatly. Because the service part is the same as PERUMDA's reflection. If they are tidy then customers will think they are polite and kind." (Interview with Head of General Affairs and Finance of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

Based on the results of these interviews, it can be seen that employees of the Tirta Rafflesia Regional Drinking Water Company (PERUMDA) in Central Bengkulu Regency must have courtesy and be friendly towards customers. Prior to being placed in the previous service section, they attended training to serve customers well.

#### 5. Empathy

Empathy is the attention given to public service customers at the Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water PERUMDA Office, Central Bengkulu Regency. Willingness to prioritize the interests of service applicants at PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency.

Empathy is an attitude that shows concern for something or someone. In a company environment, where the customer is the community, empathy is needed for continuity of service to the community in relation to the provision of clean water. Empathy in this study is the attention given personally or individually to service users. This empathy includes good communication and understanding customer needs.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers, it shows that the ability to communicate well through a friendly attitude in providing services at PERUMDA Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia is liked by customers and other communities. The company applies three words that must be used by employees in service, namely Smile, Greeting, and Greet. Every time you do service, the employees don't forget to greet the customer first while greeting and smiling at the customer. This is done so that customers feel well embraced by employees in understanding customer needs.

### **Problems faced by Customers Against the Regional Drinking Water Company (PERUMDA) Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency.**

The problem that customers face with PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water is that the water is often jammed/no water, the water is cloudy and dirty. The problems with



public services are caused by water distribution, indoor installation, water metering and natural weather when it rains. The explanation is that PERUMDA distributes water to customers through 250, 200 and 150 diameter pipes. Problems with water distribution often occur due to leaks in the planted pipes. Leaks result from age and heavy pressure on pipes and water meters. Likewise, when the situation enters the rainy season, the water becomes dirty and cloudy because the mud in the water source increases and enters the pipe flow.

The following is an excerpt of an interview with SH as the Head of Subdivision Subdivision and Finance Relations said:

"The only problem is that there is no water, if I see anything else it's fine. Indeed there are several factors that usually cause no water, such as damage to the pipe caused by heavy equipment widening the road so that we PERUMDA immediately took immediate action to repair the pipe. To repair the pipe, we had to temporarily stop the distribution of water to customers. (Interview with Head of Subdivision Relations Subdivision and Finance of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

### **The Efforts of the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) of Drinking Water Tirta Raflesia in Improving Services**

The efforts made by the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) of Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency to improve services to the community, namely:

1. Implementing a Culture of Employee Work Discipline.

The role of the leadership of PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia by implementing a culture of work discipline and maintaining the quality

of employee performance has a very positive impact on improving public services. The reliability of all PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia employees is able to influence the level of success of employees in completing work, thus the quality of service will be maintained.

According to the Director of MA as the Director of the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) Drinking Water Tirta Raflesia Central Bengkulu Regency said that:

"Talking about service to the community is indeed talking about big things. PERUMDA itself seeks to serve the community in terms of fulfilling water needs, both clean water and drinking water. We do everything for that purpose, both regarding employee performance issues and others and continue to strive to provide good service to the community. The form of service is like responding directly to complaints from the public, one of which is that we have officers who are ready to go into the field at any time for the purpose of that service." (Interview with Director of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

2. Providing Community Complaint Services

The Director of PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, also allows all customers to contact him if there is a problem in the field, the report can be via social media (Whatsapp) or the telephone network directly to which the Managing Director responds directly by providing his cellphone number as one of the media for reporting public complaints.

Efforts to utilize social media Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp as media to make it easier for the public in terms of reporting complaints received illustrate the form of





good service, this is due to the level of easy access and being able to respond quickly by PERUMDA. Apart from that, with the direct role given by the Director who is the main supervisor in receiving reports from the public, it will be more reliable in addressing problems in the field.

### 3. Perform Routine Checks Another effort made by PERUMDA

Tirta Raflesia to improve services to the community is by carrying out routine checks, including interviews related to routine checking efforts:

"We are constantly trying to make improvements to improve service to the community, from us there are always routine checks every month, during routine checks we get lots of complaints, and we handle these complaints immediately." (Interview with Director of Perumda Water Drinking Tirta Raflesia, April 2023).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion on the problem of service quality of the Regional Public Company (PERUMDA) of Tirta Raflesia Drinking Water, Central Bengkulu Regency which has been described. The researcher concludes that the quality of public services at PERUMDA Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, has been running quite well, although there are still many things that need to be improved.

1. Tangible (Physical Evidence). At the office of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, in serving service users, wear neat clothes and be equipped with identification because having a neat appearance can give a good impression to service users. Equipment and facilities can function

properly so that serving service users can run well without any obstacles.

2. Reliability (reliability). That employees are quite reliable in carrying out their respective duties, especially in the technical area they are very reliable and master the technique of solving these problems. However, the weakness in this office is that there is still a lack of employees handling technical areas, especially problems in the field section such as dealing with leaking pipes, clogged water which causes water not to flow to residents' homes.
3. Responsiveness (Responsiveness). That employees are quite responsive in providing services, they respond well to complaints and suggestions from the public, this is in accordance with the respondents' responses to the third and fourth statements, on the responsiveness indicator, namely complaints with very good responses from customers.
4. Assurance (Guarantee). Whereas to guarantee timely service, for example if a customer submits a complaint at the office regarding disruptions in the distribution of water to the customer's home, the employees immediately serve the customer by first checking incoming reports regarding problems with water distribution before giving time certainty to the customer. to make repairs to the customer's water supply system.
5. Emphaty (Attention). That employees of Perumda Air Drinking Tirta Raflesia, Central Bengkulu Regency, are required to prioritize the interests of customers, even though the employee is busy with other work or is outside the office. Serving customers wholeheartedly and



responsibly. This shows that the ability to communicate well through a friendly attitude in providing services is favored by customers and other members of the public.

## SUGGESTION

As for suggestions that can be given by the author related to the conclusions that have been presented and to build better public services in the future, namely:

1. It is hoped that all PERUMDA Tirta Rafflesia officers in Central Bengkulu Regency can carry out supervision properly and evenly. Conduct a review of the problems that arise and improve the performance of public services so that problems regarding no water and turbid water can be resolved immediately.
2. Carry out routine supervision and checks once a month evenly so as to create good service quality.
3. Regional Drinking Water Company (PERUMDA) Tirta Rafflesia can seek to improve public services by adding field technicians and selecting officers who work according to the fields needed. Thus the work productivity will continue to maintain the quality of service with good solutions.





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