

COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATION IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Service delivery that meets the needs of its customers has become an important indicator that determines the quality of governments' services. As the largest organisation in size and recipient of government allocation, Ministry of Education (MoE) faces continuous challenges in managing complaints and feedbacks in relation to maintenance of 10,223 schools nationwide. The study aims at evaluating the effectiveness of the complaint management practiced by MoE in terms of accessibility and responsiveness. The data were collected using quantitative method via questionnaire from 250 respondents, selected using simple random sampling. The data collected was analysed using regression and correlation analyses with the use of IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The study revealed that there are high relationship between accessibility and responsiveness with effectiveness of the complaint management practiced by MoE, with responsiveness having a stronger relationship with effectiveness of complaints management compared to accessibility. By ensuring accessibility of the complaint management practiced and responsiveness to complaints and feedbacks received, MoE can effectively execute its complaints management.

Keywords: *Customer relationship, Complaint management.*

INTRODUCTION

Service delivery that meets the needs of its customers has become one important indicator that determines the quality of governments' services. Governments from time to time constantly strives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery. According to Hartley et al (2008), public service has a central role in many aspects of human life, and also as the functions in maintaining the existence and growth of the community, the nation and the state. Not only focusing on improving the system and work processes, due attention is also given to strengthen the relationship between the organisation and its customers, both external and internal. Thus, to meet the needs and expectations of its customers, various initiatives have been implemented by governments including the issuance of several circulars as a guiding principles in managing customer relations among governments' agencies.

World Bank in 2019 stated that public service plays a vital role in Malaysia's transition to a high-income and developed economy. While Malaysia's public service performs relatively well, or is at par on some governance indicators compared to countries in the region, it lags behind high-income countries. Malaysia is now faced with rising expectations and increased demands from citizens for better quality public service delivery as its middle class continues to grow.

In Malaysian context, Public Administration Development Circular (PKPA) Number 1 of 2008 regarding Customer Relationship Management has elaborated steps that can be taken

by government agencies to streamline its customer relationship management (CRM) to be more responsive, efficient and effective. The circular was followed by another circular - PKPA Number 1 of 2009 regarding the improvement in public complaints management. The Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), Prime Minister's Department also published a handbook entitled Public Sector Customer Relationship Management: Intensifying Service Initiatives, Embracing Customer Aspirations in 2015 as a repository containing CRM's best practices in the public sector.

In principle, CRM is a holistic approach that offers services through efficient relationship and interaction management between the organization and its customer. There are two important aspects in CRM, namely the management of complaints and the management of customer feedback on the quality of services received. Both of these aspects are supported by communication which not only need to be strategic but also effective to enable complaints and feedback being managed as best as possible to achieve the organisation's objectives.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is one of the ministries in Malaysia that is prone to receive complaint and feedback from customers in relation to the services rendered. With a total of 10,223 schools, 415,672 teachers and 4,776,365 students in Malaysia, CRM is a challenge for MoE. Adding to that, MoE remained the largest recipient of allocation of Budget 2020 with a total of RM64.1 billion, compared to RM60.2 billion in Budget 2019. The increase in allocation involves maintenance and upgrading of schools with total allocations of RM735 million, and increment of RM83 million from RM652 million in 2019. This clearly shows that the government is committed to ensure schools have a more conducive and safer learning environment.

Although provision for maintenance and upgrading of schools increases every year and MoE has established the Asset Management Division (BPA) to manage school's maintenance, complaints regarding school's maintenance and damages are still widely portrayed especially in press and social media. The common practice 'one size fit all' and generic complaint management via the Public Complaints Management System or SISPA by Public Complaints Bureau, Prime Minister's Department (PCB) is seen as less effective. There are only 359 complaints related to MoE recorded by the PCB in 2019.

The study seeks to investigate the nature of complaint management specifically at the Asset Management Division of the Ministry of Education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Complaint are essential to organisations as it gives direct feedback from customers or consumers. Complaint are negative expression of dissatisfied customer or consumer, about products, services and organisation's action (Ngai et al., 2007). Tronvoll (2007) define complaint as action taken by a dissatisfied individual, which involves communicating something unwanted or unacceptable regarding a product or service. In dealing with complaints, organisation must systematically address customer and consumer's dissatisfaction as any other management issues. Customer relationship management has the potential for achieving success and growth for organisations in current environment of extensive competition and rapid technological development. CRM enables organisations to know their customers better and to build sustainable relationships with them (Rababah et al., 2011).

Kumar & Kaur (2020) define complaint management as process and procedure by which companies systematically handle problems of customer. Service delivery that meets the needs of its customers has become one important indicator that determines the quality of governments' services. Governments from time to time constantly strives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery. Not only focusing on improving the system

and work processes, due attention is also given to strengthen the relationship between the organisation and its customers, both external and internal. Thus, to meet the needs and expectations of its customers, various initiatives have been implemented by governments including the issuance of several circulars as a guiding principles in managing customer relations among governments' agencies.

In principle, customer relationship management is a holistic approach that offers services through efficient relationship and interaction management between the organization and its customer. There are two important aspects in customer relationship management, namely the management of complaints and the management of customer feedback on the quality of services received. Both of these aspects are supported by communication which not only need to be strategic but also effective to enable complaints and feedback being managed as best as possible to achieve the organisation's objectives.

According to Kizgin & Benli (2013), the purpose of the customer complaint management process is to produce solutions related to consumer complaints as soon as possible. Considering the studies conducted on this issue, Kizgin & Benli's study (as cited in Gerson, 1997) also emphasised the importance of customer complaint management, and focused on the problems encountered by employees, who are first addressed, when implementing the complaint policies and strategies.

CRM Model for Malaysian public service agencies was introduced by the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU) of the Prime Minister's Department in 2008 through the PKPA Number 1 of 2008. It serves as a guideline to improve CRM within Malaysia's public service to be more responsive, efficient and effective. This CRM model contains elements of quality customer service and characteristics of CRM which aimed to delight the customer: delivery, emotion, and physical – elements of quality customer service.

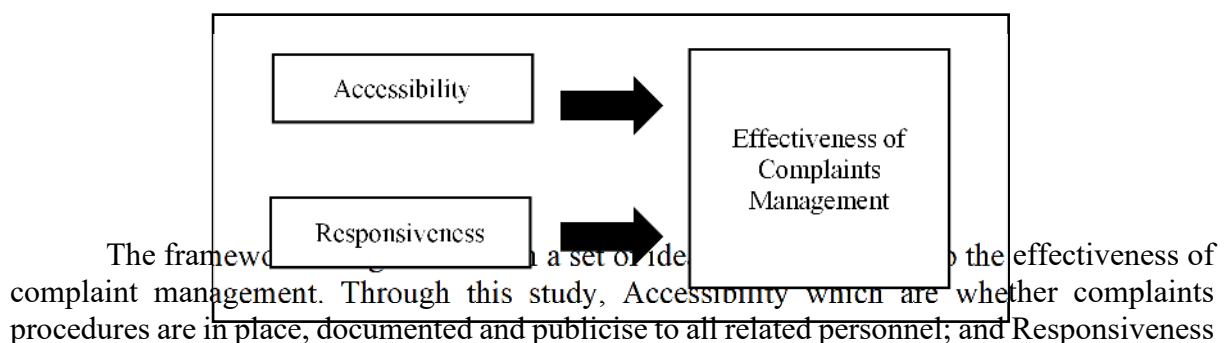
METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to identify the complaint management by BPA, MoE and to evaluate the effectiveness of the complaint management. A quantitative research using survey method utilising questionnaire is used in the study.

Framework

The study used the following framework primarily to evaluate the effectiveness of BPA, MoE complaint management.

Figure 1: Framework To Evaluate Effectiveness of Complaints Management



which are how complaint are being acknowledgement and updated as well as the resources allocated in complaint management, are identified as the study independent variables.

Effectiveness of complaint management is this study dependent variables. Effectiveness represents the satisfaction on the outcome as well as speed and manner in which complaints are being handled

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for the study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between accessibility and complaints management.

Alternative Hypothesis 1

There is a significant relationship between accessibility and complaints management.

Hypothesis 2:

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between responsiveness and complaints management.

Alternative Hypothesis 2

There is a significant differences between responsiveness and complaints management.

Population and Sampling

The target population for the study are maintenance personnel of MoE at its headquarters, State Education Departments, District Education Offices and government schools. Maintenance personnel are MoE's internal customer who are managers, administrator or user of government assets in specific government schools.

The study uses simple random sampling within the predetermined population. By using this technique, every member of the population is chosen randomly, merely by chance. Each member has the same probability of being chosen to be a part of a sample.

Instrument

The questionnaire is the primary source in collecting data from respondents. The questionnaire was designed based on the replication process, where researcher takes some questions from previous research through their thesis and articles. Based on those sources, a new set of questions related to the study was generated. Changes were made to the replicated questionnaire to make it more relatable to the study.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted involving 30 respondents from the population. The objective of the pilot study was to test the questionnaire to ensure the respondents understand it. Cronbach's alpha from IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to determine reliability and consistency of the whole questionnaire.

Mode of Analysis

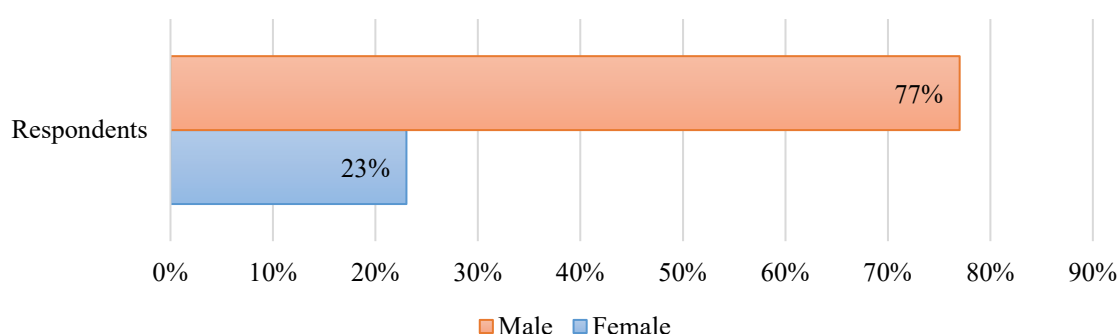
IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences is used to analyse the data based on the information stated in the questionnaire. The analysis used in this study are regression and correlation analyses.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Based on the number of questionnaires which was distributed to the population sample, 250 questionnaires (100%) have been received with complete responses.

Gender of Respondents

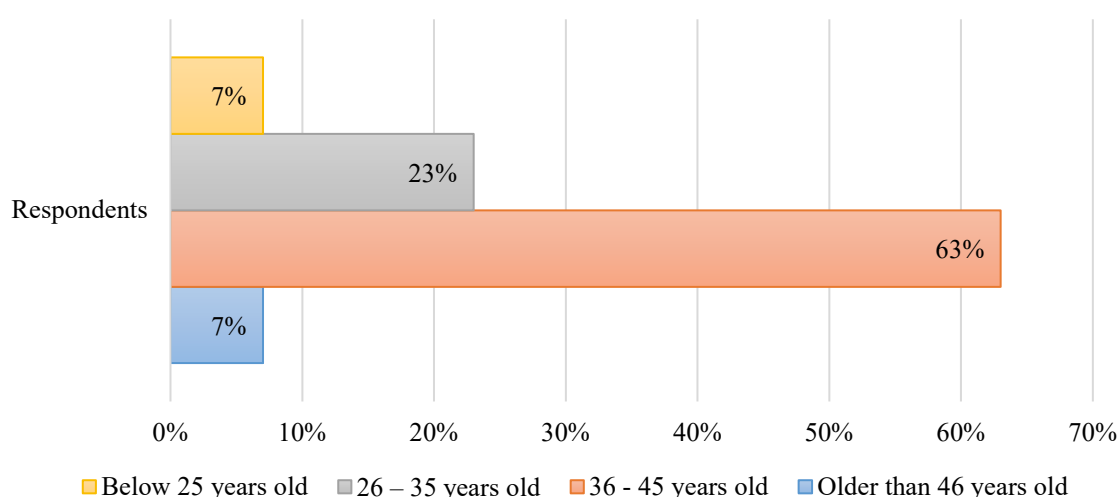
Table 1: Gender of Respondents



The study involves respondents of different genders whereas the majority of them are male (77%) and rest are female (23%).

Age of Respondents

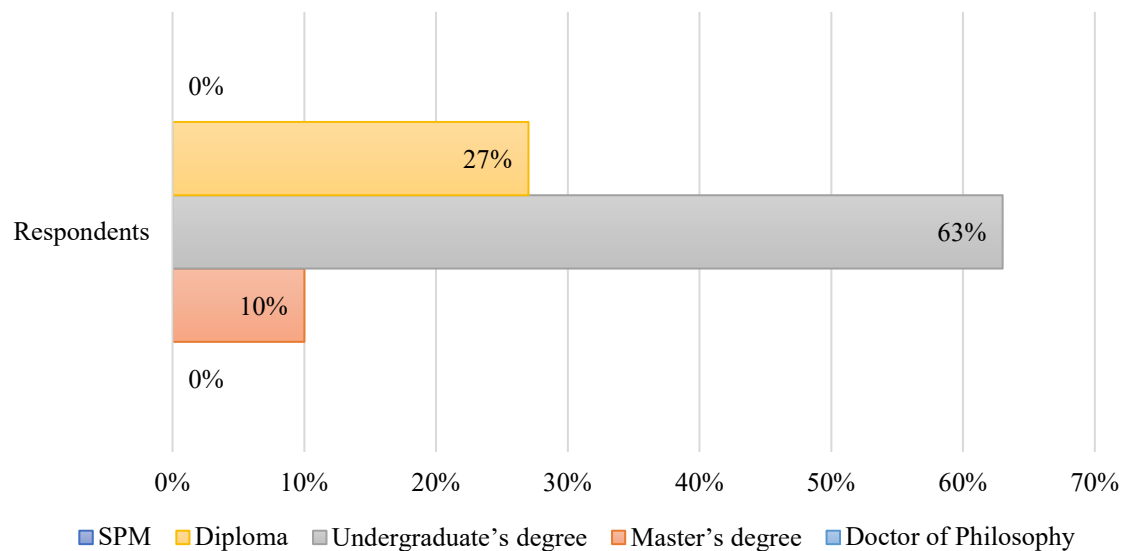
Table 2: Age of Respondents



Majority of respondents (63%) were from the age group of 36-45 years old, followed by 26-35 years old with 23%, and 7% each for below 25 years old and above 46 years old.

Education Level of Respondents

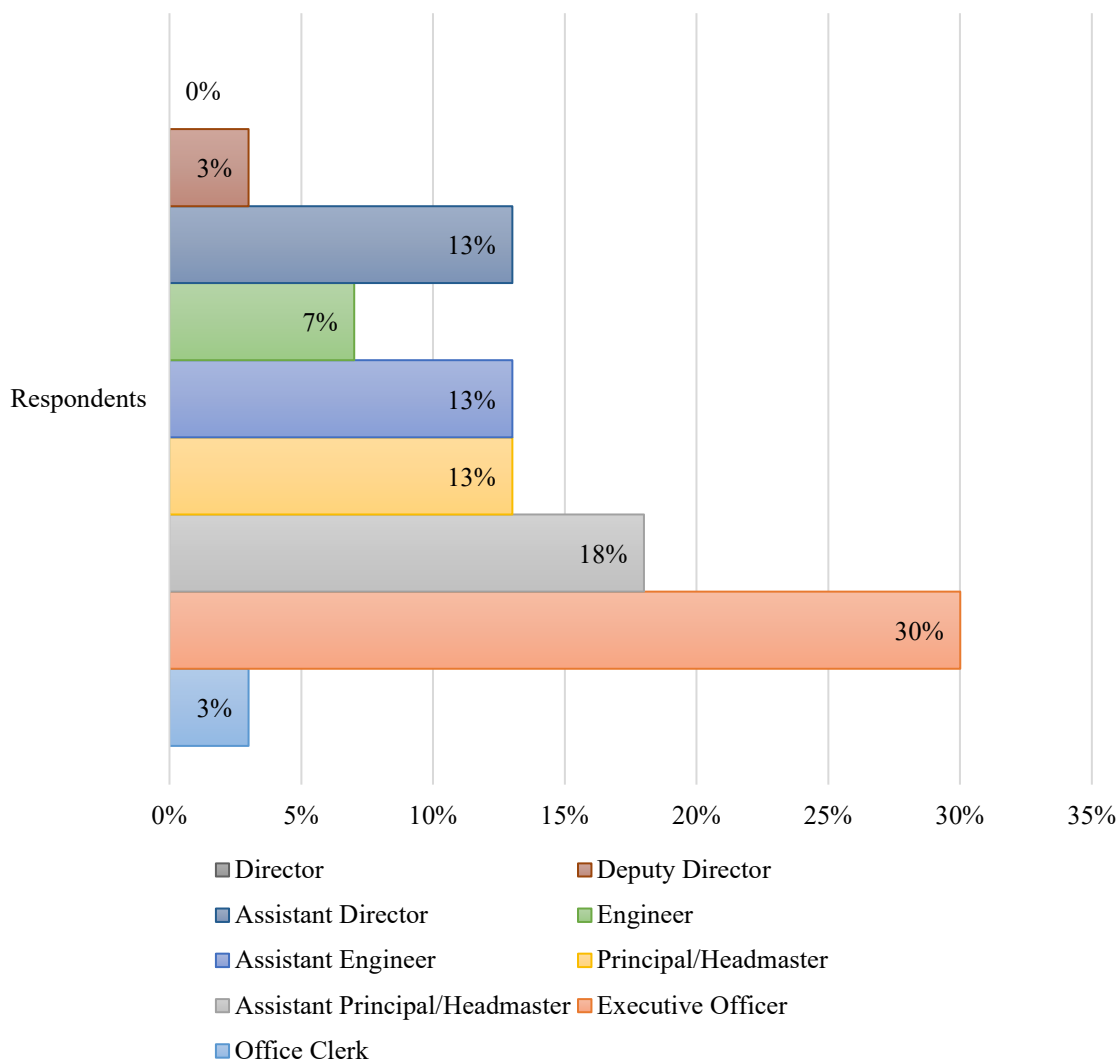
Table 3: Education Level of Respondents



Majority of respondents (63%) have undergraduate's degree, followed by 27% with diploma and 10% have master's degree. None of the respondents have SPM or Doctor of Philosophy.

Designation of Respondents

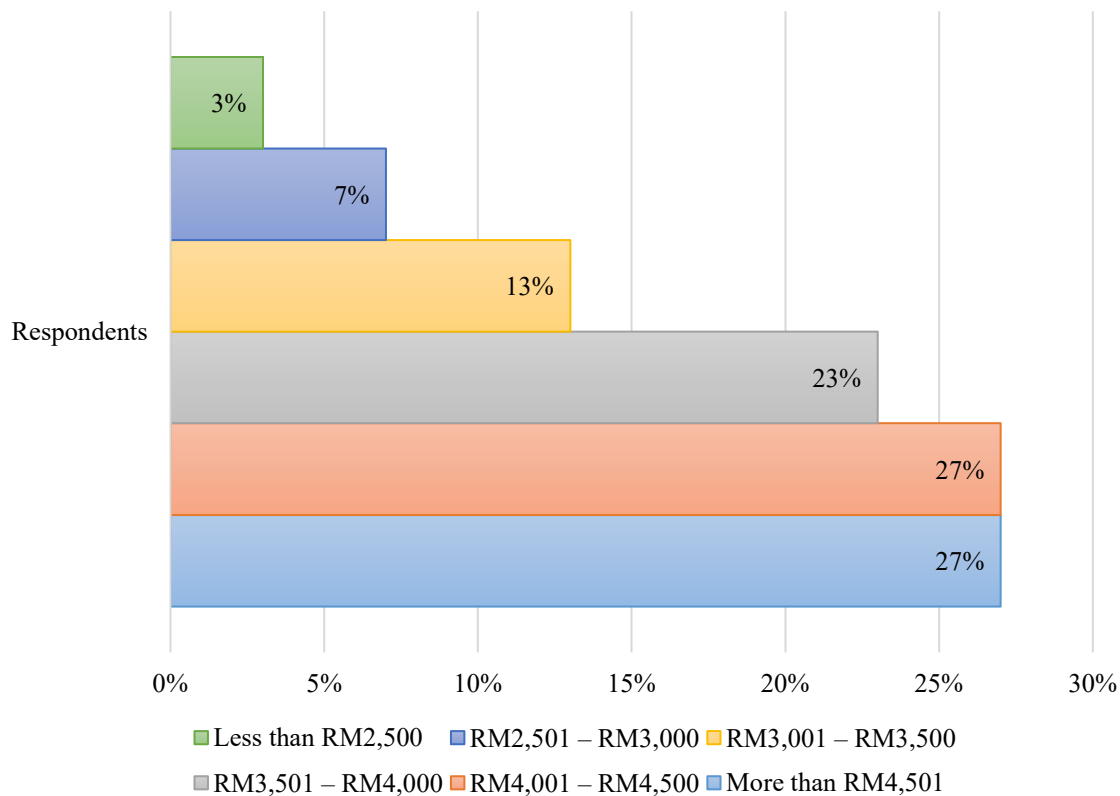
Table 4: Designation of Respondents



The study involves respondents of different designation whereas the majority of them are Executive Officer (30%) followed by Assistant Principal/Headmaster (18%), Assistant Director, Assistant Engineer and Principal/Headmaster (13%), Engineer (7%) and Deputy Director and Office Clerk (3%). None of the respondents are Director.

Salary of Respondents

Table 5: Salary of Respondents



Majority of respondents (27%) were from the salary group of more than RM4,501 and RM4,001-RM4,500, followed by RM3,501-RM4,000 (23%), RM3,001-RM3,500 (13%), RM2,501-RM3,000 (7%) and below RM2,500 (3%).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Regression Analysis: Accessibility and Effectiveness

From the regression analysis for Accessibility (IV) and Effectiveness (DV), the R Value is .83 with R Square value of .69. It should be that there is high correlation between Accessibility (IV) and Effectiveness (DV). R Square value of .69 shows that the fitted regression equation explains 69% of the variation. The ANOVA table shows that the F value of 61.05 is significant at the .000 level. Accessibility as an independent variable is significant at 0.000. The study reject Null Hypothesis 1 (there is no significant relationship between accessibility and complaints management).

Table 6: Regression Analysis (Accessibility and Effectiveness)

Model Summary (Effectiveness)									
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate						
.83	.69	.67	2.80						

ANOVA (Effectiveness)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	479.47	1	479.47	61.05	.000
Residual	219.90	28	7.85		
Total	699.37	29			

Coefficients (Effectiveness)									
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	6.42	2.28	.00	2.82	.009	1.75	11.08		
Accessibility	.87	.11	.83	7.81	.000	.64	1.10	NaN	NaN

Coefficient Correlations (Effectiveness)		
	Accessibility	
Covariances	Accessibility	5.19

Regression Analysis: Responsiveness and Effectiveness

From the regression analysis for Responsiveness (IV) and Effectiveness (DV), the R Value is .83 with R Square value of .69. It should be that there is a high correlation between for Accessibility (IV) and Effectiveness (DV). R Square value of .69 shows that the fitted regression equation explains 69% of the variation. The ANOVA table shows that the F value of 61.77 is significant at the .000 level. Responsiveness as independent variable is significant at 0.000. The study reject Null Hypothesis 2 (there is no significant relationship between responsiveness and complaints management).

Table 7: Regression Analysis (Responsiveness and Effectiveness)

Model Summary (Effectiveness)									
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate						
.83	.69	.68	2.79						

ANOVA (Effectiveness)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	481.24	1	481.24	61.77	.000
Residual	218.13	28	7.79		
Total	699.37	29			

Coefficients (Effectiveness)									
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	12.61	1.51	.00	8.36	.000	9.52	15.70		
Responsiveness	.61	.08	.83	7.86	.000	.45	.77	.48	2.10

Coefficient Correlations (Effectiveness)		
	Responsiveness	
Covariances	Responsiveness	2.27

Correlation Analysis: Accessibility, Responsiveness and Effectiveness

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to examine whether there is a relationship between accessibility, responsiveness and effectiveness of complaints management. The results revealed there is a significant and positive relationship between accessibility and effectiveness of complaints management. There is also a significant and positive relationship between responsiveness and effectiveness of complaints management.

Responsiveness have a stronger relationship with effectiveness of complaints management.

Table 7: Correlation Analysis (Accessibility, Responsiveness and Effectiveness)

Correlations		Accessibility	Responsiveness	Effectiveness
Accessibility	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.753 ^a	.828 ^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	30	30	30
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	.753 ^a	1.000	.830 ^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	30	30	30
Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.828 ^a	.830 ^a	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	30	30	30

a. Significant at .05 level

CONCLUSION

Summary of the Findings

From the findings of the research, it clearly shows that there is a high relationship between accessibility and responsiveness with effectiveness of BPA, MoE's complaints management. Responsiveness has a stronger relationship with effectiveness of the complaints management.

BPA, MOE must ensure that in order to have effective complaints management, BPA, MoE must ensure the complaints management practice is easily found and accessible to all maintenance personnel. BPA, MoE must also be responsive to all complaints received to ensure a highly effective complaints management practice.

Contribution of the Research

The research contributes to the identification of complaint management of BPA, MoE and its effectiveness. It adds more literature on complaint management in the public sector organisation in Malaysia as well as the communication field in Malaysia in particularly CRM practices.

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