

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

I.1 Research Background

Early childhood education provides guidance to children starting from birth until the age of six. It provides educational stimuli in terms of growth and physical and spiritual development to prepare undergo children for further education. There are several growth and development patterns, namely thinking-power, creativity, language and communication, including intelligence (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), spiritual intelligence (SQ) or religious intelligence (RQ). Present, a guidance is needed to determine the right basis for early childhood growth and development due to an increase in parent's attention to early childhood education (Mansur, 2011).

Currently there is an increase number of kindergartens in Indonesia, especially in the area of Bandung City, West Java. This can be seen from the growth of kindergarten students' number and the growth of kindergarten schools' number in Bandung. Table I.1 shows the comparison of kindergarten students and kindergartens based on sub-district areas in Bandung.

Table I.1 Data of The Kindergarten Students' and Kindergarten Schools' Number that Available in Bandung City

No	Sub-District	Students' Number	No	Sub-District	Schools' Number
1	Sukasari	820	1	Lengkong	24
2	Cicendo	811	2	Sukasari	23
3	Lengkong	801	3	Cicendo	22
4	Cibeunying Kidul	774	4	Rancasari	21
5	Rancasari	711	5	Cibeunying Kaler	21

(Source: Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia, 2018)

Based on Table I.1, it can be seen that out of 30 sub-districts in Bandung, there are five sub-districts which have the highest kindergarten students and kindergartens. One of them is Lengkong Subdistrict which is in the third place with 801 kindergarten students. Compared to the number of kindergarten schools, Lengkong Subdistrict ranks in the first place having 24 kindergartens. This shows that with the large number of students and kindergartens in Bandung, Lengkong Subdistrict has the highest competitiveness.

Gagas Ceria Kindergarten is selected of the research object. The selection of this kindergarten was based on the data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Bandung City (2018) which stated that Gagas Ceria Kindergarten is one of the A-accredited kindergartens in Lengkong Subdistrict area. Gagas Ceria Kindergarten is located on Jl. Malabar 84, Lengkong Subdistrict, Bandung City, which this kindergarten invites upper middle-class market segment. There are two types of class in this kindergarten, namely grade A and grade B.

Based on the interviews with stakeholders of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, there were two groups enrolling in Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, namely external applicants (ie those who were not from Gagas Ceria playgroup) and internal applicants (ie those who were from Gagas Ceria playgroup). Every year, Gagas Ceria Kindergarten always prioritizes internal applicants when accepting new students. Gagas Ceria parties determines the customer loyalty level of the Gagas Ceria Foundation for the offered services. The increase in internal applicants' number is beneficial for Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, because indirectly, it describes the services offered are perceived positively. In fact, number of the internal applicants in each year does not reflect the expectations of Gagas Ceria parties. This can be proven based on the data obtained from Gagas Ceria Kindergarten regarding the number of applicants and the new students which can be seen in Figure I.1 and Figure I.3.

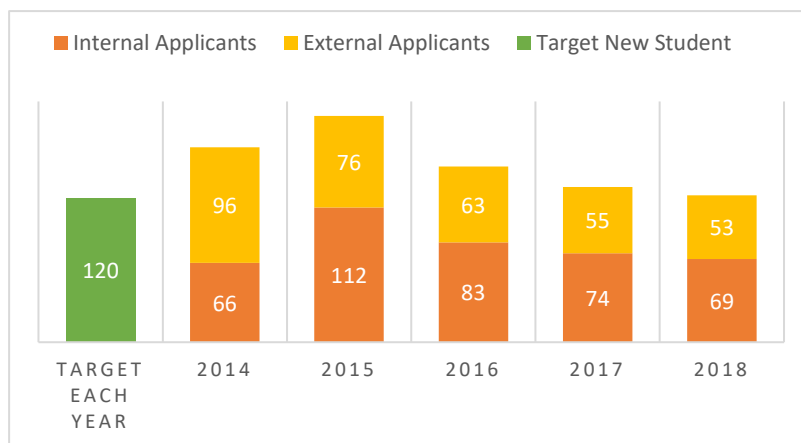


Figure I.1 Comparison of Internal and External Applicants and Target New Student

(Source: Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, 2018)

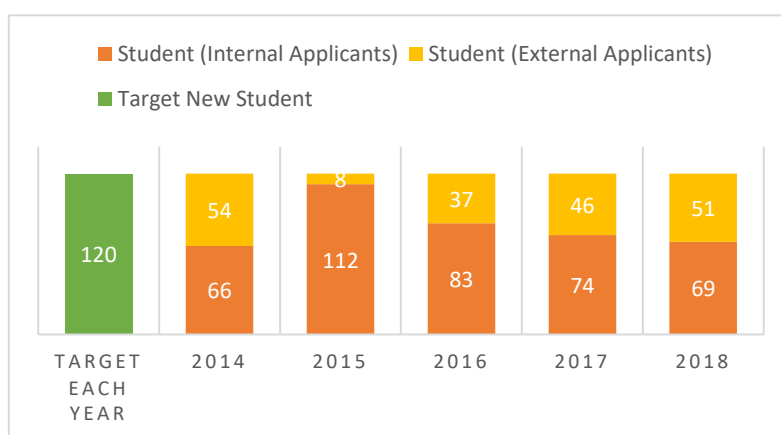


Figure I.2 Comparison of Students from Internal and External Applicants and Target New Student

(Source: Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, 2018)

In Figure I.1, it can be seen that the target number of students in Gagas Ceria Kindergarten from the past five years are the same, which is 120 students. Every year, the total number of external and internal applicants always exceeded the specified target. It can be concluded that every year there are many people interested to enroll their children to Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.

In Figure I.2, it can be seen that from the past five years, Gagas Ceria Kindergarten is consistent in accepting the number of kindergarten students', which is 120 students. There are different in composition between the acceptance of in external and internal applicants. As mentioned earlier, Gagas Ceria Kindergarten focuses more on internal applicants, so that Gagas Ceria Kindergarten will accept all

internal applicants. The remaining acceptance quota will be filled from the external applicants. Based on the charts (Figure I.2), each year the number of internal applicants of Gagah Ceria Kindergarten has decreased. It shows the level of customer loyalty has decreased, so that it becomes the concern of Gagah Ceria Kindergarten to increase the quality of its services.

Based on the interview with the representatives of Gagah Ceria Kindergarten, especially Gagah Ceria Kindergarten has several competitors' kindergartens that implement the montessori curriculum. Kindergarten schools that use the montessori curriculum are kindergartens that prioritize children's skills and abilities compared to the academic curriculum standards that exist in kindergarten schools in general. The competitors are Pascal Montessori School dan Bandung Montessori School. Pascal Montessori School is located in Jl. Guntur No.14, Lengkong Subdistrict, Bandung City. Bandung Montessori School is located in Jl. Dago Asri 24, Perumahan Dago Asri, Bandung City. Both of montessori school are one of the best montessori school in Bandung. Based on the interview with the management of Pascal Montessori School and Bandung Montessori School, each year the number of the applicants are always increase. It means that the both kindergartens are known and has big opportunities in competing their competitors. The main reason for Gagah Ceria Kindergarten choosing both competitors are because according to Gagah Ceria Kindergarten, currently some parents prioritize the montessori curriculum which focuses on children's interests and development. Gagah Ceria Kindergarten intends to implement the curriculum to improve the quality of educational services it has.

Table I.2 shows the comparison of the existing conditions of Gagah Ceria Kindergarten and competitors. The sampling technique used in the preliminary survey was a non-probability sampling technique, using Snowball Sampling Method, this means that the data retrieved continuously until there are several samples with similar responses (Sugiyono, 2017). This survey was conducted through interviews with five parents of Gagah Ceria Kindergarten and five parents of Gagah Ceria Playgroup. Interviews were conducted on Monday, November 19th, 2016 at 09.00 WIB until 12.00 WIB, at the lobby of Gagah Ceria.

Table I.2 Comparison Study with Competitors

Aspects	Gagas Ceria Kindergarten Conditions	Pascal Montessori School Conditions	Bandung Montessori School Conditions
Facilities	Narrow parking lot. Classrooms are not in accordance with the interests and development of children.	Narrow parking lot. Classrooms are in accordance with the interests and development of children.	Large parking lot. Classrooms are in accordance with the interests and development of children.
Activities	Lack of supporting activities in the form of music, sports, science, technology and robotic, and religious activities.	Supporting activities in the form of music, sports, science, technology and robotic and religious activities have been held every day according to children's interests and development.	Supporting activities in the form of music, sports, science, technology and robotic and religious activities have been held every day according to children's interests and development.
Parents and Staff	Complaints or comments from parents are not responded quickly	The response of parents has been treated responsively, in addition, communication is carried out through an application and email.	The response of parents has been treated responsively. In addition, communication is carried out through an email.
Curriculums	Not focusing on children's' interests and talents.	Focus on children's interests and talents by adhering to the montessori and inclusion curriculum.	Focus on children's interests and talents by adhering to the montessori and inclusion curriculum.

(Source: Preliminary Survey 2018)

Table I.2 Comparison Study with Competitors (Continuation)

Complaints	Gagas Ceria Kindergarten Conditions	Pascal Montessori School Conditions	Bandung Montessori School Conditions
Teacher	Teachers' concern about children's development and the development of the level of children's education are still lacking.	Teachers' concern for children's development is very good, this is supported by the holding of training for educators every period.	Teachers' concern for children's development is very good, this is supported by the holding of training for educators every period.

(Source: Preliminary Survey 2018)

Based on Table I.2, it can be seen that the existing conditions of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten still have disadvantages related to the education services offered. The aspects are obtained from the customer complaints from the preliminary survey. Compared with the competitors, namely Pascal Montessori School and Bandung Montessori School, there are number of services that have not been fulfilled by Gagas Ceria Kindergarten. This becomes a consideration of the reduced number of internal applicants.

The research study conducted to improve the quality of education services in Gagas Ceria Kindergarten. The data from this research study was taken from previous research study using the Education Quality and Refined Kano Method, as well as the results of comparison with competitors to produce technical characteristics and critical parts for the development of recommendations in this research. Based on the problems experienced by Gagas Ceria Kindergarten, it can be stated that refinements and the quality improvements of education services are needed, to compete with other kindergartens.

I.2 Research Questions

Based on the background described previously, it can be concluded that the problems questions of the research study are as follows:

1. What technical characteristics are obtained based on Gagas Ceria Kindergarten's customer needs?
2. What are the critical parts that can be developed in improving the quality of education services for Gagas Ceria Kindergarten?
3. What are the recommendation in an effort to improve the service quality of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten?

I.3 Research Objectives

Based on the results of problems questions that mentioned earlier, the research objectives are:

1. Identify the technical characteristics of customer needs to improve the quality services of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.

2. Identify critical parts that can be developed in improving the quality services of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.
3. Identify the final recommendations to improve the quality services to meet customer needs of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.

I.4 Research Limitations

The problems limitations needed to do this research so as not deviate from the intended purpose, are as follows:

1. Customer need attributes are obtained based on the results of previous research using the method of Integration of Education Quality and Refined Kano.
2. The research object is Gagas Ceria Kindergarten which located in Lengkong Subdistrict.
3. Internal data from this research was obtained from the data of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten's applicants from 2014 until 2018.
4. External data from this research was obtained from brainstorming with Gagas Ceria Kindergarten and benchmarking with competitors.
5. The research was hold from October 2018 until May 2019.

I.5 Research Benefits

The benefits of this research are:

1. The result can be an evaluation for Gagas Ceria Kindergarten to improve the education quality services.
2. As a recommendation regarding the quality services of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten that can be developed to improve its education services.

I.6 Organizations of The Paper

This organization of the paper is organized based on the following chapters.

CHAPTER I Introduction

Chapter I, consists of the research background, the problems questions of the research, the research objectives, the research limitations, the research benefits, and the organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II Literature Review

Chapter II provided concepts and basic principles used as the theoretical basis of this research, namely the explanation of previous research on improving the education services quality, methods comparison used to improve the education services quality, and the explanation of the selected method.

CHAPTER III Research Methodology

Chapter III presented the methodology of this research. This chapter consisted of data collection stages, data processing stages using QFD first iteration (House of Quality), concept development, and making QFD second iteration (Part Deployment).

CHAPTER IV Data Collection and Processing

Chapter IV discussed the stages of data collection, namely coding the true customer needs from Gagas Ceria Kindergarten's customer, performs data processing in QFD first iteration. It contained the planning matrix including adjusted importance score, making the technical characteristics, determining the strength of the relationship between true customer needs with the technical characteristics, making a correlation matrix between technical characteristics, and making a technical matrix that includes probability values, target units, current situation, competitive benchmarks, column weight, and ranking in Gagas Ceria Kindergarten. Chapter IV also discussed, several alternative concepts or concept development are made. QFD second iteration or QFD in part deployment matrix, which is making critical parts, making correlation matrix between technical characteristics and critical parts, and making technical characteristics matrix of Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.

CHAPTER V Data Analysis

Chapter V, presented the analysis of the data collection and processing. Each step, that has been done in the previous chapter, is analyzed thoroughly. The next stage is the formulation of recommendations to be submitted to Gagas Ceria Kindergarten.

CHAPTER VI Conclusion and Suggestion

Chapter VI showed the results of the analysis. In this chapter, the research suggestion is given directly to Gagas Ceria Kindergarten and further researchers.