



THE STUDY OF SERVICE QUALITY BY RAPID KUANTAN BUS

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ABSTRACT

Public transportation services play an important role in the country and are seen as a solution to overcome the serious traffic congestion. Traffic congestion caused by the increasing number of private cars and was due to public transport cannot meet the needs and customer satisfaction. Therefore the objective of this study was to determine the level of service quality by Rapid Kuantan Bus and to investigate the factors of strength and weakness by Rapid Kuantan Bus. This study was conducted to find out the respondents' views on the availability of information, comfort, safety and convenience. This study focuses on the quality of service with Rapid Kuantan Bus by using the questionnaire survey method. The study was conducted on 300 respondents randomly involving route 100 Hentian Bandar – Gambang Resort. The results revealed that most respondents said the service quality by Rapid Kuantan Bus was still in good level, especially in term of safety, air condition and physical appearance. Nevertheless, Rapid Kuantan Bus should improve their service quality in seat availability, crowdedness and exchange money for price fare. Recommendations have been made based on the results of the study is to provide two different types of buses, provides free Wi-Fi and provides ticketing system.

ABSTRAK

Perkhidmatan pengangkutan awam memainkan peranan yang penting di negara ini dan dilihat sebagai penyelesaian untuk mengatasi kesesakan lalu lintas yang serius. Kesesakan lalu lintas yang disebabkan oleh peningkatan jumlah kereta persendirian dan adalah disebabkan oleh pengangkutan awam tidak dapat memenuhi keperluan dan kepuasan pelanggan. Oleh itu, objektif kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan tahap kualiti perkhidmatan oleh Rapid Bas Kuantan dan untuk menyiasat faktor-faktor kekuatan dan kelemahan oleh Rapid Bas Kuantan. Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengetahui persepsi responden terhadap keadaan maklumat, keselasaan, keselamatan dan kemudahan. Kajian ini menumpukan kepada kualiti perkhidmatan dengan Rapid Bas Kuantan dengan menggunakan kaedah soal selidik. Kajian ini dijalankan secara rawak terhadap 300 responden yang melibatkan laluan 100 hentian Bandar-gambang resort. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan responden berkata kualiti perkhidmatan oleh Rapid Bas Kuantan masih di tahap yang baik, terutamanya dari segi keselamatan, penyaman udara dan penampilan fizikal. Walau bagaimanapun, Rapid Bas Kuantan perlu meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan mereka dalam kekosongan tempat duduk, Kesesakan dan menukarkan wang untuk tambang harga. cadangan yang telah dibuat berdasarkan hasil kajian ialah menyediakan dua jenis bas yang berbeza, menyediakan perkhidmatan Wi-Fi dan menyediakan sistem tiket.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MIROS	Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research
MPK	Majlis Perbandaran Kuantan (Kuantan Municipal Council)
LRT	Light Rail Transit
MAS	Malaysia Airlines System
KLIA	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
LCCT	Low Cost Carrier Terminal
SPAD	Suruhanjaya Pengangkutan Awam Darat (Land Public Transport Commission)
PRIME	Prasarana Integrated Management and Engineering Services Sdn Bhd
PRIDE	Prasarana Integrated Development Sdn Bhd
CCTV	Closed-circuit video
Wi-Fi	Wireless internet frequency interface

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Malaysia's population is increasing each year in line with the rapid growth in urban areas. Therefore, the activity of the population has also increased the movement of people to move from one destination to another destination public transportation is needed by the user. Public transport can be defined as a form of transport that has an enormous capacity to carry passengers at a time, in contrast to private vehicles with small capacity.

In Malaysia, the public transport system is the most significant factor in whether a communication system for both urban and rural communities. Transport is one of alternative communication systems in the world. It is considered as the driving force and income for some people. Development of a place closely associated with the transportation system. As the country grew increasingly advanced communication system within a country should have the competence and progress in terms of services and technologies used.

A study conducted by the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research (MIROS) revealed that the risk of accidents when using public transport is seven times lower than driving their own vehicles and 48 times safer than riding a motorcycle. Despite the obvious advantages of safety in the use of public transport, public transport system in Malaysia is still weak in terms of management. This results in an average population of more tempted to have a private vehicle.

The problem of road congestion in big cities has always haunted people, whether in this country or around the world. Although there are numerous public transport facilities provided by the government, but the people who drive the streets elections never diminished. Public transport, especially airplanes, trains, buses and taxis to be given attention and enhanced capacity as the best alternative for the reduction of road accidents thereby reduces the amount of vehicles on the road.

Hence the need to find a public transport initiative for strategic planning agenda in optimizing the level of public transport services to be the best alternative to the community as flexible, inexpensive and safe. Therefore the government is committed to providing public transport services more convenient and efficient to the community. In line with the government's aspiration to transform the public transport system in Kuantan, Prasarana Negara Berhad (Prasarana) has been responsible for setting up Rapid Kuantan Sdn Bhd to operate buses in Kuantan.

Rapid Kuantan Bus was launched on November 30, 2012 commenced operation of public services in Kuantan. Rapid Kuantan services include towing, Sungai Lembing, Bukit Sagu, Permatang Badak, Kampung Ubai and popular tourist spots such as the Teluk Cempedak and Gambang Water Park Resort. Rapid Kuantan has now operated with 13 routes and two new routes in operation starting 1 June 2014. The 15 routes are shown in Table 1.1. With two new routes that operate recently, the Rapid Kuantan service will cover 15 routes with 80 buses and aims to provide transport facilities to more than 13,000 passengers a day. These services to meet the demands of the population, and celebrated 'Visit Malaysia Year 2014.

Table 1.1: Route of Rapid Kuantan Bus around Kuantan

No of Bus	Routes
100	Hentian Bandar – Bukit Gambang Resort City
101	Hentian Bandar – Taman Indera Sempurna
102	Hentian Bandar – Permatang Badak
200	Hentian Bandar – Teluk Cempedak
201	Hentian Bandar – Taman Gelora
300	Hentian Bandar – Taman Impian
301	Hentian Bandar – Bukit Sagu
302	Hentian Bandar – Indera Mahkota 1
303	Hentian Bandar – Terminal Sentral Kuantan
400	Hentian Bandar – Pekan
401	Hentian Bandar – Ubai
500	Hentian Bandar – Sg Lembing
600	Hentian Bandar – Balok Makmur (via Beserah)
601	Hentian Bandar – Polisas Semambu
602	Hentian Bandar – Balok Makmur (via Kuantan Bypass)
603	Hentian Bandar - PSDC

Source: Rapidkuantan (2014)

For bus fares, children under seven years old are not charged. For school uniforms and school children between the ages of seven to twelve years will be charged half price. The bus fare was starting from RM 2 to travel in a single zone and the maximum of RM4 to travel across the two zones. Only five routes that consist two zones of fare, which is route 100, 301, 400, 401 and 500. Routes shall be imposed cost RM2 per trip. Rapid Kuantan also introduces concessions card My Rapid will enjoy a discount of 50 per cent of the fare that is eligible for primary and secondary school students, senior citizens and physically-challenged or those aged 60 years and over

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Public transportation services play an important role in the country and are seen as a solution to overcome the serious traffic congestion. Traffic congestion caused by the increasing number of private cars as the main mode of transport for the movement to reach a destination. Public transport should reduce the number of private vehicles in the city, but instead of public transport in Malaysia encourage people to use private vehicles. Public transport should become part of a solution to overcome the problem later. However, in order to keep and made as main mobility to community, public transport must to have high service quality to satisfy and fulfill a wider range of different customer's needs (Budiono, 2009). Public transport must have a high quality service to meet every passenger satisfaction. Consistent with the government, Kuantan Municipal Council has five major strategies that the vision and mission set to realize the strategic plan of Kuantan Municipal Council 2009-2014. One of the key strategies is to improve the planning and development of public transport (Pelan Strategik Majlis Perbandaran Kuantan, 2009). Kuantan Municipal Council (MPK) has asked from the State Government amounting to RM42 million from RM95 million to improve public transport facilities in Kuantan. (Pengguna bakal hadapi masalah, 2012). This study aims to determine the level of service of Rapid Kuantan Bus and investigate the factors of strength and weakness to help improve the bus service in the city of Kuantan.

1.3 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The importances of cities as centers of economic activities which are geared towards service-oriented activities have been increasing. Transport networks must be able to support economic growth, population growth and diversification. It can be proved that the global transport system is a comprehensive and an important contributor to economic prosperity. Nevertheless, the activities in cities have led to the issue of serious traffic congestion. Thus, the shift from private vehicles to public transport is seen as a solution to the problem. Therefore, the government has taken an initiative to launch a Rapid Kuantan Bus service since 1st December but how far this approach can

ensure that users always use a rapid bus service as their primary mobility to move from one destination to another destination. This research hopes to make an assessment of the quality and the rapid bus service may be able to make improvements to customer satisfaction in the future.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- i. To determine the level of service quality by Rapid Kuantan Bus.
- ii. To investigate the factors of strength and weakness by Rapid Kuantan Bus.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the levels of service quality by Rapid Kuantan Bus?
- ii. What are the factors of strength and weakness by Rapid Kuantan Bus?

1.6 SCOPES OF STUDY

The study focuses the level of service quality and investigates the factors of strength and weakness of public bus transport in Kuantan area. The respondent will be selected randomly which is consist Rapid Kuantan Bus users. The study was conducted to measure the Rapid Kuantan Bus. The respondents were selected by the Rapid Kuantan Bus user. The study of the Rapid Kuantan Bus is an important sign to make it up from the bus is one of the majorities public bus transports and operates around Kuantan.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Public bus transportation services otherwise known as transit buses operate along the route and itinerary determined by the management of bus services (Wikipedia, 2013). The bus service is the most important public transport, especially for those who do not have private vehicles. Good level of quality service will be able to meet the customer satisfaction.

2.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA

The transportation system is a very important infrastructure for each country in many ways. It allows for the movement of people and goods, defining land use and development pattern of a country, produce economic growth and job creation, support public policy related to energy use, air quality and thus carbon emissions. Public transport is a transport system where the passenger does not move using their own vehicles. Generally, there are three types of public transport systems in Malaysia, namely land, maritime and air.

2.2.1 Land

Public transport such as road and rail transport is the main mode of public transport in Malaysia. Public transport covers transport such as buses, taxis, trains, and light rail transit (LRT), KTM Komuter, KL Monorail, Express Rail Link (KLIA Express and KLIA Transit). Overland public transport plays an important role as a catalyst in

driving and shaping economic growth. The provision of an effective public transport has the potential to open a new batch of urban growth, increasing the attractiveness of existing urban clusters, and to drive urban renewal. Infrastructure development has contributed to the strong increase in passenger and public transport offering high impact on mobility needs.

2.2.2 Maritime

Maritime transport involves the transportation systems in the rivers and the sea. Examples of maritime transport in Malaysia are like ships, ferries and so on. The service of transport also takes a ferry from Tanjung Belungkor, Kukup, Desaru, Johor Bahru Duty Free Zone and Seban Cove (all in Johor) to the nearby islands in the south and from Butterworth to Pulau Pinang. Ferries play an important role in public transportation for most of the coastal cities allowing direct transit between destinations with smaller cost. Water transport has played an important role, especially for trading. This is evidenced by the emergence of Malaysian ports such as Port Klang and Tanjung Pelepas engaged in export and import transactions.

2.2.3 Air

Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) is known throughout the region and is recognized as one of the most modern airports in the world. Air service is also available at the international airport in Penang, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, and at the local airport in most state capitals. In addition, the airport also has a Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT) built specifically for low cost air carriers. LCCT is 20km from the main terminal building and visitors can go to here by car, train or bus.

Malaysia Airlines (MAS) is the national airline which offers flights to various destinations around the world. It provides domestic flights in the country. MAS is also working with the airlines to launch services to the other airline's global requirements. In 2003, MAS has relationships with 110 destinations across 6 continents. MAS has increased frequencies to overseas destinations such as Australia and Europe. Service

aircraft lessor in Malaysia was also operated by Air Asia Sdn. Bhd, Berjaya Sdn Bhd and Pelangi Sdn Bhd.

2.3 COMPONENTS OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

The transit system is a transport system that has been set and itinerary as public bus services. Generally there have seven components of the public transport system. Components of the public transport system are as follows:

- a) Station
A place to drop off and pick up process. The bus will wait for passengers.
- b) Terminal
Its function is similar to the situation, but the reduction of intake passenger is faster because it does not wait for passengers.
- c) Bus stops
Points for lowering and raising the passengers are on along the bus route.
- d) Depot
Bus storage. It is also the place to improve and maintenance of the damaged bus.
- e) Route
Permanent roads traveled by the bus passenger's discretion, to send the starting from the station or terminal to the destination.
- f) The time interval (headways)
The time interval between the first bus heads to the second bus.
- g) Number of buses (Fleet size)
The number of buses on the way

2.4 TYPES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN KUANTAN

Kuantan is the capital of Pahang and the town of Kuantan city planned to make progressive, beautiful, clean and develop. This can be seen in public transport in Kuantan such as taxis, buses, airplanes where Kuantan Airport is also known as an Airport Great Circle and Seaport Kuantan.

2.4.1 Taxi

The role of taxis in public transport in the town of Kuantan is very small. Almost all taxis serve the district (i.e. For travel to towns and rural areas in Kuantan). Taxis in Kuantan play a role in tourism to attract more visitors to Kuantan. In addition to providing facilities to foreign tourists, from within the country and abroad, it is also a public transport service the residents of the surrounding area are quite isolated and remote. Figure 2.1 shows the taxi service that commenced its operation at Terminal Sentral Kuantan.

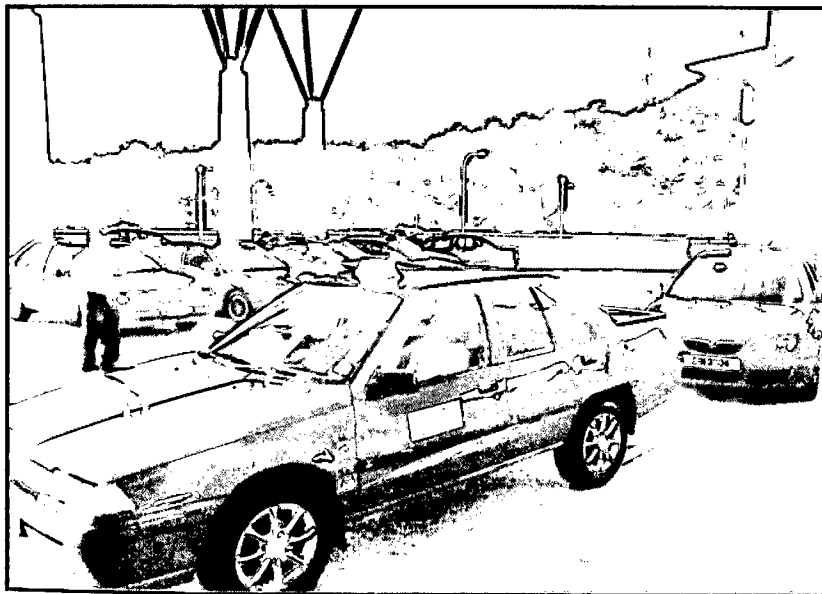


Figure 2.1: Taxi service at Terminal Sentral Kuantan

2.4.2 Bus

There are three types of bus services operate around the Kuantan area which is city buses, express buses and intercity buses. Express buses and intercity buses operating in Terminal Sentral Kuantan (TSK) at Bandar Indera Mahkota and city buses stop operating in the Hentian Bandar Jalan Stadium (Near Pasar Besar Kuantan) as showing in Figure 2.2. Terminal Sentral Kuantan is the new terminal connecting to all major towns in Peninsular Malaysia. Rapid Kuantan Bus (route 303) was shuttling between the main city (Hentian Bandar) and Terminal Sentral Kuantan. Figure 2.3 and 2.4 shows the Rapid Kuantan Bus has taken the passenger at two main different stops.

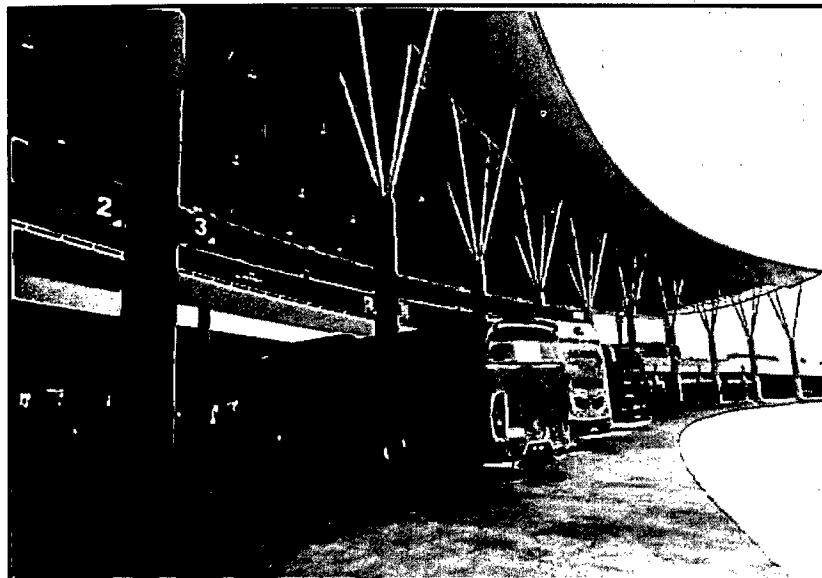


Figure 2.2: Express buses and intercity buses at Terminal Sentral Kuantan

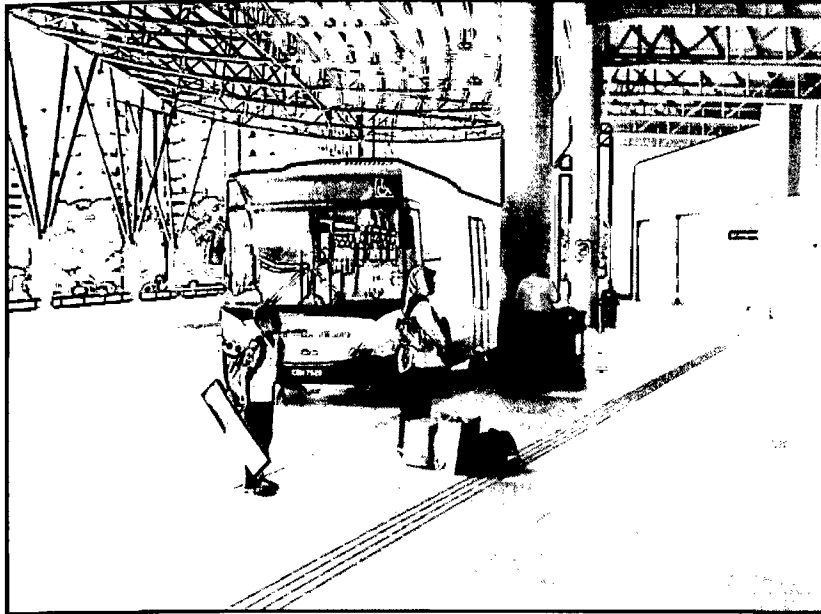


Figure 2.3: Rapid Kuantan Bus (route 303) from Hentian Bandar to Terminal Sentral Kuantan



Figure 2.4: Rapid Kuantan Bus at Hentian Bandar

2.4.3 Airplanes

Kuantan also provide air transportation to accommodate the residents and the tourists. Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah Airport is about 15 km southwest of the city. The airport currently serves several daily flights from KLIA Kuala Lumpur (40 minutes) on Malaysia Airlines. It also has a service from Penang airport via Firefly. The airport also serves international flights to Singapore by Firefly. The airport was quite busy, because every day there are at least three flights by Malaysia Airlines Berhad (MAS) to and from Kuala Lumpur. Direct and connecting flights from MAS overseas destinations with frequent the arrival of each day and about 5 times a week to take off. In fact, there is a direct and connecting MAS flight from Paris-Charles De Gaulle, London Heathrow and Frankfurt (Germany) to Kuantan. The airport is really able to handle up to one million passengers per year. Figure 2.5 shows the passenger leaving at the Sultan Ahmad Shah Airport.

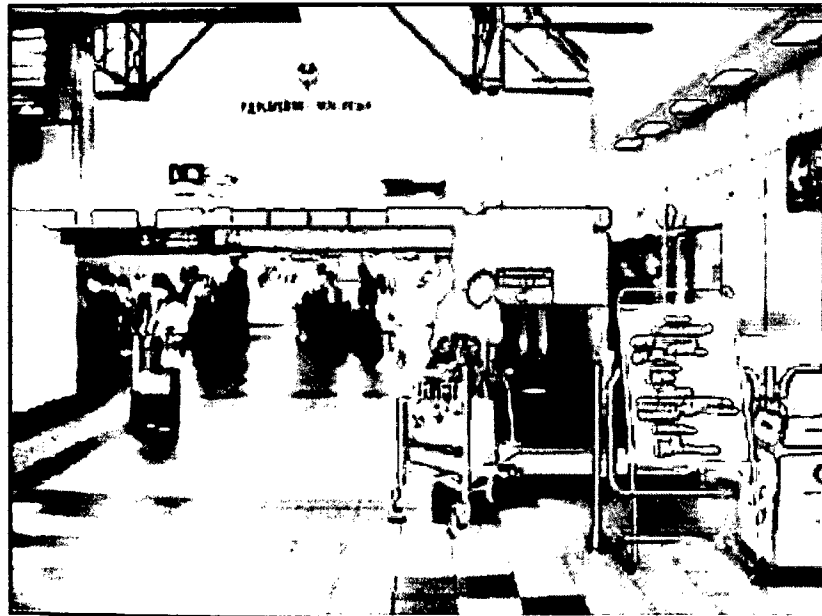


Figure 2.5: Sultan Ahmad Shah Airport passenger leaving

2.5 PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORT IN KUANTAN

There are three types of bus services operate around the Kuantan area which is an intercity bus, city bus and express bus. City bus operator in Hentian Bandar (near Pasar Besar Kuantan Jalan Stadium) has, meanwhile, expressed bus and intercity bus operations in Terminal Sentral Kuantan located in Bandar Indera Mahkota.

2.5.1 Intercity Bus

This bus is also known as a stage bus. These buses provide service along the path between the two major cities, including in rural areas or small towns along the route. The service of intercity bus is more focused on the population in urban areas and to travel to the city of Kuantan for the certain purposes. The intercity bus that still operates until now, which is Transnasional Coach Services and Utama Express. Buses also run surrounding Pahang state (Temerloh, Jerantut, Raub, Maran, Kuala Lipis)

2.5.2 City Bus

The city bus provides public transportation services to the area within a city, with a distance of about a few kilometers away. The service of city bus only operates in the city center, which is Kuantan Town. The tourism sector is growing rapidly, especially for short trips and long term will improve the city's transport system that is efficient, fast and economical (Harun, 2011). Rapid Kuantan Bus is one of the majority public bus transports which have commenced operation of public bus services in Kuantan and its surrounding areas. The Rapid Kuantan Bus system operates to and from several spots around Kuantan, including nearby tourist spots Sungai Lembing, Bukit Gambang Resort, Pekan and Teluk Chempedak. Currently, an area behind old Terminal Makmur called Hentian Bandar serves as the main hub/interchange for all Rapid Kuantan buses.

2.5.3 Express Bus

Express bus is a service that connects the state with other states. Express bus provides long distance services between major cities. The Express bus usually operates its trip service more quickly by following the schedule and moving directly to the intended destination and taking a faster route, such as a highway (Wikipedia, 2013). The express bus operates modern and comfortable, service is frequent, and fares are low to moderate depending on the distance traveled (Pktan, 2007). There are many express bus companies still running their services in certain locations around the peninsula like Syarikat Konsortium Bas Ekpress Semenanjung, Sani Express, Maraliner, Utama Express and etc. Buses also run to other major cities such as Kota Bharu, Johor Bahru, Singapore, Melaka, Penang and other towns.

2.6 INVOLVED IN THE PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN KUANTAN

Public transport policy designed to ensure the public transport is always safe and efficient based on current needs. According to the Road Transport Act and the Railways Act 1991, the implementation and enforcement of the regulatory tasks are under the roles and responsibilities of agencies involved. The public transport system has to meet demands from its users and operators, as well as from the community. The public transport users want an affordable and well functioning system while the ambition for the operators is to achieve an efficient system with a low cost. Also the community and its leaders have an interest in how the public transport affects the city (Karlsson & Larsson, 2010).

2.6.1 Responsible Authorities

The responsibility for public transport development in Kuantan is divided between several authorities. The Malaysia governments' role is generally responsible for the planning and implementation of policies, strategies and programs in the public transport sector including land transport, maritime and air. Responsible for carrying out

the transport policy decided by the government is the Suruhanjaya Pengangkutan Awam Darat (SPAD), together with the Syarikat Prasarana Negara Berhad (SPNB).

The Suruhanjaya Pengangkutan Awam Darat (SPAD) is a statutory body set up under the Land Public Transport Act 2010. The main function of the SPAD is to plan and oversee policy and public transport in the country such as trains, buses and taxis as well as transport of goods by road or rail train and perform law enforcement duties. SPAD play an important role in the effort to overhaul public transport services in Malaysia, where the effort is one of the main agenda of the National Key Result Areas (NKRA) for urban public transportation as outlined in the Government Transformation Plan.

Responsible for the development of public transport the Government-owned Syarikat Prasarana Negara Berhad (Prasarana) was set up to facilitate, undertake and expedite public infrastructure projects which is incorporated in 1998 by the Ministry of Finance. Prasarana and its group of companies are also asset-owners and operators of the Ampang and Kelana Jaya light rail transit (LRT) lines, KL Monorail, as well as bus operations in the Klang Valley, Penang and Kuantan. Prasarana forming four new subsidiaries namely Rapid Rail Sdn Bhd, Rapid Bus Sdn Bhd, Prasarana Integrated Management & Engineering Services Sdn Bhd (PRIME), Prasarana Integrated Development Sdn Bhd (PRIDE). A public bus service which is Rapid KL, Rapid Penang and Rapid Kuantan are operated by Rapid Bus Sdn. Bhd.

2.7 SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Determining the quality of service can be very complicated because there is no measurement of specifications such as distance, depth, area, weight, height and others. Service quality was seen as insubstantial and qualitative because of different thoughts, assumptions and specifications. Quality of service can vary based on experience, conditions, and personal needs and so different to an individual's face. Endeavor to meet the needs of consumers must coincide with what should consumers receive. Quality is defined as a service level management should be in line with customer