

Analysis Of Harbor Mastr Sevice Qualty At The Baubau–Wamengkoli Ferry Crossing Port

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ABSTRAK

This study aims to analyze the quality of harbor master (Syahbandar) services at the Baubau–Wamengkoli ferry crossing port. The primary focus of the research was the role of the harbor master providing administrative services maritime safety. The research method employed was descriptive qualitative, with data collection conducted through field observations, interviews, and documentation during the Community Service Program (KKL) period. The result indicated that the harbor masters services have complied with standard operating procedures (SOP), however several obstacles remain specilities regarding passenger congestion during peak seasons and limited supporting facilities at the terminal.

Keywords : Service Quality; Safety; Baubau–Wamengkoli; Transportation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ferry ports play a crucial role in bridging connectivity between regions, especially in the Buton archipelago region such as Southeast Sulawesi. The Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry port, as one of the important crossing points in the Buton region and its surroundings, serves not only as a stopping point for ships but also as a gateway for the economy, social, and culture of the community. The quality of service at this port, especially that provided by the harbormaster, is a key factor in determining the comfort, safety, and satisfaction of passengers and businesses using the ferry service.

The harbormaster, as the official with the highest authority at the port, holds extensive responsibilities, ranging from overseeing ships' compliance with shipping regulations, enforcement of security and safety in port waters, and providing administrative services to service users. In the context of crossing crossings, the role of the harbormaster becomes more vital because he must ensure the smooth operation of passenger ships, process documents 1. How is the quality of harbormaster services at the Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry crossing from an evidence perspective? 2. What factors hinder the implementation of harbormaster services at the Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry crossing?

2. METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach was chosen to describe and analyze in depth the quality of harbormaster services at the Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry port crossing, based on field observations. Location and Time in Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry port, which is a vital crossing route for public mobility and the distribution of goods, was conducted in December 2025. Primary Data: Harbormaster Officers and Ferry Passengers, Secondary Data: Official Harbormaster Document and Law No. 17 of 2008 concerning Shipping, Population and Research Information The population in this study is all parties involved in and using harbormaster services at the Baubau-Wamengkoli ferry port. The indicators used are: a. Harbormaster officers who understand the service process, b. Passengers who regularly use ferry services, c. Crew members who interact directly with the harbormaster

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings were obtained through a combination of questionnaire distribution to ferry passengers and in-depth interviews with harbormaster officers and ship crew members operating at the Baubau–Wamengkoli ferry crossing. This mixed qualitative approach allowed the researcher to capture both users' perceptions and the perspectives of service providers regarding the implementation of harbormaster duties. The quality of harbormaster services was analyzed using the SERVQUAL framework, which consists of five key dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions were selected because they are widely recognized as effective indicators for assessing public service quality, particularly in transportation and maritime sectors where safety, efficiency, and professionalism are critical. Overall, the results show that the quality of harbormaster services at the Baubau–Wamengkoli ferry crossing can be categorized as fair to good. This indicates that, in general, the harbormaster has performed service delivery and safety supervision functions in accordance with prevailing laws and regulations, including national shipping standards and operational procedures.

From the tangibles dimension, the quality of service can be observed through the condition and availability of physical facilities and infrastructure that support ferry operations. The study found that essential facilities such as the harbormaster office, passenger waiting rooms at the dock, and maritime safety equipment are generally available and function as the main support for ferry crossing activities. These facilities play an important role in ensuring smooth service delivery, as well as providing a sense of security and order for passengers. However, despite their availability, several aspects still require improvement. The comfort level of the waiting room, for example, has not yet fully met passenger expectations, particularly during busy periods when the number of users exceeds seating capacity. In addition, supporting facilities such as adequate seating, clear and updated

information boards, and overall cleanliness are still limited. Safety equipment, while available, requires routine inspection and maintenance to ensure it remains in optimal condition and ready for use in emergency situations. On a positive note, the appearance and neatness of harbormaster officers and related stakeholders such as ASDP personnel and transportation agency staff—are generally good and reflect a professional attitude, which contributes positively to public trust and perceptions of service quality.

In terms of reliability, the research indicates that harbormaster officers generally carry out their duties in accordance with established procedures. This includes conducting inspections of vessels, verifying passenger and cargo documents, and ensuring compliance with safety requirements before granting sailing permits. Passengers and crew members interviewed acknowledged that these procedures are consistently applied, although occasional delays occur due to external factors such as congestion or weather conditions. Reliability is a crucial dimension in ferry services because it directly affects safety and operational certainty. While the harbormaster's performance in this dimension is considered adequate, improvements in coordination and the use of supporting technology could further enhance consistency and efficiency in service delivery.

The responsiveness dimension reflects the ability of harbormaster officers to respond promptly to passenger needs, complaints, and unexpected situations. The findings suggest that officers generally demonstrate a willingness to assist passengers, particularly in providing information related to schedules, boarding procedures, and safety requirements. However, responsiveness tends to decline during peak seasons when passenger volumes increase significantly. Under such conditions, limited human resources and infrastructure constraints make it more challenging for officers to respond quickly and effectively to all passenger inquiries and concerns. This highlights the need for better service management strategies, including additional personnel deployment during peak periods and improved communication systems to disseminate information more efficiently.

Regarding assurance, the study shows that harbormaster officers possess adequate knowledge and competence related to maritime safety and service procedures. Their polite and professional behavior contributes to passengers' sense of security and confidence in using ferry services. Assurance is particularly important in maritime transportation, where passengers rely heavily on the expertise and authority of harbormaster officers to ensure safe crossings. Interview results indicate that passengers generally trust the harbormaster's decisions, especially when delays or cancellations are made for safety reasons. Nevertheless, continuous training and capacity building are essential to maintain and enhance this level of assurance, especially in dealing with emergency situations and evolving regulatory requirements.

The empathy dimension examines the extent to which harbormaster officers provide attentive, fair, and non-discriminatory services to passengers. The findings reveal that officers are generally friendly and treat passengers equally, regardless of background or travel purpose. This positive attitude supports the creation of a humane and inclusive service environment. However, during crowded conditions, individualized attention becomes more difficult, which can affect passengers' perceptions of empathy. Strengthening service culture and ensuring sufficient staffing levels during high-demand periods could help address this issue and improve overall service quality.

Despite the generally positive assessment, the study also identified several significant factors that hinder the effective implementation of harbormaster services at the Baubau–Wamengkoli ferry crossing. One of the main challenges arises during peak seasons, such as before religious holidays, national holidays, and the annual homecoming period. During these times, there is a sharp increase in the number of passengers and vehicles using ferry services, leading to congestion within the port area. This situation complicates supervision activities, document inspections, and control of vessel cargo capacity. The high demand often creates pressure to accommodate more passengers and vehicles than recommended, increasing the risk of vessel overloading. Overloading poses serious safety threats and requires harbormasters to enforce stricter controls, including limiting passenger numbers and, in some cases, delaying departures. While these measures are necessary for safety, they can also lead to passenger dissatisfaction and operational inefficiencies.

Another major obstacle is adverse weather conditions, such as strong winds, heavy rainfall, and high waves, which are common in maritime environments and cannot be avoided. Unfavorable weather frequently results in delays or cancellations of ferry departures to ensure navigational safety. These conditions directly affect harbormaster services, particularly in scheduling, vessel supervision, and communication with passengers. Bad weather also increases safety risks, requiring harbormaster officers to conduct more thorough inspections and assessments before granting sailing permission. This additional workload can strain existing resources but is essential to prevent accidents and protect lives.

the research demonstrates that harbormaster services at the Baubau–Wamengkoli ferry crossing are generally implemented in line with regulatory standards and achieve a fair to good level of quality across SERVQUAL dimensions. Nevertheless, improvements are still needed, particularly in upgrading facilities, enhancing responsiveness during peak seasons, and strengthening service management in the face of congestion and adverse weather. Addressing these challenges through infrastructure development, human resource strengthening, and improved coordination among stakeholders will be crucial to ensuring sustainable, safe, and high-quality ferry services in the future.



Figure 1, Handover Of Field Work Lecture (KKL) Students To The Office Of The Class II Baubau
KSOP Syahbandar



Figure 2, KKL Students Participate In Overload Checking Activities And Checking The Completeness Of Sailing Ship Permit Documents To Support Shipping Safety And Compliance With Applicable Provisions

4. CONCLUSION

This qualitative descriptive study concludes that the quality of harbormaster services at the Baubau–Wamengkoli Ferry Port crossing, when assessed using the five SERVQUAL dimensions, is generally categorized as fairly good to good. The findings show that physical evidence, including facilities, cleanliness, and the appearance of officers, is relatively well maintained; reliability is reflected in the implementation of duties in accordance with established procedures and the provision of accurate

information; responsiveness is demonstrated by the fairly prompt handling of passenger complaints and operational issues; assurance is evident through the professionalism and security awareness of officers, which fosters passenger trust; and empathy is shown through friendly, fair, and non-discriminatory service. Nevertheless, the study also identifies several challenges that hinder optimal service delivery, particularly limitations in facilities and infrastructure, surges in passenger numbers during certain periods, and the influence of weather and natural conditions. Based on these findings, it is recommended that infrastructure and port facilities such as waiting rooms and ticket counters be improved and regularly maintained to enhance passenger comfort, and that more effective passenger volume management strategies be implemented, including the preparation of contingency plans for peak periods such as Eid al-Fitr and the New Year through the addition of temporary staff, faster inspection processes, and, where possible, adjustments or extensions to ferry operating schedules.

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