

Analysis of the Quality of Land Transportation Services at the Transportation Agency of Central Maluku Regency, Indonesia

Ronald M. Parinussa^{*1}, Samson Laurens¹, and Normawati¹

¹*Master of Public Administration, Universitas Pattimura, Indonesia*

^{*}*Email Co-Authors: mrparinussababb@gmail.com*

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Abstract: This research seeks to assess and interpret the effectiveness of land transportation services offered by the Transportation Agency of Central Maluku Regency. The qualitative approach relied on gathering data through interviews using a predetermined guide, document tracing, and obtaining other pertinent documents. Secondary data was collected from working papers, legal documents, regional legal documents, brochures, and other legal document analyses pertaining to transportation services. Qualitative analysis techniques were applied to the data. The results indicated that the agency of transportation makes it a point to provide service with five distinct features, which include: serviceability—facilities and infrastructure; reliability—competence and capability; responsiveness—quick and adequate service; assurance—security and guarantees; and empathy—engagement. Central Maluku residents are, therefore, greatly satisfied with the land transportation services offered to them. The public service satisfaction model analysis presented increases in trust and responsibility when the standards are upheld, thus leading to improvements in the region and service effectiveness. The implications of the findings indicate that the agency should focus on improving responsiveness, reliability, and serviceability to maintain satisfaction.

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INTRODUCTION

Land transportation plays a strategic role in supporting community mobility and economic development (Berg & Ihlström, 2019; Thynell30, 2017; Zhang et al., 2022), especially in areas with limited access such as Central Maluku Regency. Good quality land transportation services not only improve user comfort but also contribute to operational efficiency and regional development (Hu et al., 2016; Yuda Bakti & Sumaedi, 2015). In this context, the role of the Central Maluku Regency Transportation Agency is crucial in ensuring quality land transportation services that meet public service standards.

However, the main problems faced in land transportation services in Central Maluku Regency are disparities in infrastructure and the availability of adequate services (Bahasoan et al., 2019; Mustamu & Soplanit, 2020). Although the Transportation Agency has made efforts to improve service quality (Nugroho & Makatita, 2021), there are still challenges related to limited transportation facilities (Sitaniapessy et al., 2022), uneven availability of public transportation, and a lack of public satisfaction with certain aspects

of the service (Noya et al., 2021). These problems can have an impact on community mobility, accessibility to public services, and regional economic growth.

A number of studies have discussed the quality of public transportation services in general (Bahasoan et al., 2019; Wiweka et al., 2019), but there are still gaps in the literature regarding specific implementation in areas with geographical characteristics such as Central Maluku Regency. Existing studies have focused more on urban areas with better access to transportation facilities (Noya et al., 2021), while studies on islands and remote areas are still limited. Therefore, an in-depth study on the application of service quality principles in the context of Central Maluku Regency is needed to fill the gap in the literature.

To address these issues, this study proposes a qualitative descriptive analysis approach that can comprehensively describe the reality of land transportation services. By examining various dimensions of service quality—including tangibility (facilities and infrastructure), reliability (capability), responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (attentiveness and sincerity)—this study aims to provide concrete recommendations for improving more effective and sustainable services.

The urgency of this study lies in the importance of improving transportation service quality in supporting community life and regional development. Given that land transportation is a vital element for connectivity and accessibility, a more systematic improvement in service quality can contribute to improved mobility, increased user satisfaction, and the fulfillment of more optimal public service standards. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide insights for policy makers in designing strategies to improve land transportation in the region.

The main objective of this study is to analyze and describe the quality of land transportation services provided by the Central Maluku Transportation Agency. Through a qualitative approach, this study seeks to explore how aspects of service contribute to community satisfaction and how existing weaknesses can be improved. In addition, this study aims to provide concrete recommendations for improving service quality by considering the needs and expectations of land transportation users in the region.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the local context of Central Maluku Regency, which differs from similar studies that are more urban-oriented. By prioritizing more specific and data-driven analysis from the region, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the implementation of land transportation service quality on a regional scale. Additionally, this study offers a new perspective on how service quality principles can be effectively applied in areas with unique challenges in infrastructure and accessibility.

RESEARCH METHOD

Data Collection Techniques

This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews and documentation (Gillan et al., 2014; Gouais & Wach, 2013; Rosenthal, 2016). Interviews were conducted purposively, selecting key informants based on their

relevance and position in the land transportation system in Central Maluku Regency. Informants consisted of Transportation Agency officials, transportation organization representatives, members of the Regional Representative Council, and transportation service users. The interview method was supported by an In-Depth Guide, which facilitated direct and verbal interaction between the researcher and informants. All conversations were recorded in the form of complete transcripts to ensure data accuracy.

In addition to interviews, this study relied on documentation techniques, which involved searching for, reading, and understanding various official documents relevant to land transportation services. The documents studied included work reports, laws and regulations, local regulations, government decisions, and service information brochures. This technique is used to obtain secondary data, which is useful in complementing the interview results and providing a broader context to the issues under study.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained is analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques, referring to the (Gillan et al., 2014; Gouais & Wach, 2013; Rosenthal, 2016). This analysis is carried out in three main stages:

1. Data Reduction – This stage involves selecting, focusing, and simplifying the data obtained from interviews and documentation. Irrelevant information is filtered out, while data directly related to transportation service quality is organized systematically.
2. Data Presentation – After the reduction process, the data is presented in the form of descriptive narratives that illustrate patterns, relationships, and specific categories. This presentation allows researchers to understand trends and key findings related to the quality of land transportation services.
3. Conclusion and Verification – Conclusions are drawn based on the interpretation of the analyzed data, taking into account the relationships between variables and the transportation policy context. This process also includes verification, which is a re-examination of the analysis results to ensure the validity and consistency of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tangible Facilities and Infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure are fundamental factors in improving the quality of land transportation services (Hu et al., 2016; Machado-León et al., 2017; Ngoc et al., 2017), particularly in terms of comfort and efficiency for users. Research findings indicate that the Transportation Department of Central Maluku Regency has implemented various initiatives to ensure the availability of adequate facilities, such as safe and comfortable service areas and operational vehicles used for inspecting public transportation vehicles. Research informants, including department officials and service users, confirmed that these improvements in facilities have had a positive impact on user satisfaction with transportation services. With better infrastructure, the community has experienced increased effectiveness and efficiency in accessing quality land transportation services.

However, despite significant improvements, there are still challenges in maintaining and developing infrastructure to ensure service sustainability. Factors such as budget constraints and the need for modernization are the main obstacles faced by the Transportation Agency. Discussions with various stakeholders revealed that there is a need for more careful investment planning so that existing facilities can be optimally maintained. In addition, supervision of vehicle inspection operations is also an important factor in ensuring that the services provided meet the established standards.

Furthermore, there is a need to improve facility standards to keep pace with technological developments and community demands. The implementation of digital-based transportation systems, such as real-time vehicle monitoring and improved service accessibility through online platforms (Cucor et al., 2023), is a step that can support infrastructure quality improvement. This will not only increase service transparency but also provide convenience for the public in accessing information related to land transportation. With a more innovative and sustainable approach, the quality of land transportation services can continue to be improved to meet the needs of the community more effectively.

The findings of this study confirm that facilities and infrastructure have a significant impact on the quality of land transportation services in Central Maluku Regency. Efforts to improve facilities must be accompanied by more systematic and community-based management strategies. Thus, these tangible aspects are not merely a matter of meeting service standards but also a key element in building a more responsive, efficient, and effective land transportation system for the community.

Reliability of land transportation

The reliability of land transportation services depends on the competence and professionalism of the human resources operating them (Melliana et al., 2019). Research results show that the Central Maluku Transportation Agency has made efforts to improve the quality of its employees through training and continuing education. This step aims to ensure that every employee has optimal capabilities in handling various aspects of transportation services, including operational supervision, public vehicle management, and interaction with the community. With the increased capacity of employees, service quality has improved significantly, as reflected in the decrease in the number of complaints from the community regarding the performance of the Transportation Agency.

However, there are still challenges in ensuring the sustainability of staff competency improvement, particularly related to resource constraints and the effectiveness of training programs. Discussions with various stakeholders revealed that a more systematic approach is needed to optimize the results of the training that has been conducted. One recommended strategy is to improve the training curriculum based on actual needs in the field, as well as to utilize technology to accelerate the learning process of staff. In addition, the integration of certification programs for employees is considered to improve their professionalism in carrying out land transportation services.

Apart from competence, service reliability is also influenced by the ability of employees to handle problems that arise in the field quickly and accurately (Guin, 2019; Utami et al., 2018). The results of interviews show that the community appreciates the improvements in the work system implemented by the Transportation Agency, especially in handling complaints and providing solutions to various transportation obstacles. However, there is still room for improvement in coordination between relevant agencies and the public to ensure a more effective response to transportation service issues. With a more collaborative approach, it is hoped that service reliability can be further improved.

The findings of this study emphasize that improving the quality of human resources is a key element in building a more reliable and sustainable land transportation system. Continuous efforts in competency development, technology utilization, and improved coordination with the community are strategic steps that need to be taken. Thus, service reliability is not merely about meeting service standards but also reflects a commitment to quality and the satisfaction of land transportation service users in Central Maluku Regency.

Responsiveness to Land Transportation Issues

Responsiveness in land transportation services refers to the ability of employees to respond quickly and appropriately to the needs and problems faced by the community (Cebecauer et al., 2021; Patrman et al., 2019). The results of the study show that the Central Maluku Transportation Agency has implemented a service mechanism that emphasizes high responsiveness to complaints and operational constraints. Employees are actively involved in addressing various transportation issues in the field, including service delays, vehicle conditions, and traffic problems that affect public comfort. With a more proactive approach, transportation service users have experienced an improvement in the speed of response to the problems they face.

Although responsiveness has improved, there are challenges in ensuring that every issue is resolved optimally (Guin, 2019). Discussions with stakeholders revealed that coordination between various parties, including public transport operators and local governments, still needs to be improved. The lack of an integrated complaint system forces the public to rely on manual reporting mechanisms, which sometimes hinder the effectiveness of complaint handling. Therefore, innovation is needed in the communication system between the public and the Transportation Agency, such as the use of digital platforms for complaints and real-time problem tracking.

In addition to technical aspects, human resources also play an important role in building better service responsiveness (Gene Hawkins & Chang, 2016). Special training on communication and complaint handling skills has been implemented by the Transportation Agency, with the aim of improving the ability of employees to deal with public issues with appropriate and efficient solutions. Research findings indicate that more responsive and trained staff have a positive impact on transportation service user satisfaction. This confirms that responsiveness is not only about the speed of response,

but also about the effectiveness of offering solutions that are truly relevant to community needs.

The findings of this study show that responsiveness is a key aspect in improving the quality of land transportation services. The efforts made by the Transportation Department of Central Maluku Regency have yielded positive results; however, further improvements are needed in communication systems, inter-agency coordination, and the utilization of technology to address issues more effectively. With a more innovative and inclusive approach, the responsiveness of land transportation services can continue to be enhanced to better meet public expectations.

Guarantee and Assurance of Land Transportation Services

Assurance in land transportation services is an important aspect that determines public trust in the effectiveness and transparency of the system implemented (Goyal et al., 2022; Pautz & Rinfret, 2016). The results showed that the Central Maluku Regency Transportation Agency has implemented various policies to ensure more structured and accountable services. Employees are required to work in accordance with established operational standards, including certainty in service schedules, accuracy of transportation information, and monitoring mechanisms for public vehicle operations. This commitment contributes to increased public trust in transportation service providers, as sustainability and operational certainty are key factors in the user experience.

While steps have been taken to improve service assurance, this research found that challenges remain in implementing regulations and service accountability (Prosser, 2021). Several research informants revealed that the monitoring system needs to be strengthened in order to maintain service assurance, especially in ensuring that each vehicle meets safety and operational standards. In addition, there is still room for increased transparency in service delivery, such as the publication of performance reports and evaluation of the effectiveness of policies that have been implemented. By increasing information disclosure, it is hoped that the public can better understand the working mechanisms of the transportation system and participate in monitoring services.

The sustainability of service guarantees also depends on the effectiveness of communication between relevant agencies and the public (Dudley et al., 2018). This research found that the community wants a service system that is more responsive and provides clear certainty, especially in terms of complaints and problem-solving. The Central Maluku District Transportation Agency needs to develop a more structured mechanism to handle complaints quickly and ensure that any problems that arise can be resolved properly. The implementation of technology-based systems can be a solution that allows the public to obtain service certainty more easily and transparently.

The findings of this study show that the assurance aspect of land transportation services has a significant impact on public satisfaction and the effectiveness of the system implemented. This research confirms that improving operational standards,

strengthening supervision, and optimizing communication mechanisms are important steps in ensuring the sustainability of more transparent and trustworthy services. With a more systematic approach, the assurance of land transportation services can be further improved to meet the needs of the community more effectively.

Empathy and Caring Attitudes of Employees in Transportation Services

Empathy in land transportation services plays an important role in building harmonious relationships between employees and the service user community (Bahadur et al., 2020; Sony et al., 2018). The results showed that the Central Maluku Regency Transportation Office has tried to improve this aspect through fostering service ethics and supervising employee discipline. Employees are required to show a professional attitude, discipline in attendance, and friendliness in interacting with the community. This finding shows that changes in work culture that are more oriented towards care and service have an impact on increasing the satisfaction of land transportation users.

Despite improvements in empathy, there are still challenges in ensuring that every employee has the same understanding of the importance of caring for the community (Hamzah et al., 2023; Soza-Parra et al., 2019). Discussions with stakeholders revealed that some employees still show a lack of responsiveness to the needs of service users. Therefore, a more systematic training program on service ethics is needed, including how employees should handle interactions with the public in a more sensitive and inclusive manner. In addition, employee performance evaluation can be a tool to ensure that empathy-based service standards are maintained.

Sustainability in fostering empathy also depends on leadership within the agency. The research shows that the leadership of the Central Maluku Regency Transportation Agency has played an active role in providing direction and setting service standards that focus on the needs of the community. This approach allows employees to understand that good service is not just procedural but also involves emotional and social factors that affect user satisfaction. With leadership that supports an empathy-based service ethic, service quality can be continuously improved.

The findings of this study confirm that empathy in land transportation services is not just about being polite but also reflects a commitment to community welfare. Improving this aspect requires continuous coaching, more structured performance evaluation, and leadership that encourages a more caring and inclusive service culture. With a more holistic approach, empathy in transportation services can be a major factor in creating a more humanistic and user satisfaction-oriented transportation system.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the quality of land transportation services in the Central Maluku Transportation Agency is determined by the optimization of five main dimensions: facilities and infrastructure, service reliability, responsiveness to problems, assurance of certainty, and employee empathy in service delivery. The main findings

indicate that improvements in facilities and employee competence have significantly increased public satisfaction with transportation services. Additionally, the level of responsiveness and clarity of service guarantees play a crucial role in building public trust in the effectiveness of the existing transportation system. Employee empathy, strengthened through training and leadership, also contributes to enhancing user experience in land transportation services.

The implications of this study suggest that the sustainability of improvements in the quality of land transportation services must be carried out using a holistic approach, including the use of technology to improve complaint systems and service transparency. Policies to improve human resources and optimize infrastructure must also be prioritized to ensure the sustainability of public satisfaction. However, this study has several limitations, including the limited scope of the study area to one district and reliance on qualitative data that may require further verification through quantitative methods. Therefore, further research could explore the implementation of land transportation policies in various regions with different characteristics to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of these services.

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