Predicting Citizen Satisfaction of Local Seaport: A Descriptive Analysis in The Largest Maritime Province in Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

ABSTRACT

With more than thirty thousand islands, local seaports in the Province of North Maluku, the largest maritime province in Indonesia are vital in ensuring the movements of goods and people as a part of equally distributing resources for regional and national development. The users of public goods and services tend to be seen as regular customers as they are in the private sector. In fact, they should be more seen in the context of citizen satisfaction, as they do as customer satisfaction. This research aims to examine the stronger predictors of local seaport users' satisfaction, as they are seen as citizen satisfaction. This research used predictors identified from an early explorative study and used them to question255 respondents from 9 local seaports across the Province of North Maluku. The descriptive statistics showed that most of the respondents were from Sanana; traveled on the personal purposes; were in the productive groups of age; and were mostly males. In terms of the items of the questionnaires, the least responded answers were more concerned about facility and payment. These results provided a preliminary description on the satisfaction aspects of the local seaport users in the Province of North Maluku—the maritime province.

Keywords: Indonesia, Maritime, Seaport

JEL Classification: M00, M19, M20

INTRODUCTION

With more than thirty thousand islands across the nation, Indonesia's transportation and distribution of both people and goods between islands is challenging. Indonesia's President, Joko Widowo, in his second term of administration in 2019, declared the establishment of sea toll as a part of massive infrastructure development across the country. However, this plan is likely only to improve the infrastructure of the selected seaports. As a result, local seaports in certain provinces cannot experience direct benefits of this program, including those seaports in the Province of North Maluku.

Although the Province of North Maluku is the third place as the most archipelagic Province in Indonesia, with an administrative area of 145,801.10 km2, nearly 80% of the Province is ocean area (BPS, 2021). herefore, most remote and local seaports undoubtedly would be far from ideal conditions. In this context, seaports tend to monopolize services by the government, and the users have no options to use them, even though with the minimal conditions of all supporting facilities and basic infrastructure. In other words, under this condition, the users of the local seaports cannot be perceived as a customer because of the limited option they have to choose from.

These users are more on citizens than customers; hence, their satisfactions would lean more toward citizen satisfaction than customer satisfaction. Unfortunately, the former has fewer discussions in the extant literature than the latter (Akinboade et al., 2012; Zenker & Rütter, 2014; Nakamura & Managi, 2020). Based on the phenomena of the local seaports' conditions in archipelagic Province and limited discussions on citizen satisfaction, this research was focused on.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Citizen Satisfaction
According to Kotler et al. (2014, p. 128), "Satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that result from comparing a product's perceived performance". This definition is one of the definitions that has been used to describe the satisfaction of customers in studies of customer satisfaction for years. The use of this definition has been mainly for illustrating the reciprocal relationship between the producer and its consumer. This also means that a producer needs to maintain a long-lasting relationship with its customers. The relationship is enabled when the producer realizes that customer satisfaction is far more important to retain customers than attract new customers (Kim & Lee, 2011; Yoshida & James, 2010).

Retaining customer loyalty due to their satisfaction with certain products is almost impossible in a highly competitive business environment. This situation has been much fierce recently as the competition moves to use social media to promise better products than their competitors (Alalwan et al., 2017) context is seen more appropriate under the context of producer-customer paradigm (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2008)

However, the situation above occurs in a free market where competitors are available and have identical services. When a product or a service is monopolistically run by a producer especially by the government, a customer is different from a user (Daunorienė & Žekevičienė, 2015; Moodley, 2012). The need to represent the sovereign consumer is well in line with the democratic political philosophy where the individual is the supreme power repository. In this context, the producer-customer paradigm needs to be changed its paradigm into government-citizen. Abdullah and Kalianan (2008) clarify the difference between the two as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimension of the Two Paradigms (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2008, p. 92)

Dimension	Producer-Customer	Government-Citizen
Role	Producer/Provider	Government/Protector
Challenge	Production/Management	Welfare and Safety/Consultation/Balance
Relationship	Economic	Political/Social
Indicators	Productivity/Satisfaction	Support/Participation
Public	Consumers/Recipients/Buyers	Deciders/Participants/Tax Payers

It is further noted that the definition of a person as a 'customer' might, therefore, seem inappropriate under government-citizen paradigm, but the word 'customer' is useful in the context of enhancing service delivery because it supports certain values that are as central to the provision of services for commercial benefit as they are to the provision of services. (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2008). Besides, Moodley (2012) explains that, in considering the citizen as consumers, the government needs to listen to and take into account citizen opinions when making decisions; to decide what services should be given, to treat them considerably and respectably, to ensure that the agreed level and quality of service are always of the highest standard; and to react quickly and sympathetically.

The explanations above briefly differentiate between customer satisfaction and citizen satisfaction. Again, Abdullah and Kalianan (2008) remind that the main measure of local government efficiency is citizen satisfaction and not just consumer satisfaction. However, within the context of government being the exclusive provider of some services, citizens have no option but to use the products and services provided by the government. Under this situation, citizen satisfaction needs to be measured. Zhong and Duan (2018) state that the public's sensational status is a subjective evaluation of how government institutions are meeting their expectations and this subjective evaluation is a measure of citizen satisfaction.

Because the basic paradigm for citizen satisfaction is distinct from customer satisfaction, the measurement should also be differentiated. However, it is crucial to highlight how customer satisfaction is measured. In recent years, several studies attempt to increase the level of holistic measure of customer satisfaction, for example by integrating emotional aspects into the customer satisfaction index Deng et al. (2013). Other studies examine how customer satisfaction surveys affect strategic marketing performance (Ilieska, 2013) and overall organization's performance (Sun & Kim, 2013).

Unfortunately, the above studies mostly concern about customers' satisfaction under the producer-customer paradigm. Until recently—when the public is the customers—limited studies have dedicated to exploring the satisfaction of citizens (Zenker & Rütter, 2014), who are most the users as they have no option unless using the products or services provided by government. "Citizen satisfaction is an important metric in evaluating cities, an effort to improve city performance ultimately affect the benefit and comfort of city inhabitants" (Nakamura & Managi, 2020, p. 3). As well, surveys on satisfaction are suggested to have tremendous appeal as a realistic way to measure the effect of governance (Akinboade et al., 2012).

The tendency of lacking hard evidence from citizen satisfaction studies is suspected of the nature of the provided products or the service. It is almost certain that this is because the citizen has no option but using those services and products. In other words, the citizen's satisfaction would not be the concern of the government as no other options

available. Hence, measuring government effectiveness and efficiency are needed by borrowing the producer-consumer paradigm as the basic concept (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2008; Daunorienė & Žekevičienė, 2015).

To fill the above-mentioned absence, another study is likely to be proposed to conduct another survey, borrowing those under the producer-customer paradigm. Governments around the world have been striving to measure how effective they take care of their citizen, through an institutionalized mechanism. This includes Indonesia Government under Ministerial Decree (KEPMENPAN) Number KEP/25/M.PAN/2 of 2004 regarding the General Guideline on Establishing Citizen Satisfaction Index of Government Institution Unit.

Identified Predictors of Seaport Users' Satisfaction
Although the surveys provide significant evidence for decision-makers, especially the government, studies show other flaws. Most studies on customer satisfaction that use a survey, suffer from survey's inherent flaws, including "the possibility of missing appropriate context and of lacking respondents' knowledge" (Supriyadi, 2010, p. 431) as the survey tends to use a general assumption (Tan & Lim, 2019). To avoid this general assumption, a more subjective approach is needed to explore those studied feelings.

Cheng and Rashid (2013) suggest that open-ended questions would allow researchers to have greater access to the thoughts of the respondents about the issues. In other words, a qualitative approach is likely to be proposed to fill this missing gap, as admitted by Van de Walle (2018). Studies are considered to ignore customers' feelings toward the products they are consuming. This is also the reason Deng et al. (2013) integrated the emotional aspect of their study. Therefore, besides missing hard evidence on measuring citizen satisfaction, a survey is not always a panacea. Another approach is still needed, and it is believed that this missing gap is wider in measuring citizen satisfaction.

An early study was conducted to identify the predictors of citizen satisfaction, using the local seaport users to form the context of citizen satisfaction (Fahri, 2020). This initial coding was conducted by using line-by-line coding and then coded the line based on its abstract meaning. The initial coding was then continued with selective coding, as shown in

Figure 1. At this step, the nodes from the initial coding were coded into a more abstract level and specifically into more selective themes or nodes. It is interesting to note that parking appears to be the most concerning aspect of seaport the user's satisfaction. In other words, selective coding had allowed the analysis to explore the patterns of participants' responses to a higher level of abstraction.

Figure 1. Selective Coding Result

The analyses of this study identified 19 predictors of the satisfaction of local seaport. These identified indications were Toilet, Levy Inclusiveness, Ticket Inclusiveness, Capacity Conformance, Lighting, Seaport Cleanliness, Waiting Room, Officers, Parking, Stairs, Economy Centre, Developing City, Schedule Information, Recommending Alternative Seaport, Docking Position, Alternative Seaport, Sharing Experience, and Usage Frequency. However, because this explorative study was conducted only involving 8 participants, this early study only satisfies internal generalizability. More respondents are needed to reach the external one.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted between May and August 2021 and targeted in ten local seaports within the Province of North Maluku. These targeted seaports were based on the location of the seaports, which were in the capital of the sub-districts; as well as number of passengers (BPS, 2019; KSOP, 2018).

This research used descriptive analyses of the seaport's users' movements at the targeted sites and used use purposive sampling technique as the respondents were purposively questioned because of their role as seaport users. The number of respondents were determined based on J.F. Hair Jr. et al. (2019). The use of Hair's approach was because the of population of the passengers who traveled using the seaports were inconsistent through the time of research; where:

Number of samples (respondents) = number of indicators X 10

Based on the identified indicators above, number of samples in this research were

19 x 10 = 190 samples (respondents)

However, this research used 190 as a minimum the number of respondents to be questioned. This research attempted to increase the sample size in order to increase the external generalizability of the identified predictors from the earlier study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

These seaports covered Bastiong (City of Ternate), Mangga Dua (City of Ternate, Dufa Dufa (City of Ternate), Rum (City of Tidore Islands), Sofifi (City of Tidore Islands), Jailolo (West Halmahera), Tobelo (North Halmahera), Obi (South Halmahera), Sanan (Sula), and Taliabu (Taliabu Island). The questionnaires were given to respondents to at these local seaports, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Research Sites within the Province of North Maluku
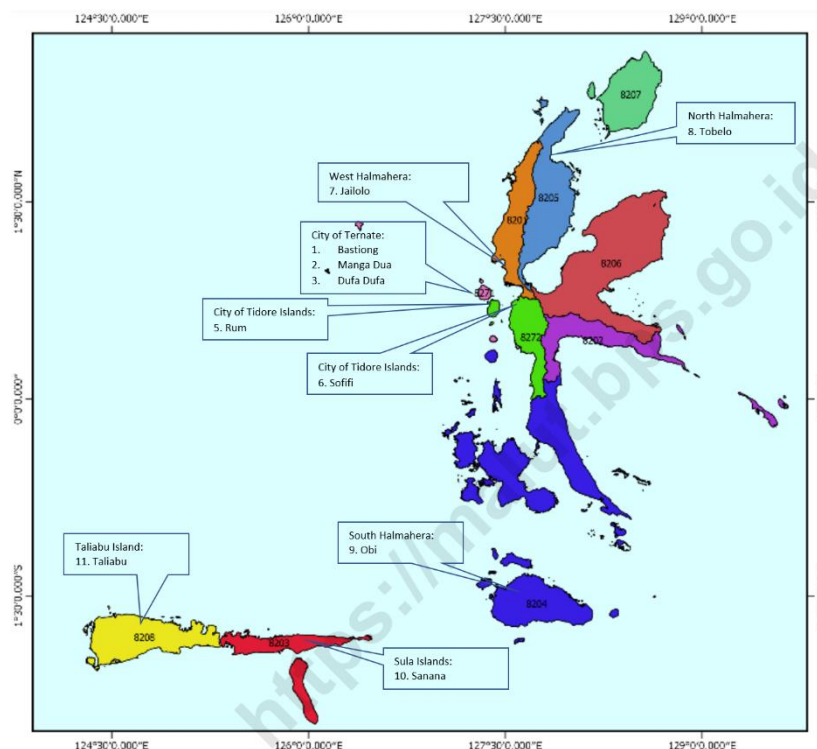
As early calculated, the number of samples (respondents) were 190. Nonetheless, this research treated this sample size as the minimum number and tried to increase the size. This effort was due to the fact that the predictors were identified through an exploratory study the has only internal generalizability. The research needed to increase the

identified predictors by increasing the number of samples size in order to achieve the indicators' external generalizability. After disseminating the questionnaires, the processed data was only from 255 respondents. In other words, there was 34.21% increase from the minimum number of sample size.

While results showed how the data generate certain patterns of findings, discussions section elaborates more on how those findings should be explained in the existing literature. The results section elaborates descriptive statistics based on the characteristics of the respondents. The characteristics included type of travel, occupation, age groups of the respondents.

In this research, the number of targeted samples is assumed to be adequate due to time constraint and limited resources. The main assumption towards the number is due to its nature of each respondent's answer. This research strictly assesses their need to arrive to their destination affordability and reliability and is less consider the purpose of their travel. This basic assumption applies to 100 respondents in any age between the ranges of 15-64. In other words, this range of age might be treated as period of productivity and required reliable public transport.

Type of Travel
The next characteristic for the respondents was type of travel. This study provided three options for the respondents to choose from—business, on duty, or personal. The analysis showed that most travel was for personal purposes, as can be seen in Figure 3. The second largest proportion of travel type was those who were on duty to travel. These respondents were forced to travel and were likely to have no option unless using sea-mode transportation. This can be explained by the early characteristic of the attribute above, where the seaport in Sanana had the highest proportion to be reviewed. The respondents were no option unless using the seaport to travel to and from Sanana.
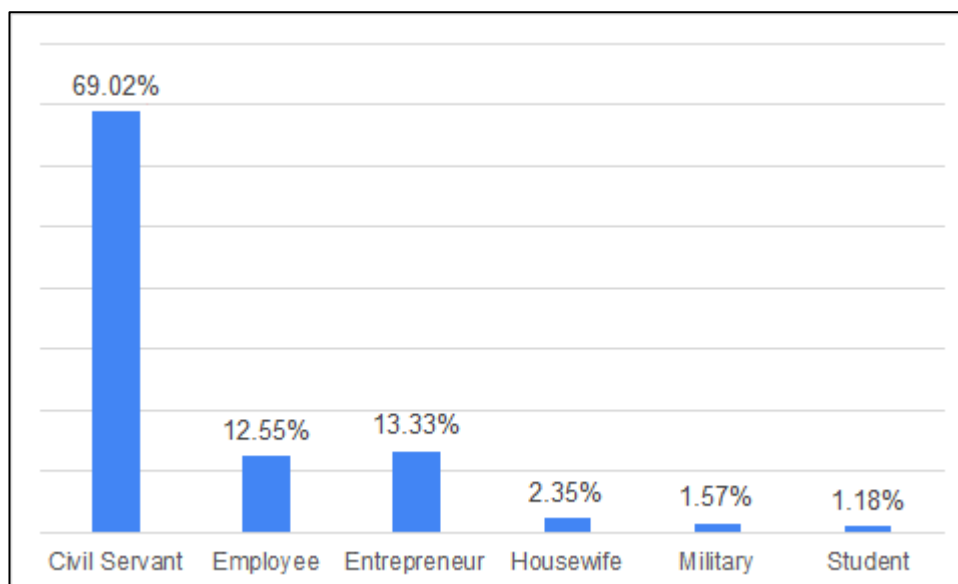
Figure 3. Percentage of Respondents' Type of Travel
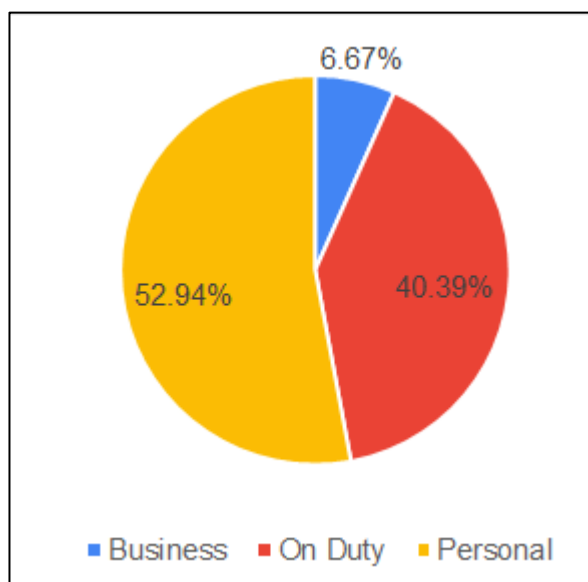
Occupation

Figure 4 shows 6 types of the respondents' occupations—civil servant (ASN), employee, entrepreneur, housewife, military (TNI/POLRI), and student. From the analysis, it indicated that the largest proportion of the occupation was those of civil servant.

**Figure 4.** Percentage of Respondents' Occupation

Because the previous characteristic is type of travel, this study also included the occupation of the respondents. This is in line with the indication provided by earlier characteristic: type of travel. The second largest of travel type was on-duty one, where civil servants should travel across the region and between islands because they had to work. Especially, when a travel could be costly, only those who had fixed income such as civil servants could travel frequently.

Age Group
The next attribute of the respondents was the respondents' age. This study classified five age group, ranging from 15 years old to more than 55 years old. Figure 5 shows that the high percentage of respondents were at the age between 36 and 45 years old, followed by those of 46 and 55 years of age.It can be said that these ranges of age were at their productive era, either they were in personal travel or on duty. This tendency was shown from the previous attributes of the respondents—occupations and type of travel.

Figure 5. Percentage of Age Group
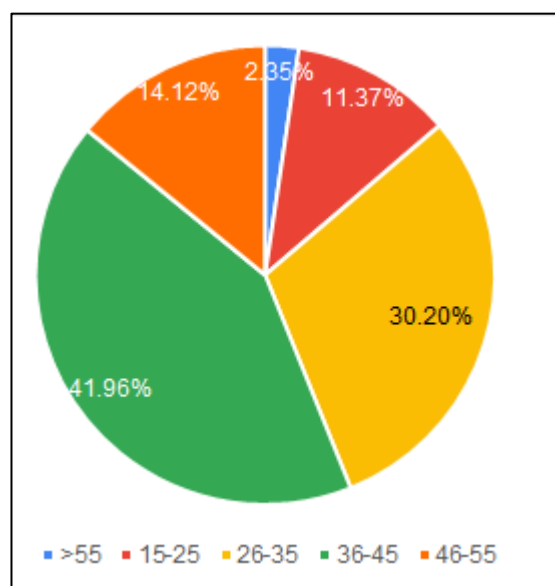
The results show tendencies of respondents' characteristics. This research emphasized three main characteristics—type of travel, occupation, and age group. Studies have shown these three characteristics are associated one another (Sánchez-Moral et al., 2018; Wendt et al., 2020) in describing mobility of people who are usually workers and who are in productive age. Kurtyka-Marcak et al. (2019) says that at this stage of life, the mobility is higher. In other others, the findings in this research provide an alignment of those characteristics to be highly dependent to use seaports.

Responses
In terms of responses toward the indictors, it can be seen in

Figure 6. The indicators have been identified through an earlier-explorative study. This study found the predictors of the seaport users' satisfaction—as citizen satisfaction— consisted of Toilet, Levy Inclusiveness, Ticket Inclusiveness, Capacity Conformance, Lighting, Seaport Cleanliness, Waiting Room, Officers, Parking, Stairs, Economy Centre, Developing City, Schedule Information, Recommending Alternative Seaport, Docking Position, Alternative Seaport, Sharing Experience, and Usage Frequency (Fahri, 2020).

The descriptive analyses then classified these predictors into three groups of mean score—below 3.00 (disagree), between 3.00 and 4.00 (somewhat agree), and above 4.00 (agree).

Figure 6 shows three indicators that the means were below 3 (somewhat agree). They were Toilet, Levy Inclusiveness, Ticket Inclusiveness. Toilets had the lowest mean provided by the respondents, with the mean of the responses was 2.39. The respondents mostly gave 'disagree' and 'somewhat agree' regarding the proper function of the toilets at most seaports.

In service industry, even a small aspect of the service could be vital determinant for a customer satisfaction. Recent studies keep arguing the important of toilets in determining the overall customer satisfaction (Cahoon, 2007; Pupsyte & Lileikis, 2016). Although, this importance has been proven scientifically, less attentions are given to this aspect. This research provides evidence the negligence of toilets as a part of the overall service at a seaport that should be provided be the government.

Meanwhile, mean of the responses for Levy Inclusiveness was 2.66, meaning that many users were disagree and somewhat agree regarding the inclusiveness of the levy. The users expected that the payment for the entry levy should be inclusive as a single price, and should not be separated as well as doble payments. In other words, it was indicated that additional charges applied when the informants (seaport users) used other facilities within the location.

In terms of Ticket Inclusiveness, for so long, the passenger (both the respondents and the informants) had pay less attention on the importance of travel and life insurance. From the earlier study, it could be argued that the informants never thought about the importance of those insurances. And when the insurance would be applied, it should not be additional charges, but already in the ticket.

Figure 6. Mean of Responses
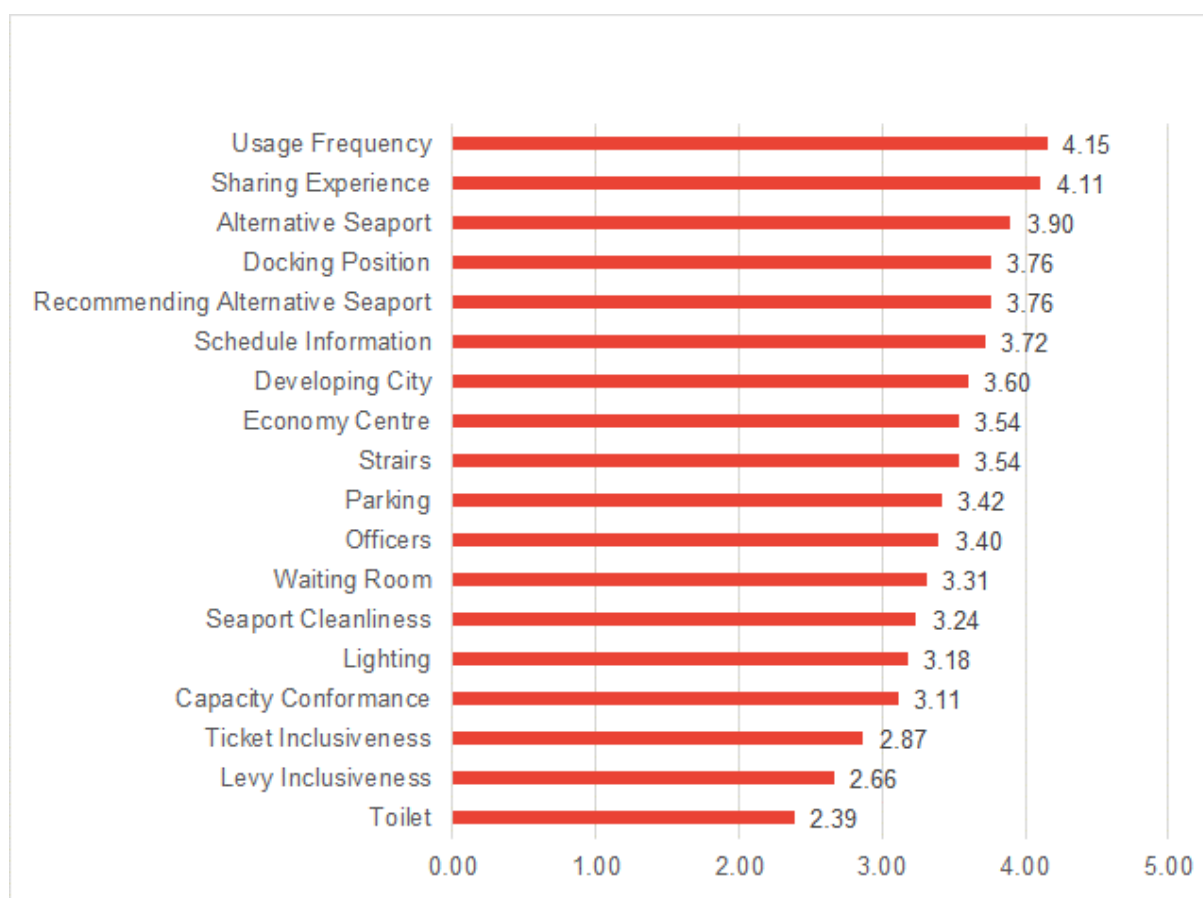
Both levy and ticket inclusiveness were identified as the predictors of the seaport users' satisfaction elements. However, the lowest scores provided by the respondents indicated a sensitivity of prices by people. Recent studies still discuss the sensitivity of this aspect that could lead to dissatisfaction of the customers (Cahoon, 2007; Dewa et al., 2018). However, although these studies signal the vital aspect of pricing of a service, they are still not be able to detail the level of sensitivity towards the components of the prices. This current research then provides another evidence on how sensitive a price because of the separation of cost components.

Moreover, the second group that had mean score between 3.00 and 4.00 consisted of Capacity Conformance (3.11), Lighting (3.18), Seaport Cleanliness (3.24), Waiting Room (3.31), Officers (3.40), Parking 3.42), Stairs (3.54), Economy Centre (3.54), Developing City (3.60), Schedule Information (3.72), Recommending Alternative Seaport (3.76), Docking Position (3.76), and Alternative Seaport (3.90). In other words, the users of the local seaports had tendencies that these predictors were less crucial leading to their satisfaction in using the seaports.

For example, in terms of Capacity Conformance, the users tend to 'somewhat agree' regarding the conformance of the local seaport capacity to cater the mobility of people and goods across the province. This score of the mean could imply that a seaport capacity might be less capable to serve the movement of people and goods. The users also concerned about the lighting at the seaport area, particular the piers where the boats were docking. When a travel was in the evening or early in the morning, the users 'somewhat agree' that lighting was crucial for the activity at a seaport. Next, the users also provide almost similar score for Seaport Cleanliness. The mean score for this predictor could indicate that the users had less concerned toward the cleanliness of the

seaport. It can be said that as long as they users could use a local seaport, they did not mind if the seaport was not really cleaned.

The tendency of the users' responses could be similar to the waiting room and the parking facilities. In fact, the tendency of concerning these two predictors increased. In other words, the users had more concerned on waiting rooms and parking facilities at the seaport areas, compared to Capacity Conformance, Lighting, and Seaport Cleanliness. It was also interesting that the users were less concerned towards the ability of the seaport officers. Usually, there several institutions at a seaport, including KP3 and Transportation Agency of a Municipality (Dishub Kota/Kabupaten).

As the mean scores were higher, it could be seen from

Figure 6 that the users started to concern more on the safety when they board a boat as the schedule for their travels. The tendency can be seen in the predictors of 'Stairs' and Docking Position'. The seaport users paid more attention to these predictors because they determined the users' safety when they board a boat at a pier. The users needed to make sure they the stairs were safe as they were stepping into a boat. This situation also depended on how a boat was positioned at a pier. Frequently, few boats docked parallel in a pier, so the users/passengers needed to move from one boat to reach to another boat. This situation was critical and dangerous, and the users were increasingly concerned.

The users also somewhat agree on the location of a seaport. A city where a seaport located was crucial in providing a reason for the movement of people and goods across the province. This condition was in particular true when the location was a developing city where it would be a new economic center in the Province of North Maluku.

The second group of mean score could be seen as a mixture of tangible and intangible aspects of customer satisfaction. However, because the customers had no choice to use the seaports, this research seen this context as more of citizen satisfaction (Abdullah & Kalianan, 2008) toward tangible and intangible aspects in using the seaports (Pupsyte & Lileikis, 2016; Sánchez-Moral et al., 2018).

The analysis also found an interesting tendency of the users' responses, in terms of recommending an alternative seaport to other users for the other travel times. A user would recommend an alternative point of departure to another passenger for his/her future travel routes. This condition then led to seek alternative seaports so a user of a group of users could travel comfortably.

As early discussed, Zhong and Duan (2018) state that the public's sensational status is a subjective evaluation. This nature of evaluation leads to recommending a service to other customers or potential ones. Nonetheless, due to the context of a monopolistic service, a public service tends to be free from the pressure of 'an ugly truth' recommendation. Studies have shown this tendency where public services have less

attentions for its advertisement because citizens have no option unless using them (James, 2011; Phua & Tinkham, 2016).

The tendency in recommending an alternative seaport and leading to seek alternative seaports justified the highest mean score for sharing experience (4.11). In other words, the users had a high tendency to share their experience as the same time as recommending an alternative local seaport. When a recommendation was convincing the process of seeking an alternative route for sea travel could be an opportunity for sharing the experience in using previous a local seaport.

Interestingly, these few last predictors could prove that the users were highly dependable seaports within the province. As their activities required them to move from one island to another, seaports were vital and frequently used by them. This condition led to 'Usage Frequency' had the highest score of mean, compared to all other predictors. However, it is very rare for studies to discuss specifically the role of water transportation that could lead to employees' mobility. In this context, seaports play a significant role to ensure the productivity. In this regard, government was the only provider for the service, and people should not be consider as customers but more into users (Daunorienė & Žekevičienė, 2015; Moodley, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This research provides another evidence of a tendency on how citizen—as government's customer—satisfy a service, which was inter-islands seaports in the Province of North Maluku. This province has been chosen provides a relevant context due to the fact that the province it's the third largest archipelagic province, yet the largest province covered by the sea in Indonesia—the largest maritime country in the world! The results show that the people in the province almost had no choice unless using the seaports because they needed to travel, either for personal or business purposes. These two characteristics were relevant considering most of the travelers were in the productive age.

The most significant findings of this descriptive research are that a monopolistic service in the context of seaports led the sea travelers had no option unless using them with minimum level of supporting facilities and infrastructure. Both tangible and intangible aspects of services show low responses by the seaport users, but they had to use them because of limited, yet the most reliable and affordable options available.

Because this was a descriptive study, more causal-relationship studies are needed. However, sample size is needed to be increased as well as the number of seaports and location outside the Province of North Maluku are needed. Local ports in the area with many rivers should be used and questioned their frequently-used commuters.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
This research has no conflict of interests.

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