

IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE ISSUANCE OF SEAMEN'S BOOKS IN ACHIEVING EXCELLENT SERVICE AT THE TANJUNG PERAK MAIN PORT AUTHORITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the effectiveness of the E-Office-based Seafaring Certificate service at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority (KSOP). Using a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was carried out through field observations, document analysis, and in-depth interviews with internal informants from the KSOP and supporting informants comprising seafarers and shipping company agents. The research findings indicate that the Goal Achievement dimension operates optimally, characterised by a reduction in processing time from 3–5 days to a maximum of 24 hours, zero-error data accuracy, and the closure of physical counters (contactless service), which has successfully dismantled the brokerage ecosystem. In the 'Integration' dimension, internal communication is well automated; however, there was a digital literacy gap amongst senior seafarers in the external environment, which was subsequently overcome through the provision of self-service kiosks. The 'Adaptation' dimension demonstrates organisational resilience; the 'culture shock' experienced by senior staff was addressed through a cross-generational tandem working system, and central server instability was mitigated via data queuing features. This study also reconceptualises Steers' theory by proposing the pillar of Digital Security Transformation (Electronic Signatures and QR Codes) as an absolute prerequisite for the effectiveness of public organisations in the cyber age. In conclusion, the implementation of the E-Office has been highly effective and has successfully transformed the face of bureaucracy, making it transparent, swift and accountable.

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INTRODUCTION

The delivery of service excellence is a tangible manifestation of the success of bureaucratic reform within government agencies (Osborne, 2020). As mandated by the Public Service Act, the State is responsible for meeting the basic needs of the public through a responsive and transparent service system (Act No. 25 of 2009). The delivery of service excellence is a tangible manifestation of the success of bureaucratic reform within government agencies. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are guidelines setting out the standard operational steps that staff must follow when providing services. SOPs are technical guidelines that are systematically formulated and applied consistently for every

activity or task carried out (da Silva Rufino et al., 2025). (Regulation of the Minister of State Apparatus Reform and Bureaucratic Reform No. 36 of 2023). The effective and measurable implementation of SOPs is believed to enhance service quality and ultimately lead to service excellence (Lubis et al., 2020).

In carrying out its public service functions, the Tanjung Perak Surabaya Main Harbour Master's Office is obliged to provide high-quality services to both the public and private shipping companies (Ghobehei et al., 2019). Continuous improvement in service quality is a crucial step towards meeting the expectations of service users, including agents of maritime transport companies, thereby fostering satisfaction and trust in the services provided (Chen et al., 2019).

In order to enhance the quality of service to the public, including private shipping companies, the Tanjung Perak Surabaya Main Harbour Master's Office, as a public institution, must implement various policies that support the delivery of excellent and high-quality service (Lanin & Hermanto, 2019). Members of the public are given the opportunity to process vessel documentation independently at the Tanjung Perak Surabaya Main Harbour Master's Office without going through an agent. It has been stipulated that applications for vessel measurement may be submitted by the vessel owner or an authorised representative, as set out in Article 11(1) of Indonesian Minister of Transport Regulation No. 8 of 2013. Furthermore, the fees for vessel measurement have been set out in Government Regulation No. 15 of 2016 concerning Non-Tax State Revenue (PNBP) Tariffs (Kusumo et al., 2023).

The practice of delivering public services is a tangible manifestation of the role of the civil service as servants of the people and the state. These services are intended to meet the needs of citizens whilst fostering social justice within the community; in this way, the government can realise a better life for its people (Polii et al., 2025). One strategic public service sector that demands a high level of compliance with standard operating procedures (SOPs) is the provision of legal documentation for seafarers in the maritime sector. The Seaman's Book is a state-issued document that every seafarer must possess as an absolute prerequisite for seaworthiness. The Tanjung Perak Main Harbour Master's Office and Port Authority (KSOP) in Surabaya, as the largest logistics gateway in Eastern Indonesia, bears a very heavy administrative workload (Putra et al., 2025). According to internal data from the Tanjung Perak Main KSOP, the volume of Seaman's Book services has shown a consistent upward trend over the last four years. In 2021, there were 6,842 applications, rising to 7,156 in 2022, 7,523 in 2023, and reaching 7,891 in 2024 (Internal Data from the Tanjung Perak Main KSOP, 2024). To address this significant service workload, specific procedures for the issuance of Seafarers' Books have been established through Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) No. 008/SOP/KSOP PERAK/09/2024 on the Online Issuance of Seafarers' Books (SOP No. 008/SOP/KSOP PERAK/09/2024). This SOP sets out comprehensive procedures, ranging from document verification, payment and printing to the handover of Seafarers' Books, drawn up in accordance with legislation and adapted to the actual conditions at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority (Ariesta et al., 2025).

The urgency of issuing and managing Seafarers' Books has become increasingly crucial when viewed within the context of the overall maritime logistics ecosystem. At the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority, the Seafarers' Book is not merely an identity document, but an absolute prerequisite in the chain of services for vessel departures, particularly for the issuance of the Certificate of Clearance to Sail (SPB) (Atteridge et al., 2022). The management of vessel departures must now be integrated online via the Inaportnet application (Regulation of the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries No. PM 34 of 2014) (Bintoro et al., 2026).

Under the Inaportnet system, an SPB cannot be issued until all clearances from the relevant authorities have been obtained (Iman et al., 2022). This includes port approval (Port Authority), pilotage verification (PT Pelindo), payment for navigation services (Vessel Traffic System/Navigation District), health quarantine approval, and the most critical stage: the certification of the ship's crew by the Maritime Section of the Safe Navigation Division at the Tanjung Perak Main KSOP. The Inaportnet application operates on an auto-response system (Approve, Revise, or Reject). The duty officer at the KSOP may only press the 'Approve' button once all vessel and crew data has been validated. If there are discrepancies in the seafarers' data, the system will instruct "Revise" or "Reject", which automatically halts the vessel's departure process and results in massive losses of time and operational costs for shipping companies (Dwiputri et al., 2024).

The implementation of an efficient, effective and competitive national maritime transport system, in line with the vision of the Directorate General of Maritime Transport, must be realised to support the life of the nation and state. Pursuant to Government Regulation No. 189 of 2015 concerning the Organisation and Work Procedures of the Ministry of Transport, the Directorate General of Maritime Transport is tasked with formulating and implementing policies and technical standardisation in the field of maritime transport. These duties include the formulation of policies, norms, standards, procedures and criteria; the provision of technical guidance and evaluation; and the administration of affairs in accordance with its authority (Minister of Maritime Affairs Regulation No. PM 189 of 2015) (Supriyanto, 2026).

The Tanjung Perak Main Harbour Master's Office is responsible for providing services in the field of maritime traffic and transport, as well as maintaining the security and safety of navigation within the port's waters to support the smooth flow of maritime transport (Decision of the Minister of Transport No. KM 36 of 2012). In carrying out these duties, the organisation of the Tanjung Perak Main Harbour Master's Office is guided by the Minister of Transport Regulation No. PM 135 of 2015 concerning the Organisation and Work Procedures of the Main Harbour Master's Office. Meanwhile, the performance of operational duties in the fields of shipping and maritime affairs is governed by Law No. 17 of 2008 on Shipping. Furthermore, in carrying out its governmental functions and providing services to the public, the office also adheres to Law No. 25 of 2009 on Public Services. Consequently, the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority acts as an agency providing public services, particularly to those involved in the maritime sector (Fauziyah & Putri, 2022).

In the mechanism for certifying ship's crews, the validity of the Seafarer's Book serves as the primary basis. This process begins with the recruitment stage by shipping companies, which assess the seafarers' experience, Certificates of Competency and Certificates of Proficiency. If a seafarer meets the qualifications, the next legal step is the drafting of a Seafarers' Employment Agreement (PKL) between the company (the first party) and the seafarer (the second party), which is then certified by an official from the KSOP Utama's Seafaring Section. Once the PKL has been issued, officials are required to carry out the promotion process, or 'Sijil Naik', in the Seafarer's Book and the Ship's Crew Certificate Book (Lahibu et al., 2022). The recording of these promotion entries is organised hierarchically and sequentially, starting from the highest rank (Master) down to the lowest level (ratings). This lengthy bureaucratic chain emphasises that every stage in the management of the Seafarer's Book is bound by strict regulations and does not tolerate administrative errors (Wahyudi et al., 2023).

In theory, the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedure for the Online Issuance of Seafarers' Books is designed to cut through bureaucratic red tape (SOP No. 008/SOP/KSOP PERAK/09/2024) (Nababan et al., 2024). However, in practice, the achievement of service excellence still faces various obstacles. Based on the results of initial observations and a documentary study at the Tanjung Perak Main KSOP, several fundamental problems were identified in the implementation of the SOP policy for the issuance of Seafarers' Books, including: (1) the continued existence of complaints from seafarers regarding service completion times that are not consistent with the time standards set out in the SOP; (2) the limited reliability of technical facilities and infrastructure, such as passport (seafarers' book) printers, which frequently break down; (3) the sub-optimal state of the integrated information system infrastructure, leading to frequent network access disruptions; (4) the need to expand staff's technical competencies to keep pace with the rapid development of digital service technologies; and (5) the sub-optimal provision of channels for proactive public participation in service evaluation (Maharani & Ginting, 2023).

Provisions regarding these service standards are further regulated under Regulation of the Minister of Transport of the Republic of Indonesia No. 19 of 2017 concerning Guidelines for Service Standards within the Ministry of Transport. Chapter II, Section B, point 5 stipulates that service standards must be formulated in accordance with the principle of transparency, so that service information can be easily accessed and understood by the public as service users.

Furthermore, the obstacles to achieving service excellence at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority (KSOP Utama Tanjung Perak) stem not only from internal bureaucratic factors but are also influenced by external factors relating to service users. Evidence on the ground indicates that service delivery is often hampered by a lack of comprehensive understanding on the part of a number of shipping companies and crew manning agencies. There are many cases where shipping companies do not yet fully understand the required administrative recruitment procedures. This lack of understanding includes errors in preparing draft Seafarers' Employment Agreements (PKL), procedural errors in issuing endorsements in seafarers' service books, and an inability to align seafarers' certificate qualifications with the latest regulations. Consequently, applications submitted at service counters or via the system are frequently returned (for revision), leading to long queues, disputes between crew members and the company, and a negative perception of the slowness of KSOP services, even though the root of the problem lies in the inadequacy of the service users' documentation (Danial et al., 2024).

The various empirical phenomena described above indicate that there is significant scope for improvement that requires academic examination. Research on services within the KSOP environment has been extensive, yet crucial research gaps remain. Previous studies have largely focused on the digitalisation transition in medium-sized ports. Meanwhile, research on large-scale ports tends to emphasise the downstream aspect, namely 'Customer Satisfaction', without examining the upstream aspect, namely managerial compliance with the SOPs themselves (Simatupang et al., 2019). There has been no postgraduate-level study that comprehensively examines the correlation between the

implementation of SOP policies in the digital era and the achievement of Service Excellence at ports with extremely high volumes, such as Tanjung Perak. Therefore, this thesis research was conducted to fill this gap in the literature, whilst also providing strategic recommendations to realise excellent public service at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority (KSOP Utama Tanjung Perak).

The lengthy sequence of the vessel departure service ecosystem underscores that the Seaman's Book constitutes the upstream (first layer) element that is crucial to the success of subsequent downstream stages. Without a valid and timely Seafarer's Book, the processes of drawing up the Seafarer's Employment Agreement (PKL), the Boarding Certificate, the certification of the crew, and the vessel's departure approval (SPB) within the Inaportnet system cannot be executed. Therefore, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the issuance of Seafarers' Books, as the cornerstone of seafarer administration, plays a vital role. If the SOPs are not optimally implemented at this initial stage—whether due to internal factors relating to infrastructure or external factors such as a lack of understanding among service users—the maritime logistics service chain will be disrupted. This is the fundamental reason why the optimisation of the SOPs for the Issuance of Seafarers' Books is an absolute prerequisite for achieving Service Excellence at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority (KSOP Utama Tanjung Perak).

Based on the issues outlined in the background, this research is titled: 'The Implementation of Standard Operating Procedures for the Issuance of Seafarers' Books in Achieving Service Excellence at the Tanjung Perak Main Port Authority'.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with descriptive research characteristics. The qualitative approach, as outlined by Moleong (2000:6), explains that this study aims to examine and understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, including their behaviour, views, motivations, actions, and so on. The descriptive method is used to depict and explain the relationships between the phenomena that form the focus of the research. The researcher is also involved in the process of observation or participant observation (Moleong, 2007:9). The research was conducted at the Tanjung Perak Main Harbour Master's Office and Port Authority (KSOP), Surabaya, East Java. The selection of this location was based on academic and empirical considerations (purposive area), as Tanjung Perak Port is one of the busiest ports and serves as a barometer of maritime traffic in Eastern Indonesia.

Supporting informants are individuals or groups who serve as sources of secondary data or information, providing a supporting perspective on the primary data relating to the research issue; they are people who can provide additional information to complement the analysis and discussion in qualitative research. To avoid data bias arising solely from one-sided claims by government agencies, it is essential to triangulate the data by exploring the perspectives of service recipients (external parties). Supporting informants include: Seafarers / Seafarers' Book applicants (at least 2–3 people); representatives of shipping agencies / crewing agencies (at least 2 people) who routinely handle the administration of certificates and PKL at the Tanjung Perak Port Authority (KSOP).

The data analysis method in this study draws on the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014) to process the research data. Qualitative data analysis was carried out interactively and continuously until all the data obtained was deemed saturated. The interactive model used is as follows:

Data Collection. Data collection is the process of obtaining data in the form of words, rather than numerical sequences.

Data Condensation. Data condensation refers to the process of selecting, abstracting, simplifying and/or transforming data that approximates the entirety of written field notes, interview transcripts, documents and other empirical materials.

Data Display. Data display in qualitative research takes the form of brief descriptions, diagrams, category maps, flowcharts and similar formats.

Drawing Conclusions (Conclusion, Drawing/Verifying). The final stage in qualitative data analysis, according to Miles, Huberman and Saldana, is the process of drawing conclusions (Conclusion, Drawing/Verifying).

The following is an illustration of the interactive data analysis technique by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014):

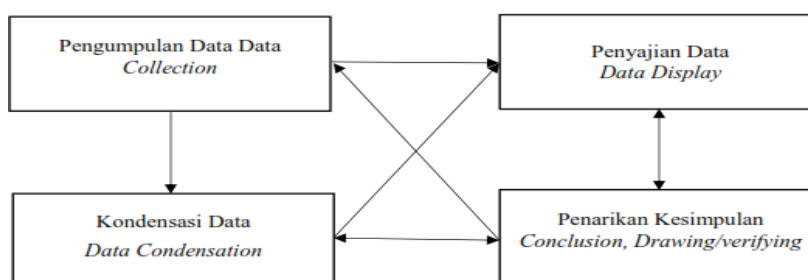


Figure 1. Interactive Data Analysis Model
Source: Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Two concepts from the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and SERVQUAL's definition of excellent service quality

Based on the findings from the field, the results can be summarised into the two clusters below: a synthesis of communication and bureaucratic structure in relation to reliability and responsiveness. The first theoretical discussion centres on the systemic failure of initial policies (Communication and Structure) and final services (Reliability and Responsiveness), and where the findings of the cause-and-effect analysis lie at the level of institutional communication, which is asymmetrical (one-way) and assumes that the public understands the digital system simply by being informed via the website. However, when combined with the variable of a rigid bureaucratic structure (Standard Operating Procedures requiring physical validation and signatures from structural officials), this triggers a backlog of workload at service counters. Staff verifying documents are forced to assist users/seafarers who are not tech-savvy.

This phenomenon supports George C. Edwards III's (1980) view that a combination of poor communication and bureaucratic rigidity creates bureaucratic pathology. The impact on service quality is detrimental to Reliability and Responsiveness, as outlined by Parasuraman (1988). The reliability of the institution is diminished when the promised document processing time (Service Level Agreement) specified in the SOPs becomes inaccurate. This finding is consistent with the research by Wanuri et al. (2023) and Nurfadilah (2023), which states that the digitalisation of service administration often struggles to address disparities in digital literacy among service users. However, this thesis goes a step further by identifying that the root of the problem lies in the over-centralisation of IT authority (vertical fragmentation), whereby regional offices lack the ability to rectify system errors independently.

A synthesis of resource pathways and dispositions towards the dimensions of tangibles (physical evidence), assurance (guarantees) and empathy, within the dialogue between these two theories, discusses how limitations in organisational capacity shape the psychological behaviour of officials, which in turn impacts service users' comfort and legal certainty. Resource constraints (a small number of verifiers and a central server that frequently experiences downtime) logically result in an extreme workload (overload). This high workload psychologically affects the Disposition (attitude) of counter staff. Staff experience emotional labour, meaning that the friendly attitude which is a pillar of Service Excellence is only evident in the morning and subsequently becomes stiff or curt by midday or in the afternoon.

This analytical synthesis concludes that: The bureaucratic structure governing the issuance of seafarers' books is characterised by excellent clarity of duties (work procedures) thanks to detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs). To achieve Service Excellence, the bureaucratic structure of seafarers' book publishing must be transformed from a mechanistic-hierarchical model towards a more organic-adaptive structure, so that there is no overlapping of authority between sections, thereby ensuring that, structurally, the working mechanisms operate in a mechanistic and accountable manner.

To understand how SOP information flows from the management level down to the technical implementation level, the researcher conducted an interview with the Head of the Seafaring Section. He stated:

"Regarding the SOP for the Online Seafarers' Book, internal dissemination has actually been carried out clearly since this application was launched by the Directorate General of Maritime Affairs. We routinely hold weekly briefings

and share the latest procedures via the official work group whenever there are system updates. For the public (seafarers), we have displayed banners outlining the application process in the service hall, provided written guidelines on the official website, and utilised social media. Thus, in terms of information transmission, the agency has made every effort to utilise both digital and physical channels to ensure there are no information bottlenecks.” (Interview, 12 May 2026).

The statement from the Key Informant above indicates that, from a structural perspective, the information transmission process has been carried out in a hierarchical (top-down) manner. However, when the researcher sought confirmation at the street-level bureaucracy through an interview with a Verification Counter Officer, different operational dynamics were found.

“For us counter staff, the SOP instructions are indeed clear. But the problem is, awareness-raising amongst seafarers out there hasn’t been consistent. Many seafarers, particularly senior seafarers or those accustomed to working on conventional fishing vessels, come to the counter without realising that they must now create an online account first. As a result, our time at the counter is not spent verifying documents in accordance with the SOP, but is instead diverted to acting as guides, teaching them how to click and upload documents themselves on their mobile phones.” (Interview, 14 May 2026).

Theoretically, Edwards III (1980) states that without psychological incentives and a rational workload, the disposition of frontline staff will tend to resist or undermine the achievement of policy objectives. Within the SERVQUAL framework, these variations in disposition directly degrade the dimensions of Empathy (personal attention) and Tangibles (the atmosphere of the waiting area, which is overcrowded due to system errors). Nevertheless, there is an interesting finding (positive discretion) where staff demonstrate an adaptive disposition by expediting the printing of documents for seafarers in emergency situations (force majeure). This supports the theory of Suryantoro & Kusdyana (2020) that, in maritime management, the adaptation of bureaucratic flexibility for the safety or operational sustainability of ships represents the highest level of Assurance (guarantee of certainty) for the business sector. A critical analysis of Edwards’ Theory III and SERVQUAL reveals that the attitudes of those implementing the SOP for the issuance of Seafarers’ Books fall within the conditional-pragmatic category. Normative bureaucratic commitment (such as integrity pacts) is established at the top level, but suffers a decline in consistency when transmitted to the street-level bureaucracy due to extreme workloads.

In his theory, Edwards states that the tendency of practitioners to implement policies effectively is influenced by incentives (both material and psychological). The absence of a reward system commensurate with the emotional labour of counter staff makes their positive disposition easily fragile when the organisation is under pressure (such as overwhelming queues or system failures).

In relation to Service Excellence: These fluctuating dispositional conditions have a direct impact on two crucial dimensions within the SERVQUAL instrument: 1) The Dimension of Empathy indicates that staff are not yet optimally able to maintain friendliness and individual care during —indicating that the value of empathy has not yet been internalised as part of the organisational culture, but remains merely a matter of formal compliance. 2) The Dimension of Assurance, where the positive discretion shown by staff in assisting seafarers during emergencies (force majeure) constitutes a disposition that strongly supports Service Excellence. This has implications for the shipping industry, demonstrating that the bureaucracy is capable of acting adaptively without breaching the substance of the law.

This analytical synthesis concludes that, to optimise dispositional variables towards excellent public service, agencies cannot rely solely on the threat of punishment. There is a need for governance reform in the form of psychological incentives, stress management training (emotional intelligence training) for frontline staff, and the formulation of legally sound discretionary guidelines within Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to legitimise the emergency actions of officials in the field. The category of officials’ disposition is rated as ‘Good’. A strong moral commitment from leadership has helped to eradicate the culture of illegal levies. The officers’ responsiveness and willingness to work overtime demonstrate bureaucratic responsiveness, which supports the successful and substantive implementation of SOPs.

Table 1. A comprehensive matrix integrating all dimensions of George Edward III (1980) with indicators of excellent service quality

Process Domain (Edwards III)	Actual Conditions in the Field	Impact on the Outcome Domain (SERVQUAL)	Consequences for Service Excellence	Recommendations for a New Model (Novelty)
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Communication	One-way communication; server disruption information is not provided in real time.	Reducing Responsiveness.	Sailors feel left in the lurch without any certainty regarding the information when the system malfunctions	Implementation of the Live Chat Notifications feature in the app.
Resources	Not enough verifiers, the central server is frequently down, and the printers are outdated.	This undermines reliability and tangible assets.	Processing times were not met, and the waiting area was uncomfortable due to long queues.	Upgrade local bandwidth and restructure staffing levels.
Disposition	A high level of formal commitment, but consistency breaks down due to emotional exhaustion.	Degrades Empathy.	Service has become mechanical, rigid and lacking	Emotional Intelligence training and the development of a reward system.
Bureaucratic Structure	Semi-manual SOP (requires a signature)	Reduces assurance.	A bureaucratic 'ping-pong' phenomenon has arisen	The implementation of electronic signatures (E-Signature)

Source: Data compiled by the researcher, 2026

The dialogue between the theories of George C. Edwards III (1980) and SERVQUAL in this study demonstrates a new finding: "The failure of service excellence in digital bureaucratic systems is not caused by the failure of the technology itself, but rather results from the unpreparedness of the bureaucratic structure, communication asymmetry, and a shortage of human resources in managing this socio-technical transition."

In the context of achieving Service Excellence, the bureaucratic structure is required to be agile, to minimise redundant red tape, and to ensure the certainty of service flows. Based on the results of field research, the following is an in-depth description of the bureaucratic structure governing the issuance of Seafarers' Books, focusing on the clarity of the division of labour through Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) themselves and organisational fragmentation. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Between Formal Legality and On-the-Ground Rigidity. The current SOPs for the issuance of Seafarers' Books are designed to integrate the physical verification process with the digital Seafarers' Book Online system.

A critical analysis of the synthesis of Edwards III's theory and SERVQUAL reveals that the results of the qualitative data analysis on the dimension of bureaucratic structure uncover the presence of classic bureaucratic ills packaged within the guise of digitalisation. Edwards' Theory III states that the bureaucratic structure governing the issuance of Seafarers' Books at the research site faces serious obstacles in terms of the rigidity/lack of flexibility of the SOPs and the over-centralisation of authority (hindered by fragmentation).

Although the agency has adopted e-government, the structure of the SOPs implemented has not been fully re-engineered (business process re-engineering). This structure still retains the conventional, linear bureaucratic mindset and relies on tiered physical approvals. Consequently, digital technology has failed to accelerate service delivery as it is constrained by a rigid bureaucratic structure. The distribution of authority, which places full control over the resolution of IT issues at the central level (a top-heavy structure), paralyses the adaptive capacity of the street-level bureaucracy in

the regions. Field officers lack the structural capacity to take remedial action to safeguard services when technological malfunctions occur.

This analytical synthesis concludes that: The bureaucratic structure governing the issuance of seafarers' books possesses excellent clarity of duties (work procedures) thanks to detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs). To achieve Service Excellence, the bureaucratic structure for the issuance of seafarers' books must be transformed from a mechanistic-hierarchical model towards a more organic-adaptive structure, so that there is no overlapping of authority between sections, thereby ensuring that, structurally, operational mechanisms function in a mechanistic and accountable manner.

A network of interrelationships illustrating the service domains constructed by Edward III's (1980) dimensions.

The Dimension of Communication with Service Units (Applicant's Cognitive Aspect): Communication is the process of conveying rules. If communication breaks down, the aspects of public service that are compromised are Transparency and Public Understanding. Real-world situation: Seafarers do not yet know the correct way to register online because the agency's outreach has been passive (merely displaying banners). The service pathway is weak in terms of ease of access to information. Consequently, the public perceives the service as slow, when in fact the problem is simply that they do not understand the process due to poor communication from the bureaucracy.

The Resource Dimension in Relation to Service Delivery: Resources—such as the number of computers, internet connectivity and staff numbers—are the primary drivers of service delivery. If resources are insufficient, the aspect of public service that suffers is the Speed of Resolution (Responsiveness). Reality on the ground: The number of verifiers is insufficient, whilst nearly 200 applications are received daily, compounded by the Ministry's central server frequently going down. Service delivery is consequently affected in terms of Technical Reliability and Timeliness. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) commitment of 2 working days has extended to 4 working days. This is where users/seafarers most frequently provide feedback or lodge complaints.

The Disposition Dimension in Relation to Service Delivery: Disposition refers to the character, commitment and morale of staff. If their disposition is positive, the public service aspects that benefit are Service Ethics and Legal Certainty (Free from Illegal Fees). Reality on the Ground: Staff possess high integrity and implement a cashless payment system (Simponi). The service process is particularly strong in the Assurance aspect, meaning seafarers feel safe as there are no illegal fees or extortion by unscrupulous officials. Furthermore, the aspect of Empathy is evident when counter staff willingly work overtime to complete the printing of seafarers' logbooks after the system experienced an error earlier in the day.

The Dimension of Bureaucratic Structure in Departmental Services: Bureaucratic Structure regulates the division of labour through Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). If the structure is clear, the resulting public services are Standardisation and Procedural Fairness. On-the-Ground Reality: The flow from the registration counter, through the photography room and the printing room, to the handover of documents is organised sequentially (in order) and without overlap. The service pathway is successful in terms of Procedural Consistency. All seafarers, whether from large agencies or independent seafarers, are treated equally according to their queue number. There are no preferential treatment or discrimination in service. The implementation of this Seafarer's Book SOP has a direct impact on the Quality of Public Service (Servqual). Specifically, weaknesses in the Resources and Communication elements undermine the service aspects of Timeliness (Responsiveness) and Transparency of Information. However, strengths in the Disposition and Bureaucratic Structure elements have successfully enhanced the service aspects of Assurance against Bribery and Procedural Certainty.

With regard to technological facilities and infrastructure, given that the current SOPs rely on the Online Seafarers' Book application, the availability of technological infrastructure (such as server stability, internet bandwidth and specialised printers) is a key determining factor. The researcher interviewed IT and Information Systems Operators to explore the technical challenges behind the scenes, who stated that:

"Our biggest problem lies in server integration and reliability. The central server for the Online Seaman's Book application is located at the Directorate General of Maritime Affairs in Jakarta, whilst we in the regions are merely users. There are frequent delays or system outages at the central office during peak hours (10.00–14.00). If the central system goes down, the computers and biometric devices at our counters automatically become unable to process any data."

Furthermore, the Seafarer's Book printer (blanket printer) at our office is an outdated model and frequently suffers from paper jams, whilst spare parts have to be ordered well in advance." (Interview, 16 May 2026).

The impact of these limited facilities is felt directly and on a massive scale by service users. The researcher interviewed a merchant seafarer whilst waiting in the service counter's waiting area, who stated the following:

"The intention behind this online system is good, but the supporting facilities on the ground are not yet fully ready. I've been queuing since 8 am, but by 1 pm I still hadn't been called for my biometric photo because they said the computer had frozen and the server was constantly buffering. The waiting area is also packed, and the air conditioning isn't cooling the room properly because the room's capacity cannot accommodate the overwhelming number of seafarers due to the system delays from yesterday." (Interview, 16 May 2026).

Summary of Theoretical Synthesis (Path Model)

As a conclusion to the analysis discussed above, the interaction pathways between George C. Edward III's (1980) implementation model and Zeithaml's (1988) dimensions of public service quality can be formulated into the following theoretical propositions:

Passive Communication: Weakens the Tangibles Aspect of Information; One-way communication triggers an information gap, leading applicants to misinterpret the requirements set out in the SOP documents.

Resource Deficit: Reduces Reliability and Responsiveness; The limited number of local verifiers and the instability of the central server are the main causes of public service delays beyond the official SOP targets.

Integrity-Driven Approach: Maximising Assurance and Empathy; the moral commitment of staff and the cashless system have succeeded in creating a service free from bribery and fostering a sense of dedication amongst staff to work overtime.

Mechanistic Bureaucratic Structure: Ensuring Standardisation of Services; A clear division of labour within the SOP ensures the fair processing of documents and eliminates discrimination in service delivery on the ground.

Factors Supporting and Hindering Implementa

A synthesis of all interview findings identifies the following crucial factors:

Supporting Factors (Enablers)

Cashless Payment System: The integration of a payment system directly into the state treasury via distribution banks facilitates financial verification and ensures the bureaucracy remains free from extortion.

Staff Commitment and Integrity (Strong Work Ethic): The work ethic and discipline of frontline staff in meeting daily document targets are the main driving force behind the continued operation of the service, despite staff shortages.

Clarity of SOP Regulations: SOP documents are written in a detailed and comprehensive manner, thereby preventing double standards amongst verifiers.

Barriers (Barriers)

Reliance on the Central Server (Ministry): As the issuance application operates on a centralised system, whenever the central server experiences downtime or maintenance, services at the regional level are automatically brought to a complete standstill.

Imbalance in Human Resources: The number of verifiers and technical staff responsible for photography and printing is not commensurate with the growth in the number of seafarers submitting applications.

Low Digital Literacy Among Applicants: There are still many seafarers (particularly traditional seafarers or those of lower rank) who do not understand how to upload documents correctly (incorrect format, poor resolution), resulting in their files being repeatedly rejected by the system.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, field findings and an in-depth discussion combining George C. Edward III's (1980) policy implementation model with Zeithaml's (1988) dimensions of public service quality (SERVQUAL), this study on the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Issuance of Seafarers' Books can be summarised as follows:

The dimensions of Communication and Bureaucratic Structure in the implementation of these SOPs have been carried out in a highly structured manner. The digital workflow set out in the SOP is mechanistic, rigid and sequential.

This has a positive impact on the dimensions of Procedural Certainty and Equality of Service for service users. This system has successfully eliminated discrimination and illegal 'back channels'. However, communication with external parties (seafarers) remains passive (one-way), thereby creating an information gap and reducing efficiency in the 'Tangibles' dimension of information.

The 'Disposition' dimension of the implementers acts as a buffer in this public service. Transformational leadership of the highest integrity, coupled with the implementation of a cashless payment system via Simponi/PNBP, has successfully eradicated the culture of illegal levies and touts. This has significantly boosted the Assurance dimension of security. Furthermore, a positive disposition fosters a high level of Empathy among staff, who are willing to work overtime to process seafarers' documents when the system experiences disruptions.

The Resource dimension is the most critical obstacle crippling the performance of this policy. There is a shortage of human resources, as the number of certified verifiers—who process up to 200 files per day—is insufficient, coupled with an absolute systemic reliance on the Ministry of Transport's central server, which frequently experiences overloads (and goes down). Consequently, the reliability of the digital system is compromised, directly undermining the agency's responsiveness. This results in document processing times frequently exceeding the SOP target (from 2 working days to 4-5 working days).

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