

THE EFFICIENCY OF PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY FRONTLINE SERVICES AND ITS IMPACT ON CLIENT SATISFACTION



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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the relationship between client satisfaction and the efficiency of frontline services delivered by the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA). It focuses on three key service areas: processing permits for hazardous cargo, cargo entry procedures, and vessel entry formalities. Using a quantitative approach, 60 clients from various sectors were surveyed to determine how timeliness, accessibility, and clarity of procedures relate to overall satisfaction. Results show a strong positive correlation: higher service efficiency is associated with greater client satisfaction. The report recommends further improvements including digitally streamlined systems and tailored assistance to enhance operational efficiency and sustain competitiveness in shipping logistics.

Keywords: Client satisfaction, efficiency, frontline services.

1. INTRODUCTION

Public service delivery in developing countries such as the Philippines has long been challenged by bureaucratic inefficiencies and complex administrative procedures. These challenges often result in delayed transactions, reduced public trust, and lower client satisfaction. In response, the Philippine government enacted Republic Act No. 9485, known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 (Philippine Government, 2007). This reform was further strengthened through Republic Act No. 11032, the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018 (Philippine Government, 2018), which mandates government agencies to simplify procedures, adopt automation, and establish transparent service standards.

Institutional inefficiency and excessive regulation have been identified as major barriers to economic productivity and public sector performance in developing economies. According to the World Economic Forum (2019), administrative inefficiencies, weak institutional frameworks, and slow public service delivery significantly undermine national competitiveness and business confidence. These challenges highlight the urgency of public sector reforms aimed at improving efficiency, transparency, and service quality.

These legal frameworks emphasize the importance of efficient frontline services, particularly in high-contact government agencies such as the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), whose operations directly affect trade flow, logistics performance, and national economic activity.

Efficient frontline services are not only essential for regulatory compliance but also play a critical role in shaping client perceptions and satisfaction.

Service quality theory provides strong support for this relationship. The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), identifies reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles as core dimensions that influence how clients evaluate service performance. When these elements are delivered effectively, client satisfaction improves significantly.

In today's environment, technological expectations further shape how services are perceived. Research from the Pew Research Center (2019) indicates that younger adults increasingly expect fast, digital, and user-friendly services. This trend underscores the growing importance of integrating technology in public service delivery, particularly in agencies like the PPA where transaction efficiency is critical.

Against this backdrop, this study investigates the level of efficiency of PPA's frontline services and examines how this efficiency influences client satisfaction. The findings aim to provide insights that can support continuous improvement in public service performance.

2. METHODS

This study examined how clients view the effectiveness of PPA frontline services using a quantitative research methodology. Twenty respondents were allocated to each of the three service areas, vessel entrance procedures, cargo entry, and the issue of licenses for hazardous cargo out of the 60 clients who took part in the survey. To guarantee a varied mix of client types, including private individuals, corporate representatives, and government employees across a range of age ranges, participants were chosen using a combination of quota and convenience sampling.

In order to guarantee clarity, correctness, and relevance, the research adviser examined and approved the structured questionnaire used to collect the data. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first gathered demographic data, including age, client type, and the sort of service utilized; the second evaluated respondents' assessments of overall satisfaction and service quality. The survey was designed to capture the experiences of different kinds of clients, making sure that the results would reflect a realistic picture of how the PPA serves its clients. By including a mix of ages and client types, the study could better understand how various groups perceive service efficiency, accessibility, and clarity of procedures. Each participant was given a structured questionnaire, which was easy to understand and complete, so that their feedback would be honest and accurate. The aim was to get a well-rounded perspective on how PPA's services are delivered, where they are doing well, and where improvements could be made.

Throughout the procedure, rigorous adherence to ethical research practices was maintained, such as adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Every participant provided their informed consent, and their answers were kept completely private. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any point without any negative consequences. No monetary awards, gifts, or other forms of compensation were given for participation. All data collected were stored securely and handled with strict confidentiality to ensure the protection of

personal information. After the research was completed and the data were no longer needed, they were properly disposed of in a secure manner to prevent any unauthorized access. The study was designed carefully to ensure that no physical, emotional, or psychological harm could come to the participants. The researcher used Pearson's correlation and descriptive statistics to examine the direction and intensity of the association between client happiness and service efficiency, while ensuring that all ethical standards were strictly followed throughout the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study was to evaluate how efficiently the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) delivers its frontline services, particularly in relation to client satisfaction. The focus was on three specific services: vessel entrance formalities, cargo entry procedures, and the processing of permits for dangerous goods. Beyond measuring efficiency, the study also examined how the quality of these services shaped clients' overall satisfaction and experiences. The findings presented in the following sections reflect how clients perceived and interacted with PPA services during their business transactions.

Table 1 The demographic Profile of the 60 respondents of the study, the data shows frequency percentage of the Age, Client Type and the Service Availed.

Table 1: *Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n = 60)*

Profile		f	%
Age	18 – 30	30	50.0
	31 – 45	22	36.7
	46 – 59	7	11.7
	60 and above	1	1.7
Client Type	Private	29	48.3
	Business	16	26.7
	Government Agency	2	3.3
	Missing	13	21.7
Service Availed	Vessel Entrance Formalities	20	33.3
	Entry of Cargoes	20	33.3
	Handling Permit for Dangerous Cargo	20	33.3

The demographic data revealed that half of the respondents (30 out of 60, or 50%) were aged between 18 and 30 years old, making young adults the most represented age group. In terms of client type, private clients comprised the largest portion, accounting for 29 respondents or 48.3%. Meanwhile, the services availed were evenly split across the three categories vessel entrance formalities, cargo entry, and handling of dangerous cargo with each category represented by 20 respondents (33.3%). This even distribution ensures a well-balanced evaluation of experiences across all service types. Missing responses they were excluded from subgroup analysis but still retained in the overall descriptive statistics.

The demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents were young adults and private clients, which suggests a need for service designs that accommodate varying levels of digital

engagement. Research by the Pew Research Center (2019) indicates that younger adults are more likely than older adults to use smartphones and mobile internet as their primary means of accessing online services, highlighting their preference for fast, digital, and user-friendly systems. At the same time, inclusive service design that considers the needs of older or less digitally experienced users is essential for ensuring accessibility across age groups, as older adults often face barriers related to technology use and may require additional support or training to fully benefit from digital services (Laukka et al., 2024).

1. What is the level of efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority services as rated by the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Quality service.
 - 1.2 Client satisfaction.

Table 2: Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents in terms of Quality Service

Quality Service		Mean Response	Remarks
1	Overall, the service I received at PPA was efficient.	4.53	Very High
2	The staff provided me with efficient and high-quality service.	4.55	Very High
3	I experienced a fast and efficient service for my transaction.	4.50	High
4	The service I availed was processed in a timely manner.	4.55	Very High
5	The steps for my transaction are straightforward and efficient.	4.57	Very High
6	The queue for my transaction is organized and efficient.	4.53	Very High
7	I experience no delays or obstacles when processing my transactions.	4.42	High
8	I have observed that the staff are consistently available whenever I require assistance.	4.42	High
9	The location for processing my transaction is easy to find and accessible.	4.52	Very High
10	The facility and the area in which I process transaction are maintained in a clean and orderly condition.	4.52	Very High
Grand Mean		4.51	Very High
Legend:			
	1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Very Low
	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree	Low
	2.51 – 3.50	Neutral	Average
	3.51 – 4.50	Agree	High
	4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High

As shown in Table 2, the overall grand mean of 4.51 reflects that respondents rated the PPA's service quality as Very High, especially in areas like timeliness, accessibility, and the cleanliness of its facilities. This strong rating suggests that the agency has built a solid foundation for delivering efficient frontline services (Philippine Government, 2007, 2018).

However, some areas such as avoiding delays received slightly lower ratings (Q7, mean = 4.42), pointing to room for improvement in maintaining consistent service speed. This aligns with the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), which identifies reliability as a critical element of service quality. Minimizing delays and ensuring consistent performance are essential to sustaining client trust and satisfaction, consistent with the objectives of the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) and the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act, which aim to streamline government services and improve efficiency (Philippine Government, 2007, 2018).

Table 3: Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents in terms of Client Satisfaction

Client Satisfaction		Mean Response	Remarks
1	I am satisfied with overall efficiency of the service I received at PPA.	4.47	High
2	I am satisfied with the efficient and high-quality service rendered by the staff.	4.48	High
3	I am satisfied with efficiency of the service I received.	4.48	High
4	I am satisfied with the timely processing of the services I received.	4.52	Very High
5	I am satisfied with efficient and straightforward steps for my transactions.	4.47	Very High
6	I am satisfied with the organized and efficient queuing process, as well as the absence of padrino system in availing of services.	4.57	Very High
7	I am satisfied that I encounter no delays or obstacles in receiving the service.	4.52	Very High
8	I am satisfied with the availability of resources and staff when I require assistance.	4.52	Very High
9	I am satisfied with how easy it was to find and access the venue for processing my transaction.	4.52	Very High
10	I am satisfied with cleanliness and orderly condition of the facility and area in which I conduct my transaction.	4.55	Very High
Grand Mean		4.51	Very High
Legend:			
	1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Very Low
	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree	Low
	2.51 – 3.50	Neutral	Average
	3.51 – 4.50	Agree	High
	4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High

Table 3 shows that client satisfaction also received a Very High overall rating, with a grand mean of 4.51. Respondents especially appreciated the organized queuing system (Q6) and the timeliness of services (Q4), both of which scored particularly high.

These results reinforce the idea that efficient service delivery plays a key role in shaping client satisfaction. The availability of staff and resources (Q8, mean = 4.52) must continue to be

well-managed to maintain these positive perceptions. Empirical studies indicate that improvements in service efficiency, responsiveness, and process reliability are strongly associated with higher client satisfaction (Dimaro, 2023; Ratnasari, Wijaya, & Yeniyati, 2023). Well-structured procedures and adequate staffing contribute to a smoother service experience, which clients perceive positively and associate with overall satisfaction.

Table 4: Summary on the Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents

		Mean Response	Remarks
1	Quality Service	4.51	Very High
2	Client Satisfaction	4.51	Very High
Overall Grand Mean		4.51	Very High
Legend:			
	1.00 – 1.50	Strongly Disagree	Very Low
	1.51 – 2.50	Disagree	Low
	2.51 – 3.50	Neutral	Average
	3.51 – 4.50	Agree	High
	4.51 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High

The grand mean score of 4.51 for both service quality and client satisfaction suggests that the Philippine Ports Authority is widely viewed as delivering highly efficient services. Respondents consistently rated the agency favorably in areas such as timeliness, ease of access, and well-organized procedures. These results reflect a strong consensus that the PPA has not only met expectations but has also put in place reliable systems and practices that support effective service delivery and client engagement.

The findings suggest that the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) is actively aligning its efforts with the goals of the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018 (Republic Act No. 11032, 2018). By reducing bureaucratic delays and simplifying procedures, the PPA is contributing to a more responsive and client-focused public service environment.

2. Is there a significant difference in the level of efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority services as rated by the respondents when their profile is considered?

Table 5: Significant Difference on the Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents in terms of their Age.

PPA Services	Age	Mean Response	F-value	P-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Quality Service	18 – 30	4.59	1.025	0.384	Not Significant	Do not reject Ho
	31 – 45	4.50				
	46 – 59	4.29				
	60 and above	4.00				
	18 – 30	4.56	0.998	0.401		
	31 – 45	4.54				

Client Satisfaction	46 – 59 60 and above	4.26 4.00			Not Significant	Do not reject Ho
Overall	18 – 30 31 – 45 46 – 59 60 and above	4.58 4.52 4.27 4.00	1.034	0.385	Not Significant	Do not reject Ho

According to the SPSS analysis, the significance value reported in Table 5 is 0.385, which is higher than the standard alpha level of 0.05. This means that there is no statistically significant difference in how respondents from different age groups rated the quality of service and their overall satisfaction, suggesting a consistent perception across all age brackets.

These findings indicate that age does not appear to significantly influence clients' evaluations of service quality or satisfaction with PPA services. Research on public service evaluation shows that demographic variables such as age often do not produce large differences in satisfaction when service delivery is generally perceived as reliable and accessible (de Menezes, Pedrosa, da Silva, & Figueiredo, 2022). A systematic review of public service evaluation also highlights that users' expectations and personal experiences play a more substantial role in shaping satisfaction than simple age differences (de Menezes et al., 2022). Therefore, the similarity of ratings across age groups in this study suggests that the PPA's service delivery mechanisms may be operating in a way that meets clients' expectations uniformly, regardless of their age.

Table 6: Significant Difference on the Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents in terms of their Client Type

	Client Type	Mean Response	F-value	P-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Quality Service	Private Business Government Agency	4.36 4.78 4.80	4.983	0.011	Significant	Reject Ho
Client Satisfaction	Private Business Government Agency	4.37 4.73 4.80	4.001	0.025	Significant	Reject Ho
Overall	Private Business Government Agency	4.36 4.75 4.80	4.654	0.015	Significant	Reject Ho

The results reveal statistically significant differences in how various client types rated the PPA's services. Specifically, Quality of services ($p = .011$) and client satisfaction ($p = .025$) ratings varied among client groups, with government agencies and business clients giving consistently higher ratings compared to the private clients. This pattern may be explained by differences in

users' expectations and perceptions of public service quality. Groups with more frequent interaction or familiarity with service procedures tend to interpret service efficiency and outcomes more positively than less experienced users. Research on public performance but also by how well service delivery aligns with users' expectations, access, and experience of the service process (de Menezes et al., 2022). In public sector contexts, effective evaluation and monitoring of service quality require understanding these subjective perceptions along with service performance metrics to ensure that services meet user needs (Amador, 2025).

Table 7: Significant Difference on the Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents in terms of their Service Availed

	Service Availed	Mean Response	F-value	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Quality Service	Vessel Entrance Formalities	4.65	2.185	0.122	Not Significant	Do not reject Ho
	Entry of Cargoes	4.33				
	Handling Permit for Dangerous Cargo	4.55				
Client Satisfaction	Vessel Entrance Formalities	4.66	2.411	0.099	Not Significant	Do not reject Ho
	Entry of Cargoes	4.31				
	Handling Permit for Dangerous Cargo	4.55				
Overall	Vessel Entrance Formalities	4.66	2.381	0.102	Not Significant	Do not reject Ho
	Entry of Cargoes	4.32				
	Handling Permit for Dangerous Cargo	4.55				

Table 7 shows that there were no significant differences in how respondents rated service quality ($p = 0.122$) and client satisfaction ($p = 0.099$) across the three types of services offered vessel entrance formalities, cargo entry, and handling of permits for dangerous goods. This suggests that the PPA has maintained a consistent level of service efficiency and client satisfaction

regardless of the specific service availed, reflecting a standardized approach to frontline operations.

The uniformity in service ratings indicates that the PPA has effectively implemented consistent operational standards across its frontline services. Consistent service quality helps build client confidence and trust, as users tend to rate their experience more favorably when service processes are reliable and predictable (Amador, 2025). The slightly lower mean scores for the Entry of Cargoes service may reflect specific operational challenges unique to that service type. Public service research shows that regular evaluation and refinement of service categories help ensure that client satisfaction remains high and that areas requiring improvement are identified and addressed systematically (Amador, 2025).

3. Is there a significant correlation in the level of efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority services as rated by the respondents between quality service and client satisfaction?

Table 8 Significant Correlation in the Level of Efficiency of the Philippine Ports Authority Services as rated by the Respondents Between Quality Service and Client Satisfaction

x-variable	y-variable	r-value	Interpretation	p-value	Remarks	Decision on Ho
Quality Service	Client Satisfaction	0.935**	Very High Positive Correlation	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

The analysis revealed a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.935$, $p < 0.01$) between the quality of service and client satisfaction. This means that as the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery improve, clients are significantly more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction. This strong relationship underscores how critical it is for the PPA to consistently uphold high service standards, as doing so directly enhances the overall client experience.

Research shows that service quality is positively and significantly related to customer or client satisfaction. In empirical studies, improvements in service reliability, responsiveness, and other quality dimensions have been associated with increased satisfaction among users (How & Sorooshian, 2013). Additionally, literature focusing on public sector service delivery indicates that higher service quality leads to greater client satisfaction, reinforcing the need for consistent and effective service practices in government agencies (Amador, 2025).

In conclusion, the strong positive correlation between service quality and client satisfaction highlights the importance of maintaining high standards of service delivery. By committing to ongoing improvements and ensuring that its practices reflect the needs and expectations of its clients, the Philippine Ports Authority can further strengthen its reputation as a responsive, efficient, and client-centered agency.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study examined how efficiently the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) delivers its frontline services and how these services affect client satisfaction. Findings revealed that both service quality and client satisfaction received Very High ratings, with an overall mean score of 4.51. These results suggest that the PPA effectively meets client expectations, particularly in areas such as timely service delivery, accessible facilities, and well-managed queuing systems.

The study revealed no significant differences in service ratings based on respondents' age or the type of service availed, suggesting that PPA services are delivered consistently and inclusively across these categories. However, noticeable gaps were observed among client types of private clients gave slightly lower ratings compared to business and government clients. This finding points to the need for targeted improvements that can better support private clients and enhance their overall service experience.

The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.935$, $p < 0.01$) between service quality and client satisfaction highlights how critical it is to maintain efficient service delivery in enhancing client experiences. These results align with the SERVQUAL framework (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and international benchmarks for public service excellence, which emphasize the importance of reliability, responsiveness, and assurance in achieving high levels of client satisfaction.

Overall, the findings highlight the PPA's effectiveness in providing efficient, client-focused services. At the same time, the study identifies areas where further enhancements can be made to ensure the agency remains competitive and responsive within the evolving landscape of the logistics and shipping industry.

Despite the positive findings, this study has some limitations. The sample consisted of only 60 respondents and was based on self-reported data, which may affect the accuracy of responses. The study was conducted at a single point in time and was limited to the Philippine Ports Authority – Port Management Office of Zamboanga. Therefore, the findings reflect only this setting and should not be generalized to other ports without further studies involving larger samples and multiple locations.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends the following:

To further enhance the efficiency and client satisfaction of the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), it is essential to maintain the current high standards of service while addressing areas where minor inefficiencies still exist particularly in reducing delays and ensuring that staff and resources remain readily available. Special attention should be given to the needs of private clients, who reported slightly lower satisfaction. Providing tailored support, such as simplified procedures and dedicated assistance, can help bridge the gap and ensure a more consistent and positive experience across all client groups.

In addition, refining internal workflows across different service categories and adopting digital platforms for transactions and client feedback can greatly improve operational efficiency.

Regular staff training and clear, accessible communication about service procedures will also help boost client engagement and ensure quicker, more responsive service delivery.

Lastly, future research should investigate the effects of technology adoption and other factors, such as environmental sustainability, to gain deeper insights into service efficiency and satisfaction dynamics. By executing these strategies, the PPA can reinforce its status as a benchmark for public service excellence in the logistics industry

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