



LEVEL OF PASSENGER SATISFACTION ON PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

Efficient maritime services are vital in the Philippines' archipelagic context, where the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) plays a pivotal role in ensuring passenger safety and satisfaction at key ports.

This quantitative descriptive study evaluates the level of passenger satisfaction with PCG services in selected major port areas of Iloilo Province, employing the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980) to measure gaps between expectations and perceived performance across dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Data from 122 passengers, gathered via a structured Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and inferential tests (Mann-Whitney U), revealed overall satisfaction with general services (mean=3.084, "Satisfied") and cleanliness (mean=3.156, "Satisfied"), with younger passengers (≤ 30 years) slightly higher in both but no statistically significant differences by age ($p=0.320$) or gender ($p=0.649$). These findings affirm PCG's effective delivery in safety assistance, personnel responsiveness, communication, and facility

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maintenance, while highlighting minor gaps in specific areas; recommendations include enhanced training, resource allocation, and continuous feedback mechanisms to sustain maritime safety, boost public trust, and inform policy for inter-island transport.

Keywords: *passenger satisfaction, Philippine Coast Guard, SERVQUAL model, maritime services, service quality, Iloilo ports, quantitative descriptive study, Mann-Whitney U test, demographic differences*

INTRODUCTION

The maritime transportation sector plays a vital role in the Philippines due to its geographical composition as an archipelagic nation. Thousands of passengers rely on sea transportation daily for travel, commerce, tourism, and economic activities. In this context, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) serves as one of the primary government agencies responsible for ensuring maritime safety, security, and passenger welfare in ports and coastal areas. Beyond enforcing maritime laws and regulations, PCG also provides front-line services such as passenger assistance, safety monitoring, information dissemination, and emergency response. As maritime passenger traffic continues to increase, the quality of services delivered by the Philippine Coast Guard has become increasingly important in shaping passengers' overall travel experience.

Passenger satisfaction is recognized as an essential indicator of service quality and organizational performance. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), customer

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INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VII, Issue III

February 2026

Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



satisfaction is influenced by how well service performance meets or exceeds the expectations of clients. In public service institutions such as the Philippine Coast Guard, passenger satisfaction reflects the agency's effectiveness in delivering reliable, responsive, safe, and customer-oriented services. When passengers perceive that services are efficient, accessible, and professionally delivered, trust and confidence toward the institution are strengthened. However, when services fail to meet expectations, dissatisfaction may arise and negatively affect public perception.

Despite the efforts of the Philippine Coast Guard to improve maritime safety and operations, concerns regarding service delivery remain evident in some port areas. Passengers may experience delays in assistance, inadequate communication, limited responsiveness, and inconsistencies in the delivery of safety-related services. These concerns indicate possible gaps between expected service standards and the actual services experienced by passengers. Parasuraman et al. (1988) emphasized that service quality gaps occur when there is a discrepancy between customer expectations and perceived performance, which may eventually affect satisfaction levels.

Several studies have emphasized the importance of evaluating passenger satisfaction in maritime transportation. Pantouvakis et al. (2008) found that service quality dimensions such as responsiveness, assurance, reliability, and tangibles significantly influence passenger satisfaction in maritime environments. Similarly, Buño and Pizarra (2024) revealed that passenger-centered assessment helps improve the effectiveness of transportation services and guides policy enhancement in public transportation systems. Furthermore, Saransi and

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Erlinda (2024) emphasized that even when overall passenger satisfaction is high, improvements in responsiveness and cleanliness are still necessary to maintain consistent service quality.

Although existing studies focus on maritime transportation and ferry systems, limited research has specifically examined passenger satisfaction toward Philippine Coast Guard services. Most studies are centered on operational efficiency, vessel management, or infrastructure development rather than passengers' actual experiences with Coast Guard personnel and services. This research gap highlights the need to assess how passengers perceive the quality of services provided by the Philippine Coast Guard in selected port areas.

Anchored on the SERVQUAL Model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) and supported by the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory of Oliver (1980), this study aimed to determine the level of passenger satisfaction on Philippine Coast Guard services. Specifically, it examined passenger satisfaction in terms of service quality and cleanliness when grouped according to age and gender. The findings of the study are expected to provide meaningful insights that may help the Philippine Coast Guard strengthen service delivery, improve passenger assistance, and enhance maritime public service operations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, sampling design, research instrument, validity of the research instrument, data gathering

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procedure, and data analyses used in the study. The purpose of this research was to determine the level of passenger satisfaction on Philippine Coast Guard services in selected port areas within Iloilo Province.

Research Method

The study utilized quantitative research method using survey questionnaires as the primary tool for data collection. Quantitative research was appropriate because the study aimed to gather measurable and numerical data regarding passengers' level of satisfaction toward the services rendered by the Philippine Coast Guard.

According to Creswell (2014), quantitative research is a systematic investigation that focuses on collecting numerical data and applying statistical techniques to determine patterns, relationships, and interpretations. In this study, the quantitative method enabled the researcher to objectively measure passenger satisfaction levels based on the respondents' actual experiences with PCG services.

Research Design

This study employed descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is appropriate when the purpose of the study is to describe the current condition, status, or level of a particular phenomenon without manipulating variables.

The descriptive design was used to determine the level of passenger satisfaction on Philippine Coast Guard services in terms of service quality and cleanliness. It also examined

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whether significant differences existed in the level of satisfaction when respondents were grouped according to age and gender.

The study relied on survey data gathered from passengers who had direct experience with the services provided by the Philippine Coast Guard. Through this design, the researcher was able to systematically describe and analyze the perceptions of passengers regarding the quality of maritime public services.

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were one hundred twenty-two (122) passengers from selected port areas within Iloilo Province who had experienced the services provided by the Philippine Coast Guard.

The respondents consisted of male and female passengers belonging to different age groups. These included regular commuters, occasional travelers, tourists, and other sea passengers who directly encountered PCG personnel during their travel. The respondents were considered appropriate participants because they had firsthand experience with the services being evaluated in the study.

Sampling Design

The study utilized a non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling.

Convenience sampling was employed because the respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate during the data gathering period. Passengers

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who were present in the selected port areas and who had direct interaction with Philippine Coast Guard personnel were invited to answer the survey questionnaire.

This sampling design was considered suitable due to the accessibility of respondents and the nature of maritime passenger movement within the port areas. Although convenience sampling does not provide complete generalizability, it allowed the researcher to efficiently gather relevant data from actual passengers who experienced PCG services.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL Model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988).

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I gathered the demographic profile of the respondents, specifically their age and gender. Part II measured the level of passenger satisfaction regarding Philippine Coast Guard services in terms of service quality and cleanliness.

The questionnaire included indicators related to responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, communication, safety assistance, and sanitation practices. A Likert Scale was used to measure the responses of the participants with the following scale:

- 4 – Very Satisfied
- 3 – Satisfied
- 2 – Dissatisfied
- 1 – Very Dissatisfied

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The use of a structured questionnaire enabled the researcher to collect organized and measurable data necessary for statistical analysis.

Validity of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire underwent expert validation prior to its administration.

The questionnaire was presented to the research adviser and selected validators who were considered experts in research methodology and public service studies. Their comments, suggestions, and corrections were carefully incorporated to improve the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items included in the instrument.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2017), validity refers to the appropriateness and meaningfulness of the inferences made from research instruments. Through expert validation, the questionnaire was refined to ensure that the items accurately measured passenger satisfaction toward Philippine Coast Guard services.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secured permission from the concerned authorities and port management offices to administer the survey questionnaire in the selected port areas.

After obtaining approval, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to qualified respondents who had directly experienced Philippine Coast Guard services. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, and their voluntary participation was

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requested. Respondents were assured that all information gathered would be treated with confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes only.

The researcher retrieved the accomplished questionnaires immediately after completion to ensure a high retrieval rate and prevent data loss. The gathered data was then organized, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analyses

The data gathered in the study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

For descriptive analysis, frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were utilized to determine the level of passenger satisfaction regarding Philippine Coast Guard services and cleanliness.

For inferential analysis, the Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine whether significant differences existed in the level of passenger satisfaction when respondents were grouped according to age and gender. The Mann-Whitney U Test was appropriate because the study compared two independent groups using ordinal data gathered through the Likert Scale.

All statistical computations were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was conducted to determine the level of passenger satisfaction on Philippine Coast Guard services in selected port areas within Iloilo Province.

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design using a researcher-made survey questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL Model. The respondents of the study were 122 passengers who directly experienced the services of the Philippine Coast Guard. The gathered data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Mann-Whitney U Test.

The findings revealed that passengers were generally satisfied with the services provided by the Philippine Coast Guard. In terms of age, younger passengers aged 30 years old and below obtained a mean score of 3.103, while older passengers aged 31 years old and above obtained a mean score of 3.071. Both groups verbally interpreted the services as "Satisfied." The findings indicate that passengers across age groups positively perceived the services rendered by the Philippine Coast Guard.

In terms of gender, male respondents obtained a mean score of 3.086, while female respondents obtained a mean score of 3.082, both interpreted as "Satisfied." This suggests that both male and female passengers shared similar positive perceptions regarding the quality of services delivered by the agency.

The study also examined passenger satisfaction in the category of cleanliness. Younger passengers obtained a mean score of 3.191, while older passengers obtained 3.133, both verbally interpreted as "Satisfied." Similarly, male respondents rated cleanliness with a mean

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score of 3.182, while female respondents rated it 3.133. The results imply that passengers were generally satisfied with the sanitation and maintenance practices implemented in the port areas supervised by the Philippine Coast Guard.

The inferential analysis further revealed that there were no significant differences in the level of passenger satisfaction when respondents were grouped according to age and gender. The computed p-values for both service quality and cleanliness were greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that the perceptions of passengers toward Philippine Coast Guard services were statistically similar regardless of age and gender.

The findings support the SERVQUAL Model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which emphasizes that customer satisfaction is influenced by service quality dimensions such as responsiveness, assurance, reliability, and tangibles. The positive satisfaction ratings indicate that the Philippine Coast Guard is effectively delivering services that meet the expectations of passengers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that passengers were generally satisfied with the services provided by the Philippine Coast Guard in selected port areas within Iloilo Province. The respondents positively perceived the quality of services in terms of responsiveness, assistance, communication, safety support, and cleanliness. The results indicate that the Philippine Coast Guard can deliver efficient and passenger-oriented maritime services that meet the expectations of the traveling public.

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The study further revealed that there were no significant differences in the level of passenger satisfaction when respondents were grouped according to age and gender. This implies that the Philippine Coast Guard provides fair, consistent, and unbiased services to passengers regardless of demographic characteristics. The findings also suggest that the agency maintains effective sanitation and maintenance practices that contribute to passenger comfort, safety, and confidence while traveling.

In relation to the significance of the study, several recommendations are hereby proposed. For the public, passengers are encouraged to continue cooperating with the rules, regulations, and safety protocols implemented by the Philippine Coast Guard to help maintain order and safety within maritime transportation. Passengers are also encouraged to provide constructive feedback and suggestions that may help improve the quality of services rendered by the agency.

For the Philippine Coast Guard, the findings of the study may serve as a basis for strengthening customer service strategies and improving overall service delivery. It is recommended that the agency continue conducting regular training and development programs for personnel, particularly in customer relations, communication skills, emergency response, and passenger assistance. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of passenger satisfaction are also encouraged to identify service gaps and enhance operational effectiveness. Furthermore, maintaining high standards of cleanliness, sanitation, and organization in port areas should remain a priority to ensure passenger comfort and safety.

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For port management and maritime administrators, the results of the study may be utilized in formulating policies and programs that support efficient and passenger-centered maritime services. Strengthening coordination among maritime personnel and improving facilities, waiting areas, and information systems may further enhance passenger experience and satisfaction.

Lastly, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies involving wider geographical coverage and larger groups of respondents to further validate the findings of the present study. Future studies may also consider additional variables such as educational attainment, travel frequency, and socioeconomic status to gain deeper insights into passenger satisfaction in maritime transportation. Comparative studies involving other maritime agencies and transportation sectors are likewise recommended to contribute to the continuous improvement of public maritime services in the Philippines.

Overall, the study confirms that the Philippine Coast Guard is successful in meeting the expectations of passengers through quality service delivery. However, continuous improvement in responsiveness, communication, and service efficiency remains essential to further strengthen public trust and enhance passenger satisfaction in maritime transportation services.

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