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Analysis of Leadership and Managerial Functions on the Km. Sultan Hasanuddin as an Inter-Island Pioneer Ship in Makassar

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of leadership and managerial functions on KM Sultan Hasanuddin, an inter-island pioneer vessel operating in Eastern Indonesia. Maritime operations present unique challenges due to their high-risk, isolated, and hierarchical environment, making leadership a critical determinant of safety and performance. This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation involving seven informants representing top, middle, and lower management levels on board. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, supported by triangulation techniques to ensure validity. The findings reveal that the captain applies a situational leadership approach by integrating transformational and transactional leadership styles within the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM). Transformational elements are reflected in motivational and inclusive interactions that foster crew cohesion and reduce burnout, while transactional elements ensure strict adherence to standard operating procedures (SOPs), particularly in emergency and technical operations. The implementation of managerial functions (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) demonstrates strong organizational structure, clear task division, and systematic evaluation mechanisms, contributing to operational stability and zero-incident performance. Furthermore, organizational communication is characterized by open, participatory, and adaptive patterns, supported by both formal (HT communication) and informal channels, despite technical barriers such as signal limitations. This study concludes that effective leadership on board is achieved through adaptive leadership shifting, strong managerial integration, and resilient communication systems, which collectively enhance safety, efficiency, and crew well-being in maritime operations.

Introduction

Maritime transportation has a highly strategic role in supporting economic growth, regional connectivity, and national integration, particularly in archipelagic countries such as Indonesia. As the world's largest archipelagic state, Indonesia depends heavily on sea transportation to connect thousands of islands, distribute logistics, and provide public services to isolated communities. The maritime sector therefore becomes not only an economic instrument but also a means of strengthening national unity and public welfare (Ayhan, 2023; Prasetyo & Suseto, 2023; Li, 2023). In this context, pioneer vessels serve a vital role because they operate on routes that are commercially less attractive but socially essential for remote island populations. Maritime transportation also functions as a backbone for regional development and equitable distribution of goods and services throughout eastern Indonesian waters (Hadiningrat et al., 2024; Pulungan, 2024; Riyadi, 2024).

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The operational environment of ships differs significantly from land-based organizations. A ship operates within an isolated, high-risk, and highly hierarchical environment where all activities depend on effective coordination among crew members. The captain possesses full authority over navigation, technical operations, safety procedures, and crew management for twenty-four hours a day (Rielage, 2022; Crozier, 2023). Consequently, leadership on board cannot merely rely on formal authority but must also involve psychological, managerial, and interpersonal competencies capable of maintaining operational stability during voyages. According to Putra et al. (2026), maritime safety culture is strongly influenced by leadership behavior because crew compliance with procedures often depends on the effectiveness of communication and supervision exercised by ship leaders. This condition makes leadership one of the most critical determinants of maritime safety and operational performance (Veltsin, 2024; Santoso et al., 2025; Purba, 2025).

In Indonesia, the legal basis concerning shipping operations is regulated under Law Number 17 of 2008 concerning Shipping. The law emphasizes that a ship captain not only functions as the highest technical authority on board but also carries managerial and organizational responsibilities in ensuring the welfare, discipline, and effectiveness of crew members (Xu, 2023; Sibali, 2024; Öztaşkin, 2024). However, in practical implementation, there remains a gap between normative regulations and the realities of social interaction aboard ships. Maritime operations often involve stressful working conditions, long working hours, limited physical space, and restricted communication with the outside world, all of which can influence the psychological condition and performance of the crew (Brooks & Greenberg, 2022; Kim, 2024; Bhatia et al., 2024). These conditions require adaptive leadership capable of balancing operational discipline with emotional support for crew members.

The importance of adaptive leadership becomes increasingly relevant in the context of pioneer vessels operating in Eastern Indonesia. One such vessel is the KM Sultan Hasanuddin, a training and pioneer ship with a gross tonnage of 1,200 GT that operates routes connecting Makassar, Selayar, Jampea, Maccini Baji, Dewakang Lompo, Kalukalukuang Island, and Pamantauanang Island. The ship performs an important public service function by supporting mobility and logistics for remote island communities. Operationally, the ship is manned by 21 crew members under a formal organizational structure led by the captain and supported by deck officers and engineer officers. Such operational complexity demands effective managerial coordination and disciplined communication systems to ensure voyages remain safe, efficient, and on schedule.

The unique operational characteristics of maritime organizations require leadership practices that differ from those commonly applied in conventional organizations. Leadership aboard ships must be capable of responding quickly to emergencies while simultaneously maintaining crew morale and cooperation. According to Siwiyanti et al. (2022), leadership effectiveness is strongly determined by a leader's ability to adapt to situational demands and organizational conditions. In maritime settings, the captain must often shift between directive authority and participatory interaction depending on operational circumstances. This dynamic becomes particularly important in isolated maritime environments where interpersonal conflicts or communication failures may directly affect navigation safety and crew performance.

Research on maritime leadership indicates that effective captains tend to combine technical authority with human-oriented leadership practices. (Mair, 2024; Simiyu, 2024; Heroman; 2025) explain through the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) that effective leaders integrate transformational and transactional leadership dimensions. Transformational leadership focuses on motivating subordinates, inspiring commitment, and fostering emotional attachment within the organization, while transactional leadership emphasizes discipline, rules,

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supervision, and performance evaluation (Park et al., 2022; Kou et al., 2024; Vijai, 2025). Within maritime operations, both dimensions are necessary because ships require strict compliance with safety procedures while also depending on strong interpersonal trust among crew members. The leadership dynamics observed on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin reflects this dual challenge. The captain demonstrates a flexible and inclusive leadership style intended to reduce psychological stress and work burnout among crew members. Emotional closeness between leaders and subordinates can contribute positively to morale, communication openness, and team cohesion (Ludwig et al., 2022; Abdurachman, 2022; Obuba, 2023). However, excessive informality may also weaken formal authority and reduce the effectiveness of supervision within hierarchical systems. This imbalance between humanistic interaction and managerial firmness becomes a critical issue influencing operational effectiveness on board.

The confined working environment aboard ships also increases the potential for psychological fatigue and interpersonal tension. Maritime workers spend extended periods within limited physical spaces while carrying demanding operational responsibilities. According to (Ajayi & Udeh, 2024; Keivani, 2025), human resource management in shipping industries must pay close attention to psychological adaptation and communication patterns because crew well-being directly influences operational safety and productivity. Rigid managerial interactions based solely on hierarchy may trigger stress, reduce initiative, and create communication barriers among crew members. Therefore, adaptive communication patterns become essential to maintaining harmonious working relationships and minimizing organizational conflict (Liu et al., 2023; Yue et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024).

Effective organizational communication aboard ships also play a strategic role in supporting operational safety. Communication failures at sea may lead to navigation errors, technical misunderstandings, and delayed responses during emergencies. (Min et al., 2022; Melnyk et al., 2023; Kulasegaram, 2024) argue that effective communication systems significantly contribute to safe ship operations because they facilitate coordination, information exchange, and teamwork among crew members. Formal communication channels such as radio communication, bridge instructions, and safety briefings must therefore be supported by informal interactions capable of strengthening trust and reducing hierarchical barriers. According to (Hoffjann, 2024; Zhu et al., 2024; Brennecke et al., 2025) further explain that informal communication within organizations often functions as a mechanism for resolving hidden problems that may not appear through formal reporting systems.

The managerial dimensions of maritime leadership can also be analyzed through Yusuf et al. (2024) POAC framework consisting of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. In maritime organizations, planning includes route preparation, emergency anticipation, and technical readiness; organizing relates to crew division and watchkeeping systems; actuating concerns motivation and coordination; while controlling involves supervision and evaluation of operational performance (Kwartama, 2025; Marichev, 2025; Supriatna et al., 2026). Effective implementation of these managerial functions contributes directly to operational discipline and voyage safety. According to (Amoako et al., 2022; Caniago, 2024; Natsir et al., 2024) emphasizes that management effectiveness depends not only on organizational structure but also on the ability of leaders to integrate human resources toward common objectives.

In addition to managerial competence, leadership effectiveness in maritime environments is closely related to adaptive decision-making capabilities. According to (Mei et al., 2024; Sott & Bender, 2025; Boikanyo, 2025) explain that adaptive leadership allows leaders to respond flexibly to changing operational conditions while maintaining organizational stability. Ships operating on pioneer routes frequently encounter uncertain weather conditions, limited port infrastructure, and technical constraints requiring rapid and accurate decisions. Under such

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circumstances, captains must maintain operational control while simultaneously preserving crew confidence and emotional resilience.

The urgency of studying leadership and managerial functions on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin therefore lies in the need to understand how a captain integrates transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership approaches within a highly hierarchical maritime organization. Previous studies on maritime leadership have generally focused on technical authority and navigation safety, while limited attention has been given to interpersonal communication, emotional management, and organizational comfort aboard ships. This research becomes important because it explores how leadership practices influence crew comfort, operational discipline, communication effectiveness, and overall voyage stability in pioneer shipping services.

The operational context of the KM Sultan Hasanuddin as a pioneer vessel under the Public Service Agency (BLU) system adds another dimension to leadership challenges. The ship must maintain service standards, operational accountability, and public safety simultaneously. BLU institutions are expected to balance efficiency, accountability, and service quality within public sector operations. Consequently, the captain's leadership effectiveness becomes not only an operational necessity but also an institutional requirement in ensuring sustainable maritime public services.

Based on these conditions, this research seeks to examine the implementation of leadership styles and managerial functions aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin in supporting operational effectiveness, organizational communication, and crew well-being during maritime operations. The study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of maritime leadership studies, particularly regarding the integration of humanistic leadership approaches within formal maritime organizational structures.

Method

Research Approach and Type

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive case study design. The qualitative approach was selected because the research aimed to obtain an in-depth understanding of leadership practices, managerial functions, and communication dynamics within the operational environment of the KM Sultan Hasanuddin as an inter-island pioneer vessel. Qualitative research is considered appropriate for exploring social interactions, organizational behavior, and human experiences that cannot be measured solely through quantitative indicators. Qualitative research emphasizes the understanding of social phenomena from the perspective of participants within their natural settings. In this study, the focus was not merely to identify leadership patterns formally implemented aboard the ship, but also to understand how such leadership was experienced, interpreted, and responded to by crew members in everyday operational situations.

The case study design was chosen because this research concentrated specifically on one organizational setting, namely the KM Sultan Hasanuddin, which possesses unique operational characteristics as a pioneer ship operating in Eastern Indonesia. The ship operates within a complex maritime environment characterized by isolation, high operational risks, strict hierarchical structures, and limited physical space. These characteristics create distinctive leadership and managerial challenges that require contextual and in-depth analysis. Through the case study approach, the researcher was able to examine leadership behavior, communication practices, managerial coordination, and interpersonal dynamics comprehensively within their real-life operational context. This design also allowed the

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researcher to explore the relationship between formal organizational structures and the informal interactions that occur among crew members during voyages.

Furthermore, the descriptive nature of the research was intended to provide a systematic and accurate depiction of the leadership and managerial phenomena occurring aboard the ship. The study sought to describe how the captain exercised authority, implemented managerial functions, coordinated the crew, resolved communication barriers, and maintained operational stability throughout the voyage. The descriptive approach also enabled the researcher to present detailed narratives regarding the daily realities of shipboard operations, particularly concerning the balance between formal command structures and humanistic leadership approaches.

Researcher's Role and Presence in the Field

In qualitative research, the researcher functions as the primary research instrument or human instrument. This means that the researcher personally determined the research focus, selected participants, collected data, interpreted findings, and formulated conclusions based on field realities. The direct presence of the researcher in the field was therefore essential to obtain rich, contextual, and authentic data regarding leadership and managerial dynamics aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin.

During the research process, the researcher assumed the role of a participant-observer. In this role, the researcher did not merely observe from a distance but also participated to a limited extent in the daily routines and interactions of the ship's crew. This involvement allowed the researcher to directly experience the working atmosphere aboard the ship, including the captain's leadership style, communication patterns between departments, operational coordination during navigation, and social interactions among crew members. Through participant observation, the researcher was able to understand not only what informants stated during interviews but also how leadership and managerial practices were actually implemented in real operational situations.

The researcher's presence aboard the ship was fully acknowledged by all informants, including the captain, officers, and crew members. Prior to conducting the study, the researcher completed formal administrative procedures and obtained permission from relevant authorities. Informants were also informed regarding the objectives, procedures, and ethical principles of the study. This process was carried out to establish trust and rapport between the researcher and participants while ensuring compliance with research ethics standards.

Although the informants were aware of the researcher's presence, efforts were made to maintain a natural research setting so that participants could behave and interact normally. The researcher adopted a relaxed and approachable attitude to minimize potential psychological barriers that could influence participants' responses or behavior. Maintaining objectivity was also an important consideration throughout the study. The researcher continuously reflected on personal assumptions and avoided excessive involvement that could potentially influence the interpretation of data. To strengthen objectivity, data triangulation was conducted using multiple data sources and collection techniques. Additionally, all participant identities were kept confidential to protect privacy and encourage openness during interviews and observations.

Research Location and Time

This research was conducted aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin, an inter-island pioneer vessel operating in the Makassar region, South Sulawesi, Makassar. The research location was selected because the ship represents a maritime organization with a complex operational structure involving leadership, communication, coordination, and human resource

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management within a confined and high-risk environment. As a pioneer vessel serving remote islands in Eastern Indonesia, the KM Sultan Hasanuddin also performs important public service functions that require effective managerial practices to ensure operational continuity and passenger safety.

The study was conducted from June to October 2025, while the primary research activities took place intensively in August 2025. The research schedule was adjusted to the operational routes and voyage activities of the ship to ensure that the researcher could observe various operational situations, including navigation activities, loading and unloading processes, crew coordination, and emergency preparedness procedures. Conducting the study over several months enabled the researcher to observe leadership consistency under different operational conditions, including routine voyages and periods of high workload.

Data Sources and Informants

The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained directly from field interactions and represented firsthand information regarding leadership styles, managerial functions, communication practices, and operational coordination aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin. The primary data included interview transcripts, observational records, field notes, and documentation collected during the researcher's participation aboard the ship.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques, in which participants were deliberately chosen based on their relevance to the research objectives. According to Sugiyono (2019), purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research because it enables researchers to select participants who possess rich and relevant information concerning the phenomenon being studied. A total of seven informants participated in this study, representing different hierarchical levels within the ship's organizational structure. These included the captain as top management, deck officers and engineer officers as middle management, and crew members representing operational personnel.

The inclusion of informants from different organizational levels allowed the researcher to obtain diverse perspectives regarding leadership implementation, communication effectiveness, managerial coordination, and workplace dynamics aboard the ship. This variation also strengthened data credibility by enabling comparisons between managerial perceptions and operational experiences among crew members.

Secondary data were obtained from written documents, organizational records, government regulations, and related literature relevant to maritime leadership and management. These included ship logbooks, engine logbooks, standard operating procedures (SOPs), organizational structure documents, cargo and passenger manifests, crew regulations, and statistical records concerning ship performance. In addition, legal documents such as Law Number 17 of 2008 concerning Shipping and Ministerial Regulation PM 93 of 2013 concerning Pioneer Sea Transportation were utilized to provide regulatory context for the study.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. These techniques were combined to obtain comprehensive and in-depth information regarding leadership and managerial practices aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all selected informants. This interview format allowed the researcher to prepare guiding questions while still providing flexibility for participants to express their experiences and perspectives openly. Interviews focused on leadership styles, communication patterns, managerial coordination, conflict resolution,

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operational supervision, and crew interactions aboard the ship. The use of semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to explore unexpected themes that emerged during conversations while maintaining alignment with the research objectives.

Observation techniques were used to directly examine operational activities and social interactions aboard the ship. The researcher observed bridge operations, crew briefings, safety meetings, loading and unloading activities, and informal interactions among crew members. Observations were conducted in natural settings to understand how leadership and communication practices were implemented in actual operational situations. These observations also served to validate interview findings and identify consistencies or discrepancies between verbal statements and observed behavior.

Documentation studies were conducted to support and strengthen findings obtained from interviews and observations. Documents examined included ship organizational structures, operational SOPs, ship logbooks, performance evaluation records, and official regulations related to pioneer shipping services. These documents provided administrative and legal evidence supporting the analysis of leadership and managerial practices aboard the ship.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study followed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. These analytical processes were conducted continuously throughout the research period to ensure systematic interpretation of field findings.

Data reduction involved selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. During this stage, the researcher identified themes and categorized information related to leadership styles, managerial functions, communication systems, and organizational dynamics aboard the ship.

The next stage involved data display, where organized data were presented in narrative descriptions, matrices, and thematic categorizations to facilitate interpretation. Displaying data systematically allowed the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and recurring themes emerging from different data sources.

Finally, conclusions were drawn through interpretative analysis of the collected data. Conclusions were continuously verified through comparison between interview results, observational findings, and documentary evidence. This verification process ensured that conclusions accurately reflected the realities observed during the study.

Validity and Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the research findngs, several validation techniques were applied. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from different informants representing various organizational levels aboard the ship. Technique triangulation involved comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation studies to ensure consistency of information.

The researcher also increased diligence by conducting observations and interviews during different operational situations, including routine conditions and high-pressure activities such as berthing, unberthing, and adverse weather conditions. This approach enabled the researcher to examine whether leadership and communication patterns remained consistent under varying operational pressures. Member checking was conducted by reconfirming findings and interpretations with selected informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately represented participants' experiences and perspectives. Additionally, an audit trail

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was maintained by systematically documenting all research procedures, field notes, interview transcripts, and analytical processes. This documentation enhanced transparency and allowed the research process to be reviewed systematically. Confirmability was ensured by maintaining objectivity throughout the study and basing interpretations strictly on empirical field data. All findings were supported by authentic evidence obtained from interviews, observations, and official documentation. The researcher avoided subjective assumptions and ensured that conclusions reflected actual field realities rather than personal biases or expectations.

Result and Discussion

The presentation of these results is designed to answer the research question regarding the effectiveness of the captain in managing the KM Sultan Hasanuddin, a pioneering vessel.

Analysis of the Captain's Leadership Style (FRLM Approach)

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with key informants (the captain, officers, and crew), it was found that the leadership style on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin is not singular but rather situational. Field data indicates that the captain applies elements of Inspirational Motivation. This was confirmed by Informant 1 (the captain), who stated:

> *"I always emphasize to my crewmates that we are not just merchant mariners; we are public servants for the people of isolated islands."*

This statement was validated by Informant 2 (Officer 2), who felt an emotional closeness and direct guidance from the captain when facing adverse weather conditions on the pioneering route. In terms of safety at sea, a transactional leadership style dominates ship operations. The captain implements an active monitoring system (Management by Exception-Active). Based on the researcher's observations, any violation of safety SOPs is immediately met with a stern warning and recorded in the Logbook. This indicates that in technical navigation matters, rules reign supreme. Transactional leadership emphasizes clarity of duties, adherence to procedures (SOPs), and evaluation of work results. Based on interviews, this dimension is highly prevalent in technical operations on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin. Strict Adherence to SOPs in Critical Situations the Captain (Informant 1) firmly stated that decision-making is not arbitrary, but rather based on a predetermined system:

> *"We always refer to the SOPs provided, and I frequently provide education regarding emergency response on board."*

This support was reinforced by the Middle Management group (Machinists 1, 2, and 3), who explained that during technical repairs, they do not proceed without official guidance:

> *"Before carrying out repairs, we check the manual to see what needs to be prepared."*

Periodic Supervision and Evaluation Function (Contingent Reward/Feedback) Transactional leadership characteristics are evident in the formal evaluation system implemented by the captain. Informant 1 explained:

> *"Every three months, there are standards set by the office for performance evaluation, and the evaluation report is submitted to the management office."*

This was validated by the engineer technicians, who stated that each completed task is always followed by an evaluation session:

> *"After the job is completed, another safety meeting is held to evaluate the work results."*

Clarity of Roles and Structure (Tupoksi). Trans actionality within the ship's organization is also evident in how all crew members work according to their assigned "contracts" or positions. Informant 7 (Foreman/Crewman) confirmed:

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"My duties as foreman are already known and are stated in the crew handbook."

Laissez-Faire Leadership Dimension (Passive/Avoidant)

The final dimension in the FRLM spectrum is laissez-faire leadership, a leadership style that tends to be passive, avoids decision-making, and provides complete freedom without supervision. Based on research on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin, it was found that the captain did not employ a laissez-faire style in the negative sense (indifference), but rather a measured delegation of authority. This was revealed in interviews with Informant 2 (Officer 2) and Informant 3 (Officer 3), who stated:

> "I was given a lot of freedom to take initiative, working according to my job description..."

This statement indicates that although the captain provided "space" and "flexibility" (as Informant 1 stated), this did not mean he was hands-off. Researchers observed that the freedom granted remained within the strict SOPs and job descriptions. The researchers' analysis concluded that the captain avoided the destructive trap of a laissez-faire style (indifference) by maintaining his controlling function. This is evidenced by Informant 1's statement:

> "On the ship, there are already job descriptions, and I just supervise."

The word "supervise" here is key to ensuring there is no operational neglect. The captain entrusts the officers to take technical initiatives, but retains final control, especially in emergency situations. Thus, the passive element that is a hallmark of laissez-faire is minimized through regular coordination and consistent safety meetings.

Managerial Function Analysis (POAC)

The implementation of management functions on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin is influenced by the tight schedule of pioneer vessels and the accountability standards of the Public Service Agency (BLU). The planning function on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin is the primary foundation for ensuring safe navigation, particularly in the face of emergency situations and the ship's technical conditions. Researchers found that passage planning was carried out collaboratively between the Master and Deck Officers. However, challenges posed by the uncertainty of dock conditions at pioneer ports of call required rapid contingency planning. Based on interviews, planning was not only carried out top-down but also involved team collaboration. The Master (Informant 1) emphasized that every action was based on a well-thought-out and standardized plan:

> *"I always refer to the provided SOPs, and I often provide education regarding emergency handling on board."*

In technical matters, planning was carried out through discussions with officers to mitigate risks. Informant 1 added:

> *"Every time there's an emergency, I involve my officers to assist me... which can ensure zero incidents on board."*

In the engine department, work planning begins with a study of technical literature. Engineers 1 & 2 (Informants 4 & 5) explained:

> *"Before carrying out repairs, we check the manual to see what needs to be prepared and what spare parts need to be replaced."*

Based on research findings, the planning function on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin is characterized by safety-oriented planning, where every work plan always refers to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) and manuals. This demonstrates that planning is not simply a

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routine activity but rather a risk mitigation strategy to achieve the target of zero incidents. The division of labor on board the ship follows a clear master role. However, researchers noted role flexibility during the loading and unloading of goods belonging to island residents, where cross-departmental coordination is key. The organizational function on board the ship is well established, adhering to standard maritime organizational structures (ship hierarchy) and clearly defined main tasks and functions (tupoksi).

The captain (Informant 1) explained that he acted as a supervisor of the existing system:

> *"There are already duties and responsibilities on the ship, and I just supervise them."*

Organization is reflected in the strong relationship between the deck and engineering departments. The second and third officers (Informants 2 & 3) stated:

> *"There is definite coordination between the crew. The captain always coordinates between departments."*

Work hours (watch duty) are strictly regulated by position to ensure 24-hour readiness. Informants 2 & 3 confirmed:

> *"Watch schedules are in place according to positions on the ship."*

Engineers 1 & 2 explained that at the technical level, tasks are fully divided in the pre-work briefing:

> *"The briefing of tasks is in accordance with each individual's duties."*

In the organizing function, researchers observed the implementation of a highly effective professional bureaucracy. Division of labor is no longer an obstacle because every crew member (from the officer to the foreman) understands their respective crew manuals. This clear structure allows the captain to provide flexible supervision without having to intervene excessively in daily technical tasks. The synergy between participatory planning and job-based organization is key to the operational stability of the KM Sultan Hasanuddin as a pioneering vessel.

The Actuating Function on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin focuses on how the captain mobilizes the crew, provides motivation, and leads in operational and emergency situations. Based on interviews, this motivating function is carried out through a humanistic yet systematic approach in several situations, such as:

> *"The way to motivate my colleagues is to embrace them and give them space to express their opinions."*

In the engineering department, motivating is done through clear instructions before work. Engineers 1 & 2 (Informants 4 & 5) explained:

> *"Before we work, there's usually a briefing, explaining the tasks according to each person's role."*

Engineer 3 (Informant 6) added that the captain not only gives orders but also participates in understanding the problem:

> *"The captain also collaborates to understand technical issues, so they can make technical decisions."*

Supervision (Controlling)

The controlling function is crucial on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin to ensure safe sailing and compliance with BLU standards. Supervision is carried out in stages, starting with daily

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supervision and continuing with formal performance evaluations at the head office. The captain ensures that all crew members are working on schedule. Informant 1 stated:

> *"On the ship, there are already duties and functions, and I only supervise."*

Control is carried out after a task is completed to ensure quality and safety. Engineers 1 & 2 (Informants 4 & 5) stated:

> *"After the work is completed, another safety meeting is held to evaluate the work results."*

As part of the BLU organization, a strict administrative control system is in place. Informant 1 explained:

> *"Every three months, standards are issued by the office for performance evaluation, and the evaluation report is submitted to the management office."*

Control is carried out by referring to official technical documents. Informant 4 noted that before repairs, the crew must check the manual as a control tool to prevent technical errors. The research results indicate that the Actuating function on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin operates with a participatory leadership pattern, with briefings and team meetings being the primary means of mobilization. Meanwhile, the Controlling function is implemented in layers, ranging from direct supervision by the captain, post-duty safety meetings, to quarterly performance evaluations of an administrative-bureaucratic nature. This integration of the POAC creates a stable management system, as evidenced by the achievement of "Zero Incidents," as mentioned by the informants.

Organizational Communication Analysis

Organizational communication on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin is the lifeblood of managerial and leadership functions. Based on field findings, the established communication pattern is open, two-way, and has a mechanism for rapid conflict resolution. The captain employs a combination of communication channels to ensure every technical instruction is conveyed while maintaining emotional closeness with the crew. Informant 1 (the captain) explained:

> *"I use the HT for official orders, and casual conversations to gather the crew's aspirations."*

The use of these informal channels has proven effective in creating a conducive work environment. This was validated by Informants 2 & 3 (the ship's officers):

> *"The leadership style is very engaging, creating a comfortable atmosphere on board."*

The flow of information on this ship is both vertical (instructions and reports) and horizontal (coordination between departments). Reporting is carried out in layers to ensure accountability. Informants 2 & 3 stated:

> *"Written and verbal reports... The captain always coordinates between departments."*

In the engineering department, communication focuses on technical complaints to avoid disrupting operations. Informant 4 (Machinist 1) added:

> *"Communication is smooth, convey your complaints."*

Communication Barriers and Conflict Resolution

This study found that communication barriers on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin were predominantly caused by external (geographical) factors rather than internal (psychological) factors. Informant 1 explained this obstacle:

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"So far, there have been no communication issues. Sometimes, if there's no signal in certain areas, that hinders communication."

Regarding the potential for miscommunication between personnel, officers acknowledged that this is normal but always has a solution. Informants 2 & 3 explained:

"Miscommunication has occurred on board, it all depends on the situation at the time, and most of the impacts can be resolved."

Space for expressing aspirations is also wide open through regular meetings, as Informant 7 (Foreman) stated:

"Yes, we can convey suggestions and complaints through meetings, meetings between crew members."

Overall, the communication system on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin demonstrates characteristics of Participatory Communication. Researchers concluded that despite the ship's dense hierarchy, the captain successfully broke down the "walls of separation" through casual conversations that served as a means of bottom-up feedback. The use of HT (Handy Talky) as a formal communication tool ensured the clarity of instructions, while regular meetings (inter-crew meetings) served as a mechanism for conflict resolution before issues escalated. Frequent signal disruptions on pioneering routes required independence at the middle management level (officers/engineers). However, because the planning and organizing functions were well-developed, these signal disruptions did not significantly disrupt operational stability. This effective communication was a key contributing factor to the achievement of harmonious working relationships across all crew levels.

Table 1. Triangulation Matrix of Research Findings

Variable / Issue	**Top Management (Captain)**	**Middle Management (Officers & Engineers)**	**Lower Management (Crew/Foreman)**	**Researcher Analysis**
Leadership Style	Flexible, inclusive, SOP-oriented leadership	Leadership is supportive, comfortable, and allows initiative	Captain is fair, responsive, and decisive in emergencies	Captain combines transformational and transactional leadership effectively
Managerial Functions (POAC)	Supervises duties and conducts quarterly evaluations	Work follows SOPs, schedules, and technical briefings	Understands duties through crew handbook	Strong organizational structure with clear division of tasks
Organizational Communication	Uses HT for formal communication and informal talks for aspirations	Coordination between divisions runs effectively	Communication occurs through meetings and daily interaction	Communication is participatory, adaptive, and operationally effective

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Effectiveness of Leadership, Managerial Functions, and Communication on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin

Based on the synthesis of field data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation studies, the effectiveness of leadership aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin cannot be understood as a static or singular leadership pattern. Instead, leadership effectiveness emerged from the captain's ability to dynamically shift leadership styles according to operational situations and organizational needs. This phenomenon can be described as leadership shifting, where the captain combines transformational, transactional, and adaptive leadership approaches in response to the unique conditions of maritime operations. The findings indicate that the captain successfully balanced humanistic interaction with organizational discipline, enabling operational stability while maintaining crew morale during long voyages on pioneer routes (Longoria, 2025; Laksmana et al., 2026).

The captain demonstrated effectiveness in applying the transformational dimension of leadership, particularly through inspirational motivation and interpersonal engagement with crew members. The isolated and stressful environment aboard a pioneer ship requires a leader who functions not only as a technical commander but also as a psychological stabilizer capable of maintaining emotional balance among crew members. Through open communication, informal interaction, and emotional closeness, the captain created a work atmosphere that encouraged crew members to express opinions, communicate operational difficulties, and participate actively in daily activities (Romadhoni et al., 2026). This leadership approach contributed significantly to reducing psychological fatigue and work burnout despite the demanding operational conditions and heavy physical workload experienced by the crew. High levels of crew loyalty and harmonious working relationships reflected the success of this motivational leadership pattern.

However, the implementation of transformational leadership was not carried out without maintaining formal authority. In technical and operational matters, the captain consistently applied transactional leadership principles, particularly in relation to safety procedures and operational discipline. The findings revealed that strict adherence to standard operating procedures (SOPs) remained the highest operational priority because maritime operations involve high-risk situations where even minor mistakes may threaten human safety, ship operations, and state assets. The captain implemented a clear reward and punishment system, accompanied by direct supervision and immediate corrective actions whenever procedural violations occurred. This demonstrates that the captain understood the necessity of maintaining firm control within a hazardous maritime environment.

The synthesis of these findings shows that the effectiveness of leadership aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin was achieved through the captain's ability to position himself as "soft" in interpersonal relationships while remaining "rigid" in operational and safety standards. This balance between empathy and authority enabled the captain to maintain crew cohesion without weakening organizational discipline. Such findings are consistent with the Full Range Leadership Model developed by Bass and Avolio, which emphasizes the importance of integrating transformational and transactional leadership dimensions in achieving organizational effectiveness. The captain's leadership effectiveness was therefore not based solely on formal command authority, but also on the ability to adapt leadership behavior according to situational demands at sea.

From a managerial perspective, the implementation of the POAC functions Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling was found to contribute significantly to operational effectiveness aboard the ship. In terms of organizing, the captain established a clear division of labor based on International Maritime Organization (IMO) standards and formal shipboard

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hierarchy. Duties and responsibilities were distributed systematically among the Deck Department, Engineering Department, and supporting crew members. These responsibilities were then operationalized through daily coordination mechanisms such as toolbox meetings, shift briefings, and interdepartmental communication. The clear chain of command minimized role overlap and reduced operational confusion during routine activities and emergency situations.

The organizing function also strengthened operational efficiency because the captain could focus on strategic supervision rather than becoming directly involved in every technical detail. Delegation of authority to officers and engineers allowed operational tasks to be carried out professionally according to each crew member's area of expertise. The first engineer confirmed that the captain provided significant trust regarding technical engine matters as long as all activities remained within the framework of established SOPs. This trust-based delegation system created professional accountability among crew members while reinforcing organizational discipline aboard the ship.

The controlling function was implemented systematically through direct supervision, routine evaluations, and administrative accountability mechanisms. The findings revealed the existence of quarterly performance evaluation systems that were formally reported to the management office of PIP Makassar. These evaluations functioned not only as performance assessments but also as instruments for maintaining administrative accountability under the Public Service Agency (BLU) framework. As a result, managerial supervision aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin extended beyond physical operational control and included bureaucratic accountability concerning public service standards, financial responsibility, and operational reporting.

The implementation of managerial functions aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin also had direct implications for the effectiveness of the ship's professional bureaucracy. The structured division of tasks between departments reduced the possibility of operational overlap and strengthened coordination during navigation and technical operations. Decision-making processes were participatory in nature because officers and technical personnel were involved in operational discussions and problem-solving activities. Nevertheless, authority remained centralized under the captain as the highest commanding officer on board. This centralized decision-making structure was necessary because pioneer shipping operations under the BLU system require every operational decision to be legally, technically, and administratively accountable.

In addition to leadership and managerial effectiveness, communication and coordination between divisions emerged as crucial factors supporting operational stability aboard the ship. Communication functioned as a bridge connecting leadership practices with managerial implementation, ensuring that all operational activities could be carried out safely and efficiently. The study found that communication patterns aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin were characterized by a combination of formal and informal communication systems. Formal communication occurred through official instructions, HT (Handy Talky) radio communication, operational reports, safety briefings, and departmental coordination meetings. Informal communication, meanwhile, took place through casual conversations during mealtimes, rest periods, and daily social interactions among crew members.

Cross-departmental coordination between the Deck and Engineering divisions was found to be highly effective, particularly during critical operational moments such as berthing and unberthing maneuvers. The existence of a "One Command, One Goal" organizational culture strengthened interdepartmental synergy and minimized operational misunderstandings. Regular pre-task briefings also played an important role in aligning technical perceptions and

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ensuring that all crew members understood operational objectives and procedures before activities commenced.

Interestingly, technical communication obstacles such as signal disruptions on pioneer routes did not significantly weaken operational effectiveness. Instead, these limitations fostered greater operational independence among crew members because the captain had successfully developed a collective understanding regarding operational procedures and coordination systems. As a result, crew members were capable of coordinating effectively without continuously depending on instructions from headquarters or external communication systems. This demonstrates that internal organizational communication aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin had developed into a resilient and adaptive communication culture.

The findings also revealed that informal communication channels played a significant role in maintaining organizational harmony. Crew members considered informal interactions during meals and relaxation periods as the most comfortable opportunities for discussing operational challenges and expressing concerns that might not emerge within formal reporting systems. This reflects Robbins' perspective that informal communication often functions as a hidden organizational safety mechanism capable of identifying problems before they escalate into operational conflicts.

The study concludes that the effectiveness of leadership, managerial functions, and communication aboard the KM Sultan Hasanuddin was achieved through the integration of adaptive leadership practices, structured managerial systems, and participatory communication patterns. The captain's ability to balance humanistic leadership with strict operational discipline created organizational stability, strengthened crew resilience, and supported the achievement of safe and efficient maritime operations on pioneer shipping routes.

Conclusion

The effectiveness of the captain's leadership on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin was determined by the successful implementation of the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) across the situational spectrum. The captain demonstrated adeptness in integrating a Transformational style to build crew morale on pioneering routes and a Transactional style to ensure compliance with safety SOPs. This success occurred because the captain was not fixated on a single style but was able to shift styles according to the demands of operational situations at sea. The implications of managerial functions, including the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) aspects, demonstrated synergy between international maritime standards and the Public Service Agency (BLU) administrative system. These functions contributed to a stable bureaucracy on board, where a clear division of tasks and a regular evaluation system minimized the risk of operational failure. This occurred because the captain's POAC structure provided legal and technical certainty for each crew member in carrying out their duties. Effective communication and coordination between departments served as the primary supporting instruments linking FRLM leadership with the POAC managerial function. An open, two-way communication pattern successfully reduced psychological hierarchical barriers and increased crew resilience to technical challenges on pioneering routes. Researchers concluded that transparency of information between departments was a key factor in ensuring the achievement of a zero-incident status on the KM Sultan Hasanuddin.

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