

Comparative Analysis of TKBM and TKSS Workers' Wage Payment Systems at the Yos Sudarso Port Cooperative, Ambon

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the wage payment system for Stevedoring Workers (TKBM) and Stuffing Stripping Workers (TKSS) at the Stevedoring Workers Cooperative (TKBM) of Port Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon, focusing on its compliance with the principles of fairness and reasonableness. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. The research informants comprised 72 individuals, including the Deputy Chairman of the TKBM Cooperative, 10 group foremen, 60 regular TKBM and TKSS workers, and one operational staff member from PT Antali Jaya Mandiri Ambon. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The results indicate that the TKBM wage payment system satisfies both fairness and reasonableness principles, with actual wages ranging from Rp3,000,000 to Rp3,500,000 per month, exceeding the 2025 Maluku Provincial Minimum Wage of Rp3,141,899. Conversely, TKSS wages are only Rp1,000,000 per month, falling significantly below the minimum wage standard, thus satisfying fairness but failing reasonableness. When wages from both types of work are combined, regular workers receive total monthly earnings of Rp4,000,000 to Rp4,500,000, which satisfies both principles. This study concludes that although the wage system generally complies with the regulatory framework of Law Number 13 of 2003 and Minister of Transportation Regulation Number PM 57 of 2020, specific improvements are needed for TKSS worker remuneration to address the wage gap and ensure all port laborers receive fair and reasonable compensation.

INTRODUCTION

As an archipelagic nation, Indonesia's economic vitality depends heavily on its seaports, which serve as critical gateways for domestic and international trade (Budiman et al., 2024). The presence of adequate port infrastructure plays a fundamental role in facilitating the movement of goods and people across the nation's vast territory. Ports constitute the most essential infrastructure for connecting inter-island and international routes, making them indispensable nodes in the national logistics network.

Indonesia enjoys international recognition as a maritime nation, with territorial waters comprising a substantial portion of its total area (Harris et al., 2022). The country is renowned globally for its agricultural and industrial products, which are in high demand both domestically and internationally. Each region exhibits interdependence regarding natural resources and manufactured goods. To transport these commodities, water-based transportation, particularly seagoing vessels, serves as the primary mode of conveyance. From an economic perspective, maritime transport represents a relatively more expensive option compared to other transportation modes; however, it offers the distinct advantage of accommodating large cargo volumes (Syaputra, 2024). When cargo ships are utilized as freight carriers, the activities of loading and unloading goods become determining factors in overall logistics efficiency (Faturrahman, 2024).

Port Stevedoring Workers (Tenaga Kerja Bongkar Muat/TKBM) constitute one of the most vital resources in ensuring the seamless execution of loading and unloading operations to and from vessels (Dharmawan et al., 2022; Kubangun et al., 2024). The availability of stevedoring workers possessing adequate skills and appropriate numbers has consistently remained a primary objective in port operations (Sahara & Aprilia, 2023). This objective must be pursued without neglecting other supporting factors such as cranes, forklifts, and various mechanical equipment (Dewi et al., 2024).

Labor constitutes a fundamental component in the stevedoring equation. Fundamentally, effective labor is characterized by efficiency and high productivity (Fedriani & Nettiary, 2020; SIM et al., 2023). To achieve optimal workforce productivity, it must be accompanied by commensurate remuneration. Vessel loading and unloading activities encompass lowering containers from ships to Container Yards and transporting containers from Container Yards to vessels (Asimu et al., 2025). Consequently, when loading and unloading operations are executed efficiently, rapidly, and systematically, they contribute significantly to enhancing the overall flow of goods. This operational fluidity depends on the nature and form of cargo, as well as the expertise of the stevedoring workforce (Dewi et al., 2024).

Wages constitute one of the determining factors of labor productivity itself. Port workers play an active and crucial role in the stevedoring process, as they are directly engaged in field operations, thereby substantially contributing to the smooth execution of loading and unloading activities. Thus, stevedoring wages represent a significant consideration in port operations, ensuring that workers receive equitable welfare benefits.

The ideal wage system within labor-management relations establishes that the employer holds the right to disburse wages while the worker holds the right to receive them. By extension, the Stevedoring Workers Cooperative (Koperasi Tenaga Kerja Bongkar Muat/TKBM) should possess the authority to disburse wages to stevedoring workers (Fahrozi et al., 2025). However, in practice, wage implementation frequently exhibits inconsistencies with prevailing legal regulations (Wijayanti, 2023). On occasion, wages have even become a source of conflict between the Cooperative and its members.

The wage payment system at the Port of Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon operates through a collective labor agreement involving all port stakeholders (Kubangun et al., 2024). These stakeholders include the Indonesian National Shipowners' Association (INSA), the Indonesian Stevedoring Companies Association (APBMI), the Indonesian Logistics and Forwarders Association (ALFI/ILFA), the Stevedoring Workers Cooperative serving as the workers' union, and PT Pelindo IV Ambon Branch as the port operator. This arrangement is supervised and regulated by the Port Authority Office (KSOP) Class 1 Ambon, which serves as the government agency responsible for regulating, controlling, and supervising port activities on a commercial basis.

This regulatory framework is grounded in the Indonesian Minister of Transportation Regulation Peraturan Menteri Perhubungan Republik Indonesia Nomor PM 57 Tahun 2020 Tentang Perubahan Kedua Atas Peraturan Menteri Perhubungan Nomor PM 51 Tahun 2015 Tentang Penyelenggaraan Pelabuhan Laut (2020) concerning Port Operations and Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower. Article 88 of the Manpower Law stipulates that every worker is entitled to receive income that ensures a decent standard of living, sufficient to meet the reasonable needs of workers and their families, including food and old-age security. Article 1, Paragraph 30 of Law Number 13 of 2003 defines wages as "the right of workers which is determined and paid according to a work agreement, collective bargaining, or legislation, including allowances for workers and their families for work and/or services that have been or will be performed (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 13 Tahun 2003 Tentang Ketenagakerjaan, 2003)."

The operational workflow of TKBM workers follows a structured sequence. Initially, the shipping company confirms to PT Pelindo IV Ambon Branch the vessel's scheduled arrival for container loading and unloading operations, submitting the manifest detailing the number of containers to be unloaded and loaded, along with the designated date and time for commencement. This confirmation automatically generates requests for Stuffing Stripping workers based on the manifest specifications. The Port Operating Company submits a request letter accompanied by the manifest to the TKBM Cooperative Management, which then instructs the Workers' Union to assign the Group Foreman whose turn it is to undertake the operations.

TKBM workers receive wages immediately upon completion of loading and unloading operations, whereas TKSS workers receive wages after a predetermined period of twelve days

from the first day of work, as established through stakeholder consensus. However, there are allegations that workers receive wages inconsistent with agreements, causing dissatisfaction due to wage parity with unregistered "temporary" workers. Furthermore, TKSS workers perceive that their workloads are heavier and more challenging than stevedoring work, yet receive substantially lower wages. Based on this contextual background, this research examines the analysis of the wage payment system for TKBM and TKSS workers within the Stevedoring Workers Cooperative framework at the Port of Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted from June to August 2025. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to systematically describe and analyze the wage payment system for TKBM and TKSS workers at the Stevedoring Workers Cooperative (TKBM) of Port Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon. This approach was selected because it enables the researcher to capture in-depth information about the phenomenon under investigation, particularly regarding the principles of fairness and reasonableness in wage payment systems. The research was conducted at the TKBM Cooperative office located at Jl. Komplek Pelabuhan Yos Sudarso Ambon, Kelurahan Honipopu, Kecamatan Sirimau, Kotamadya Ambon, Maluku Province.

The primary data were obtained directly from key informants through in-depth interviews and observation. The informants comprised 72 individuals, including one Deputy Chairman of the TKBM Cooperative, ten group foremen, sixty regular TKBM and TKSS workers, and one operational staff member from PT Antali Jaya Mandiri Ambon. Secondary data were collected from relevant documents, including government regulations, scholarly journals, books, and institutional records. Data collection techniques employed in this study were structured interviews using interview guides, direct observation of port operational activities, and documentation studies of relevant policies and regulations.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consists of four stages: data collection, data reduction (selecting and focusing on essential information), data display (organizing information systematically), and conclusion drawing (verifying findings to ensure validity). The analysis framework focused on evaluating the wage system against two primary principles: fairness, measured through indicators of position-based wage distribution, adherence to established agreements, and attendance-based compensation; and reasonableness, assessed through work achievement alignment and comparison with Provincial Minimum Wage standards. The findings were then interpreted within the regulatory context of Indonesian Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower and Minister of Transportation Regulation Number PM 57 of 2020 concerning Port Operations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result Research

The research findings reveal significant insights into the wage payment system for TKBM and TKSS workers at the Port of Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon. Based on comprehensive interviews with 72 informants, including the Deputy Chairman of the TKBM Cooperative, ten group foremen, sixty regular workers, and one operational staff member from PT Antali Jaya Mandiri, the study identified several critical issues regarding wage implementation.

The wage system operates through a structured mechanism where shipping companies pay handling service fees to PT Pelindo IV Ambon Branch, which then disburses wages through the TKBM Cooperative. TKBM workers receive wages immediately upon completion of loading and unloading operations, while TKSS workers receive wages after twelve working days, as stipulated in the collective agreement among all stakeholders. The wage distribution follows a clear hierarchical structure: Foremen and Deputy Foremen receive 200% of the base wage, while regular members receive 100%.

Based on an interview with the Deputy Chairman of the TKBM Cooperative at Port Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon, he explained the labor work system, which consists of 20 groups, each comprising 20 workers. The work schedule for each group regarding loading and unloading activities is four times per month, whereas Stuffing and Stripping workers operate only twice per month.

The wage payment system for both Loading and Unloading and Stuffing and Stripping workers incorporates both similarities and differences. The commonalities are as follows: the shipping company makes handling service payments to PT Pelindo IV Ambon Branch based on the loading and unloading activities, as documented in the manifest detailing the volume of cargo discharged from and loaded onto the vessel. Following the completion of loading and unloading operations, the TKBM Cooperative submits a payment request to PT Pelindo IV Ambon Branch, which then disburses the wages to workers through the TKBM Cooperative at Port Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon. The identical procedure applies to Stuffing and Stripping activities. Subsequently, the TKBM Cooperative summons the Workers' Union to receive the wages, which are then distributed to the Group Foreman who was on duty during the operation, for allocation among group members in accordance with the number of workers who participated.

The primary distinction between the two systems is that Loading and Unloading workers receive their wages immediately upon completion of the work, whereas Stuffing and Stripping workers receive their wages after a twelve-day period following the commencement of work.

Regarding the nominal amount or magnitude of wages received, these are variable and contingent upon the volume of containers handled. For Loading and Unloading activities, wages depend on the number of containers loaded or unloaded. Containers are available in two sizes: 20 feet and 40 feet. Additionally, each vessel carries both full and empty containers. Similarly, compensation for Stuffing and Stripping activities is also dependent on

the number of containers processed. The wage distribution system allocates 200% of the base wage to the Group Leader and Deputy Group Leader, while regular members receive 100%.

Furthermore, workers are entitled to supplementary benefits, which include: BPJS Health Insurance, BPJS Employment Insurance, educational scholarships for children, Holiday Allowance, and distribution of the remaining business profits.

The researcher's interviews with 60 workers regarding the wages they receive for Loading and Unloading activities revealed that some workers earn Rp3,000,000 while others receive Rp3,500,000 per month. Meanwhile, for Stuffing and Stripping activities, workers receive an average of Rp1,000,000 per month. The majority of workers expressed that the wages they receive are neither adequate nor reasonable, citing several reasons. The first reason is that the nominal amount of wages they receive is equivalent to that received by temporary workers, who, according to them, are unregistered, unbound by regulations, and able to work at will, whereas they themselves are registered, bound by regulations, and work in accordance with applicable rules. The second reason is that most Foremen are perceived to act dishonestly, as the wages they distribute do not correspond to the workers' efforts; the wages received are disproportionately small relative to the work performed, which is arduous and fraught with risks. The third reason is that the wages received by Loading and Unloading workers are nominally greater than those received by Stuffing and Stripping workers, despite the fact that, according to the workers, the workload and risks associated with Stuffing and Stripping activities are considerably higher than those of Loading and Unloading.

Table 1. Wage Calculation for TKBM Workers (per month)

Component	Calculation	Amount (Rp)
Unloading	371,000 x 150 containers x 4 shifts / 88 workers	2,529,549
Loading	71,000 x 250 units x 4 shifts / 88 workers	4,215,909
Foreman (200%)	(Rp2,529,549 + Rp4,215,909) x 2	13,490,916
Deputy Foreman (200%)	(Rp2,529,549 + Rp4,215,909) x 2	13,490,916
Regular Member (100%)	Rp2,529,549 + Rp4,215,909	6,745,458

However, actual field observations revealed significant discrepancies. Regular TKBM workers reportedly receive only Rp3,000,000 to Rp3,500,000 per month, far below the calculated Rp6,745,458. TKSS workers receive approximately Rp1,000,000 per month, despite calculations showing they should receive Rp1,645,227 for stripping activities.

Table 2. Wage Calculation for TKSS Workers (per month)

Component	Calculation	Amount (Rp)
Stripping (Inside)	241,300 x 150 containers x 2 shifts / 44 workers	1,645,227
Foreman (200%)	Rp1,645,227 x 2	3,290,454
Deputy Foreman (200%)	Rp1,645,227 x 2	3,290,454
Regular Member (100%)	Rp1,645,227	1,645,227

This table presents the monthly wage calculation for TKSS workers at Port Yos Sudarso Class 1 Ambon. The calculation is based on the base unit rate for stripping activities is Rp241,300 per container. According to the operational data, 150 containers are processed per stripping operation, and workers perform 2 shifts per month, involving 44 workers (representing 2 groups of 22 workers each, with foremen receiving 200% allocation). The base wage is calculated by multiplying the unit rate by the number of containers and shifts, then dividing by the total worker allocation.

Based on this calculation:

1. Regular Members receive Rp1,645,227 per month (100% of the base wage)
2. Deputy Foremen receive Rp3,290,454 per month (200% of the base wage)
3. Foremen receive Rp3,290,454 per month (200% of the base wage)

Table 3. Combined Wage Calculation (TKBM + TKSS)

Position	TKBM (Rp)	TKSS ((Rp)	Combined
Foreman	13,490,916	3,290,454	16,781,370
Deputy Foreman	13,490,916	3,290,454	16,781,370
Regular Member	6,745,458	1,645,227	8,390,685

This table presents the combined monthly wages for workers engaged in both Loading and Unloading (TKBM) and Stuffing and Stripping (TKSS) activities. The calculation consolidates the wages from both types of work to show the total monthly compensation for each position:

1. Regular Members: TKBM wage (Rp6,745,458) + TKSS wage (Rp1,645,227) = Combined total of Rp8,390,685
2. Deputy Foremen: TKBM wage (Rp13,490,916) + TKSS wage (Rp3,290,454) = Combined total of Rp16,781,370
3. Foremen: TKBM wage (Rp13,490,916) + TKSS wage (Rp3,290,454) = Combined total of Rp16,781,370

Discussion

Fairness Principle Analysis

The fairness principle in wage compensation requires that rewards correspond to the input or sacrifice made by workers. This principle was evaluated through three key indicators: position-based wage distribution, adherence to established agreements, and attendance-based compensation.

Position-Based Wage Distribution: The research confirms that both TKBM and TKSS workers receive wages according to their hierarchical positions. Foremen and Deputy Foremen receive double the regular member's wage, reflecting their supervisory responsibilities and additional duties. This system of differential compensation aligns with the internal consistency principle, where higher positions command higher compensation. The

200% ratio for leadership positions appears justified given the additional coordination, supervision, and decision-making responsibilities these roles entail.

Adherence to Established Agreements: The wage determination process involves all stakeholders as mandated by Minister of Transportation Regulation Number PM 57 of 2020. The collective agreement includes INSA, APBMI, ALFI/ILFA, TKBM Cooperative, PT Pelindo IV, and KSOP Class 1 Ambon. This multi-stakeholder participation ensures that wage decisions reflect broader interests and regulatory compliance. The agreement also references Indonesian Law Number 13 of 2003, particularly Article 88, which guarantees workers' rights to decent livelihoods, and Article 1, Paragraph 30, which defines wages as workers' rights determined through work agreements or legislation.

Attendance-Based Compensation: The cooperative consistently applies attendance-based wage adjustments. Workers with full attendance receive full wages, while those with absenteeism face proportional deductions. This system promotes discipline and ensures that wages reflect actual work contribution, aligning with the principle that compensation should correspond to actual input.

Reasonableness Principle Analysis

The reasonableness principle examines whether wages align with living standards, specifically comparing earnings to minimum wage standards established by government regulations.

Work Achievement Alignment: The findings reveal that TKBM wages largely correspond to work achievement, with workers paid based on the number of containers handled. The faster and more efficiently workers complete their tasks, the earlier they receive rest periods. For TKSS workers, the system operates differently. While the standard payment period is twelve days, workers receive wages earlier if they complete stripping operations before the deadline. Conversely, if work exceeds the twelve-day period, payment occurs at day twelve, and expediting workers continue the unfinished work. This system creates efficiency incentives but may disadvantage workers who face complex or time-consuming stripping tasks.

Minimum Wage Comparison: The 2025 Maluku Provincial Minimum Wage (UMP) is Rp3,141,899, while the Ambon City Minimum Wage (UMK) is Rp3,185,733. Analyzing TKBM regular members' actual earnings of Rp3,000,000 to Rp3,500,000 reveals that these wages exceed both minimum wage thresholds, confirming the reasonableness of TKBM compensation. However, TKSS regular members receiving only Rp1,000,000 falls significantly below both minimum wage standards, indicating that TKSS wages are unreasonable despite being fair in distribution.

Table 4. Minimum Wage Comparison

Category	TKBM Actual	TKSS Actual	UMP Maluku	UMK Ambon
Regular Member	Rp3,000,000-3,500,000	Rp1,000,000	Rp3,141,899	Rp3,185,733
Status	✓ Reasonable	x Unreasonable		

Integrated Wage System Evaluation

When combining wages from both TKBM and TKSS work, regular workers receive total monthly earnings of Rp4,000,000 to Rp4,500,000. This combined wage system satisfies both fairness and reasonableness principles, as it exceeds both minimum wage standards and maintains position-based differentials. The integrated system ensures that even if TKSS wages alone are insufficient, the combination provides adequate compensation.

The Temporary Worker Issue

A significant concern raised by regular workers relates to the presence of "temporary workers" (buruh tempelan) who receive identical wages despite being unregistered and uninvolved in the cooperative's formal structure. These temporary workers allegedly work inconsistently and face fewer obligations, yet receive comparable compensation. This disparity creates dissatisfaction among registered workers who bear formal responsibilities and adhere to regulations. The existence of temporary workers earning equivalent wages undermines the fairness principle, as registered workers perceive their additional obligations and commitment as undervalued.

Structural Challenges

The research identified several structural challenges affecting wage implementation. First, the operational structure of TKSS workers remains relatively underdeveloped compared to TKBM workers. Following the 1999-2001 conflict in Ambon, many TKSS workers relocated, leaving a labor shortage that TKBM workers initially filled. This historical context explains why TKBM and TKSS remain interconnected groups despite distinct work types and wage systems. Second, the foreman role carries significant power in wage distribution, with some workers alleging misconduct in wage allocation. Finally, the complexity of TKSS tasks, which involves detailed container content management requiring multiple data inputs (including status changes from Empty Available to MTA or RCFL to SIP based on Job Orders), demands considerable expertise and effort that may not be adequately reflected in current compensation levels.

Regulatory Compliance

Overall, the wage system generally complies with Indonesian Law Number 13 of 2003 and Minister of Transportation Regulation Number PM 57 of 2020. The system incorporates collective agreements, stakeholder participation, and minimum wage standards. However, the TKSS wage gap represents a significant violation of the reasonableness principle, requiring

specific policy intervention to ensure comprehensive fairness and reasonableness for all worker categories.

CONCLUSSION AND RECOMMEDATION

Conclusion

The analysis concludes that TKBM wages satisfy both fairness and reasonableness principles, TKSS wages satisfy fairness but fail reasonableness, and the combined wage system satisfies both principles. These findings suggest that while the existing framework provides a foundation for equitable compensation, targeted improvements are needed specifically for TKSS worker remuneration to address the wage gap and ensure all port laborers receive wages that reflect their contributions and meet regulatory standards.

Recommendation

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge. The cooperative should conduct regular evaluations of wage distribution practices to ensure consistency with formal agreements. Foreman supervision and disciplinary measures should be strengthened to prevent wage discrepancies. Compensation should better reflect workload differences between TKBM and TKSS workers, and TKSS wages should be elevated to meet minimum wage standards. The temporary worker issue requires resolution to ensure fair treatment of all workers. Finally, wage systems should consider both workload duration and complexity, ensuring that workers engaged in more demanding or hazardous tasks receive appropriate compensation.

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