



Integration of Shipping Law and Maritime Policies in Indonesian Maritime Vocational Education: A Qualitative Assessment of Professional Competency Development

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the integration of shipping law and maritime policies within Indonesian maritime vocational education systems, evaluating their effectiveness in developing professional competencies amongst maritime graduates. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study investigates perspectives from three key stakeholder groups: maritime professionals, vocational lecturers, and maritime graduates. The research addresses critical gaps in legal literacy amongst Indonesian seafarers operating within international jurisdictions. Findings indicate an overall effectiveness score of 9/10 across three key indicators: shipping management, maritime business, and maritime finance with sustainability. However, significant opportunities exist for enhanced case-based learning, practical legal simulations, and contextualised application of international maritime conventions. The study recommends systematic curriculum reforms incorporating experiential learning methodologies, strengthened industry-academia collaboration, and development of competency-based legal literacy frameworks aligned with International Maritime Organisation (IMO) standards.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

Shipping constitutes a strategic sector fundamental to global mobility of goods and services, with maritime transport facilitating approximately 90% of international trade [1]. As the world's largest archipelagic nation, Indonesia occupies a vital geographical position surrounded by international shipping lanes within the Archipelagic Sea Lanes (ASL) under provisions of

the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982) [2]. This strategic positioning establishes Indonesia not merely as a maritime user but as a pivotal actor within the international maritime governance framework.

In this context, Indonesian seafarers are required to demonstrate mastery not only of technical operational competencies but also comprehensive understanding of shipping law, including maritime jurisdiction, compliance with international conventions, and proficiency in

national shipping regulations [3], [4]. The complexity of contemporary international shipping necessitates graduates with enhanced legal literacy, capable of navigating legal frameworks during emergencies, labour disputes, and international legal audits.

1.2 Shipping Law in Maritime Education

Shipping law represents an integral component of maritime jurisprudence, regulating legal relationships in vessel operations, seafarer protection, and responsibilities in transnational shipping. This legal framework encompasses regulations on vessel safety (SOLAS 1974) [5], crew training and certification (STCW 1978, amended 2010) [6], marine environmental protection (MARPOL 1973/78) [7], and rights and obligations of coastal and flag states (UNCLOS 1982) [2].

However, within Indonesian maritime vocational education practice, shipping law frequently occupies a supplementary position rather than constituting a core component of seafarers' professional competencies [8]. The escalating complexity of international shipping demands graduates with sophisticated legal literacy, encompassing not only operational procedures but analytical capabilities to navigate legal systems during contingencies.

1.3 Contemporary Challenges and Requirements

Teaching of shipping law has become increasingly pertinent as demands for seafarer compliance with international maritime law intensify. According to IMO Model Course 7.01 and STCW Code requirements, managerial-level seafarers must possess comprehensive knowledge of legal aspects in vessel operations, including legal documentation, maritime accident management, and criminalisation avoidance [9].

Unfortunately, curricula within numerous maritime vocational institutions continue to lack case-based teaching approaches, maritime arbitration simulations, or cross-jurisdictional understanding. This deficiency raises fundamental questions regarding the extent to which Indonesia's maritime vocational education system has systematically, contextually, and applicatively integrated shipping law instruction.

1.4 Research Objectives and Scope

This research addresses identified educational gaps through examination of shipping law and maritime policy integration within maritime vocational education. The study investigates perceptions of professionals, lecturers, and graduates regarding law's importance in contemporary shipping practices. The investigation focuses on three principal dimensions:

1. Integration of shipping policies and regulations within curricula
2. Effectiveness of pedagogical methods in developing graduates' legal competencies
3. Contribution of shipping law to producing legally aware and globally adaptive professional seafarers

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore shipping law and maritime policy instruction, comprehension, and application within Indonesian maritime vocational education. This methodological approach proves appropriate for understanding experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by educational and industry stakeholders regarding curriculum structures, legal content, and shipping law implementation in professional practice [10].

The approach facilitates reflective and contextual analysis of maritime policy and regulatory dynamics governed by international instruments including UNCLOS 1982 [2], STCW 1978 (as amended) [6], and SOLAS 1974 [5].

2.2 Participant Selection

Three purposively selected informant groups participated in this research:

1. **Maritime Professionals:** Including shipping entrepreneurs, port authorities, and shipping company managers
2. **Vocational Lecturers:** Academic staff responsible for maritime law instruction
3. **Maritime Vocational Graduates:** Alumni currently employed within the shipping sector

Selection criteria encompassed professional competence, relevant experience, and reflective capacity regarding shipping law education [10].

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection utilised semi-structured in-depth interviews, focusing on themes including:

1. Curriculum structure and content
2. Pedagogical effectiveness
3. Understanding of regulations such as Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006) [11]
4. Learning barriers and challenges
5. Recommendations for strengthening legal education

Interviews were conducted through face-to-face and online modalities, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis.

2.4 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis identified narrative patterns, legal concept relationships, and collective meanings across informant groups. The analytical

process involved open coding, theme grouping, and interpretation based on shipping law frameworks. Triangulation and member checking ensured data validity and reliability [12].

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were rigorously maintained throughout the research process, including informed consent procedures, participant anonymity, and voluntary participation principles.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

3.1 Overall Assessment Framework

The research evaluated three key indicators of shipping law integration within maritime vocational education: shipping management, maritime business, and maritime finance with sustainability. Each indicator was assessed by the three stakeholder groups using a ten-point scale, providing comprehensive perspectives on educational effectiveness.

3.2 Indicator 1: Shipping Management

3.2.1 Definition and Scope

Shipping management encompasses the process of planning, organising, executing, and supervising shipping operations, including legal and licensing aspects. Within maritime vocational education, shipping management must incorporate understanding of international law, shipping jurisdiction, and seafarer responsibility structures.

3.2.2 Stakeholder Assessment

Maritime Professionals assigned a score of 9, indicating that vocational graduates demonstrate sufficient comprehension of vessel operational frameworks and captain's authority under shipping law. Professionals affirmed graduates' capabilities in interpreting legal documents, understanding flag state regulations, and identifying legal aspects related to maritime accidents, logbooks, and shipping safety.

Lecturers and Educators provided equivalent scoring, noting legal instruction integration within introductory shipping law modules. However, they emphasised that legal materials are frequently taught normatively, lacking contextualisation through real-world case studies.

Graduates awarded a slightly lower score of 8, citing that legal instruction during their studies was excessively textual and inadequately equipped them with analytical competencies to address legal challenges arising in international shipping contexts.

Table 1: Shipping Management Assessment

Informant Groups	Score	Thematic Analysis
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Maritime Professionals	9	Graduates understand legal documents and captain responsibilities
Lecturers	9	Law taught normatively with minimal case studies
Graduates	8	Weak practical understanding in cross-border contexts
Average	8.67	Effective but requires contextual simulations

3.3 Indicator 2: Maritime Business

3.3.1 Definition and Scope

Maritime business encompasses economic activities involving vessel operations, port management, logistics planning, and maritime transport contracts. Within shipping law context, understanding maritime contract law, cargo licensing, marine insurance law, and carrier liability proves critical.

3.3.2 Stakeholder Assessment

Maritime Professionals assigned a score of 9, indicating graduates possess robust comprehension of transport documentation structures, including bills of lading and charter party agreements, alongside foundational knowledge of maritime finance and taxation systems. Professionals noted graduates are beginning to demonstrate capabilities in negotiating simple contracts and comprehending legal boundaries in maritime transactions.

Lecturers awarded a score of 8, acknowledging maritime business law inclusion within curricula whilst recognising predominantly theoretical teaching approaches with minimal integration of negotiation simulations or practical business contract exercises. Limited legal-financial literacy amongst seafarers leaves graduates inadequately prepared for shipping industry regulatory complexities.

Graduates rated their preparedness at 9, stating that maritime business instruction applies sufficiently, equipping them with basic logistics licensing and vessel transaction knowledge. However, they highlighted insufficient training in drafting legal maritime business documents, including marine insurance policies and compliance reports.

Table 2: Maritime Business Assessment

Informant Groups	Score	Thematic Analysis
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Maritime Professionals	9	Graduates manage shipping documents and contracts
Lecturers	8	Theoretical focus, lacks practical simulations
Graduates	9	Basic understanding but requires negotiation practice
Average	8.67	Effective; integrate case studies and legal drafting

3.4 Indicator 3: Maritime Finance and Sustainability

3.4.1 Definition and Scope

This indicator examines financial systems within shipping and ports, alongside regulations governing sustainable governance within the maritime industry. Maritime law maintains close connections to fiscal compliance, vessel financing, legal risk management, and operational sustainability in accordance with international regulations.

3.4.2 Stakeholder Assessment

Maritime Professionals assigned a score of 10, observing graduates exhibit strong awareness of legal compliance importance in financial management, including due diligence principles application, regulatory compliance, and legal audits of vessel operations.

Lecturers awarded a score of 9, noting maritime financial law instruction has begun incorporating risk-based financial system approaches with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles introduction. However, limitations in legal audit practices and maritime economic litigation remain challenging.

Graduates also rated their preparedness at 9, acknowledging maritime finance education adequately equips them to understand legal documents and vessel financial reporting. Nevertheless, they highlighted insufficient training in analysing maritime financial dispute case studies, including cargo claim adjudication and arbitration under York-Antwerp Rules.

Table 3: Maritime Finance and Sustainability Assessment

Informant Groups	Score	Thematic Analysis
Maritime Professionals	10	Strong legal compliance and financial management
Lecturers	9	Emerging ESG integration; limited litigation focus

Graduates	9	Prepared for legal reporting but weak in disputes
Average	9.33	Highly effective; strengthen economic legal analysis

3.5 Overall Assessment Summary

Table 4: Comprehensive Assessment Overview

Indicator	Professionals	Lecturers	Graduates	Average
Shipping Management	9	9	8	8.67
Maritime Business	9	8	9	8.67
Maritime Finance and Sustainability	10	9	9	9.33
Overall Score	-	-	-	8.89 ≈ 9

3.6 Critical Analysis and Interpretation

3.6.1 Educational Quality Assessment

The overall score of 9/10 reflects high quality within Indonesian maritime vocational education, particularly regarding law, policy, and shipping regulations. Shipping law inclusion within curricula has successfully enhanced graduates' understanding of legal complexities within the professional maritime sector.

However, further strengthening is required in case-based legal practice, dispute resolution simulations, and digital learning platform integration aligned with international jurisdictions. These findings demonstrate that shipping law curricula already encompass normative, strategic, and sustainability dimensions but must continue evolving alongside dynamic global regulatory changes.

3.6.2 Effectiveness of Shipping Law Integration

Maritime management relies heavily upon technical and legal regulations governing vessel operations, voyage authorisation, logistics documentation, and captain responsibilities [6]. Professional informants and lecturers assigning high scores indicate curricula reflect actual legal needs encountered in practice. Seafarers lacking mastery of these aspects remain vulnerable to criminalisation in international waters, as frequently occurs in vessel arrest cases or port state control regulation violations [3].

However, gaps persist between normative legal approaches taught in classrooms and multidisciplinary applications required in practice.

For instance, resolving cargo disputes or maritime accidents demands understanding across multiple legal areas, including liability law, international civil law, and litigation mechanisms in arbitration forums such as the London Maritime Arbitrators Association (LMAA).

3.6.3 Pedagogical Approach Quality

Legal aspects in maritime business—including carriage contracts, limitation of liability clauses, and bills of lading—constitute critical components in maritime law understanding. However, findings indicate teaching methods remain largely memorisation-based and normative. Conversely, STCW and IMO Model Courses emphasise seafarer training through legal case simulations, insurance claim negotiations, and charter party agreement drafting to achieve profound legal understanding [9].

Lecturers recognise the necessity for experiential learning transitions, including mock maritime court trials, SOLAS Chapter V violation case studies concerning navigation, and MARPOL violation report simulations. This interactive approach should be strengthened through collaboration with maritime legal institutions, international classification societies such as Bureau Veritas or DNV, and national port authorities.

3.6.4 Professional Readiness Impact

Financial indicators and maritime sustainability have become focal points, as seafarers participate not only in vessel operations but also in financial systems, crew taxation, and ESG regulations, which have become global audit standards within the shipping industry. STCW mandates that at managerial levels, seafarers must understand ISM Code fundamentals, vessel finance, and marine insurance law [6].

Without legal literacy in maritime finance, graduates struggle to comprehend corporate responsibilities related to environmental violation reporting, such as marine pollution under MARPOL Annex I [7]. Gaps remain in graduates' readiness to handle litigation processes, labour dispute resolutions, and legal claims. Without clear understanding of jurisdiction and legal systems in countries where vessels call, Indonesian seafarers risk losing legal rights or facing criminalisation.

3.6.5 Critical Assessment of Overall Scoring

Although high scores indicate initial success, they do not necessarily signify maritime legal education has achieved ideal standards. Much legal content continues referencing outdated regulations and lacks integration with updates from IMO, ILO, or documents such as Guidelines for Port State Control Officers. Absence of contextualised

maritime law literature in Indonesian language presents serious barriers.

Long-term curriculum development in maritime law must maintain pace with soft law and customary maritime law evolution, which are inherently dynamic. Aspects including seafarers' employment law (Seafarers' Employment Agreement) under Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006) [11], flag state jurisdiction, and reporting mechanisms to ITF or ILO should be embedded within instructional frameworks.

3.7 Strategic Implications

These findings confirm that shipping law repositioning within vocational curricula must be undertaken systemically and collaboratively. Firstly, international legal material integration (UNCLOS, MLC, STCW) requires layered and contextual implementation. Secondly, legal education must be practice-based with actual shipping case studies, involvement of alumni engaged in real legal cases, and contractual training.

Thirdly, government must establish minimum standards for vocational shipping law education based on learning outcomes and competency-based training according to IMO regulations and ASEAN-STCW Mutual Recognition Arrangement. Maritime legal literacy must become integral to Indonesian seafarer competency frameworks that are not only sea-proficient but also legally capable.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Key Findings Summary

This research demonstrates that Indonesian maritime vocational education has achieved significant progress in integrating shipping law, policies, and regulations within curricula. The overall score of 9/10 from informant groups underscores strengthened understanding of shipping law as a core component of seafarer professional readiness. This integration aligns with global demands positioning shipping law as professionalism foundation, particularly in addressing international regulations such as STCW 1978, SOLAS 1974, and UNCLOS 1982 [2], [5], [6].

Maritime management relies heavily upon technical and legal regulations governing vessel operations, voyage authorisation, logistics documentation, and captain responsibilities. Professional informants and lecturers providing high scores indicate curricula reflect actual legal requirements encountered in practice. Nevertheless, gaps remain between normative legal approaches taught in classrooms and multidisciplinary applications required in practice.

4.2 Strategic Recommendations

4.2.1 Curriculum Enhancement

1. **Case-Based Learning Integration:** Implement real-world maritime legal case studies, including cargo disputes, maritime accidents, and international arbitration scenarios
2. **Simulation-Based Training:** Develop mock maritime court trials, MARPOL violation simulations, and port state control inspection exercises
3. **Cross-Jurisdictional Understanding:** Enhance instruction on international legal frameworks and multi-national regulatory compliance

4.2.2 Pedagogical Innovation

1. **Experiential Learning Methods:** Transition from normative teaching to interactive, problem-based learning approaches
2. **Industry Collaboration:** Establish partnerships with maritime legal institutions, classification societies, and port authorities
3. **Digital Learning Platforms:** Integrate technology-enhanced learning aligned with international maritime regulations

4.2.3 Professional Development

1. **Faculty Enhancement:** Develop maritime legal literacy certification systems for lecturers
2. **Continuing Education:** Establish ongoing professional development programmes for maritime law instructors
3. **Research Integration:** Encourage academic research in contemporary maritime legal challenges

4.2.4 Policy Recommendations

1. **National Standards Development:** Government establishment of outcome-based national standards for shipping law education through Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of Education
2. **Competency-Based Framework:** Implement learning outcomes aligned with IMO Model Courses and STCW requirements
3. **Quality Assurance:** Develop assessment mechanisms ensuring maritime legal literacy amongst graduates

4.3 Future Research Directions

Future research should investigate longitudinal impacts of enhanced shipping law education on seafarer professional performance and legal compliance rates. Additionally, comparative studies examining international best

practices in maritime legal education could inform continued curriculum development.

4.4 Final Observations

By strengthening shipping law as a strategic dimension of maritime vocational education, Indonesia can produce seafarers who are not only technically competent but also legally intelligent, diplomatically capable, and resilient in navigating 21st-century maritime policy dynamics. Robust shipping law education will serve as the cornerstone for building a sovereign, equitable, and globally competitive national maritime civilisation.

Maritime vocational education must expand beyond statutory comprehension to foster maritime legal dialogue, emphasising legal reasoning, professional ethics, and decision-making grounded in international legal norms. This comprehensive approach will ensure Indonesian seafarers remain competitive and compliant within the evolving global maritime regulatory landscape.

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