

Collaborative Governance in Enhancing Public Transportation Quality: A Case Study of PT Dyda Silva Abadi Bus Trans NTT

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East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), an archipelagic province comprising 1,192 islands with extreme geographical barriers, faces severe connectivity fragmentation that drives up logistics costs and limits public mobility. This study aims to analyze of the collaboration between the government and the private sector in improving the quality of public transportation services through the Trans NTT Bus innovation. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation studies involving 28 informants. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select representatives from the NTT Provincial Transportation Office, PT Dyda Silva Abadi, PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry, and PT Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) and accidental sampling was used to involve 20 passengers as respondents in the study. Data were collected using Governance framework[1]. The results indicate that the collaboration has been effective, producing intermediate outcomes in the form of 'small wins' such as affordable services through a one-ticket system, physical and cargo security guarantees, comfortable fleets, and easy accessibility between terminals. The dimensions of 'commitment to the process' and 'shared understanding' serve as major strengths, where all actors share a common vision to overcome geographical barriers. The level of trust among actors is significant, recorded at a score of 8.5 out of 10 (performance-based trust), evidence by long-term contracts and routine evaluations. However, the 'face-to-face dialogue' dimension remains bilateral in the field and lacks a routine formal coordination forum involving all actors collectively. This study highlights the importance of establishing a formal coordination forum to strengthen managerial synchronization and ensure the long-term sustainability of collaboration in the public transportation sector.

Keywords: Collaborative Governance, Public transportation, Service quality

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1. Introduction

Public transportation is a crucial basic service that supports mobile community and economic growth, particularly in archipelagic nations like Indonesia. The country continues to face fundamental development challenges, ranging from high population growth rates to significant disparities in facilities and infrastructure [2]. Even the distribution of transportation infrastructure remains a primary obstacle that can impede economic acceleration and social connectivity [3]. Official data from the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Statistics Agency highlights that the province's archipelagic structure, with over a thousand islands, a highly efficient transportation system is needed to sustain regional economic connectivity [4]. Within this context, public transportation plays a vital role as an essential government service to maintain mobility among rapid residential expansion[5].

The geographical complexity of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) as an archipelagic province necessary a robust terrestrial infrastructure to ensure seamless inter-regional connectivity. However, current empirical evidence reveals a significant disparity between the demand for mobility and the actual structural integrity

of the provincial road network. According to the *2023 Transportation Statistics of East Nusa Tenggara Province*, while 64.08% of the infrastructure remains in optimal condition, approximately 28% is classified as damaged or severely damaged. This infrastructural deficit serves as a critical impediment to the operational efficiency of transportation services across the region. To provide a more granular overview of the spatial metrics and the current state of infrastructure in the province, the following tables delineate the total land mass, road length, and the percentage of road conditions in NTT

Table 1. Spatial Metrics and Infrastructure Scale in NTT Province

Description	Area / Length (km ² /km)
Total Territorial Land Mass of NTT	47.931,54 km ²
Total Provincial Road Network of NTT	2.650 km

Table 2. Distribution of Road Infrastructure Conditions in NTT Province

Road Condition	Percentage (%)
Optimal (Good)	64,08
Moderate (Fair)	7,69
Substandard (Damaged)	14,74.
Critical (Heavily Damaged)	13,49

Source : Statistik Transportasi Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur, 2023

Table 1 illustration that the connectivity profile in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) exhibits significant room for improvement, particularly within the land infrastructure sector. The disparities in road quality constitute a primary limitation in achieving equitable public transportation services across the region.

More over, there is a profound dependency on maritime transportation, as evidenced by the recording of over six million sea passengers in 2024. This substantial volume of passenger movement is necessary to robust synchronization with terrestrial transportation systems to ensure seamless onward access upon port arrival. However, these intermodal transition points often represent critical limitation that significant unresolved challenges persist.

East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) has long struggle with a fragmented intermodal transportation system, when in balance between land and sea journey remains a persistent bottleneck. The current paradigm forces passengers into multiple transit transfers, long-standing queues, and exorbitant travel expenses exacerbated by unregulated third-party fees. Such inefficiency not only impose a financial burden on the populate but also stifle regional economic fluidity. In response, a strategic alliance was formed between the NTT Provincial Government and PT. Dyda Silva Abadi to launch 'Bus Trans NTT' an integrated transport initiative. This multi-actors arrangement incorporates the Department of Transportation in a regulatory capacity, with PT. ASDP and PT. Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) serving as operational partners. Grounded in the Collaborative Governance model, this research examines the formal, consensus-driven mechanisms of this partnership. By investigating the intricacies of public-private synergy in improving Bus Trans NTT services, this study aims to enrich the academic literature in public administration and provide nuanced insights into the practical implementation of collaborative governance in underdeveloped regions.

2. Literature Review and Problem Statement

Collaborative governance is defined as a formal institutional arrangement where public and non-state actors engage in consensus-oriented collective decision-making to achieve public policy objectives [1]. This approach involves structuring and institutionalizing cross-sectoral governance in smart and effective ways that are deemed critical for achieving organizational success and high performance [6]. This framework, as

conceptualized by Ansell and Gash, emphasizes an adaptive and deliberative process through five core dimensions: face-to-face dialogue, trust building, commitment to the process, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes [1]. Previous research demonstrates that such collaborations can successfully enhance the quality and reach of urban transportation services, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems, by fulfilling these collaborative indicators [7], [8]. Converse, studies on the Jaklingko program in Jakarta highlight that initial collaborative failures often need a systemic re-evaluation of data and actor alignment to improve service outcomes[9]. Despite these insights, a significant research gap remains concerning intermodal integration—specifically between land and sea transport within the unique geographical constraints of an underdeveloped archipelagic province like East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Recent systematic reviews emphasize that identifying specific collaborative elements is vital for the successful implementation of public-private partnerships in infrastructure projects [10]

The main problem in NTT's transportation sector is a fragmented intermodal system, where the disconnect between land and sea travel forces passengers into multiple vehicle transfers, protracted queues, and inflated costs. While the 'Bus Trans NTT' initiative by the provincial government and PT. Dyda Silva Abadi represents a strategic attempt to bridge this divide, the complexity of managing a multi-actors collaboration involving regulators and diverse sea-link operators (PT. ASDP and PT. DLU) in a geographically isolated setting have not been thorough examined. Previous studies predominantly focus on single-mode urban land transport, leaving the dynamics of public-private synergy in archipelago connectivity under-researched. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing the following research question: How does the collaboration between the government and the private sector increase the quality of Bus Trans NTT transportation services in East Nusa Tenggara Province?

3. Method

This study utilizes a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach to gain a profound understanding of the lived experiences of actors involved in the collaboration. The research is conducted in Kupang City, specifically at the offices of the NTT Provincial Transportation Department, PT. Dyda Silva Abadi (operator of Bus Trans NTT), PT. ASDP Indonesia Ferry (Kupang Branch), and PT. Dharma Lautan Utama (Kupang Branch).

Data are gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data are collected through in-depth interviews and field observations, using a purposive sampling technique for key informants comprising the Transportation Department, management of PT. Dyda Silva Abadi, ASDP, and DLU, while accidental sampling is used for 20 service users (passengers). Secondary data include cooperation agreements, regional regulations, and field reports.

The data analysis follows the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana [11], these process is need four concurrent activity streams. First, data collection involves direct field engagement to capture the complexities of the collaboration between government and private sectors. Second, data condensation entails sorting, focusing, and transforming raw data from field notes and interview transcripts into categories based on collaborative governance dimensions. Third, data display presents information through descriptive narratives and comparative tables to identify relationship patterns between stakeholders. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involve interpreting the displayed data to address the research problem, followed by field re-validation. This interactive process is iterative until data saturation is reached. To ensure findings, data validity is verified through source triangulation, comparing perspectives from government, private, and community actors

4. Results and Discussion

Face to face Dialogue

Face-to-face dialogue serves as the heart of the collaborative process in building mutual understanding. Field findings indicate that dialogue in the Trans NTT Bus collaboration occurs predominantly on a bilateral basis and is operational in nature, rather than through routine formal forums involving all stakeholders simultaneously. Although formal meetings between the Department of Transportation and PT Dyda Silva Abadi were infrequent (less than five instances), this serves as a positive indicator of the private sector's compliance with regulations and Minimum Service Standards.

Face-to-face interactions are typically triggered by urgent technical constraints or external disturbances, such as conflict mediation with regional travel operators. While a collective formal forum involving all actors has yet to be established, coordination intensity is maintained through digital platforms—specifically instant messaging and routine on-site monitoring. This practical coordination is illustrated in Figure 1. documenting a field meeting between PT Dyda Silva Abadi and PT ASDP to synchronize intermodal operations.



Figure. 1. Field coordination meeting between PT Dyda Silva Abadi and PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry.

This bilateral communication pattern has proven effective, to take fast decision-making without the constraints of formal bureaucracy. Consequently, responsive bilateral communication maintains collaborative stability and serves as a practical solution in the absence of a synchronized discussion forum involving the Department of Transportation, ASDP, DLU, and PT Dyda Silva Abadi.

Trust Building

Trust within this collaboration has transitioned from reputation-based to performance-based trust. The Department of Transportation maintains high confidence in the operator, driven by strict regulatory compliance and the absence of significant violation reports. This trust is empirically quantified with a performance-based trust score of 8.5 out of 10, reflecting the reliability of the private sector in meeting institutional expectations.

Stakeholder trust is further evidenced by contractual commitments. PT ASDP demonstrates significant trust by granting a five-year Operational Cooperation Contract (Kerja Sama Operasional or KSO) to PT Dyda Silva Abadi. Conversely, PT DLU maintains a more cautious approach through annual evaluation contracts to mitigate market risks; however, it shows a positive trend toward long-term extensions. This trust is solidified through tangible performance indicators, including timely operational levy payments and the professional conduct of field crews.

Commitment To The Process

The stakeholders demonstrate a high degree of interdependence and commitment to the collaboration process, evidence by cross-sectoral support that extends beyond formal contractual mandates. The NTT Provincial Transportation Office manifests this commitment through rigorous field supervision and institutional recognition of PT Dyda Silva Abadi's operational consistency as an emerging operator.

Commitment from private actors is further demonstrated through mutual operational support. PT Dyda Silva Abadi showed immediate responsiveness to PT ASDP's request by integrating "Ferizy" application branding across its bus fleet and vessel crews from PT ASDP and PT DLU actively assist bus passengers during sea transits, with PT DLU granting priority loading access to ensure Trans NTT buses maintain their schedules. These actions indicate a strong normative commitment to service sustainability, effectively transition the partnership from a pure transactional business arrangement into a tough collaborative alliance.

Shared Understanding

All collaboration actors share a synchronized vision to realize safe, effective, and integrated transportation across the province. A primary indicator of this alignment is operational tolerance, when bus operators treat vessel delays or logistical constraints as shared technical risks rather than grounds for mutual recrimination.

This problem-solving orientation establishes a resilient foundation for service continuity within the challenging geographical and meteorological conditions of NTT. By prioritizing mutually beneficial resolutions over conflict, the actors have successfully established passenger safety and comfort as the ultimate benchmarks for collaborative success. The synergy between public and private domains is regarded as a powerful mechanism for creating public value that cannot be realized by a single organization acting alone[12]. This shared understanding ensures that individual institutional interests remain subordinate to the collective goal of regional connectivity.

Intermediate Outcomes

The collaboration result significant strategic value and tangible benefits for all participating stakeholders. For the NTT Province Transportation Office, the main outcome is to fulfill of the mandate under Law No. 22 of 2009 concerning integrated public transportation. This achievement without imposing a significant fiscal burden on the regional budget (APBD), and also increase reputation the reputation institute through the delivery of effective innovations of transportation for the archipelagic community.

For the private maritime operators, PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and PT DLU, the collaboration guarantee consistent vessel load factors and occupancy from the bus fleet, thereby optimizing revenue generation and promoting maritime services. Meanwhile, for PT Dyda Silva Abadi, the collaboration has built strong institutional trust from both government and partner organizations. This trust serves as strategic social capital for future expansion, further bolstered by market share certainty secured through the structured Operational Cooperation (KSO) system.

The intermediate outcomes of this collaboration are manifest through enhanced public transportation service quality, consistent with established standards across four primary indicators: affordable, safety, comfort, and accessible [13]. Service quality is understood as a series of deeds, processes, and performances where the interaction between the provider and the consumer determines the overall satisfaction[14]. This aligns with the services marketing perspective which emphasizes that in highly competitive or regulated environments, the quality of service delivery acts as the primary differentials to fulfill public expectations[15]. The significant result of transition will more integrated and reliable regional transport system. Detailed comparisons of service quality indicators before and after the collaboration are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Collaborative Outcomes: Quality Service Comparision

Quality Indicators	Conventional Conditions	Transportation	Actual Conditions of Bus Trans NTT (Outcome)
Affordable	High cumulative costs (Travel Tickets + Ship Tickets + Porter Fees + Informal Brokerage). Prone to price manipulation.		Implementation of a transparent and competitive single-ticketing system. The fare covers the entire journey.
Safety & Security	High risk security during late-night or early-morning transits. Lack of baggage security assurance.		Point-to-point service minimizes transit in high-risk areas. A registered baggage system ensures the security of belonging
Comfort	Physical exhausted from manual luggage handling during transfers. Vehicle facilities are often non-standard.		Direct transit (bus enters ship deck directly). Facilities include air conditioning, toilets, entertainment (karaoke), and pillows/blankets
Accessibility	Restricted access due to long distances to ports and physical ticketing		Direct connectivity between downtown terminals, to ease facility access for passengers without private vehicles.

Tabel 3 the illustration significant shifts in system integration achieved through the collaboration between PT Dyda Silva Abadi and its strategic partners. Regarding the price indicator, the transition from high cumulative costs to a single ticketing system was facilitated by formal agreements with maritime operators, PT ASDP and PT DLU. Through this integrated mechanism, informal cost elements such as unauthorized porters fees and brokers margins have been eliminated. This provides financial certainty for passengers, as a single transaction at the terminal of origin covers the entire intermodal journey.

In terms of safety and comfort, the collaboration ensures perfect service delivery. Previously, port transit points were identified as high-vulnerability areas for passengers. However, the implementation of a roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) scheme allows buses to enter the vessel's deck directly, eliminating the need for manual luggage transfers. This integrated operational flow is visually demonstrated in figure 2, which illustrates the seamless boarding and disembarking process, effectively reducing passenger transit complexity. This mechanism ensures that the 'transfer of risk' and physical burden often found at port transit points are eliminated, as passengers and their belonging to remain the secure within the vehicle during the entire intermodal transition.

a) Bus entering the ship's deck via the Ro-Ro ramp,



(b) Bus disembarking from the ship at the destination port



Figure 2. Documentation of intermodal integration

Furthermore, modern on-board amenities, including air conditioning and reclining seats, establish a new standard of comfort for long-distance travel in NTT. The comprehensive facilities provided to ensure passenger satisfaction are illustrated in Figure. 3 showing the standart of transition public transport services.



Figure 3. Documentation of intermodal integration

This fleet combines a modern exterior design with a premium interior featuring ergonomic seats and specialized comfort kits. Passengers can enjoy on-board entertainment and karaoke, while safety indicators and adjustable AC vents ensure a secure, personalized environment. The clean cabin, fitted with privacy curtains and an integrated toilet facility, provides a seamless and comfortable experience for long-distance travel. The tangible impact is reflected in passenger testimonials. One respondent stated:

“The pricing is transparent, and the terminal-to-terminal service eliminates the hassle of purchasing separate ferry tickets. The entire trip is settled in one payment. Security is well-maintained, and the buses are comfortable for long journeys.”

Managerially, these transformations were realized through schedule synchronization, a direct outcome of the “shared understanding” dimension [1]. By granting priority loading access to the Trans NTT fleet, port authorities have drastically reduced passenger waiting times. These findings provide empirical evidence that public service quality can be effectively enhanced through sound collaborative governance with the private sector, reducing total reliance on the regional government budget (APBD).

5. Conclusion

The collaboration between the NTT Provincial Transportation Office, PT ASDP, PT Dyda Silva Abadi, and PT DLU in operating the Trans NTT Bus has proven effective and aligns with the collaborative governance framework [1]. This success is primarily driven by the dimensions of shared understanding and commitment to the process, where all parties share a unified vision to serve the basic needs of the archipelagic community. This synergy is reinforced by high performance-based trust, reaching a score of 8.5 out of 10, which serves as the foundation for long-term sustainability. Despite the minimal frequency of collective formal dialogues, operational communication remains fluid through digital platforms, allowing for responsive problem-solving that bypasses bureaucratic hurdles.

The tangible outcome is an integrated transportation service that reduces costs, time, and effort for the people of NTT, while providing higher standards of safety and comfort through the roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) scheme and single ticketing system. This transformation has successfully eliminated informal brokers and reduced the high-cost economy previously associated with fragmented travel. To ensure future sustainable , it is recommended that regulation initiate annual formal coordination forums for collective evaluation and

consistent compliance with Minimum Service Standards. Moreover, public socialization is necessary to expand the service's reach. Future research should explore the scalability of this model in other archipelagic regions and the integration of digital payment ecosystems to further enhance transparency and operational efficiency.

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