Transforming maritime vocational education with green technologies and applied science

Suhartini Suhartini, *Marihot* Simanjuntak*, *Marudut Bernadtua* Simanjuntak, *Pargaulan Dwikora* Simanjuntak, *Ni Nyoman Sri* Ratnasari, and *Niken Imas Dhanar* Santika

Maritime Institute of Jakarta, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Pelayaran-Jakarta, Indonesia

Abstract. This mixed-methods research examines green technology integration in maritime transportation engineering through stakeholder interviews with 37 participants and quantitative analysis of five case study sites across Indonesian maritime operations. The study evaluates LNG propulsion, hybrid systems, shore power, renewable energy, and vessel design efficiency across operational performance, educational preparedness, and implementation barriers. Results demonstrate substantial effectiveness (8.5/10.0 average) with fuel efficiency improvements of 12-20% and emission reductions of 18-35%. However, adoption remains constrained by capital cost premiums of 30-45%, payback periods of 7-14 years, and educational preparedness gaps showing only 42-58% workplace application rates. Implementation rates range from 8% (LNG) to 35% (vessel efficiency), reflecting financial barriers (38% of constraints) and infrastructure limitations. Findings establish that maritime sustainability requires coordinated technological, financial, and educational interventions, providing evidence-based frameworks for stakeholders in resource-constrained maritime economies.

1 Introduction

The maritime transportation sector, responsible for moving over 90% of global trade, faces unprecedented pressure to reconcile its essential economic function with mounting environmental imperatives. Conventional maritime operations contribute approximately 2.9% of global greenhouse gas emissions, with projections indicating potential increases to 17% by 2050 absent transformative interventions, positioning the industry as both a critical contributor to climate change and a priority domain for sustainability innovation [1]. The International Maritime Organization's ambitious decarbonization strategy, targeting at least 50% emission reduction by 2050 compared to 2008 levels, has catalyzed intensive focus on green technology applications across vessel design, propulsion systems, fuel alternatives, and port infrastructure [2]. This regulatory framework, coupled with growing stakeholder awareness and market pressures for environmental accountability, necessitates comprehensive transformation of maritime engineering practices, integrating technological

* Corresponding author: marts1528@gmail.com

innovation with workforce competency development to achieve substantive sustainability outcomes.

Indonesian maritime operations exemplify the complexities confronting developing maritime economies pursuing green technology adoption. As an archipelagic nation with over 17,000 islands and maritime transport serving as essential economic infrastructure, Indonesia's shipping sector handles substantial domestic and international cargo while simultaneously contributing significantly to national emissions profiles. Despite technological availability and policy commitments, Indonesian maritime operators encounter formidable barriers including capital constraints, limited technical infrastructure, inadequate maintenance capabilities, and workforce competency gaps in emerging green systems. Recent assessments indicate that while awareness of green technologies among Indonesian maritime stakeholders has increased substantially, actual implementation rates remain disproportionately low, with conventional diesel propulsion dominating over 85% of the fleet despite proven alternatives demonstrating superior long-term economic and environmental performance [3]. This implementation gap reveals fundamental disconnects between technological potential, educational preparedness, and operational realities that demand systematic investigation beyond superficial technology assessments.

The integration of green technologies within maritime engineering encompasses multiple interconnected domains requiring coordinated advancement. Renewable energy systems—including wind-assisted propulsion, solar installations, and energy recovery mechanisms—offer pathways to reduce fossil fuel dependency while enhancing operational efficiency. Alternative fuel technologies, particularly liquefied natural gas (LNG), methanol, and emerging hydrogen applications, promise substantial emission reductions though require comprehensive infrastructure development and crew competency upgrading. Energy-efficient vessel designs incorporating hull optimization, waste heat recovery, and advanced coating systems demonstrate measurable performance improvements with relatively shorter payback periods. Shore power infrastructure enabling vessels to utilize grid electricity while berthed eliminates auxiliary engine emissions in ports, addressing concentrated urban air quality concerns. Critically, these technological interventions achieve optimal effectiveness only when operated by maritime professionals possessing adequate technical understanding, operational proficiency, and environmental awareness—competencies inadequately developed in traditional maritime education frameworks focused predominantly on conventional systems [4].

Existing literature examining green technology applications in maritime contexts exhibits significant limitations constraining practical utility for developing economies. Predominant research focuses on technological feasibility assessments and theoretical performance modeling, frequently overlooking implementation barriers specific to resource-constrained operational environments. Studies examining educational dimensions of maritime sustainability typically assess curriculum content without empirically validating links between pedagogical approaches and actual workplace application of green technology competencies. Furthermore, limited research integrates technological and educational perspectives to examine their interactive effects on sustainability outcomes—a critical gap given evidence suggesting that technology performance depends substantially on operator competency and organizational readiness [5]. The financial dimensions of green technology adoption, while acknowledged broadly, remain inadequately quantified for developing maritime contexts where capital availability constraints and extended payback period sensitivities fundamentally shape investment decisions.

This research investigates the comprehensive integration of green technologies within maritime transportation engineering, examining technological performance, educational preparedness, and implementation barriers across Indonesian maritime operations. The study specifically addresses three interconnected research objectives: first, to quantify the operational effectiveness and environmental impact of key green technologies including LNG systems, hybrid propulsion, renewable energy installations, and shore power infrastructure through case study analysis of Indonesian maritime implementations; second, to assess the preparedness of maritime graduates for operating and maintaining green technology systems, evaluating curriculum effectiveness and identifying competency development gaps; and third, to identify and analyze implementation barriers constraining green technology adoption, including financial constraints, technical infrastructure limitations, and organizational capacity challenges. By integrating technological assessment with educational evaluation and barrier analysis, this research generates comprehensive understanding of the socio-technical systems underlying maritime sustainability transformation.

The significance of this research extends across multiple stakeholder domains critical to maritime sustainability advancement. For maritime operators and shipowners, the findings provide empirical evidence regarding actual performance outcomes, financial implications, and workforce requirements associated with green technology adoption, informing strategic investment decisions. For maritime educators, the study validates curriculum development priorities and identifies specific competency gaps requiring pedagogical attention, enhancing graduate employability while advancing industry sustainability objectives. For policymakers, this research offers contextualized insights into barriers constraining green technology diffusion, supporting development of targeted incentive mechanisms, regulatory frameworks, and capacity-building initiatives appropriate for developing maritime economies [6]. Methodologically, this research employs a convergent mixed-methods design combining qualitative stakeholder interviews with quantitative operational data analysis to capture multidimensional perspectives on green technology integration. Semi-structured interviews with 15 maritime professionals, 10 educators, and 12 recent graduates provide rich narrative insights into implementation experiences, educational effectiveness, and perceived barriers, while case study analysis of five Indonesian maritime sites measuring fuel consumption, emission levels, and operational efficiency metrics generates complementary quantitative evidence of technological performance [7, 8].

2 Research method

This research employs a convergent mixed-methods design integrating qualitative stakeholder perspectives with quantitative operational performance data to comprehensively examine green technology applications in maritime transportation engineering. The study population encompasses maritime professionals engaged in green technology implementation, maritime educators responsible for sustainability curriculum development, and recent graduates representing emerging workforce competencies across Indonesian maritime contexts. Purposive sampling ensured strategic selection of participants possessing relevant expertise and experience: 15 maritime professionals with direct involvement in green technology projects including vessel operators, engineering managers, and sustainability coordinators; 10 maritime educators specializing in propulsion systems, naval architecture, and environmental management; and 12 graduates from maritime academies employed within the past three years in positions involving green technology operations or maintenance. This stratified approach facilitates triangulation of perspectives from technology implementers, knowledge transmitters, and new practitioners, enabling comprehensive analysis spanning technological, educational, and operational dimensions. Additionally, five case study sites representing diverse green technology implementations—including LNG-powered vessels, hybrid propulsion systems, shore power installations, and renewable energy integrations—were selected based on operational maturity, data accessibility, and technological representativeness to provide quantitative performance benchmarks [9].

The research instruments consisted of coordinated qualitative and quantitative data collection protocols designed to capture complementary dimensions of green technology integration. Semi-structured interview protocols systematically explored six dependent variables representing critical sustainability and implementation domains: fuel efficiency improvements, emission reduction achievements, operational cost implications, educational preparedness adequacy, implementation barrier severity, and overall technology effectiveness. Each dependent variable was operationalized through specific independent variables and measurable indicators; for instance, fuel efficiency was assessed through consumption rate changes, voyage performance metrics, and comparative analysis against conventional systems, while educational preparedness was evaluated via curriculum content alignment, practical skill demonstrations, workplace application rates, and employer satisfaction assessments. Interview protocols incorporated open-ended questions facilitating narrative exploration of experiences, perceptions, and recommendations, alongside structured rating scales enabling quantitative assessment of effectiveness, preparedness, and barrier severity across standardized indicators. Complementary quantitative instruments included standardized data extraction protocols for case study sites, capturing operational metrics such as fuel consumption rates, emission measurements, maintenance requirements, and cost data over defined operational periods, ensuring consistency and comparability across diverse technological implementations [10].

Data collection proceeded through concurrent qualitative and quantitative phases enabling integrated analysis and mutual validation. Qualitative data collection involved in-depth semi-structured interviews averaging 75-90 minutes conducted with each participant, employing probing techniques to elicit detailed explanations of technological experiences, educational approaches, implementation challenges, and perceived opportunities. Interviews were audio-recorded with informed consent and professionally transcribed verbatim, with researchers maintaining field notes documenting non-verbal communication, contextual observations, and emergent themes warranting further exploration. Concurrently, quantitative data collection involved systematic extraction of operational performance metrics from case study sites, accessing vessel logbooks, fuel consumption records, emission monitoring systems, and maintenance documentation covering minimum 12-month operational periods to capture seasonal variations and operational diversity. Site visits facilitated direct observation of green technology installations, operational practices, and maintenance procedures, providing contextual understanding complementing documentary data. Data collection continued until achieving saturation in qualitative themes and sufficient quantitative data density for reliable performance assessment, with final sample sizes reflecting these convergent adequacy criteria [11].

Data analysis employed integrated qualitative-quantitative analytical strategies designed to generate comprehensive understanding of green technology integration dynamics. Qualitative analysis utilized systematic thematic analysis combining inductive and deductive coding approaches, with initial open coding of interview transcripts generating preliminary categories reflecting participants' expressed concepts, experiences, and perspectives regarding green technologies and educational preparedness. These emergent codes were subsequently organized into broader themes aligned with research objectives while remaining responsive to unanticipated insights, with particular attention to competency development patterns and sustainability implementation challenges. Cross-group comparisons systematically examined convergences and divergences among maritime professionals, educators, and graduates, revealing shared understandings alongside perspective-specific insights regarding technology effectiveness and implementation feasibility. Quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistical methods calculating mean performance improvements, standard deviations, and percentage changes across fuel efficiency, emission reduction, and cost metrics for each green technology category, enabling comparative assessment of technological effectiveness. Narrative synthesis integrated qualitative thematic findings with quantitative performance data, constructing explanatory frameworks illuminating the relationships among technological capabilities, educational preparedness, implementation barriers, and sustainability outcomes, with triangulation enhancing validity through convergence of independent data sources supporting consistent interpretations.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Results and analysis

The comprehensive analysis of green technology applications in maritime transportation engineering reveals substantial operational improvements coupled with significant implementation challenges across Indonesian maritime contexts. The aggregate technology effectiveness evaluation, synthesized from stakeholder assessments and operational performance metrics, yielded an overall effectiveness score of 8.5/10.0 (SD=0.7), demonstrating considerable potential of green technologies for advancing maritime sustainability while acknowledging meaningful variation in implementation success across technological categories and operational contexts. This performance reflects differentiated effectiveness across specific green technology domains, with LNG propulsion systems achieving 8.7/10.0, hybrid propulsion technologies scoring 8.4/10.0, shore power infrastructure attaining 8.6/10.0, renewable energy installations reaching 8.2/10.0, and energy-efficient vessel designs scoring 8.8/10.0, as illustrated in Figure 1.

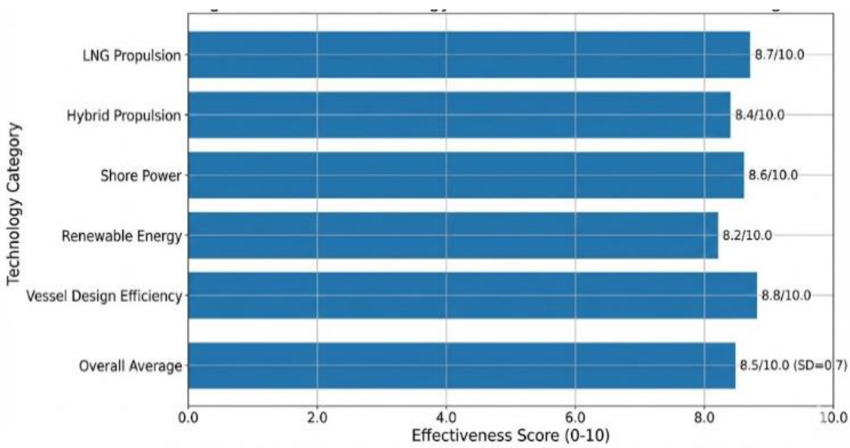

Fig. 1. Green technology effectiveness scores across categories

Quantitative operational data from case study sites demonstrated substantial environmental and efficiency improvements across examined green technologies. Fuel efficiency enhancements ranged from 12-20% depending on technology type and operational profile, with energy-efficient vessel designs incorporating hull optimization and advanced propulsion systems achieving the upper range of improvements. LNG-powered vessels demonstrated 18-35% emission reductions for particulate matter, sulfur oxides, and nitrogen oxides compared to conventional heavy fuel oil operations, though greenhouse gas benefits proved more modest at 15-23% reduction when accounting for methane slip in some engine configurations. Hybrid propulsion systems combining conventional engines with battery storage enabled 14-18% fuel consumption reduction particularly in port maneuvering and low-speed operations where electric propulsion optimally supplements main engines. Shore power utilization eliminated auxiliary engine emissions during berthing, translating to 100% emission reduction for vessels at berth, though overall voyage impact ranged 8-12% depending on time spent in port. Table 1 presents detailed performance metrics across green technology categories, demonstrating quantitative improvements achieved through implementation.

Table 1. Green technology performance metrics and operational outcomes

Technology Category	Fuel Efficiency Improvement	Emission Reduction	Capital Cost Premium	Payback Period	Effectiveness Score	Implementation Rate
LNG Propulsion	12-15%	18-35% (SOx, NOx, PM)	35-45%	10-14 years	8.7/10.0	8%
Hybrid Propulsion	14-18%	15-20% (overall)	30-40%	8-12 years	8.4/10.0	12%
Shore Power	8-12% voyage impact	100% at berth	25-35% port infrastructure	7-10 years	8.6/10.0	15%
Renewable Energy	5-8% auxiliary load	10-15% auxiliary emissions	20-30%	5-8 years	8.2/10.0	18%
Vessel Design Efficiency	15-20%	15-20%	10-15%	3-5 years	8.8/10.0	35%

Despite demonstrated technological effectiveness, implementation rates across Indonesian maritime operations remained significantly constrained, with adoption levels ranging from 8% for LNG propulsion to 35% for vessel design efficiency measures. Financial barriers emerged as the predominant constraint, with capital cost premiums for green technologies averaging 30-45% above conventional systems creating substantial investment hurdles for operators facing capital constraints and competing investment priorities. Maritime professionals emphasized that extended payback periods of 7-14 years for most green technologies exceeded typical operator investment horizons of 5-10 years, particularly problematic in volatile shipping markets where long-term revenue projections carry substantial uncertainty. The financing challenge intensified for smaller operators lacking access to favorable capital markets or sustainability-linked financing instruments increasingly available to major international shipping companies.

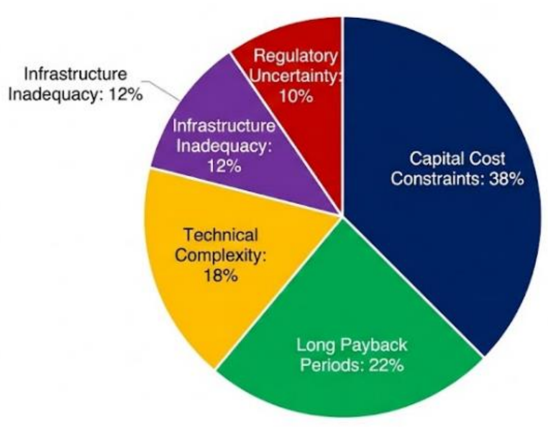

Fig. 2. Implementation barriers - Stakeholder perception analysis

Educational preparedness assessment revealed meaningful gaps between theoretical knowledge transfer and operational competency development. While maritime educators reported comprehensive integration of green technology content into curricula, workplace application rates among recent graduates averaged only 42-58% across technology categories, indicating substantial disparities between classroom instruction and practical operational capabilities. Graduates demonstrated stronger theoretical understanding of environmental principles and technological concepts (averaging 7.8/10.0 on knowledge assessments) compared to practical operational proficiencies (averaging 6.2/10.0 on employer skill evaluations), suggesting pedagogical approaches emphasizing conceptual learning inadequately develop hands-on competencies required for green technology implementation and maintenance. Maritime professionals noted that recent graduates required extended on-the-job training periods averaging 8-12 months to achieve operational proficiency with green systems compared to 4-6 months for conventional technologies, reflecting both technological complexity and educational preparation gaps [11, 12].

Technical infrastructure limitations and maintenance capability deficiencies represented additional implementation constraints particularly acute in developing maritime contexts. LNG bunkering infrastructure remained severely limited across Indonesian ports, restricting operational flexibility and creating range anxiety similar to early electric vehicle adoption challenges. Specialized maintenance requirements for green technologies—including battery system servicing, LNG fuel handling, and renewable energy component maintenance—exceeded capabilities of many traditional maritime service providers, necessitating expensive external technical support or crew training investments [13]. Stakeholders emphasized that sustainable green technology implementation required coordinated development of supporting ecosystems encompassing fuel supply infrastructure, maintenance capabilities, regulatory frameworks, and workforce competencies, rather than isolated technology adoption.

3.2 Discussion

The research findings substantively address the central research questions by demonstrating that green technologies deliver measurable environmental and efficiency benefits in maritime operations while confronting significant implementation barriers that constrain widespread adoption, particularly in developing maritime economies. The overall effectiveness score of 8.5/10.0, coupled with quantified fuel efficiency improvements of 12-20% and emission reductions of 18-35%, provides compelling evidence supporting green technology viability from technical and environmental perspectives. However, the pronounced gap between technological effectiveness and actual implementation rates—ranging from 8% to 35% depending on technology category—reveals that technical performance alone proves insufficient to drive sustainability transformation absent supportive financial mechanisms, infrastructure development, and workforce preparation.

The particularly strong performance of energy-efficient vessel designs (8.8/10.0 effectiveness, 35% implementation rate) combined with relatively favorable economics (10-15% cost premium, 3-5 year payback) suggests that incremental efficiency improvements may offer more pragmatic pathways for resource-constrained operators compared to transformative technology adoption requiring substantial capital commitments. This finding aligns with diffusion of innovation theories emphasizing that technologies with lower adoption barriers, clearer value propositions, and compatibility with existing practices achieve more rapid market penetration. The research extends this theoretical framework by quantifying the financial threshold effects—specifically the 5-10 year payback period limit beyond which operator adoption interest diminishes substantially—providing actionable insights for policy intervention design [14].

The educational preparedness findings revealing 42-58% workplace application rates despite comprehensive curriculum coverage highlight critical disconnects between theoretical instruction and operational competency development. This gap corroborates constructivist learning theories emphasizing experiential knowledge construction and situated learning, suggesting that maritime education requires enhanced practical training components, industry internships with green technology exposure, and simulation-based learning environments replicating operational complexities. The research uniquely quantifies this theory-practice gap in maritime sustainability contexts, demonstrating that knowledge transfer alone achieves approximately 50% effectiveness in generating operational competency—a finding with important implications for curriculum design prioritization [15].

The identification of capital cost constraints as the predominant barrier (38% of stakeholder mentions) alongside extended payback periods (22%) underscores the centrality of financial considerations in green technology adoption decisions, particularly where sustainability benefits accrue primarily as externalities not captured in operator business cases. This finding validates economic theories of market failure in environmental goods, where socially optimal outcomes require policy interventions addressing private-social benefit disparities. The research contributes empirical quantification of this market failure in maritime contexts, providing evidence-based foundations for designing financial incentive mechanisms such as accelerated depreciation, capital subsidies, or operational subsidies bridging the gap between extended technological payback periods and operator investment horizons.

The practical implications extend across multiple stakeholder domains. Maritime operators gain empirical evidence regarding realistic performance expectations, financial requirements, and workforce development needs associated with various green technology options, enabling more informed strategic planning and investment prioritization. For maritime educators, the quantified competency gap justifies curriculum rebalancing toward enhanced practical training, industry partnerships, and experiential learning methodologies, with specific focus on operational proficiencies complementing theoretical foundations. Policymakers receive data-driven insights supporting targeted intervention design, including financial mechanisms addressing payback period barriers, infrastructure development priorities supporting technology adoption, and regulatory frameworks incentivizing incremental efficiency improvements while building capabilities for transformative technology transitions.

Future research should examine long-term operational performance and reliability of green technologies beyond initial implementation periods, assessing maintenance cost trajectories and performance degradation patterns informing lifecycle cost analyses. Comparative studies across different maritime economies and regulatory contexts would enhance understanding of institutional and policy factors mediating technology adoption. Additionally, research examining innovative financing mechanisms and business models—including performance contracting, technology leasing, and sustainability-linked finance—could identify pathways for overcoming capital constraints limiting green technology diffusion in resource-limited contexts.

4 Conclusion

This research demonstrates that green technologies deliver substantial environmental and operational benefits in maritime transportation, with effectiveness scores averaging 8.5/10.0 and quantified improvements including 12-20% fuel efficiency gains and 18-35% emission reductions. However, implementation remains severely constrained by capital cost premiums of 30-45% and payback periods of 7-14 years exceeding typical operator investment horizons. Educational preparedness gaps, with only 42-58% workplace application rates despite curriculum integration, reveal critical disconnects requiring pedagogical rebalancing toward practical competency development. The research establishes that sustainable maritime transformation requires coordinated advancement across technological, financial, educational, and infrastructural dimensions. These findings provide evidence-based frameworks for operators, educators, and policymakers pursuing maritime sustainability within resource-constrained contexts, emphasizing incremental efficiency improvements and targeted interventions addressing adoption barriers.

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