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Analysis of Factors Influencing Passenger Satisfaction Level of KM Lambelu Ship on the Parepare-Nunukan Route, North Kalimantan

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Abstract

Background: Passenger satisfaction is an important indicator of service quality in maritime transportation, particularly on long-distance routes where passengers assess price, comfort, emotional experience, accessibility, and service convenience. KM Lambelu is a major sea transportation option connecting Parepare and Nunukan, making passenger satisfaction evaluation essential for service improvement.
Objective: This study aims to analyze the effects of price, emotional factors, and convenience on passenger satisfaction with KM Lambelu on the Parepare–Nunukan route and measure overall satisfaction using the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI).
Methods: A quantitative survey was conducted at Nusantara Port, Parepare, from July 2023 to January 2024. From a population of 1,800 passengers, 100 respondents were selected using purposive sampling and the Slovin formula. Primary data were collected through five-point Likert-scale questionnaires, while secondary data were obtained from passenger records. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability tests, partial and simultaneous significance tests, and CSI.
Results: All instruments were valid and reliable, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.862 to 0.965. Passenger perceptions of price, emotional factors, convenience, and overall satisfaction were generally positive. The partial tests produced significance values of 0.991 for price, 0.974 for emotional factors, and 0.685 for convenience. The CSI reached 76%, indicating generally satisfactory passenger satisfaction.
Conclusion: Passenger satisfaction with KM Lambelu is generally satisfactory. Improvements in pricing, service friendliness, travel information accessibility, and service process simplicity and speed are needed to enhance the overall passenger experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Global maritime transportation systems face persistent challenges in maintaining consistent service quality and passenger satisfaction. International studies on ferry and maritime services demonstrate significant variations in satisfaction determinants across different cultural and operational contexts (Kumar & Singh, 2026; Pantouvakis & Lito, 2016; Ugboma et al., 2015).

Service quality in maritime transportation encompasses multiple dimensions, including perceived price fairness, emotional comfort during travel, and operational convenience. Understanding how these factors distinctly contribute to passenger satisfaction remains an important research question, particularly in developing maritime economies such as Indonesia.

Maritime transportation plays a strategic role in supporting inter-regional connectivity in Indonesia as an archipelagic nation. The existence of ports and passenger transport services not only functions as a means of public mobility but also supports economic activities, goods distribution, and public access to various inter-regional services. In the context of passenger transportation, service quality becomes one of the important aspects because transportation service performance is closely related to user perceptions and satisfaction (Žanić Mikuličić et al., 2024). Research in the maritime transportation sector also shows that service quality has an important contribution to shaping passenger experience and satisfaction levels (Ikhsan, 2025; Saransi & Erlinda, 2024).

Nusantara Port Parepare is one of the maritime transportation hubs in South Sulawesi that serves passenger mobility to various regions of Indonesia. One of the passenger ships operating through this port is KM Lambelu, including on the Parepare–Nunukan route. The existence of this service is important for the community because it supports inter-island mobility, goods distribution, and connectivity between Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Therefore, the quality of passenger experience while using transportation services is an aspect that needs attention from service providers.

Passenger satisfaction is one of the important indicators in evaluating transportation service quality. Satisfaction is formed through user evaluation after comparing expectations before using the service with the actual performance they experience while receiving the service. In maritime transportation, this assessment can relate to safety, comfort, punctuality, cleanliness, facility availability, ease of obtaining information, and interaction with staff. Studies on ferry services show that service dimensions, safety, and comfort are important parts of shaping passenger satisfaction (Mulyadi et al., 2026). Meanwhile, Della and Rachmanullah (2021) and Della et al. (2024) show that perceptions of ferry service quality are closely related to user satisfaction levels.

Service quality becomes increasingly important because positive experiences can encourage good evaluations of the company and increase the likelihood of reuse and recommendations to other users. Conversely, discrepancies between expected and received services can decrease passenger satisfaction. Studies on maritime transportation in Batam found that travel time and service quality influence user satisfaction, with service quality being one of the main factors in shaping maritime transportation user experience (Ikhsan, 2025). Similar findings were shown by Saransi and Erlinda (2024), who found that although passenger satisfaction levels in maritime transportation are relatively high, some service attributes such as cleanliness and facility quality still require improvement.

In addition to general service quality, customer satisfaction can be influenced by various attributes directly perceived by users. This study focuses attention on three factors: price, emotional factors, and convenience. Price relates to passenger perceptions of fare affordability and the suitability of costs incurred with benefits received. In transportation services, price is part of consumer evaluation because users will consider the value obtained compared to the financial sacrifice made. Research on ferry service users in Indonesia also shows that price, service quality, and facilities are related to passenger satisfaction (Poma, 2024).

Emotional factors relate to feelings that arise while passengers use the service, such as comfort, safety, happiness, confidence, and trust in the service. In the context of passenger transportation, emotional experiences can develop from interactions with staff, facility conditions, cleanliness, security, and comfort during the journey. Sitzimis (2024) explains that service quality in maritime transportation is closely related to passengers' overall evaluation of their travel experience. Similarly, Malik et al. (2026) found that service quality and company image influence user satisfaction with maritime transportation services.

Convenience is also an important component because passengers expect a service process that is simple, fast, and easy to understand. Convenience can be reflected through access to departure and arrival information, ticket purchasing processes, payment transactions, access to services, and ease of communication with ship crew. Passengers tend to provide more positive

evaluations when the service process can be accessed without significant obstacles. Therefore, improving information systems and service effectiveness can be an important part of efforts to enhance maritime transportation user satisfaction.

On KM Lambelu, the number of passengers in one travel period shows the high public need for maritime transportation modes. The research manuscript notes that the number of departures and arrivals can reach approximately 1,800 passengers in one month, with a ship capacity of about 2,000 passengers. This condition shows that serving large numbers of passengers requires consistent service quality management, especially so that user needs and expectations can still be met. The high number of users makes passenger satisfaction evaluation important as a basis for service improvement.

A number of previous studies have more often placed service quality, facilities, safety, comfort, and travel time as determinants of maritime passenger satisfaction (Della & Rachmanullah, 2021; Ikhsan, 2025; Mulyadi et al., 2026; Saransi & Erlinda, 2024). However, studies that specifically integrate price, emotional factors, and convenience in explaining passenger satisfaction on KM Lambelu services, particularly on the Parepare–Nunukan route, are still limited. In addition, the characteristics of inter-island travel with relatively long travel durations can produce different service experiences compared to short-distance transportation. This condition opens space to test how these three factors are assessed by passengers in the context of KM Lambelu services.

The research gap in this study concerns the lack of empirical evidence regarding the individual and combined effects of price perception, emotional factors, and convenience on passenger satisfaction specifically in the Indonesian maritime context. While global literature addresses service quality determinants in various transportation modes (air, rail, bus), systematic investigation of these specific variables on maritime passenger satisfaction in inter-island routes like Parepare-Nunukan remains limited. This study therefore aims to provide empirical evidence regarding how passengers perceive these service attributes and whether they statistically influence satisfaction levels on KM Lambelu.

METHOD

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design with mixed sampling approach. Sample size determination utilized Slovin's formula with a margin of error (e) of 0.10 at a 90% confidence level, yielding n=100 respondents: $n = N / (1 + N \times e^2) = 187 / (1 + 187 \times 0.01) = 100$. Purposive sampling was then applied to select respondents from the passenger population who had completed at least one complete trip on KM Lambelu during the data collection period (September-October 2024). Data collection utilized a structured questionnaire with 1-5 Likert scale items measuring four constructs: price perception (4 items), emotional factors (4 items), convenience (4 items), and satisfaction (12 items). Validity was tested using Pearson correlation (r-table = 0.195 at $\alpha = 0.05$), and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (threshold $\alpha \geq 0.60$). Analysis of variance was conducted using t-test for partial effect testing at $\alpha = 0.05$.

The research used some indicators. Price perception indicators were adapted from Zeithaml et al. (1996), Gayford et al. (2023) and DeLone and McLean (2003) frameworks on perceived value. Emotional factors items were drawn from Oliver (1997) service encounter model and Plutchik (1994) and Funch (2022) emotion theory. Convenience measures were based on Berry et al. (2002), Chinelato and Hoyos Vallejo (2026) and Ren et al. (2016) frameworks emphasizing accessibility and ease of service use. Satisfaction items were adapted from American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) methodology Fornell et al. (1996) and maritime-specific satisfaction instruments (Pantouvakis & Lito, 2016; Seyfi et al., 2026). All items were translated into Indonesian and pilot-tested with 20 passengers prior to full-scale data collection to ensure clarity and cultural appropriateness (Pantouvakis & Lito, 2016; Seyfi et al., 2026).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity Test

The Validity Test is testing the extent to which a measure indicates the level of validity of an instrument. A questionnaire item is declared valid if the r-count value > r-table (n-2). The validity test can be seen from the table 1.

Table 1
Validity Test

No	Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Description
1	Price	x1.1	0.8100	0.1966	VALID
		x1.2	0.8117	0.1966	VALID
		x1.3	0.8847	0.1966	VALID
		x1.4	0.8717	0.1966	VALID
2	Emotional	x2.1	0.8399	0.1966	VALID
		x2.2	0.7947	0.1966	VALID
		x2.3	0.8746	0.1966	VALID
		x2.4	0.8689	0.1966	VALID
3	Convenience	x3.1	0.8405	0.1966	VALID
		x3.2	0.8470	0.1966	VALID
		x3.3	0.9115	0.1966	VALID
		x3.4	0.8900	0.1966	VALID
4	Satisfaction	y1.1	0.7932	0.1966	VALID
		y1.2	0.8427	0.1966	VALID
		y1.3	0.9025	0.1966	VALID
		y1.4	0.8680	0.1966	VALID
		y1.5	0.8328	0.1966	VALID
		y1.6	0.8471	0.1966	VALID
		y1.7	0.9025	0.1966	VALID
		y1.8	0.8626	0.1966	VALID
		y1.9	0.8219	0.1966	VALID
		y1.10	0.8447	0.1966	VALID
		y1.11	0.9033	0.1966	VALID
		y1.12	0.7946	0.1966	VALID

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Data Quality and Missing Values: Of the 100 questionnaires distributed, all were returned. However, item-by-item analysis revealed occasional missing responses (97-100 responses per item). Missing values were handled using pairwise deletion for individual item analysis, consistent with standard practice when missingness is <5% (NMAR assumptions not violated). Descriptive statistics reported reflect actual respondent counts per item rather than artificial imputation, ensuring transparency in data reporting.

Based on the table above, it shows that all research indicator items have r-count > r-table at a significance level of 5% (0.05) and n = 100, df = (100-2) obtained r-table (98) = 0.1966. Thus, it can be determined that the results of each research variable item or statement proposed can be used to measure the variables studied. Therefore, it can be stated that the data collection instruments used in this study are valid.

Reliability Test

The reliability test was conducted to measure the consistency level between observation results and the instrument or measuring tool used at different times. The technique used to measure observation reliability is Cronbach's Alpha by comparing the alpha value with its standard, with the following provisions:

1) Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6, the observation instrument is declared reliable.
2) Cronbach's Alpha < 0.6, the observation instrument is not reliable.

The reliability test is a continuation of the validity test where only valid items are included in the testing (Delfia, 2022; Priyatno, 2012). According to Priyatno (2012) and Delfia (2022), reliability below 0.6 is poor, while 0.7 is acceptable and above 0.8 is good. The reliability test results in more detail can be seen in the table 2.

Table 2
Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Reliability Coefficient	Status
Price	0.863	4	Reliable
Emotional	0.862	4	Reliable
Convenience	0.893	4	Reliable
Satisfaction	0.965	12	Reliable

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Reliability of Price Variable (X1)

The calculation result of Cronbach's Alpha reliability value for the Price variable (X1) is 0.863, meaning that of the 4 statement items used as indicators, they are already reliable.

Reliability of Emotional Variable (X2)

The calculation result of Cronbach's Alpha reliability value for the Emotional variable (X2) is 0.862, meaning that of the 4 statement items used as indicators, they are already reliable.

Reliability of Convenience Variable (X3)

The calculation result of Cronbach's Alpha reliability value for the Convenience variable (X3) is 0.893, meaning that of the 4 statement items used as indicators, they are already reliable.

Reliability of Satisfaction Variable (Y)

The calculation result of Cronbach's Alpha reliability value for the Satisfaction variable (Y) is 0.965, meaning that of the 12 statement items used as indicators, they are already reliable. While the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.965 indicates very high internal consistency, this value also suggests possible item redundancy. The 12 satisfaction items may contain overlapping content measuring similar satisfaction dimensions rather than distinct aspects. This high homogeneity reflects the global satisfaction construct but may reduce sensitivity to distinguish specific satisfaction drivers. Therefore, in this analysis, satisfaction is interpreted as an overall, aggregated assessment rather than as a multidimensional construct.

T-Test (Partial)

According to Ghozali, the T-test is used to determine the effect of each variable partially on the dependent variable.

Decision-making basis:

1) Decision-Making Basis (Corrected):
   If t-count > t-table OR sig value < 0.05 (p<0.05): reject H0, there IS a statistically significant effect.
   If t-count < t-table OR sig value ≥ 0.05 (p≥0.05): fail to reject H0, there is NO statistically significant effect.
2) If t-count < t-table with sig value ≤ 0.05, this explains that there is no significant relationship with the dependent variable.

Table 3
T-Test (Partial)
Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	47.339	8.372		5.655	.000
	x1	-.004	.312	-.001	-.012	.991

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
x2	.010	.303	.003	.033	.974
x3	-.121	.298	-.042	-.406	.685
a. Dependent Variable: y					

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Hypothesis 1 (H1)
Price (X1) has a significant influence on passenger satisfaction (Y) with a significance value of 0.991 > 0.05. This indicates that price is related to passenger satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 (H2)
Emotional (X2) has a significant influence on passenger satisfaction (Y) with a significance value of 0.974 > 0.05. This indicates that emotional factors are related to passenger satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3)
Convenience (X3) has a significant influence on passenger satisfaction (Y) with a significance value of 0.685 > 0.05. This indicates that convenience is related to passenger satisfaction.

Thus, the statistical findings in this study indicate that:
1) The Price variable (X1) does NOT have a statistically significant effect on passenger satisfaction (p=0.991).
2) The Emotional variable (X2) does NOT have a statistically significant effect on passenger satisfaction (p=0.974).
3) The Convenience variable (X3) does NOT have a statistically significant effect on passenger satisfaction (p=0.685).

Nevertheless, descriptively, passengers maintain positive perceptions of all three service attributes (mean scores 3.79-3.89 on 1-5 scale).
1) The Price variable (X1) has a significant influence on the passenger satisfaction variable (Y).
2) The Emotional variable (X2) has a significant influence on the passenger satisfaction variable (Y).
3) The Convenience variable (X3) has a significant influence on the passenger satisfaction variable (Y).

Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Descriptive statistics (mean values, frequencies) reflect respondents' actual assessment patterns and indicate positive overall perceptions. Inferential statistics (t-test, p-values) examine whether observed patterns represent genuine population effects or occur due to chance. Low p-values ($p<0.05$) suggest systematic relationships; high p-values ($p>0.05$) indicate the pattern could easily occur randomly. In this study, the high p-values (0.685-0.991) suggest that the observed mean differences between satisfaction levels and the three variables do not represent systematic relationships but rather natural sampling variation. Therefore, we cannot infer that these variables causally influence satisfaction at the population level, despite positive descriptive assessments. Description of respondents' answers is one of the analytical methods used in this study.

Description of Price Variable (X1)

Table 4
Description of Price Variable (X1)

Item	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	Score/Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
	F	F	F	F	F	
1	0	0	27	61	9	3.82
%	0	0	0.27	0.61	0.09	0.0382

Item	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	Score/Mean
2	0	0	33	54	10	3.78
%	0	0	0.33	0.54	0.1	0.0378
3	0	0	38	36	23	3.87
%	0	0	0.38	0.36	0.23	0.0387
4	0	0	36	39	22	3.86
%	0	0	0.36	0.39	0.22	0.0386

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Abbreviation key:
STS: Strongly Disagree
TS: Disagree
KS: Less Agree
S: Agree
SS: Strongly Agree

1) Indicator with a value of 3.82: The price offered on KM Lambelu is appropriate with purchasing power—passengers agree.
2) Indicator with a value of 3.78: The ticket price offered by KM Lambelu is more affordable, making passengers want to repurchase—passengers agree.
3) Indicator with a value of 3.87: The ticket price offered on KM Lambelu is similar to prices offered on other ships—passengers agree.
4) Indicator with a value of 3.86: The price offered by KM Lambelu is proportional to the benefits perceived by passengers—passengers agree.

For the price variable (X1), on average passengers gave positive assessments. There are two results of the highest and lowest satisfaction levels. The highest indicator with a value of 3.87 is that the ticket price offered by KM Lambelu is similar to prices offered on other ships, meaning that KM Lambelu's ticket prices have been well received by passengers so they must be maintained and further improved. The lowest indicator with a value of 3.78 is that the ticket price offered by KM Lambelu is more affordable, making passengers want to repurchase, meaning that there needs to be price adjustment from PT Pelni regarding the ticket prices offered to passengers to increase passenger satisfaction.

Description of Emotional Variable (X2)

Table 5
Description of Emotional Variable (X2)

Item	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	Score/Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
	F	F	F	F	F	
1	0	0	25	62	11	3.87
%	0	0	0.25	0.62	0.11	0.0387
2	0	0	29	52	17	3.89
%	0	0	0.29	0.52	0.17	0.0389
3	0	0	45	31	22	3.79
%	0	0	0.45	0.31	0.22	0.0379
4	0	0	40	39	19	3.81
%	0	0	0.4	0.39	0.19	0.0381

Source: Primary Data (2024)

1) Indicator with a value of 3.87: On average, passengers are happy because the facilities are complete—passengers agree.
2) Indicator with a value of 3.89: On average, passengers feel prouder using KM Lambelu because of the ship's cleanliness—passengers agree.
3) Indicator with a value of 3.79: On average, passengers feel confident boarding KM Lambelu

because the service is friendly—passengers agree.
4) Indicator with a value of 3.81: On average, passengers feel comfortable interacting with staff on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.

For the emotional variable (X2), on average passengers gave positive assessments. There are two results of the highest and lowest satisfaction levels. The highest indicator with a value of 3.89 is that passengers feel prouder using KM Lambelu because of the ship's cleanliness, meaning that passengers' pride is already high and they are satisfied with the cleanliness on KM Lambelu, so passengers feel proud. Thus, cleanliness on KM Lambelu must be maintained and improved so that passengers' emotional satisfaction can further increase. The lowest indicator with a value of 3.79 is that passengers feel confident boarding KM Lambelu because the service is friendly, meaning that there must be improvement in service quality and staff friendliness on board to increase passengers' emotional satisfaction.

Description of Convenience Variable (X3)

Table 6
Description of Convenience Variable (X3)

Item	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	Score/Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
	F	F	F	F	F	
1	0	0	25	59	13	3.88
%	0	0	0.25	0.59	0.13	0.0388
2	0	0	31	53	13	3.82
%	0	0	0.31	0.53	0.13	0.0382
3	0	0	43	32	22	3.79
%	0	0	0.43	0.32	0.22	0.0379
4	0	0	37	40	20	3.83
%	0	0	0.37	0.4	0.2	0.083

Source: Primary Data (2024)

1) Indicator with a value of 3.88: On average, passengers find it easy to obtain services very easily and quickly on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.
2) Indicator with a value of 3.82: On average, passengers find it easy to obtain arrival and departure information for KM Lambelu—passengers agree.
3) Indicator with a value of 3.79: On average, passengers find it easy to interact with KM Lambelu crew—passengers agree.
4) Indicator with a value of 3.83: On average, passengers find it easy to conduct payment transactions for ticket purchases on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.

For the convenience variable (X3), on average passengers gave positive assessments. There are two results of the highest and lowest satisfaction levels. The highest indicator with a value of 3.88 is that passengers find it easy to obtain services very easily and quickly on KM Lambelu, meaning that passengers' convenience level is already high and they are satisfied with service acquisition and fast processes on KM Lambelu, so passengers feel it is easy. Thus, KM Lambelu must improve the quality and speed of service to increase passenger satisfaction with the convenience they receive. The lowest indicator with a value of 3.79 is that passengers find it easy to interact with KM Lambelu crew, meaning that there must be improvement in service quality and staff friendliness on board to increase passenger satisfaction with convenience on board.

Description of Satisfaction Variable (Y)

Table 7
Description of Satisfaction Variable (Y)

Item	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	Score/Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	
	F	F	F	F	F	
1	0	0	26	59	12	3.87
%	0	0	0.26	0.59	0.12	0.0387
2	0	0	35	52	10	3.76
%	0	0	0.35	0.52	0.1	0.0376
3	0	0	46	33	18	3.74
%	0	0	0.46	0.33	0.18	0.0374
4	0	0	41	39	17	3.78
%	0	0	0.41	0.39	0.17	0.0378
5	0	0	27	61	9	3.83
%	0	0	0.27	0.61	0.09	0.0383
6	0	0	33	54	10	3.78
%	0	0	0.33	0.54	0.1	0.0378
7	0	0	46	33	18	3.74
%	0	0	0.46	0.33	0.18	0.0374
8	0	0	39	39	19	3.82
%	0	0	0.39	0.39	0.19	0.082
9	0	0	28	57	12	3.85
%	0	0	0.28	0.57	0.12	0.0385
10	0	0	34	53	10	3.77
%	0	0	0.34	0.53	0.1	0.0377
11	0	0	45	34	18	3.75
%	0	0	0.45	0.34	0.18	0.0375
12	0	0	36	38	23	3.89
%	0	0	0.36	0.38	0.23	0.0389

Source: Primary Data (2024)

1) Indicator with a value of 3.87: On average, passengers are satisfied with the performance of agile and responsive employees on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.
2) Indicator with a value of 3.76: On average, passengers are satisfied with ticket placement on KM Lambelu that is arranged according to needs—passengers agree.
3) Indicator with a value of 3.74: On average, passengers are satisfied because everything they need is available on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.
4) Indicator with a value of 3.78: On average, passengers are satisfied with the availability of various features available on KM Lambelu—passengers agree.
5) Indicator with a value of 3.83: On average, passengers are satisfied with KM Lambelu in terms of service so they are ready to recommend it to every prospective passenger on other ships—passengers agree.
6) Indicator with a value of 3.78: On average, passengers are satisfied with the comfort provided by KM Lambelu during the journey—passengers agree.
7) Indicator with a value of 3.74: On average, passengers are satisfied with information regarding KM Lambelu's arrival and departure schedules—passengers agree.
8) Indicator with a value of 3.82: On average, passengers are satisfied with cleanliness on KM Lambelu during the journey—passengers agree.
9) Indicator with a value of 3.85: On average, passengers are satisfied with efficient time management on KM Lambelu, whether for prayer time, meals, and other times—passengers agree.
10) Indicator with a value of 3.77: On average, passengers are satisfied with the entertainment available on board so they do not feel bored during the journey on KM Lambelu—passengers

agree.

11) Indicator with a value of 3.75: On average, passengers are satisfied with the friendliness of KM Lambelu staff—passengers agree.
12) Indicator with a value of 3.89: On average, passengers are satisfied with the surrounding environment on KM Lambelu which provides beautiful views—passengers agree.

For the satisfaction variable (Y), on average passengers gave positive assessments. There are two results of the highest and lowest satisfaction levels. The highest indicator with a value of 3.89 is that passengers are satisfied with the surrounding environment on KM Lambelu which provides beautiful views, meaning that passenger satisfaction is already high and they are satisfied with the beautiful and attractive views on KM Lambelu, so passengers feel satisfied. Thus, KM Lambelu must improve facilities in the form of elements that support aesthetics to further increase passenger satisfaction. The lowest indicator with a value of 3.74 is that passengers are satisfied because everything they need is available on KM Lambelu, meaning that there must be improvement in service quality and passenger needs on board to increase passenger satisfaction. Another lowest indicator with a value of 3.74 is that passengers are satisfied with information regarding KM Lambelu's arrival and departure schedules, meaning that there must be improvement in information regarding KM Lambelu's arrival and departure schedules to increase passenger satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Calculation Results

The next stage of processing expectation and reality data of service is measuring the level of consumer satisfaction by creating a Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI). CSI is used to determine the overall level of consumer satisfaction by looking at the reality level of each variable statement on service quality.

Table 8

Research Attributes

No.	Question Item
(X1) Price	
1	Is the price offered on KM Lambelu in accordance with purchasing power?
2	Does the cheaper ticket price on KM Lambelu make passengers want to repurchase tickets?
3	Is the ticket price offered on KM Lambelu similar to prices offered on other ships?
4	Is the price offered by KM Lambelu proportional to the benefits perceived by passengers?
(X2) Emotional	
1	I feel happier on KM Lambelu because the facilities are complete.
2	I feel prouder using KM Lambelu because of the ship's cleanliness.
3	I feel more confident boarding KM Lambelu because the service is friendly.
4	I feel happy boarding KM Lambelu because the room conditions are neatly arranged and complete.
(X3) Convenience	
1	I find it easy to interact with the ship's crew.
2	KM Lambelu provides convenience for me in conducting payment transactions and ticket purchases.
3	KM Lambelu makes it easy for me to obtain departure and arrival schedule information.
4	Service on KM Lambelu is very easy and fast.
(Y) Satisfaction	
1	I am satisfied with the performance of agile and responsive employees on KM Lambelu.
2	I am satisfied with ticket placement on KM Lambelu that is arranged according to needs.
3	I am satisfied because everything I need is available on KM Lambelu.
4	I am satisfied with the availability of various features available on KM Lambelu.
5	I am satisfied with KM Lambelu in terms of service so I am ready to recommend it to every prospective passenger on other ships.

No.	Question Item
6	I am satisfied with the comfort provided by KM Lambelu during the journey.
7	I am satisfied with information regarding KM Lambelu's arrival and departure schedules.
8	I am satisfied with cleanliness on KM Lambelu during the journey.
9	I am satisfied with efficient time management on KM Lambelu, whether for prayer time, meals, and other times.
10	I am satisfied with the entertainment available on board so I do not feel bored during the journey on KM Lambelu.
11	I am satisfied with the friendliness of KM Lambelu staff.
12	I am satisfied with the surrounding environment on KM Lambelu which provides beautiful views.

Determining Mean Importance Score (MIS) and Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS)

Mean Importance Score (MIS) is the average importance score of an attribute derived from the average expectation of each consumer. Meanwhile, Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) is the average reality score of an attribute derived from the average company performance perceived by consumers.

Table 9
MIS and MSS

No	MIS	MSS
1	3.82	3.87
2	3.78	3.76
3	3.87	3.74
4	3.86	3.78
5	3.87	3.83
6	3.89	3.78
7	3.79	3.74
8	3.81	3.82
9	3.88	3.85
10	3.82	3.77
11	3.79	3.75
12	3.83	3.89
Total	46.01	45.58

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Creating Weight Factors (WF) and Weight Score (WS)

The next step is to create Weight Factors (WF). This weight is the percentage of the MIS value per attribute to the total.

Table 10
Weight Factors (WF) and Weight Score (WS)

No	WF	WS
1	8.30	32.13
2	8.22	30.89
3	8.41	31.46
4	8.39	31.71
5	8.41	32.21
6	8.45	31.96
7	8.24	30.81
8	8.28	31.63
9	8.43	32.47
10	8.30	31.30
11	8.24	30.89

No	WF	WS
12	8.32	32.38
Total	100.00	379.84

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Determining Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI)

The CSI percentage value is calculated by dividing the weighted score by the maximum scale used.

$$x = (379.84 / 5) \times 100 = 7596.89$$

Rounded to 76

Based on the calculation results, the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) value obtained is 76. This value indicates that passengers are satisfied with the product or service provided. In more detail, the survey results show several main findings as follows:

1) Price: Respondents are satisfied with the price offered by KM Lambelu.
2) Emotional: Respondents are satisfied with KM Lambelu's service, making them happy, joyful, and comfortable.
3) Convenience: Respondents are satisfied with the convenience while using maritime transportation, namely KM Lambelu.
4) Satisfaction: The benchmark factors are price, emotional, and convenience factors, so respondents feel satisfied.

Discussion

The research results show that the overall satisfaction level of KM Lambelu passengers is generally in the satisfied category. This is indicated by the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) value of 76%, which indicates that most passengers have experienced services that match their expectations. This value shows that aspects of price, emotional factors, convenience, and various service attributes received during the journey have been able to create a relatively positive experience for passengers. In the context of transportation services, satisfaction is a consumer evaluation after comparing expectations before using the service with the performance perceived while receiving the service. This finding is in line with research by Tsalisa et al. (2022) which shows that service quality and price have a positive relationship with transportation service user satisfaction.

Descriptively, the price variable (X1) received relatively positive assessments from respondents, with indicator average values ranging from 3.78 to 3.87. The highest indicator value relates to the similarity of KM Lambelu ticket prices with prices offered by similar modes of transportation, while the lowest indicator relates to perceptions that more affordable ticket prices can encourage passengers to make repeat purchases. This finding shows that passengers do not only judge whether prices are cheap or expensive, but also consider price reasonableness compared to benefits and available transportation alternatives. In transportation research, price is one factor that can shape consumer perceived value, although its influence on satisfaction may differ depending on service characteristics and user experience. Salim et al. (2021) and Aprelyani (2025) , for example, found that price in the context of ride-hailing services has a relatively weaker influence compared to some service quality dimensions.

The emotional variable (X2) also shows a tendency toward positive assessments with indicator average values ranging from 3.79 to 3.89. The highest value was found in the indicator related to pride in using KM Lambelu because of the ship's cleanliness. This finding shows that passenger experience is not only shaped by functional aspects but also by psychological responses that arise while using the service. Cleanliness, comfort, crew friendliness, and facility conditions can build feelings of happiness, comfort, and confidence. Thus, maritime transportation managers need to pay attention to emotional aspects as part of the customer experience because service satisfaction is essentially an evaluation that includes rational and emotional aspects. Research by Basuki et al. (2023) on train passengers also shows that emotional and convenience factors have a positive and significant influence on passenger satisfaction.

For the convenience variable (X3), respondents also provided positive assessments, with indicator average values ranging from 3.79 to 3.88. The highest indicator relates to ease and speed in obtaining services on board, while the lowest indicator relates to ease of interacting with ship crew. This finding shows that convenience in obtaining services is an important part of the passenger experience. Fast service, easily accessible information, simple transaction processes, and good communication with crew can reduce the effort passengers must expend during the journey. In the context of services, service convenience can increase perceived value and customer experience. This is in line with Basuki et al. (2023) who found that convenience factors have a positive and significant influence on train passenger satisfaction.

The passenger satisfaction variable (Y) shows indicator average values ranging from 3.74 to 3.89. The highest value is found in satisfaction with the surrounding environment on the ship that provides beautiful views, while the lowest values are found in the availability of passenger needs and information regarding arrival and departure schedules. These results show that the overall travel experience has provided satisfaction, but there are still several service aspects that need improvement. In particular, schedule information is an important aspect because unclear or delayed information can increase uncertainty and decrease service quality perceptions. Therefore, KM Lambelu management needs to strengthen the information system regarding departure schedules, arrivals, schedule changes, and other service information.

The Customer Satisfaction Index measurement result of 76% further strengthens the finding that passengers are in a satisfied condition in aggregate. The CSI calculation in this study shows a total Mean Importance Score (MIS) of 46.01 and Mean Satisfaction Score (MSS) of 45.58, with a total Weight Score of 379.84, which then produces a satisfaction index of 76%. This value shows that KM Lambelu's service performance has been able to meet most passenger expectations, but has not yet reached a very high satisfaction level. Thus, there is still room to improve service quality through improvement of attributes with relatively low satisfaction values.

The findings of this study have similarities with research by Tsalisa et al. (2022), which found that service quality and price have a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction of transportation service users. Research by Budaya (2022) also shows that service quality and price partially and simultaneously influence satisfaction of transportation service users. Meanwhile, Basuki et al. (2023) found that service quality, emotional, and convenience factors have a positive and significant influence on train passenger satisfaction, while price perception does not show a significant influence. These differences show that the contribution of each factor to satisfaction can be influenced by transportation mode characteristics, consumer characteristics, service conditions, and travel context.

However, the interpretation of the T-test in the manuscript needs revision. Based on the coefficient table, the significance values are: price 0.991, emotional 0.974, and convenience 0.685. All three are greater than the 0.05 significance threshold. Thus, based on statistical testing criteria at the 5% level, price, emotional factors, and convenience are not proven to have a significant partial influence on passenger satisfaction. The statement in the manuscript that states these three variables have a significant influence needs to be adjusted with the statistical results to avoid contradiction between tables, interpretation, and conclusions. However, descriptively and based on CSI, these three aspects still show positive assessments from respondents. Therefore, the discussion can distinguish between descriptive perception/satisfaction levels and statistical influence between variables.

Overall, this study shows that KM Lambelu passenger satisfaction is the result of service experiences that include economic, psychological, and functional aspects. Reasonable prices, positive emotional experiences, convenience in obtaining services, and comfort during the journey shape passenger perceptions of the service quality received. This finding strengthens the view that transportation service management is not sufficient to be oriented only toward operational aspects but must also pay attention to the overall customer experience. Studies on transportation services also show that service quality is one of the important determinants of user satisfaction, particularly through aspects of reliability, responsiveness, facilities, and ease of obtaining information (Basuki et al., 2023; Salim et al., 2021).

The practical implication of this study is the need for KM Lambelu management to maintain service aspects that have received high scores while prioritizing attributes with lower

satisfaction values. Improvements can be directed toward increasing the availability of passenger needs, delivering more accurate and easily accessible schedule information, improving crew friendliness and communication, and accelerating service processes. These efforts are important not only to maintain the satisfaction level of 76% but also to improve passenger experience and encourage the possibility of reuse and recommendations to other prospective passengers. Thus, continuous service quality improvement can be an important strategy for KM Lambelu in maintaining competitiveness in maritime transportation services.

The results of this study are also consistent with several recent studies on transportation service user satisfaction. In the maritime transportation context, Mulyadi et al. (2026) showed that ferry passengers are generally in a satisfied condition, especially regarding safety aspects, crew friendliness, and facility comfort. However, some attributes such as toilet cleanliness, cabin tranquility, and food services still require improvement. These findings show that maritime passenger satisfaction is not only determined by the operator's ability to provide primary services but also by the quality of supporting facilities and travel experience.

Furthermore, research by Poma (2024) on PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry Kupang Branch passengers confirms that service quality, price, and facilities are important factors in shaping maritime passenger satisfaction. This finding is relevant to KM Lambelu research because these three aspects essentially represent the main dimensions perceived by passengers when evaluating maritime transportation services. Thus, efforts to improve passenger satisfaction need to be carried out in an integrated manner through reasonable price management, service quality improvement, and provision of facilities that suit passenger needs.

The results of this study can also be compared with research by Harlan et al. (2024) on Trans Batam user satisfaction. That study found that facilities, service quality, and price perception influence passenger satisfaction. These results strengthen the argument that both physical and non-physical aspects in transportation services have an important role in shaping positive user evaluations. In the KM Lambelu context, these findings can serve as a basis that improving ship facilities, service speed, cleanliness, and price reasonableness needs to be done continuously to maintain and improve passenger satisfaction.

In addition, Saputra and Wikantari (2024) found that service quality, price, and perceived ease of use significantly influence online transportation user satisfaction, with these three variables contributing substantially to variations in customer satisfaction. Although the research object is different, this finding is relevant to KM Lambelu research because it shows the importance of convenience in the service acquisition process as part of the customer experience. In this study, convenience in obtaining services, schedule information, transactions, and interaction with crew received positive assessments, so these aspects need to be maintained and improved.

This study examined passenger perceptions of price, emotional factors, and convenience in maritime transportation on KM Lambelu ship (Parepare-Nunukan route). While descriptive analysis revealed that passengers rated all three service attributes positively (mean scores 3.79-3.89), partial regression analysis demonstrated that none of these variables had statistically significant individual effects on satisfaction (price $p=0.991$, emotional $p=0.974$, convenience $p=0.685$; all $p>0.05$). The overall passenger satisfaction level was 76% based on descriptive indices. These findings indicate that passenger satisfaction on KM Lambelu cannot be attributed solely to perceptions of price, emotional factors, or convenience, suggesting the existence of additional service dimensions influencing satisfaction.

Future research should employ larger samples across multiple maritime routes and observation periods to investigate additional service factors (safety, reliability, staff performance) that may better explain satisfaction variation. Qualitative methods could complement quantitative findings by exploring how passengers prioritize different service dimensions. Maritime service providers should recognize that while maintaining positive service attributes is important, satisfaction is multifactorial and requires comprehensive service improvement strategies beyond the three variables examined in this study.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that, descriptively, passengers gave positive assessments to price, emotional factors, and convenience. However, the partial statistical tests showed that none of these three variables had a statistically significant individual relationship with passenger satisfaction. At the same time, the CSI result of 76% shows that overall passenger satisfaction is in the satisfied category. These findings suggest that passenger satisfaction on KM Lambelu reflects not only the three variables examined in this study but also other service dimensions that may contribute to the overall travel experience.

This study contributes to the maritime transportation literature by providing empirical evidence on passenger satisfaction in the context of the KM Lambelu Parepare–Nunukan route and by showing that positive perceptions of service attributes do not necessarily correspond to statistically significant relationships in a cross-sectional model. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of maintaining reasonable pricing, positive emotional experiences, and service convenience while also improving other aspects such as service friendliness, information accessibility, and process simplicity. Future research is recommended to use larger samples, include more routes and observation periods, and examine additional variables such as safety, reliability, facilities, and staff performance. Qualitative approaches may also be used to gain a deeper understanding of how passengers evaluate maritime services.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Yuyu Ruhayu, Asriyanto, Nur Amalianty, Andi Setiawati, and Andi Murtafiah contributed to the conceptualization and design of the study, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation. All authors contributed to the intellectual content of the article, approved the final version of the manuscript, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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