A Comparative Study of Passenger Satisfaction with ASDP Ferry Services and Dharma Lautan Utama Ferry Services on the Selayar Route

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate and compare passenger satisfaction with ferry services provided by PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and Dharma Lautan on the Selayar route, identify the factors influencing passenger satisfaction, and examine differences in service quality and operational performance between the two ferry operators. Passenger satisfaction was assessed using several indicators, including service quality, staff friendliness and responsiveness, onboard facilities, seating comfort, cleanliness, and departure and arrival punctuality. Operational performance was evaluated based on facility comfort, sailing frequency, and operational efficiency. A descriptive quantitative approach with a comparative research design was employed to examine differences in passenger perceptions between the two operators. The findings revealed that ASDP ferry services achieved a mean passenger satisfaction score of 64.68, whereas Dharma Lautan recorded a higher mean score of 72.96, representing a difference of 8.28 points. The results indicate that passengers generally reported higher satisfaction with Dharma Lautan services than with ASDP ferry services. Key factors associated with passenger satisfaction included departure punctuality, crew service quality, vessel cleanliness and facilities, ticket prices, and passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures. The comparative assessment further indicated that Dharma Lautan received more favorable evaluations across the assessed satisfaction indicators, while ASDP exhibited comparatively lower ratings, with its highest reported indicator percentage reaching approximately 30%. Overall, the findings highlight differences in perceived service quality between the two operators and emphasize the importance of improving operational reliability, passenger comfort, and service responsiveness to enhance passenger satisfaction in ferry transportation serving Selayar.

Keywords: Passenger Satisfaction; Ferry Transportation; Service Quality; Comparative Analysis; ASDP; Dharma Lautan; Selayar Route.

INTRODUCTION

Passenger satisfaction is a fundamental indicator of service performance and competitiveness in the transportation industry. It is influenced by various factors, particularly the quality of services provided and the value perceived by passengers throughout their travel experience. Customer-perceived value encompasses several dimensions, including product value, service value, personnel value, and corporate image, which are evaluated against the total costs incurred by customers, such as monetary expenditure, time, physical effort, and psychological burden [1]. In this context, service quality plays an essential role in shaping passenger expectations, influencing satisfaction, and supporting long-term customer relationships. Transportation service providers must therefore continuously improve service delivery to maintain competitiveness and respond effectively to changing passenger needs [2]. As an archipelagic country, Indonesia relies heavily on maritime transportation to support inter-island connectivity, population mobility, and the distribution of goods. Ferry transportation serves as an essential component of the national maritime transport network, particularly for island communities where alternative transportation options may be limited. Selayar, an island destination in South Sulawesi with significant tourism and regional development potential, depends on reliable maritime connectivity to support passenger movements and local economic activities. Ferry services associated with the Selayar route are provided by operators such as PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and Dharma Lautan. These services may differ in terms of onboard facilities, service delivery, operational arrangements, ticket prices, and passenger comfort, potentially influencing passengers' overall travel experiences and satisfaction levels.

Service quality is widely recognized as an important determinant of passenger satisfaction because it reflects the extent to which transportation services meet passengers' expectations and practical needs. In ferry transportation, service quality involves several interconnected dimensions, including employee responsiveness, staff courtesy, service reliability, information availability, and the efficiency of passenger handling procedures. In addition, the availability and condition of onboard facilities, such as seating arrangements, sanitation facilities, passenger accommodation, and public spaces, may significantly influence perceived comfort. Competitive ticket pricing and appropriate service standards are also relevant because passengers evaluate transportation services by considering the benefits received relative to the costs incurred [3].

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Passenger satisfaction can be understood as an overall evaluation formed through the comparison between expected service performance and the actual travel experience. Positive service encounters, responsive personnel, and comfortable facilities may strengthen favorable passenger perceptions, whereas delays, inadequate facilities, or inconsistent service delivery may reduce satisfaction. Although satisfaction may be expressed through observable responses and behaviors, it represents a broader evaluative judgment involving passengers' perceptions, expectations, and experiences rather than a single visible reaction [4]. Accordingly, passenger satisfaction assessment should incorporate multiple service indicators to provide a comprehensive understanding of perceived transportation performance.

In maritime passenger transportation, operational reliability is particularly important because departure and arrival punctuality, sailing frequency, and boarding arrangements directly influence travel convenience. Delays or inefficient embarkation and disembarkation procedures may increase passengers' time-related costs and adversely affect their overall service evaluations. Similarly, staff friendliness, effective communication, cleanliness, and onboard comfort may shape passengers' perceptions of service quality. Previous studies have emphasized that customer satisfaction is influenced not only by interpersonal service interactions but also by the adequacy of physical facilities and the reliability of service operations. Passengers who perceive that they receive respectful treatment and dependable service may report higher satisfaction, although the relationship between service quality, perceived value, and ticket price can vary across transportation contexts [5]. Despite the importance of passenger satisfaction in maritime transportation, service performance may differ between ferry operators serving similar destinations. These differences can arise from variations in vessel facilities, service procedures, staffing arrangements, operational schedules, and pricing policies. Consequently, evaluating a single operator independently may provide limited information about the relative strengths and weaknesses of available ferry services. A comparative assessment is therefore useful for examining differences in passenger perceptions and identifying service attributes that may require operational improvement.

In the context of ferry transportation serving Selayar, a comparative evaluation of ASDP and Dharma Lautan services can provide insights into how passengers assess the quality and reliability of competing or alternative maritime transportation services. The research gap addressed in this study concerns the need for operator-specific comparative evidence regarding passenger satisfaction across key service dimensions, particularly staff responsiveness, onboard facilities, cleanliness, punctuality, ticket affordability, and passenger embarkation and disembarkation arrangements. Such an assessment can support a more structured understanding of service performance differences within the local ferry transportation context. Accordingly, this study aims to (1) evaluate passenger satisfaction with ferry services provided by PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and Dharma Lautan on the Selayar route, (2) identify service-related factors associated with passenger satisfaction, and (3) compare perceived service quality and operational performance between the two ferry operators. Using a descriptive quantitative approach with a comparative research design, the study examines passenger evaluations across relevant service indicators to identify differences in satisfaction levels and areas requiring improvement. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for ferry operators and maritime transportation stakeholders in strengthening service quality, improving passenger comfort, and supporting more reliable and passenger-oriented ferry transportation services to Selayar.

METHODS

Research Design and Study Location

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a comparative research design to examine differences in passenger satisfaction between two ferry operators, PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and Dharma Lautan Nusantara. The comparative approach was selected to evaluate passenger perceptions of service quality, onboard facilities, operational punctuality, and ticket pricing, as well as to identify factors associated with overall passenger satisfaction. The study was conducted on ferry services operating along the Makassar–Selayar route, Indonesia, over the period from April to December 2025. The research focused on passengers who had experienced the services provided by both ferry operators, enabling comparisons based on their direct travel experiences.

Data Sources and Sampling Technique

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from passengers through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The questionnaires were designed to assess passenger satisfaction across several service dimensions, including service quality, onboard facility comfort, departure and arrival punctuality, and ticket prices. Interviews were conducted to obtain additional information regarding passengers' perceptions, expectations, and experiences with the services provided by the two ferry operators.

Secondary data were obtained from relevant supporting documents, literature, and available information concerning ferry operations and passenger services. These data were used to provide contextual information and support the interpretation of the primary findings. Participants were selected using a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The principal

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inclusion criterion was prior experience traveling with both ASDP and Dharma Lautan Nusantara ferry services, allowing respondents to provide comparative assessments of the two operators. The sample size was determined by considering the conditions and feasibility of data collection in the field.

Research Variables and Measurement

Passenger satisfaction was the principal outcome variable of the study. It was assessed through questionnaire indicators representing passengers' evaluations of the services received from both ferry operators.

The explanatory variables comprised service quality, onboard facilities, punctuality, and ticket prices. Service quality included aspects such as staff friendliness, responsiveness, and the efficiency of passenger assistance. Onboard facilities were assessed in terms of seating comfort, cleanliness, and the availability of supporting amenities. Punctuality reflected passengers' evaluations of departure and arrival schedules, while ticket pricing concerned perceived affordability and value relative to the quality of services provided. These dimensions were used to characterize differences in perceived service performance and examine their relationships with overall passenger satisfaction.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize passenger satisfaction levels for each ferry operator. The analysis included measures such as mean scores and frequency distributions to describe passenger evaluations across the assessed service dimensions. Comparative statistical analysis was planned to determine whether differences in passenger satisfaction between ASDP and Dharma Lautan Nusantara were statistically significant. Depending on the structure and distribution of the collected data, an appropriate comparison test, such as a t-test or analysis of variance (ANOVA), could be employed.

Because the sampling criteria required respondents to have experienced both ferry services, a paired-samples comparison would be appropriate if the same respondents evaluated both operators. The selection of the final statistical test should therefore account for the paired nature of the observations and the relevant statistical assumptions. Linear regression analysis was also proposed to examine the relationships between service quality, onboard facilities, punctuality, ticket pricing, and overall passenger satisfaction. The analysis was intended to identify which service-related factors were statistically associated with passenger satisfaction and provide supporting evidence for service improvement priorities. The results of the descriptive and inferential analyses were interpreted to compare perceived service performance between the two operators and identify areas requiring improvement in ferry transportation services serving Selayar

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Passenger Satisfaction Levels with ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) Ferry Services on the Selayar Route

The assessment of passenger satisfaction was conducted using questionnaires administered to 25 passengers of PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and 25 passengers of Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) operating on the Selayar route. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the distribution of passenger satisfaction scores for each ferry operator. The statistical analysis included the number of observations, score range, minimum and maximum values, mean scores, standard deviations, and variances. The descriptive statistical results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of passenger satisfaction questionnaire scores.

Ferry operator	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation	Variance
ASDP	25	34	46	80	64.68	7.894	62.310
Dharma Lautan Utama	25	28	52	80	72.96	7.536	56.790
Valid N (listwise)	25						

As presented in Table 1, the mean passenger satisfaction score for ASDP ferry services was 64.68, whereas Dharma Lautan Utama recorded a higher mean score of 72.96. The difference between the two mean scores was 8.28 points, indicating that passengers evaluating DLU services reported higher average satisfaction than those evaluating ASDP services. The standard deviation of ASDP satisfaction scores was 7.894, with a variance of 62.310, while DLU recorded a standard deviation of 7.536 and a variance of 56.790. These values indicate that passenger satisfaction scores for DLU were slightly less dispersed around their mean than those for ASDP. The observed distribution suggests relatively more consistent satisfaction assessments among DLU respondents.

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The minimum satisfaction score for ASDP was 46, compared with 52 for DLU, while both operators recorded a maximum score of 80. These findings indicate that DLU received a higher minimum score as well as a higher overall mean. Nevertheless, both operators obtained relatively favorable average assessments within the observed score range. Overall, the descriptive results demonstrate that Dharma Lautan Utama achieved a higher average passenger satisfaction score than ASDP on the Selayar route. However, the difference in mean scores represents a descriptive comparison and does not independently establish statistical significance without an appropriate inferential test.

Factors Influencing Passenger Satisfaction with ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama Ferry Services

Passenger perceptions of the factors influencing satisfaction were assessed using five questionnaire statements administered to respondents from both ferry operators. Each statement was evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Uninfluential) to 5 (Strongly Influential). The five statements addressed departure punctuality, crew service quality, vessel cleanliness and facilities, ticket prices, and passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures. These dimensions were selected to examine the principal service-related considerations associated with passenger satisfaction.

1. Departure Punctuality

The first questionnaire statement was: *"On-time departure schedules influence my satisfaction."*

Departure punctuality represents an important aspect of ferry service reliability because passengers depend on predictable transportation schedules to organize their travel activities. The questionnaire assessed the extent to which respondents perceived punctual departures as influencing their overall satisfaction with the ferry services.

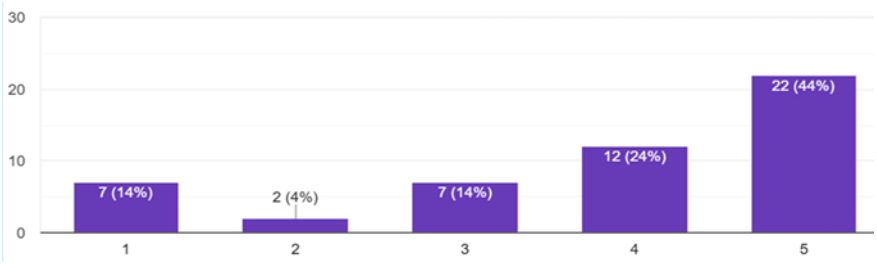


Figure 1. Percentage distribution of responses concerning the influence of departure punctuality on passenger satisfaction.

2. Crew Service Quality

The second questionnaire statement was: *"Crew service quality influences my travel comfort."*

This indicator examined passengers' perceptions of the contribution of crew performance to onboard comfort. The assessment focused on the perceived importance of service-related factors such as staff friendliness, responsiveness, and assistance provided during ferry operations.

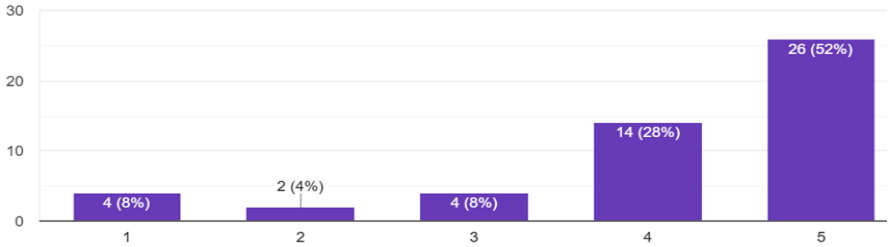


Figure 2. Percentage distribution of responses concerning the influence of crew service quality on passenger comfort.

3. Vessel Cleanliness and Onboard Facilities

The third questionnaire statement was: *"Vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities strongly influence my satisfaction."*

This statement evaluated the perceived importance of vessel cleanliness and the availability of onboard facilities in shaping passenger satisfaction. The assessment considered the role of passenger accommodation, seating comfort, sanitation, and supporting facilities in determining the quality of the travel experience.

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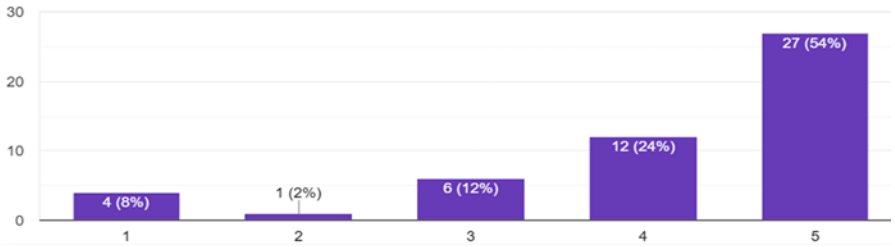


Figure 3. Percentage distribution of responses concerning the influence of vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities on passenger satisfaction.

4. Ticket Prices

The fourth questionnaire statement was: *"Ticket prices have a substantial influence on my satisfaction."*

Ticket pricing was examined as a component of passengers' overall evaluation of ferry services. The questionnaire assessed whether respondents considered ticket costs an important factor influencing satisfaction with the transportation services provided.

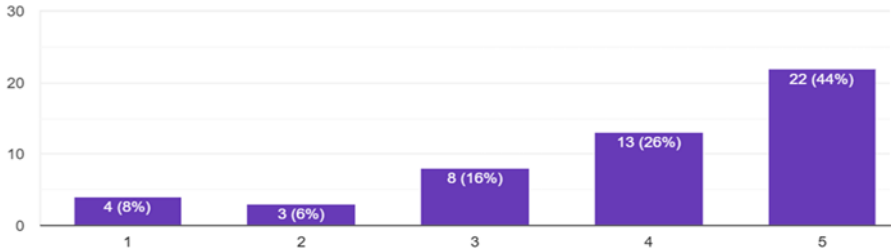


Figure 4. Percentage distribution of responses concerning the influence of ticket prices on passenger satisfaction.

5. Passenger Embarkation and Disembarkation Procedures

The fifth questionnaire statement was: *"Passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures influence my satisfaction."*

This indicator assessed the importance of boarding and disembarkation arrangements in shaping passenger satisfaction. The evaluation concerned passenger perceptions of the accessibility, organization, and efficiency of embarkation and disembarkation procedures.

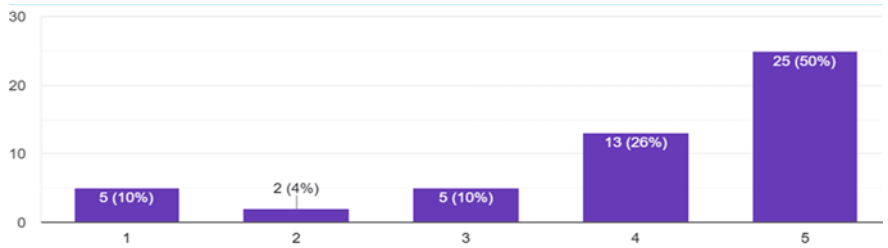


Figure 5. Percentage distribution of responses concerning the influence of embarkation and disembarkation procedures on passenger satisfaction.

Collectively, the five questionnaire indicators provide a framework for examining passengers' perceptions of service attributes relevant to ferry transportation. However, the numerical response distributions for these statements are required to determine which factors received the highest evaluations and whether the response patterns differed between the two operators.

Comparison of Service Quality and Operational Performance Between ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama

A comparative assessment was conducted to examine passenger satisfaction with the service quality and operational performance of ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama ferry services on the Selayar route. The assessment involved a total of 50 questionnaire responses, comprising 25 passengers from each ferry operator. The comparison focused on service-related indicators associated with passenger satisfaction, including punctuality, crew services, onboard cleanliness and facilities, ticket prices, and embarkation and disembarkation procedures. These indicators provided the basis for examining differences in passengers' perceptions of the two operators.

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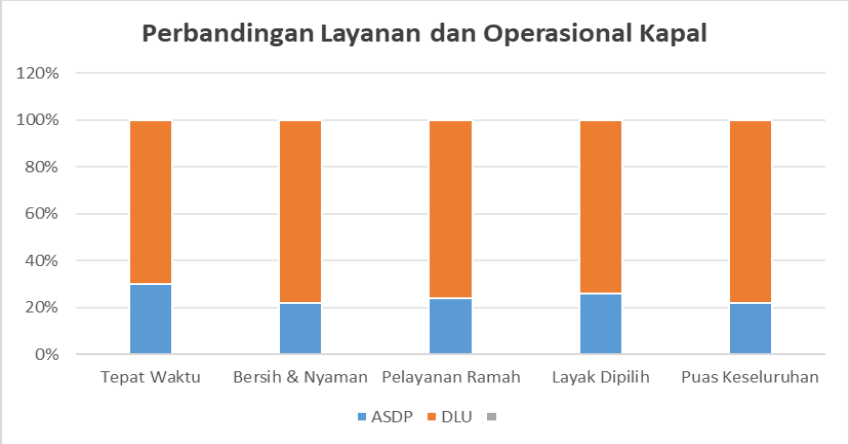


Figure 6. Percentage comparison of passenger satisfaction between ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama ferry services.

Based on the descriptive statistics presented in Table 1, DLU recorded a higher mean overall passenger satisfaction score (72.96) than ASDP (64.68), with an observed difference of 8.28 points. This result indicates more favorable overall satisfaction assessments among the DLU respondents included in the study. Nevertheless, a detailed comparison of individual satisfaction indicators requires the corresponding percentage distributions shown in Figure 6. Without these numerical distributions, the available data do not establish the magnitude of differences for each service attribute. The comparative findings therefore provide preliminary descriptive evidence of differences in passenger satisfaction between the two ferry operators. Further statistical analysis would be required to determine whether the observed differences are statistically significant and to identify the relative contributions of individual service dimensions to overall passenger satisfaction.

Passenger Satisfaction Levels with ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) Ferry Services on the Selayar Route

Passenger satisfaction levels for ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) ferry services were interpreted using the Community Satisfaction Index (*Indeks Kepuasan Masyarakat*, IKM) classification presented in Table 2. This classification categorizes service performance into four levels based on perception scores and their corresponding converted index values.

Table 2. Community Satisfaction Index (IKM) Classification Intervals.

Perception Score	Score Interval	Converted Index Interval	Service Quality Grade	Service Quality Category
1	1.00–1.75	25.00–43.75	D	Poor
2	1.76–2.50	43.76–62.50	C	Fair
3	2.51–3.25	62.51–81.25	B	Good
4	3.26–4.00	81.26–100.00	A	Very Good

Source: National Civil Service Agency (BKN), Central Office and Regional Offices, 2016.

Based on the classification intervals presented in Table 2, the mean passenger satisfaction scores of both ferry operators fall within the Good (Category B) service quality classification. ASDP recorded an average satisfaction score of 64.68, whereas DLU achieved a higher mean score of 72.96. Both values are within the converted index interval of 62.51–81.25, indicating that passengers generally evaluated the services of both operators favorably. Nevertheless, the difference of 8.28 points suggests that DLU received more positive overall passenger satisfaction assessments than ASDP. In addition to the mean scores, the descriptive statistical results provide information regarding the variability of passenger evaluations. The standard deviation and variance describe the dispersion of observations around their respective group means. ASDP recorded a standard deviation of 7.894, while DLU exhibited a slightly lower value of 7.536. These results indicate that passenger satisfaction scores for ASDP were somewhat more dispersed, whereas those for DLU were relatively more concentrated around the group mean. The corresponding variances were 62.310 for ASDP and 56.790 for DLU, supporting the observed difference in score dispersion.

Differences in the score ranges further illustrate the distribution of passenger satisfaction assessments. ASDP recorded a range of 34 points, with scores extending from 46 to 80, whereas DLU had a narrower range of 28 points, with scores between 52 and 80. This indicates greater variability in the satisfaction scores reported for ASDP, while DLU demonstrated a comparatively narrower distribution of passenger evaluations. Overall, both operators were classified within the Good

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service quality category based on the adopted IKM intervals. However, DLU achieved a higher mean satisfaction score and slightly lower score variability, indicating more favorable and relatively consistent passenger satisfaction assessments among the respondents.

Factors Influencing Passenger Satisfaction with ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama Ferry Services

Based on questionnaires distributed to 25 ASDP passengers and 25 DLU passengers, five principal service-related factors were identified as relevant to passenger satisfaction. These factors and their reported percentages are summarized as follows:

1. Departure punctuality (44%).
2. Crew service quality (52%).
3. Vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities (54%).
4. Ticket prices (44%).
5. Passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures (50%).

Among the five factors, vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities recorded the highest reported percentage (54%), followed by crew service quality (52%) and passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures (50%). Departure punctuality and ticket prices each recorded 44%. These findings suggest that passengers placed considerable importance on onboard conditions, service interactions, and passenger handling procedures when evaluating ferry transportation services. Vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities represent important aspects of the passenger travel experience because they influence perceived comfort and the usability of passenger spaces during a voyage. Adequate seating, maintained sanitary facilities, and accessible onboard amenities may contribute to favorable service assessments. Similarly, crew service quality plays an essential role in shaping passenger perceptions through employee responsiveness, courtesy, communication, and assistance during transportation activities.

Passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures are also important operational considerations. Well-organized boarding arrangements and efficient passenger movement can improve travel convenience, particularly during periods of high passenger demand. Meanwhile, departure punctuality contributes to service reliability, and ticket pricing influences passengers' perceptions of affordability and value relative to the quality of services received. These findings are consistent with the customer service perspective proposed by William B. Martin, which emphasizes that service quality should be understood and evaluated from the customer's point of view. Under this perspective, a service can be considered satisfactory when customers perceive that their needs and expectations have been adequately addressed [6].

The findings also align with the view that service quality cannot be assessed solely from the service provider's perspective but should incorporate customers' evaluations of their experiences. The quality of services delivered to passengers should correspond to their expectations, while consistent employee performance and organizational commitment are essential for maintaining favorable service perceptions [7]. Accordingly, the results highlight the relevance of customer-centered service management in ferry transportation. The reported percentages provide descriptive information concerning passengers' evaluations of the five service factors; however, further statistical analysis would be required to establish their independent effects on overall passenger satisfaction.

Comparison of Service Quality and Operational Performance Between ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama

The comparative evaluation was based on questionnaire responses obtained from a total of 50 passenger observations, consisting of 25 evaluations for ASDP and 25 for Dharma Lautan Utama. The assessment examined differences in perceived service quality and operational performance between the two ferry operators serving the Selayar route. The research findings indicate that DLU achieved higher overall passenger satisfaction than ASDP. This result is reflected in the mean satisfaction scores, with DLU recording 72.96 compared with 64.68 for ASDP. The observed difference of 8.28 points suggests that DLU services were evaluated more favorably by the respondents included in the study.

The reported percentage comparison also indicates that DLU received higher assessments across the evaluated passenger satisfaction indicators, whereas ASDP's highest reported percentage was approximately 30%. These differences suggest variation in passenger perceptions of the services and operational arrangements provided by the two ferry operators. The comparative findings emphasize the importance of service reliability, onboard comfort, crew responsiveness, ticket affordability, and efficient passenger handling in maintaining passenger satisfaction. Higher evaluations of these attributes may reflect favorable passenger experiences and contribute to positive overall assessments of ferry services.

Nevertheless, the available results primarily demonstrate descriptive differences between the two operators. Although DLU recorded a higher mean satisfaction score and more favorable reported percentages across the assessed indicators, statistical significance cannot be established without an appropriate inferential comparison test. In addition, the interpretation of indicator-level differences requires the complete percentage distributions for both operators. From an operational perspective, these results suggest that continuous improvements in service delivery and passenger facilities may contribute to better passenger experiences. ASDP may benefit from evaluating service attributes associated with lower passenger

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assessments, while DLU should maintain and periodically assess the service practices contributing to its relatively favorable evaluations.

Overall, the comparison indicates that both ferry operators achieved a Good service quality classification under the adopted satisfaction index, with DLU obtaining a higher average score. The findings provide descriptive evidence that may support service improvement initiatives and passenger-oriented operational planning for ferry transportation serving Selayar.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a comparative assessment of passenger satisfaction with ferry services operated by PT ASDP Indonesia Ferry and Dharma Lautan Utama (DLU) on the Selayar route. Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The results indicate that passenger satisfaction scores for ASDP exhibited greater variability than those for Dharma Lautan Utama. ASDP recorded a score range of 34, with values ranging from 46 to 80, whereas DLU demonstrated a narrower range of 28, with scores ranging from 52 to 80. These findings suggest that passenger satisfaction assessments were more widely dispersed for ASDP, while DLU received comparatively more consistent evaluations.
2. The study identified five principal factors associated with passenger satisfaction: (1) departure punctuality, (2) crew service quality, (3) vessel cleanliness and onboard facilities, (4) ticket prices, and (5) passenger embarkation and disembarkation procedures. These factors represent important aspects of ferry transportation services that should be considered when evaluating and improving the overall passenger experience.
3. The comparative findings indicate that Dharma Lautan Utama received higher reported percentages across the evaluated passenger satisfaction indicators, whereas ASDP's highest reported percentage was approximately 30%. These results suggest that DLU achieved more favorable passenger evaluations across the assessed service dimensions.

Overall, the study highlights differences in passenger satisfaction between ASDP and Dharma Lautan Utama ferry services and emphasizes the importance of service quality, operational reliability, and passenger comfort in improving maritime transportation services on the Selayar route.

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