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*Research Article*

# The Impact of Operational Performance and Pricing Policy on Purchase Intention for Economy-Class Train Services

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**Abstract**
This study aims to analyze the effect of operational performance and pricing policy on purchase intention for long-distance economy-class train tickets at Bekasi Station. Fluctuations in passenger numbers and relatively low growth compared to market potential indicate unstable consumer purchase intention. Operational issues such as delays and facility complaints, as well as perceptions of price-value mismatches, are assumed to influence consumer decisions. A quantitative survey approach was employed using primary data collected from 76 economy-class passengers. Data were analyzed through validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests, and multiple linear regression using SPSS. The results reveal that operational performance and pricing policy have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, both partially and simultaneously. The coefficient of determination shows that these two variables explain 97.5% of the variation in purchase intention. The findings conclude that improving punctuality, service quality, and facility comfort, and implementing competitive, value-based pricing strategies are crucial to increasing consumer interest. Managerially, the study contributes practical insights for railway operators in designing operational improvements and adaptive pricing strategies to enhance competitiveness and passenger demand.

Keywords: Operational Performance, Pricing Policy, Purchase Intention, Economy-Class Train.

JEL Classification: L92, M31, D12

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## 1. Introduction

Rail-based transportation plays a strategic role in supporting economic mobility and regional connectivity, particularly in densely populated urban corridors such as the Bekasi–Surabaya route. Public transport systems are expected to provide reliable, affordable, and efficient services to remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic market environment (Ibrahim et al., 2020). In Indonesia, long-distance rail services, especially economy-class trains, serve a large segment of middle-income consumers who are highly sensitive to service performance and pricing policies.

However, fluctuations in passenger volume indicate that consumer purchase intention is not yet fully stable, suggesting operational and pricing-related challenges that may influence consumer decisions (Georgiadis et al., 2023).

Operational performance is widely recognized as a critical determinant of service-based competitiveness. In transportation services, punctuality, comfort, safety, and service responsiveness significantly shape passengers' behavioral intentions (Wang et al., 2020). Empirical evidence suggests that service quality dimensions directly influence satisfaction and reuse intention in urban rail systems (Wang et al., 2020). Similarly, post-pandemic rail transport studies emphasize that reliability and perceived service assurance are essential drivers of passenger intention to utilize rail services (Georgiadis et al., 2023). Despite ongoing improvements in Indonesian railway services, operational issues such as delays, inconsistent boarding processes, and facility complaints remain concerns that may reduce consumer confidence and weaken purchase intention.

In addition to operational performance, pricing policy serves as a strategic marketing instrument that directly affects perceived value and consumer decision-making. Price is the only marketing mix element that generates revenue while simultaneously signaling service quality to customers (Kotler et al., 2021). Recent research in rail revenue management demonstrates that dynamic pricing and seat allocation strategies significantly affect demand behavior and operational efficiency (Zhou et al., 2021). Moreover, flexible pricing strategies integrated with fleet management decisions have been shown to increase passenger demand and revenue by optimizing perceived value (Zeyaullah et al., 2023). Nevertheless, in the context of economy-class rail services in Indonesia, consumers may perceive a mismatch between ticket prices and service benefits, which could reduce their willingness to repurchase.

From a behavioral perspective, purchase intention reflects consumers' evaluative responses toward service attributes and perceived value. The Theory of Planned Behavior posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control determine intention formation (Ajzen, 1991). In transportation services, operational reliability and price fairness contribute to positive attitudes and enhance perceived control over purchasing decisions (Hanafiah & Djabbar, 2024). Therefore, understanding how operational performance and pricing policy simultaneously influence purchase intention is essential for developing effective managerial strategies in rail transportation services.

Although numerous studies have examined service quality and pricing in transportation contexts, most research focuses on urban rail transit, digital ticketing services, or high-speed rail systems in international settings (Wang et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021). Limited empirical studies specifically investigate long-distance economy-class rail services in Indonesia, particularly at Bekasi Station, as one of the busiest commuter and intercity hubs. This indicates a clear research gap in understanding how operational performance and pricing policy jointly affect purchase intention within the Indonesian railway market. Furthermore, prior studies often examine service quality and pricing independently, rather than integrating them within a single analytical framework.

Despite extensive literature examining governance mechanisms and their influence on taxpayer behavior, empirical evidence that clearly explains how specific governance dimensions shape tax compliance remains limited, particularly in developing economies. Previous studies generally emphasize institutional quality or enforcement mechanisms, yet fewer studies integrate governance-related factors within a comprehensive analytical framework that directly explains taxpayer compliance behavior. Therefore, this study seeks to address this empirical gap by examining how governance-related variables influence tax compliance using a quantitative approach. The theoretical contribution of this research lies in extending the tax compliance literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of governance factors in shaping compliance behavior. In addition, this study offers a clearer differentiation from prior governance–compliance research by focusing on specific governance dimensions and testing their simultaneous influence on tax compliance, thereby providing more focused insights for policy formulation and institutional improvement.

## 2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

### Literature Review

#### Operational Performance

Operational performance reflects an organization's ability to deliver services effectively, efficiently, and consistently to meet customer expectations. In service industries, operational performance encompasses reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible aspects of service delivery (Parasuraman et al., 2019). Within rail transportation, operational performance is commonly associated with punctuality, comfort, safety, and service responsiveness, which directly influence passengers' perceptions of service quality and trust (Ibrahim et al., 2020). Reliable operational systems enhance service credibility and reduce perceived risk, thereby strengthening consumer confidence in public transportation services (Georgiadis et al., 2023).

From an operations management perspective, performance excellence is achieved when service processes align with customer value expectations, including timeliness and flexibility (Heizer et al., 2020). In rail-based systems, delays, inconsistent boarding processes, and limited service assurance negatively affect passengers' evaluations of overall service quality (Wang et al., 2020). Empirical findings further indicate that improvements in operational reliability and service assurance significantly increase customer satisfaction and reuse intention in rail transit systems (Wang et al., 2020; Georgiadis et al., 2023). Therefore, operational performance is a critical determinant of behavioral intention in transportation services.

#### Pricing Policy

Pricing policy represents a strategic decision-making framework that determines how firms set, adjust, and manage prices to achieve competitive positioning and financial sustainability. Price functions not only as a revenue generator but also as a signal of value and quality in the consumer's evaluation process (Kotler et al., 2021). In service contexts, perceived price fairness and value congruence significantly influence consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2020).

In rail transportation, dynamic pricing and revenue management systems are increasingly implemented to optimize seat allocation and demand patterns (Zhou et al., 2021). Empirical studies demonstrate that adaptive pricing strategies aligned with operational efficiency positively affect demand and revenue performance (Zeyaullah et al., 2023). However, when passengers perceive a discrepancy between ticket price and service benefits, purchase intention may decline (Hanafiah & Djabbar, 2024). Thus, pricing policy must balance affordability, competitiveness, and perceived service value to sustain passenger demand.

#### Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's conscious plan or willingness to buy a product or service in the future. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, intention is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2022). In transportation services, attitudes toward operational reliability and perceived price fairness significantly shape behavioral intention (Hanafiah & Djabbar, 2024).

Marketing literature emphasizes that purchase intention arises after consumers evaluate alternative options based on service quality, price, and perceived value (Kotler et al., 2021). In rail transit research, service quality and satisfaction have been shown to influence reuse intention and recommendation behavior positively (Wang et al., 2020). Similarly, studies in post-pandemic rail transport confirm that operational reliability and perceived safety significantly affect passengers' intention to utilize rail services (Georgiadis et al., 2023). Therefore, purchase intention in rail transportation is closely associated with both operational excellence and strategic pricing decisions.

### Hypothesis

#### The Effect of Operational Performance on Purchase Intention

Operational performance directly influences consumers' evaluations of service quality and reliability. According to service quality theory, reliable and responsive service delivery enhances

customer trust and satisfaction, which, in turn, drives behavioral intention (Parasuraman et al., 2019). In rail transportation, punctuality and comfort significantly predict passengers' satisfaction and intention to reuse (Wang et al., 2020). Georgiadis et al. (2023) also found that operational reliability and assurance positively affect passengers' intention to use rail transport in the post-pandemic era.

Furthermore, Ibrahim et al. (2020) identified punctuality and service accessibility as key determinants of user satisfaction in rail-based systems. In the Indonesian context, Hanafiah and Djabbar (2024) confirmed that service quality dimensions significantly influence transportation purchase intention. These findings collectively suggest that improved operational performance strengthens passengers' positive attitudes and perceived behavioral control, ultimately increasing purchase intention.

**H1: Operational performance has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention for economy-class train tickets.**

**The Effect of Pricing Policy on Purchase Intention**

Pricing policy plays a central role in shaping consumers' perceptions of value and fairness. Price fairness theory posits that consumers evaluate whether the monetary sacrifice aligns with the benefits received (Kotler et al., 2021). When pricing strategies are perceived as reasonable and competitive, consumers are more likely to develop favorable purchase intentions (Hinterhuber & Liozu, 2020).

Empirical research in high-speed rail systems demonstrates that differential pricing strategies significantly influence passenger demand patterns (Zhou et al., 2021). Zeyaullah et al. (2023) further found that flexible pricing, when integrated with operational efficiency, increases demand and passenger interest. In transportation marketing studies, perceived price fairness has been shown to positively affect purchase intention and decision-making (Hanafiah & Djabbar, 2024). Consistent with consumer behavior theory, fair and value-based pricing enhances perceived benefits and strengthens buying intention.

**H2: Pricing policy has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention for economy-class train tickets.**

**The Simultaneous Effect of Operational Performance and Pricing Policy on Purchase Intention**

Consumer decision-making in service industries involves multidimensional evaluations, including quality, performance and price considerations (Kotler et al., 2021). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, both attitudinal and control-related factors jointly influence intention formation (Ajzen, 2022). Operational reliability builds positive attitudes, while price fairness enhances perceived behavioral control, creating a combined effect on purchase intention.

Previous studies have demonstrated that service quality and pricing simultaneously influence consumer behavioral intention (Hanafiah & Djabbar, 2024). Research by Wang et al. (2020) confirmed that service quality indirectly strengthens reuse intention through satisfaction, while pricing perception reinforces value evaluation. Additionally, Zhou et al. (2021) emphasized that integrating operational efficiency with pricing strategies optimizes passenger demand behavior. These findings indicate that operational and pricing strategies function synergistically in shaping consumer intention.

**H3: Operational performance and pricing policy simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention for economy-class train tickets.**

## 3. Data and Method

**Research Design**

This study employs a quantitative research design, using a survey approach, to examine the effects of operational performance and pricing policy on purchase intention for economy-class train tickets. A quantitative method is appropriate because it allows hypothesis testing through statistical procedures and objective measurement of relationships among variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

The research adopts an explanatory design to identify causal relationships among the independent variables (operational performance and pricing policy) and the dependent variable (purchase intention).

**Population and Sample**

The population of this study consists of all passengers who purchase long-distance economy-class train tickets at Bekasi Station. Since the exact number of economy-class passengers fluctuates daily and cannot be determined with certainty, this study applies a non-probability sampling technique, specifically accidental sampling. Respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate at the time of data collection. The sample size consists of 76 respondents. According to Hair et al. (2019), for multiple linear regression analysis, the minimum sample size should be at least 5–10 times the number of indicators analyzed. Therefore, the selected sample size is considered adequate to represent the research model and ensure statistical reliability.

**Data Collection Technique**

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed directly to economy-class passengers at Bekasi Station. Before distribution, the questionnaire items were tested for validity and reliability to ensure measurement accuracy. Validity testing was conducted using Pearson correlation, while reliability testing employed Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019).

**Data Analysis Method and Research Model**

Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression in SPSS. Multiple regression is used to determine the partial and simultaneous effects of independent variables on the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2021). Prior to hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests were conducted, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

## 4. Results

**Normality Test Results**

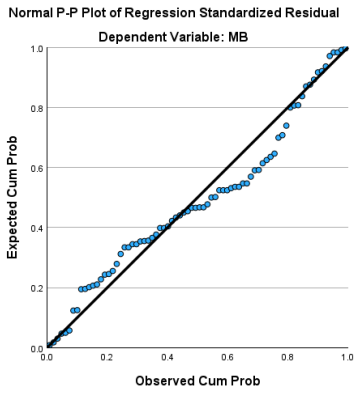


**Figure 1. Normality Test Results**

Based on the Probability Plot (P), the data appear approximately normal. The points appear to lie near the diagonal line and follow it, indicating that the data in this study are normally distributed.

**Linearity Test Results**

**Table 1. Linearity Test Results**

| Variables | Deviation From Linearity | Significance Level | Information |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operational Performance = Purchase Interest | 0,022 | 0,05 | Linier |
| Pricing Policy = Purchase Interest | 0,004 | 0,05 | Linier |

Source: Processed Data (2025)

Based on the linearity test above, the ANOVA Table obtained a significant value for the Deviation for Linearity (0.022 > 0.05) for the variables Operational Performance and Purchase Intention. This indicates linearity, thereby concluding that the linearity requirement holds, namely, a linear relationship between Operational Performance and Purchase Intention. Meanwhile, the Deviation for Linearity (0.004 > 0.005) for the variable Purchase Intention also shows a significant value. This indicates linearity, thereby concluding that the linearity requirement holds, namely, a linear relationship between Pricing Policy and Purchase Intention.

**Multicollinearity Test Results**

**Table 2. Multicollinearity Test Results**

| Independent Variable | Tolerance | VIF | Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| Operational Performance | 0,192 | 5,197 | No Multicollinearity Occurs |
| Pricing Policy | 0,192 | 5,197 | No Multicollinearity Occurs |

Source: Primary data processed with SPSS (2025).

Based on the multicollinearity test results in Table 2 above, the following was obtained: the Operational Performance variable had a tolerance of 0.192 (VIF = 5.197); the Pricing Policy variable had a tolerance of 0.192 (VIF = 5.197). The test results indicate that each variable has a tolerance value greater than 0.10 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value less than 10, indicating no multicollinearity problem. Thus, there is no high correlation between the dependent variables.

**Heteroscedasticity Test Results**

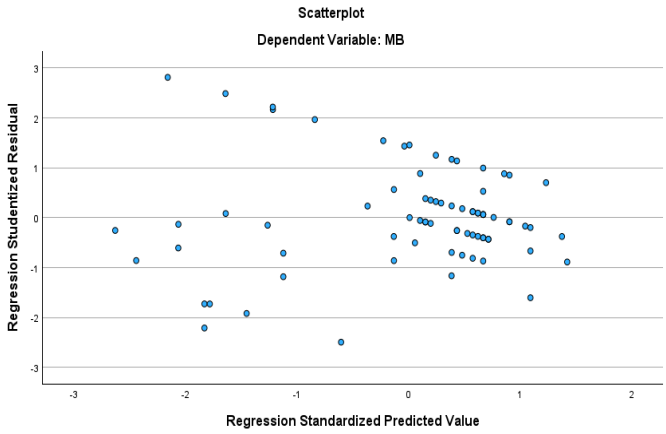


**Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity Test Results**

Based on the scatterplot above, the regression model does not exhibit heteroscedasticity. This is indicated by the distribution of data points, which do not form a specific pattern and are randomly distributed above and below zero on the Y-axis.

**Coefficient of Determination Results**

The coefficient of determination measures the extent to which independent variables influence the dependent variable. The coefficients of determination values in this study are:

**Table 3. Coefficient of Determination Test Results**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Eror of Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ,987[a] | ,975 | ,974 | ,677 |

Source processed using SPSS Primary Data (2025).

The R-Square value is 0.975, which indicates that the independent variables influence the dependent variable simultaneously (together) by 97% in this model, with the remaining 2.5% influenced by other variables outside the model.

**T-Test Results**

**Table 4. T-Test Results**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3,053 | ,627 | | 4,872 | <,001 |
| | Operational Performance | ,636 | ,026 | ,888 | 24,630 | <,001 |
| | Pricing Policy | ,095 | ,030 | ,114 | 3,173 | ,002 |

Source processed using SPSS Primary Data (2025).

Based on the results of primary data processing using SPSS (2025), the partial test shows that Operational Performance has a t-value of 24.630 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), exceeding the t-table value of 1.993 ($df = 73$), indicating a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention. This means that the better the perceived punctuality, cleanliness, comfort, and service, the greater the interest in purchasing economy-class train tickets. In addition, Price Policy also shows a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention with a t-value of 3.173 and a significance of 0.002 ($p <0.05$), which is also greater than the t-table 1.993, so that Hypothesis (H2) is declared accepted.

## 5. Discussion

**The Effect of Operational Performance on Purchase Intention**

The findings indicate that operational performance has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention for economy-class train tickets. This suggests that passengers' perceptions of punctuality, reliability, comfort, and service responsiveness play a central role in shaping their willingness to repurchase or recommend train services. In service-based industries, operational consistency reduces perceived risk and strengthens trust, which ultimately encourages behavioral intention. This result aligns with service quality theory, which emphasizes that reliability and responsiveness are key determinants of consumer intention (Parasuraman et al., 2019). In the context of rail transportation, Wang et al. (2020) found that improved service quality significantly increases passengers' intention to reuse. Similarly, Georgiadis et al. (2023) demonstrated that operational reliability and assurance positively influence passengers' intention to use rail services in the post-pandemic era. Ibrahim et al. (2020) further confirmed that punctuality and accessibility are critical factors affecting user satisfaction and future usage intention in rail-based public transport. Theoretically, these findings support the Theory of Planned Behavior, where positive service experiences shape favorable attitudes that strengthen purchase intention (Ajzen, 2022). From a managerial perspective, maintaining operational excellence is not merely a technical objective but a strategic effort to secure long-term passenger loyalty and demand stability.

**The Effect of Pricing Policy on Purchase Intention**

The results also reveal that pricing policy positively and significantly affects purchase intention. This indicates that when passengers perceive ticket prices as fair, affordable, and aligned with service value, they are more inclined to purchase economy-class train tickets. Price serves not only as a monetary sacrifice but also as a signal of value, influencing consumer evaluations and decision-making. This finding is consistent with pricing theory, which states that perceived price fairness and value congruence significantly determine consumer behavioral intention (Kotler et al., 2021). Hinterhuber and Liozu (2020) emphasized that strategic pricing aligned with customer value perceptions enhances purchase likelihood and competitiveness. In the transportation sector, Zhou et al. (2021) found that effective differential pricing strategies significantly influence passenger demand patterns.

Additionally, Hanafiah and Djabbar (2024) confirmed that perceived price fairness positively impacts transportation purchase intention. These findings suggest that pricing strategies in rail transportation should consider both affordability and perceived service benefits. A well-designed pricing policy strengthens perceived behavioral control and enhances consumers' confidence in making purchase decisions, thereby increasing demand for economy-class train services.

**The Simultaneous Effect of Operational Performance and Pricing Policy on Purchase Intention**

The study further demonstrates that operational performance and pricing policy simultaneously influence purchase intention. This indicates that consumer decisions are formed through a multidimensional evaluation process that integrates service quality and price considerations. Passengers assess not only whether the service operates efficiently but also whether the price paid reflects the benefits received. This result is consistent with marketing decision-making theory, which highlights that consumers evaluate overall value as a combination of perceived quality and perceived price (Kotler et al., 2021). Wang et al. (2020) found that service quality strengthens reuse intention, while pricing perception enhances value assessment. Zhou et al. (2021) also emphasized that integrating operational efficiency with adaptive pricing strategies optimizes passenger demand behavior.

Furthermore, Hanafiah and Djabbar (2024) showed that service quality and price perception jointly influence transportation purchase intention. Theoretically, this supports the integrative perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior, which holds that attitude and perceived control jointly shape intention (Ajzen, 2022). A balanced strategy that ensures reliable service performance and fair pricing is essential to enhance competitiveness and sustain passenger growth in the rail transportation sector.

## 6. Conclusion

This study concludes that operational performance and pricing policy play a significant role in shaping purchase intention for economy-class train tickets. The findings confirm that passengers are more likely to purchase tickets when they perceive train services as punctual, reliable, comfortable, and responsive. At the same time, fair, affordable, and value-based pricing policies strengthen consumers' confidence in making purchase decisions. The simultaneous influence of these two variables indicates that purchase intention is formed through an integrated evaluation process that combines service quality and price considerations. Thus, achieving consistent operational excellence and implementing effective pricing strategies are essential to enhancing passenger interest and sustaining demand in the rail transportation sector.

From a managerial perspective, railway operators should prioritize improving operational reliability, including punctual departures and arrivals, efficient boarding systems, and enhanced service responsiveness to maintain passenger trust. In addition, pricing strategies should be carefully designed to reflect service value, ensure affordability for economy-class passengers, and remain competitive with alternative transportation modes. Integrating operational improvements with adaptive and transparent pricing policies can strengthen market positioning, increase passenger loyalty, and support long-term business sustainability in the railway industry.

## Recommendation

Railway management should prioritize improving punctuality, boarding efficiency, cabin cleanliness, and real-time service communication to strengthen passengers' perceptions of operational reliability. Pricing policies should be regularly evaluated to ensure affordability and fairness, particularly for economy-class passengers, while applying demand-based pricing carefully to avoid negative price perceptions. Future researchers are encouraged to expand the sample size across multiple stations, include additional variables, such as customer satisfaction or perceived value, as mediators, and apply longitudinal or experimental designs to obtain deeper insights into consumer behavioral dynamics in rail transportation services.

## Limitations and avenues for future research

This study has several limitations. First, it focuses only on economy-class passengers at a single station, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other routes, service classes, or regions. Second, cross-sectional survey data capture perceptions at a single point in time and do not reflect changes in behavior over time. Third, the analysis relies on self-reported responses and multiple linear regression, which may not fully capture complex relationships among variables. Future research should involve broader samples, longitudinal designs, and advanced analytical methods such as SEM to provide deeper insights.

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