

An Empirical Analysis of Service Quality and Price Toward Customer Satisfaction in Regional Transportation Services

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of service quality and price on customer satisfaction with the TravelQ travel services in Tembilahan City. The research employs a quantitative, explanatory survey approach with 96 respondents. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicate that service quality has a significant effect on customer satisfaction ($t = 2.797$; $p < 0.05$), whereas price exerts a more substantial influence ($t = 3.985$; $p < 0.05$). Simultaneously, both variables have a significant effect on customer satisfaction ($F = 12.324$; $p < 0.05$). The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.210 indicates that 21% of the variation in customer satisfaction is explained by service quality and price, with the remaining 79% influenced by other factors outside the model. These findings emphasize that perceived price suitability is the most dominant factor in shaping customer satisfaction, while service quality contributes through comfort and travel experience. Therefore, aligning service improvement efforts with pricing strategies is essential for TravelQ to meet customer expectations effectively.

Keywords service quality, price, customer satisfaction, TravelQ

INTRODUCTION

Transportation plays a crucial role in enabling the mobility of modern society, particularly in regions where social and economic activity continues to grow. Safe, fast, affordable, and accessible transportation services have become essential for people to carry out their daily activities. These conditions have stimulated the emergence of various transportation modes that aim to meet user expectations regarding travel comfort and efficiency. In the land transportation sector, increasing demand is reflected in the public's tendency to choose services that offer reliability, flexibility, and consistent operational quality (Mutaqin et al., 2023).

In Tembilahan City, travel services have become a widely used mode of transportation for intercity trips. Operational data from TravelQ over the past six months indicate fluctuating passenger volumes, with a decline of approximately 12–18% on weekdays and an increase of up to 20% during extended holiday periods. This pattern suggests that demand is influenced not only by seasonal factors but also by service quality and the company's pricing structure (TravelQ, 2023). These dynamics highlight the importance of understanding how these two variables shape user experiences when utilizing travel services.

Service quality is a central factor affecting customer satisfaction. Service dimensions such as punctuality, staff reliability, empathy, and safety have been shown to contribute significantly to positive customer perceptions (Silaban et al., 2021). Fulfilling consumer expectations through high-quality service lays the foundation for satisfaction (Tjiptono, 2014). In addition, price perception plays a significant role; prices perceived as matching the benefits received tend to increase customer satisfaction (Ariffin et al., 2017). In non-metropolitan areas, price sensitivity tends to be higher than in metropolitan regions due to limited mode choices and differing socioeconomic conditions (Nugroho & Wulandari, 2022).

Given the distinct characteristics of users in Tembilahan and the limited research available in non-metropolitan contexts, this study becomes particularly relevant. This research

aims to provide a deeper understanding of how service quality and pricing shape customer satisfaction with TravelQ. Accordingly, the study.

METHOD

Research design

This study employs a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among service quality, pricing, and customer satisfaction among users of the TravelQ land transportation service in Tembilahan City. Referring to Sugiyono (2018), the quantitative approach is grounded in the positivist paradigm, involving a clearly defined population and sample, the use of measurable research instruments, and the processing of data in numerical form through statistical techniques. Accordingly, this method is selected because all findings are expressed numerically and allow the hypotheses to be tested objectively.

Research site

To meet the needs of this research, the selected object of study is the land transportation service operated by TravelQ on the Tembilahan–Pekanbaru route, located at Jalan Lingkar I No. 12, Tembilahan, Indragiri Hilir.

Population and Sample

According to Sugiyono (2016), a population refers to the entire set of elements that possess specific characteristics and serve as the basis for research generalisation. In this study, the population comprises all users of the TravelQ transportation service on the Tembilahan–Pekanbaru route. Since the population size is unknown and fluctuating, this research employs probability sampling, ensuring that each user has an equal chance of being selected as a respondent. The sample size is determined using the Lemeshow formula, which is commonly applied when the population size is unknown (infinite population). This approach ensures that the resulting sample size is statistically adequate to support the reliability of the study's generalisations (Sugiyono, 2017):

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P (1-P)}{d^2} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Note:

- n = Sample Size
- d = Precision (0.10) or 10% sampling error
- P = Estimated proportion = 0.5
- Z = Desired confidence level of 95% = 1.96

Thus, the total sample is:

$$n = \frac{(1,96)^2 \times 0,5 (1-0,5)}{(0,10)^2} \dots\dots\dots (2)$$
$$n = 96,04 = 96$$

Thus, the total sample size in this study is 96 respondents.

Research Instrument

According to Sugiyono (2018), a research instrument is a tool used to measure a phenomenon, whether social or natural. In this study, respondents' perceptions were assessed using a Likert scale. This scale measures individuals' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions

toward a social phenomenon. Each variable is translated into a set of indicators, which are then formulated into question or statement items within the research instrument.

Table 1. Scores for Respondents' Answers

No.	Response Category	Score
1.	Strongly Agree	5
2.	Agree	4
3.	Neutral	3
4.	Disagree	2
5.	Strongly Disagree	1

The questionnaire was distributed to TravelQ customers in Tembilahan City to assess how service quality and pricing contribute to shaping their satisfaction. In addition, this study employs the Respondent Achievement Level (Tingkat Capaian Responden/TCR) analysis to categorize the responses for each variable. The TCR calculation is carried out using a specific formula that indicates the level of achievement or the strength of respondents' responses.

$$TCR = \frac{R_s}{n} \times 100\% \dots\dots\dots(3)$$

Note:

- TCR = Respondents' Achievement Level
- Rs = Average score of respondents' answers
- n = Maximum possible score

Table 2. TCR Scale Rating

No.	Rating Scale	TCR Category
1.	81.0 – 100%	Very Good
2.	61.0 – 80.99%	Good
3.	41.0 – 60.99%	Fairly Good
4.	21.0 – 40.99%	Fair
5.	0.0 – 20.99%	Poor

Instrument Test

Before data collection, validity and reliability tests were conducted on the questionnaire items used in the study.

Validity Test

The validity test aims to ensure that each questionnaire item can measure the concept at the focus of the research. An instrument is considered valid when the questions constructed can represent the variables being examined, allowing the resulting data to accurately and reliably reflect the actual condition of the object under study. In this research, the validity test was conducted using SPSS. The validity of each item was assessed by comparing the obtained correlation value with the r -value listed in the product-moment Table.

- a. If the calculated r value exceeds the critical r value (at the 5% significance level), the questionnaire item can be considered valid.
- b. If the calculated r value is lower than the critical r value (at the 5% significance level), the questionnaire item is deemed invalid.

Reliability Test

Reliability testing assesses the extent to which a questionnaire yields consistent responses that reflect the constructs being measured (Ghozali, 2009). An instrument is considered reliable when an individual's responses to questionnaire items remain stable over time.

Multiple Linear Regression

Consumer satisfaction testing was further analyzed using multiple linear regression, with the testing procedure conducted through the following steps:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \varepsilon_i \dots\dots\dots(4)$$

Note:

- Y = Estimated mean value of consumer satisfaction.
- β_0 = Constant term of the regression equation
- β_1 = Regression coefficient of variable X_1 (service quality)
- X_1 = Score of the service quality dimension
- β_2 = Regression coefficient of variable X_2 (price dimension)
- X_2 = Score of the price dimension

Normality Test

According to Ghozali (2016), the normality test is conducted to ensure that the independent and dependent variables in the regression model are normally distributed. Meanwhile, multicollinearity can be examined using tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF), which indicate the extent to which other independent variables influence an independent variable. Commonly accepted criteria for the absence of multicollinearity are a tolerance value greater than 0.10 or a VIF value less than 10 (Ghozali, 2018).

Hypothesis Testing

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to assess the extent to which a model can explain the variation occurring in the dependent variable. The value of R^2 ranges from 0 to 1. A low R^2 value indicates that the independent variables can explain only a small portion of the changes in the dependent variable. Conversely, a value approaching 1 suggests that almost all variations in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in the model (Ghozali, 2016).

F-Test

According to Ghozali (2016), the F-test is used to assess whether all independent variables included in the regression model simultaneously have a significant effect on the dependent variable. Essentially, the null hypothesis (H_0) states that all regression coefficients are equal to zero, meaning that the independent variables do not provide a significant explanation of the dependent variable. Using a significance level (α) of 0.05, the F-test is conducted to determine whether the regression model as a whole is adequate and whether the tested independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable.

- a. If the calculated F (F_{hitung}) > F_{tabel} , H_0 is rejected.
- b. If the calculated F (F_{hitung}) < F_{tabel} , H_0 is accepted.

T-Test

The t-test essentially indicates the extent to which an individual independent variable influences the variation in the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2016). The purpose of testing individual parameters is to determine whether each variable, considered individually, has a significant effect on the dependent variable while assuming that all other independent variables remain constant, using the following formula:

$$t_o = \frac{b_i}{s_{b_i}} \dots\dots\dots(5)$$

Note:

- b_i = Regression coefficient of X_i
- s_{b_i} = Standard error of the regression coefficient b_i
- t_o = Calculated or observed t-value

Testing Criteria:

- a. If the calculated t (t_{hitung}) > t_{tabel} and the significance value (p-value) < 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.
- b. If the calculated t (t_{hitung}) < t_{tabel} and the significance value (p-value) > 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

In this study, a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) was used.

DISCUSSION

Brief History of TravelQ

TravelQ is a transportation service operated by PT Agung Solusi Trans, a subsidiary of Agung Toyota under the Agung Concern Group. Its establishment is grounded in a commitment to supporting national development through reliable, high-quality transport services. The company adopts a partnership-oriented approach to ensure balanced benefits for all stakeholders. TravelQ's services are designed with a strong emphasis on passenger comfort and safety, offering executive seating and maintaining consistent departure schedules. The company operates intercity shuttle routes between Pekanbaru and Dumai, and between Pekanbaru and Tembilahan, supported by a fleet of Toyota Hiace and Mitsubishi Elf vehicles.

Respondent Characteristics

Based on Passenger Age

The age-based characteristics of respondents using TravelQ services in Tembilahan on the Tembilahan-Pekanbaru route are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age

No	Age	Frequency	Percent
1.	17 – 25	46	47,9 %
2.	26 – 35	14	14,6 %
3.	36 – 45	26	27,1 %
4.	> 45	10	10,4 %
Total		96	100 %

Source: Primary Data, 2023

Based on Table 3, the respondents who most frequently used TravelQ were those aged 17-25, accounting for 47.9% (46 respondents). Meanwhile, passengers aged 26-35, 35-45, and 45+ totaled 14, 26, and 10 respondents, with respective proportions of 14.6%, 27.1%, and 10.4%.

Characteristics Based on Gender

The respondent data based on gender characteristics are presented in Table 3.2 below:

Tabel 4. Distribusi Frekuensi Responden Berdasarkan Jenis Kelamin

No	Gender	Frequency	Percent
1.	Male	36	37,5 %
2.	Female	60	62,5 %
Total		96	100 %

Source: Primary Data, 2023

Based on Table 3.2, the majority of respondents were female, representing 62.5% or 60 individuals. Meanwhile, 36 respondents were male, accounting for 37.5% of the total.

Characteristics Based on Occupation

The respondent data based on occupational characteristics are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

No	Occupation	Frequency	Percent
1.	Student	46	47,9 %
2.	Entrepreneur/Self-Employed	10	10,4 %
3.	Civil Servant	16	16,7 %
4.	Housewife	24	25,0 %
Total		96	100 %

Sumber : Data Primer, 2023

Based on Table 5, the majority of respondents were students, totaling 46 individuals (47.9% of all participants). Meanwhile, respondents categorized as entrepreneurs, civil servants, and homemakers numbered 10, 16, and 24, respectively, with corresponding proportions of 10.4%, 16.4%, and 25%.

Instrument Testing

Instrument testing was conducted to examine the data obtained from 30 questionnaire responses with consistent respondent characteristics. The instrument assessment for the respondents selected as the sample in this study is described as follows:

Validity Test

A questionnaire is considered valid when each item accurately captures the information aligned with the concept being measured. In other words, an instrument is deemed valid when it produces accurate data that accurately represent the variables under investigation.

Table 6. Summary of Validity Test Results

Question Item	R-Table Value	R-Calculated Value	Description
X1.1	0,361	0.823	Valid
X1.2	0,361	0.859	Valid
X1.3	0,361	0.838	Valid
X1.4	0,361	0.682	Valid
X1.5	0,361	0,860	Valid
X1.6	0,361	0.682	Valid
X1.7	0,361	0.693	Valid
X1.8	0,361	0.581	Valid
X1.9	0,361	0.663	Valid
X2.1	0,361	0.698	Valid
X2.2	0,361	0.622	Valid
X2.3	0,361	0.776	Valid
X2.4	0,361	0.689	Valid
X2.5	0,361	0.612	Valid
X2.6	0,361	0.717	Valid
Y1	0,361	0.757	Valid
Y2	0,361	0.821	Valid
Y3	0,361	0.728	Valid
Y4	0,361	0.677	Valid

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

The validity test results indicate that all items within the service quality variable, consisting of nine statements, achieved corrected item–total correlation values above 0.361. This confirms that each statement effectively reflects the construct being measured. For the price variable, all six tested items also demonstrated correlation values exceeding the minimum threshold, indicating that they are valid indicators. Similarly, the four statements in the consumer satisfaction variable produced correlation values above the 0.361 criterion. These findings confirm that all items across the three variables meet the validity requirements and that the instrument is appropriate for data collection in this research.

Reliability Test

The reliability test was conducted to ensure that the research instrument possesses adequate consistency in measuring the designated variables. A reliable instrument indicates that each questionnaire item yields stable, dependable responses when administered under similar conditions. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha for each variable, where values above 0.6 are considered acceptable for social research, indicating that the instrument is suitable for use.

Table 7. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Criterion	Description
Service Quality (X1)	0,890	0,6	Reliable
Price (X2)	0,760	0,6	Reliable
Consumer Satisfaction (Y)	0,727	0,6	Reliable

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

Based on the calculations presented in Table 7, the service quality variable achieved a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.890. This value is well above the minimum threshold, indicating excellent internal consistency. For the price variable, the obtained value of 0.760 reflects satisfactory stability across its items in measuring respondents' perceptions. The consumer satisfaction variable also demonstrated good reliability with a value of 0.727, which meets the instrument adequacy standard. Overall, all three variables exhibit reliability values exceeding 0.6, confirming that the instrument is sufficiently robust and can be utilized in subsequent analytical stages without requiring revisions to its items.

Classical Assumption Test

Normality Test

The results of the normality test are presented in Table 8 below:

Table 8. Normality Test Results

Variable	Asymp. Sig	Description
Service Quality (X1)	0,378	Normal
Price (X2)	0,142	Normal
Consumer Satisfaction (Y)	0,060	Normal

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

Multicollinearity Test

Table 9. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Description
Service Quality (X1)	0,998	1.002	There is no multicollinearity
Price (X2)	0,998	1.002	There is no multicollinearity

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

Hypothesis Testing

Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to determine the extent to which the independent variables influence the dependent variable. In this study, service quality (X1) and price (X2) are independent variables, and consumer satisfaction (Y) is the dependent variable. This analysis enables an assessment of the strength and direction of each independent variable's influence on consumer satisfaction with TravelQ services. The results of the regression test examining the effects of service quality and price on consumer satisfaction are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Model	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	2,126	0,838	0,404
Service Quality (X1)	0,153	2,797	0,006
Price (X2)	0,310	3,8985	0,000

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

The multiple linear regression equation based on Table 10 is::

$$Y = 2,126 + 0,153 (X1) + 0,310 (X2) + e \dots\dots\dots(6)$$

- a. Constant (2.126): the estimated baseline level of consumer satisfaction when X1X_1X1 and X2X_2X2 are zero.
- b. Coefficient for service quality (0.1530.1530.153): holding price constant, a one-unit increase in perceived service quality is associated with an average increase of 0.153 units in consumer satisfaction. This effect is statistically significant ($t = 2.797$, $p = 0.006$).
- c. Coefficient for price (0.3100.3100.310): holding service quality constant, a one-unit increase in the price variable is associated with an average increase of 0.310 units in consumer satisfaction. This effect is statistically significant ($t = 3.8985$, $p < 0.001$).

Implications

- a. Both independent variables exert a positive, statistically significant influence on consumer satisfaction; the price variable has a larger estimated effect than service quality in this sample.
- b. Caution: interpretation is associative, not necessarily causal. Further model diagnostics (e.g., R^2 , F-test, residual analysis) would strengthen conclusions about overall model fit and predictive power.

Partial Test (t-Test)

The t-test is used to determine the individual (partial) effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. This test evaluates whether each predictor service quality (X1) and price (X2) has a statistically significant influence on consumer satisfaction (Y) when analyzed separately.

The decision criteria for the t-test are as follows:

- a. If t calculated $> t$ Table and Sig < 0.05 , then H_a is accepted, and H_0 is rejected (the independent variable has a significant effect).
- b. If t calculated $< t$ Table and Sig > 0.05 , then H_a is rejected and H_0 is accepted (the independent variable does not have a significant effect).

Tabel 11. Uji Persial (Uji T)

Model	B	T	Sig
Constant	2,126	0,838	0,404
Service Quality (X1)	0,055	2,797	0,006
Price (X2)	0,078	3,985	0,000

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

The coefficient for service quality (X1) in relation to consumer satisfaction shows a t value of 2.797 with a significance level of 0.006, which is below the 0.05 threshold. With the t Table value at 1.661, the comparison $2.797 > 1.661$ indicates that H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected. This confirms that service quality has a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer satisfaction with TravelQ services.

The coefficient for price (X2) demonstrates a *t* value of 3.985 and a significance level of 0.000, which is also below 0.05. Given the *t-table* value of 1.661, the comparison $3.985 > 1.661$ leads to the rejection of H0 and the acceptance of H2. These results show that price has a positive, statistically significant effect on consumer satisfaction with TravelQ.

Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

Table 12. Simultaneous Test (F-Test) Results

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	108.312	2	54.156	12.324	.000 ^a
Residual	408.678	93	4.394		
Total	516.990	95			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), price (X2), Service Quality (X1)
- b. Dependent Variable: kepuasan konsumen (Y)

Source: Data Processing Results, 2023

Based on Table 3.15, the results show that the calculated F value exceeds the F Table value ($12.324 > 3.942$) at the 0.000 significance level, which is below the 0.05 threshold. These findings indicate that the model is statistically significant. Thus, service quality and price jointly exert a significant influence on consumer satisfaction.

Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

This analysis determines the contribution of service quality and price variables to consumer satisfaction for TravelQ's services, expressed as a percentage. The results can be seen in Table 13 below:

Table 13. Results of the Simultaneous Coefficient of Determination Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,458 ^a	0,210	0,193	2,09628

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Price (X2), Service Quality (X1)
- Source: Processed Data, 2023

Based on Table 13, the analysis shows that the service quality and price variables jointly influence consumer satisfaction, with an R-square value of 0.210. This value indicates that the two variables explain 21% of the variation in consumer satisfaction, while the remaining 79% is influenced by other variables not included in the research model. Furthermore, a partial determination coefficient test was conducted to examine the individual contribution of each independent variable to consumer satisfaction, with the following results:

Table 14. Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test for the Service Quality Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,273 ^a	0,075	0,065	2,256

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality
- Source: Processed Data, 2023

Table 14 shows that the service quality variable accounts for 0.075 of the consumer satisfaction variable, or 7.5%.

Table 15. Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test for the Price Variable

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
1	0.378 ^a	0,143	0,134	2,171

a. Predictors: (Constant), Harga

Source: Processed Data, 2023

Table 15 shows that the price variable accounts for 0.143 of the consumer satisfaction variable, or 14.3%. I have and to meet consumer expectations.

Effect of Service Quality and Price on Customer Satisfaction

The results of this study indicate that service quality and price jointly contribute to customer satisfaction with TravelQ. The R value of 0.458 shows that the relationship between service quality and price with customer satisfaction falls within the moderate category. Meanwhile, the R Square value of 0.210 indicates that the model explains 21.0% of the variance in customer satisfaction. This means that service quality and price exert only a limited influence together. At the same time, the remaining 79% of the variance is explained by factors outside the model, such as fleet comfort, travel conditions, and service experience.

Furthermore, the simultaneous test (F-test) yielded an F value of 36.002 with a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that service quality and price together significantly affect customer satisfaction. Service quality partially has a significant effect, with a t-value of $2,797 > 1.661$, while price demonstrates a more substantial influence, with a t-value of $3,985 > 1.661$.

The findings related to service quality are consistent with modern service theory, which emphasizes reliability, empathy, assurance, and responsiveness as key determinants of satisfaction (Zeithaml et al., 2020). This result also aligns with Putra and Handayani (2021), who found that punctuality and staff professionalism directly affect customers' emotional evaluations. In the context of TravelQ, this indicates that service elements such as vehicle comfort, driver friendliness, and information clarity are genuinely valued by customers as contributors to satisfaction.

Price is found to exert a more decisive influence than service quality, as reflected in the higher t-value. This supports the findings of Ariffin et al. (2017), who noted that fair price perceptions enhance consumer satisfaction because customers tend to compare prices with the benefits they receive. This result also aligns with Nugroho and Wulandari (2022), who reported that consumers in non-metropolitan areas are more sensitive to affordability and price suitability relative to their purchasing power.

Overall, this study confirms that price is the most dominant factor shaping customer satisfaction with TravelQ. These findings suggest that maintaining price stability while simultaneously improving service quality is essential for the company to remain competitive and to meet consumer expectations.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that both service quality and price significantly influence customer satisfaction with TravelQ. Among the two, price exerts a more substantial effect, suggesting that customer satisfaction is shaped more by perceived value and price suitability than by operational service attributes. These results highlight that, within the context of transportation services in non-metropolitan areas such as Tembilahan, customer sensitivity to price is relatively higher compared to service-related factors. Practically, the findings underscore the importance for TravelQ to maintain a competitive pricing structure that aligns with local purchasing power, while simultaneously improving service quality in aspects most recognized by customers, such as vehicle comfort and punctuality. Academically, these results

reinforce the existing literature on consumer behavior in transportation services within non-metropolitan regions, indicating that economic factors tend to exert a greater influence than service attributes. Given that the research model explains only a modest proportion of the variance in customer satisfaction, future studies are recommended to incorporate additional variables such as perceived safety, travel experience, brand image, and customer trust, which may offer greater explanatory power for understanding customer satisfaction and loyalty in transportation services.

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