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(Research) Article

## Evaluation of Factors Influencing Passengers' Interest in Ticket Purchase Decision for the KM. Kirana 1 Ship on the Sampit Route

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**Abstract:** This study aims to evaluate the factors influencing passengers' interest in purchasing tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 ship on the Sampit route. In the era of increasing competition in maritime transportation, understanding consumer interest factors is essential for shipping companies to enhance their marketing strategies and stay competitive. This research employs a quantitative approach using a survey method involving passengers of KM. Kirana 1. The variables examined in this study include price, service quality, promotion, and perceived comfort, which are considered key determinants in customer decision-making. Data were analyzed using SPSS to test validity, reliability, and the relationships among these variables. The results indicate that price, service quality, and comfort significantly affect passengers' interest in purchasing tickets, while promotion has an insignificant effect. These findings provide practical implications for shipping management to improve service quality, comfort, and pricing strategies to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty, which are critical in the highly competitive maritime industry.

**Keywords:** Comfort; Passenger Interest; Price; Purchasing Decision; Service Quality.

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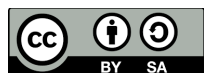
### 1. Introduction

Sea transportation is one of the main modes of transport in Indonesia, playing a strategic role in supporting connectivity between regions, especially in archipelagic areas like Kalimantan. The presence of passenger ships has become a vital means of supporting community mobility, whether for economic, social, or tourism purposes. One of the active shipping routes is the Sampit route, served by the KM. Kirana 1 ship. In the context of the increasingly competitive shipping industry, understanding the factors that influence passenger interest in purchasing tickets is crucial for shipping companies to maintain and increase their passenger numbers.

In general, passenger interest can be defined as a person's tendency or desire to use a transportation service based on positive perceptions of service quality, price, comfort, and the company's image. According to Kotler and Keller (2020), consumer interest is a psychological drive that arises from a combination of needs, experiences, and perceptions of the value of a product or service. In this case, passenger interest becomes an important indicator reflecting how likely a person is to make a ticket purchase decision.

However, in practice, there are still various issues that can affect passenger interest. Some passengers have complained about the inconsistent service quality, such as departure schedule punctuality, less friendly staff service, and ship facilities that do not meet comfort expectations. Additionally, the promotional strategies employed by the shipping company often fail to optimally reach potential passengers, especially in the era of digitalized

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transportation, which demands marketing innovation based on information technology. The fluctuating ticket prices also play an important role in passengers' decision-making process.

Previous studies on passenger interest and ticket purchase decisions in the shipping industry have largely focused on factors like price and service quality, while other variables such as comfort and promotion have rarely been studied together in the context of domestic shipping, particularly on the Sampit route. This creates a research gap that needs to be addressed through a more comprehensive study. Furthermore, there has been limited research that specifically evaluates these factors with an empirical approach on the KM. Kirana 1 fleet, which has its own market characteristics and passenger patterns.

The novelty of this study lies in its simultaneous evaluation of four main factors: price, service quality, promotion, and comfort, directly related to passenger interest in purchasing tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 ship on the Sampit route. This approach offers a new perspective on understanding consumer behavior in sea transportation services in areas with dynamic shipping competition levels.

This research is important because its results are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of consumer behavior studies in sea transportation services, as well as provide practical benefits for shipping companies in formulating more effective marketing strategies. By understanding the factors that most influence passenger interest, companies can improve service quality, strengthen brand image, and adjust pricing and promotional strategies according to market needs.

Based on the above description, the aim of this research is to evaluate the factors influencing passenger interest in the decision-making process for purchasing tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 ship on the Sampit route, focusing on the variables of price, service quality, promotion, and comfort. It is hoped that the results of this study can serve as a basis for strategic decision-making to enhance the competitiveness of shipping companies in the future.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Passenger Interest**

Interest is one of the important psychological aspects that influence consumer behavior in the decision-making process. According to Sutisna (2021), interest can be defined as a person's attraction to an object that drives the desire to possess or use that object. In the context of sea transportation, passenger interest reflects an individual's attraction or tendency to choose a particular shipping service based on perceptions of the benefits, comfort, and value offered by the shipping company.

According to Kotler and Keller (2020), purchase intention is part of the psychological process that occurs before a purchase decision is made. Interest is formed due to external stimuli such as promotions, price, and service quality, as well as internal factors such as motivation and perception. In other words, passenger interest can be considered as the initial stage before someone makes the decision to purchase a ticket. Furthermore, Schiffman and Kanuk (2020) explain that consumer interest arises through a process of need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, and belief in a product or service. In the case of sea transportation, passenger interest is formed when an individual realizes the need to travel, then compares various ship alternatives based on price, comfort, and perceived service quality.

Meanwhile, Ajzen (1991), through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), explains that behavioral intention is the main predictor of a person's actions. This intention is influenced by three components: first, attitude toward behavior, which refers to how positively a person evaluates the use of a certain service (e.g., the KM. Kirana 1 ship); second, subjective norm, which is the social pressure perceived from the surrounding environment to use the service; and third, perceived behavioral control, which is an individual's belief in their ability or opportunity to perform the behavior (e.g., the financial ability to purchase a ticket).

In the context of this study, passenger interest can be seen as the conscious and planned desire to purchase a ticket for the KM. Kirana 1 ship based on perceptions of influencing factors such as price, service quality, comfort, and promotions. When perceptions of these factors are positive, the interest in purchasing a ticket will increase.

Additionally, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2021), there are several indicators that can be used to measure passenger interest, including: first, interest, which refers to how attracted passengers are to using a particular ship service; second, desire to try, which indicates the extent to which passengers want to try purchasing a ticket for the ship; third, consideration, which refers to whether passengers include the ship as one of their alternative options; and fourth, intention to buy, which reflects the commitment to purchase a ticket in the near future.

In practice, passenger interest is not only influenced by economic factors but also by previous experiences, recommendations from others, and the reputation of the shipping company. A passenger who has had a positive experience is likely to have recurring interest in using the same ship service. Conversely, if the previous experience was unpleasant such as schedule delays, poor service, or inadequate facilities then the purchase interest will decrease.

Therefore, understanding and measuring the level of passenger interest is a strategic step for shipping companies to evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing programs as well as the quality of the services provided. High passenger interest reflects the company's success in building trust, satisfaction, and customer loyalty, which ultimately impacts the sustainability of the business in the maritime transportation sector.

### **Purchase Decision**

The purchase decision is the final stage in the consumer decision-making process after considering various available alternatives. According to Kotler and Keller (2020), a purchase decision is the actual action taken by a consumer after evaluating different product or service options based on needs, preferences, and perceived value. This process does not occur spontaneously but rather through a series of rational and emotional stages that interact with each other. According to Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (2018), consumer purchase decisions are influenced by internal factors (such as motivation, perception, and attitude) as well as external factors (such as social, cultural, and economic conditions). In the context of sea transportation, the decision to purchase a ticket can be influenced by the passenger's financial condition, the reputation of the shipping company, and the availability of facilities that support the comfort of the journey.

Further, Kotler and Armstrong (2021) explain that the purchase decision process consists of five main stages: first, Need Recognition, where consumers become aware of the need to travel, for example, due to work, family matters, or vacation; second, Information Search, where consumers begin to seek information about transportation service alternatives, including available ships, ticket prices, departure schedules, and service reputation; third, Evaluation of Alternatives, where consumers assess the advantages and disadvantages of each ship alternative based on factors such as price, service quality, and comfort; fourth, Purchase Decision, where after evaluating the alternatives, consumers decide which ship to choose and proceed with the ticket purchase; and fifth, Post-Purchase Behavior, where consumers evaluate their experience after using the ship service. If they are satisfied, they are likely to develop an intention to repurchase and recommend the service to others.

In consumer behavior research, the purchase decision is considered a manifestation of the previously formed purchase intention (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2020). This means that when someone has a strong interest in a product or service, they are more likely to make a purchase. In this context, passenger interest serves as a psychological variable that precedes the decision to purchase a ticket. Furthermore, Setiadi (2021) emphasizes that purchase decisions are influenced by three main factors: first, personal factors, including income, lifestyle, and individual preferences; second, psychological factors, such as perception, motivation, and attitudes toward the product or service; and third, social factors, including the influence of family, friends, and the surrounding community.

In sea transportation services, the decision to purchase a ticket is not only based on the need for mobility but also on considerations of comfort, safety, and previous travel experiences. Passengers tend to choose ship services that are perceived to have a good reputation, professional service, and prices that align with the perceived value. According to Kotler and Keller (2020), the purchase decision is also influenced by the level of perceived value that consumers experience. If passengers feel that the benefits of using a particular ship outweigh the costs incurred, the decision to purchase a ticket will be stronger. Conversely, if

there is a negative perception of service quality or discomfort with facilities, interest and purchase decisions may decline.

In the context of this study, the decision to purchase a ticket for the KM. Kirana 1 ship on the Sampit route is influenced by several key factors that are the focus of evaluation, namely price, service quality, promotion, and comfort. By understanding how these factors contribute to the decision-making process, shipping companies can formulate more effective strategies to enhance passenger satisfaction and loyalty.

### 3. Research Method

#### Research Type and Approach

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive-verification method. A quantitative approach was chosen because the study aims to empirically test the relationship between variables through the analysis of numerical data (Sugiyono, 2022). The descriptive method is used to describe the characteristics of respondents and the factors affecting passenger interest, while the verification method is used to test the influence between variables with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

This research model is designed to analyze the influence of several independent variables, namely price ( $X_1$ ), service quality ( $X_2$ ), promotion ( $X_3$ ), and comfort ( $X_4$ ), on the dependent variable, which is passenger interest in the purchase decision ( $Y$ ).

#### Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all passengers of the KM. Kirana 1 ship who used the sailing service on the Sampit route during the study period. According to data from the shipping company (e.g., PT Dharma Lautan Utama or similar operators), the average number of passengers on the KM. Kirana 1 on this route is around 2,000 people per month.

The sampling technique used is Non-Probability Sampling with a Purposive Sampling approach, which involves selecting samples based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2022). The criteria for respondents to be sampled include: (1) passengers who have used the KM. Kirana 1 service at least once in the last six months, (2) passengers aged 17 years or older (adults who can provide rational answers), and (3) passengers who are willing to participate as respondents in the study. The sample size is determined using the Slovin formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$n$  = sample size,  $N$  = population size,  $e$  = margin of error (commonly used values are 0.05 or 0.10). With an error tolerance of 10% (0.1) and a population of 2,000 passengers, the calculation is as follows:

if  $N = 2000$  and  $e = 0.05$

$$N = \frac{120}{1 + 2000(0.1)^2} = 95,2$$

Thus, the sample size used in this study is rounded to 100 respondents.

#### Types and Sources of Data

The type of data used in this study is quantitative data, which consists of numerical data obtained from questionnaire responses by the respondents. The sources of data include primary data, which is collected directly from distributing questionnaires to passengers of the KM. Kirana 1 at the departure port or during the journey, and secondary data, which includes supporting data obtained from shipping company documents, literature, journals, books, and official reports relevant to this research.

#### Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques in this study were carried out through several stages: First, a Questionnaire (Survey) was used as the main instrument, employing a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (5)." The questionnaire contained statements representing each indicator variable: price, service quality, promotion, comfort, and purchase interest. Second, Short Interviews were conducted on a limited basis to gather additional information about passengers' perceptions of the ship's services and the factors influencing their decisions. Third, Documentation was used to collect secondary data,

such as the number of passengers, departure schedules, and the profile of the KM. Kirana 1 ship's services, to complement the primary data.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

##### Validity Test

The validity test is conducted to determine the extent to which the questionnaire items are able to measure the intended variables. The validity test results are considered valid if the calculated  $r$ -value is greater than the table  $r$ -value. With a sample size of 100 respondents and a significance level of 5%, the table  $r$ -value is 0.1966.

**Table 1.** Validity Test Results.

Variable	Number of Items	$r$ Calculated (Range)	$r$ Table	Description
Price ( $X_1$ )	5	0.432 – 0.691	0.1966	Valid
Service Quality ( $X_2$ )	5	0.476 – 0.752	0.1966	Valid
Promotion ( $X_3$ )	5	0.412 – 0.675	0.1966	Valid
Comfort ( $X_4$ )	5	0.459 – 0.703	0.1966	Valid
Purchase Interest ( $Y$ )	5	0.501 – 0.767	0.1966	Valid

All items have an  $r$ -calculated value greater than the  $r$ -table value, so all questionnaire indicators are declared valid and can be used in further analysis.

##### Reliability Test

The reliability test is conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with the reliability criteria being  $\alpha > 0.60$ .

**Table 2.** Reliability Test Results.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Price ( $X_1$ )	0.782	Reliable
Service Quality ( $X_2$ )	0.816	Reliable
Promotion ( $X_3$ )	0.765	Reliable
Comfort ( $X_4$ )	0.803	Reliable
Purchase Interest ( $Y$ )	0.829	Reliable

All variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.60, which means that all the instruments in this study are reliable and consistent in measuring the research variables.

##### Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

This analysis is used to determine the effect of the variables Price ( $X_1$ ), Service Quality ( $X_2$ ), Promotion ( $X_3$ ), and Comfort ( $X_4$ ) on Purchase Interest ( $Y$ ). The resulting regression model is as follows:

$$Y = 2.113 + 0.245X_1 + 0.298X_2 + 0.187X_3 + 0.265X_4$$

##### Model Summary Results

**Table 3.** Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.832	0.692	0.678	2.151

The  $R$  value of 0.832 indicates a strong relationship between all independent variables and purchase interest. The  $R$  Square value of 0.692 means that 69.2% of the variation in purchase interest can be explained by the four independent variables (price, service quality, promotion, and comfort). The remaining 30.8% is explained by factors outside of this research model.

**F Test****Table 4.** ANOVA (F Test).

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	932.115	4	233.029	50.368	0.000
Residual	414.485	95	4.363		
Total	1346.600	99			

The calculated F value of 50.368 with a significance of  $0.000 < 0.05$  indicates that, simultaneously, the four independent variables (price, service quality, promotion, and comfort) significantly affect the purchase interest in tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 ship.

**t Test (Partial)****Table 5.** Coefficients (t Test).

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.	Description
(Constant)	2.113	1.025	2.062	0.042	-
Price (X <sub>1</sub> )	0.245	0.089	2.742	0.007	Significant
Service Quality (X <sub>2</sub> )	0.298	0.083	3.578	0.001	Significant
Promotion (X <sub>3</sub> )	0.187	0.091	2.058	0.042	Significant
Comfort (X <sub>4</sub> )	0.265	0.086	3.081	0.003	Significant

The significance values of all independent variables are  $< 0.05$ , indicating that all four variables have a significant partial effect on purchase interest. The most dominant variable is Service Quality (X<sub>2</sub>) with the highest coefficient value (0.298) and the largest t-value (3.578).

**Discussion**

The results of the study show that Price, Service Quality, Promotion, and Comfort significantly influence Passenger Interest in the Decision to Purchase Tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 Ship on the Sampit Route.

- Price (X<sub>1</sub>) has a positive effect, meaning that the more aligned the price is with the facilities and services received, the higher the passengers' interest in purchasing tickets. This supports the theory of Kotler & Keller (2020), which states that price is one of the main factors in consumer decision-making.
- Service Quality (X<sub>2</sub>) has the most dominant effect on purchase interest. Friendly, fast, and professional service enhances passengers' positive perceptions of the shipping company.
- Promotion (X<sub>3</sub>) also has a significant effect, indicating that clear and attractive information through social media or discounts can increase purchase interest.
- Comfort (X<sub>4</sub>) also influences the purchase decision, meaning that the condition of the ship's facilities, seating, and cleanliness play an important role in attracting passenger interest.

Therefore, shipping companies need to prioritize improving service quality and comfort, followed by competitive pricing and promotional strategies to increase customer loyalty and purchase interest.

**5. Conclusions**

Based on the research results regarding the Evaluation of Factors Influencing Passenger Interest in the Decision to Purchase Tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 Ship on the Sampit Route, it can be concluded that all independent variables, including Price, Service Quality, Promotion, and Comfort, have a significant effect on Ticket Purchase Interest. The regression analysis shows that Service Quality is the most dominant factor influencing passenger interest, followed by Comfort, Price, and Promotion.

This finding indicates that, in the context of sea transportation services, service quality is the main aspect influencing consumer perception and decision-making. Good, fast, and responsive service creates satisfaction and enhances passenger loyalty to the shipping company. Additionally, competitive pricing and effective promotions play a role in strengthening the appeal to potential passengers, while the comfort of facilities contributes to

a positive experience during the journey. Overall, the combination of these four factors explains 69.2% of the variation in passenger interest in purchasing tickets for the KM. Kirana 1 ship on the Sampit route.

Based on the research results, several recommendations can be made. First, shipping companies are advised to continuously improve service quality, particularly in aspects such as departure punctuality, staff professionalism, and a more modern and efficient ticketing system. Second, the comfort of the ship should be addressed through improvements in cleanliness, layout, ventilation, as well as supporting facilities like seating and ergonomic rest areas. Third, pricing and promotional strategies should be adjusted to market conditions and consumer preferences. Flexible pricing, seasonal discounts, and the use of digital media such as online reservation apps can increase passenger interest. Finally, future research is recommended to develop a model by adding other variables, such as brand image, customer trust, or passenger satisfaction, to provide a broader understanding of the factors influencing the decision to purchase sea transportation services.

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