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Customer Satisfaction and Commuter Service: An Evaluation of Intercity Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) Performance Delivery

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Abstract

The present study focuses on an evaluation of intercity Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) performance delivery on customer satisfaction and commuter services. Its objective is to evaluate the customers' satisfaction of KTMB intercity towards the performance delivery of various services. As such, a framework was proposed for major dimensions which have an impact on the level of services satisfaction provided by my KTM commuter. Furthermore, the study employed qualitative and quantitative methods for the purpose of analysis. Data was obtained using 600 questionnaires and 18 staff via interview session. The findings show that status and age of respondents have no significant influence on safety and security, cleanliness, facilities, as well as services except between the categorical variables; quality, punctuality and price which have significant differences tangled with the performance of commuter service. From all the responses that were pointed out by interviewees, the most significant reason for the persistence of the problems is MyCommuter launched by KTM, which is the unbalanced momentum of systematic management. Also, it was realised that the heterogeneous variations of lower fairness within the system will affect the punctuality, functions of commuter, the breakdown of the trains, limitation of commuters, and etc in a negative direction. Important areas of priorities for the improvisation of commuter services are the holistic coordination of effective and continuous monitoring of system in terms of systematic management. Lastly, the present study suggests conducting an extensive study in comparing KTMB and ETS services to enhance the quality of their services.

Keywords: customer satisfaction, commuter service, performance delivery, evaluation

Introduction

The continuous development of a nation is a process of improving various aspects of her community life from time to time based on the needs of the society over a certain period. One of such development is transportation and its systems. Transportation keeps pace with the progress of human life and culture in the high technology of the globe. It has contributed important roles, such as accelerating the sharing of economic development by connecting spatial regions around the world. Malaysia as a country, compared to her neighbors is also one of the latest nation that had inter-city

commuter railway service. This was introduced in the year 1995 and operated by Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad. However, in the beginning of its operation, the impression of its services towards passengers was not overwhelming (Rahaman, 2009). The main reason for being not popular as the mode of transportation was due to less attention that was given to its establishment & improvement in comparison to the attention given to road transportation. Thus, an evaluation was initiated to measure the performance delivery of Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) based on customer satisfaction and commuter service.

Customer satisfaction in the aspect of service quality is usually evaluated in terms of technical quality and functional quality (Gronroos 1984). Usually, customers do not have much information about the technical aspects of a service. Therefore, functional quality becomes the major factor from which to form perceptions of service quality (Donabedian 1980, 1982). On the other hand, service quality may be defined as customer's perception of how well a service meets or exceeds their expectations (Czepiel 1990). It can be measured in terms of customer perception, customer expectation, customer satisfaction, and customer attitude (Sachdev and Verma 2004).

Ekinci (2003) indicates that the evaluation of service quality, leading to customer satisfaction should be done constantly. Rust and Oliver (1994) define satisfaction as the "customer fulfillment response," which is an evaluation as well as an emotion-based response to a service.

Over the years, various commercial and industrial sectors in Malaysia are showing improvements as well as growth, and the country hopes to achieve the status of a developed country by 2020. Various plans have been implemented to achieve this vision. Along with this, the 9th Malaysia Plan (RMK-9) shows the development of the country's efforts in generating the economic sector to upgrade the quality of services and facilities for use by people, such as public transportation.

Thus, the present study is an attempt to put forth the role of service quality, physical aspect, promotional scheme and personal interaction affecting customer satisfaction in the context of railway services, with special reference to Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB).

The Intercity KTM commuter is the first electrified commuter service in Malaysia, and as of today, it is the most convenient mode of public transportation. These commuters' carries a minimum of eight thousand passengers daily. The commuters are enhanced with great features with a primary goal which is to give the best service as possible with safe and faster mode of transportation for those who want to travel far and near alike. This allows people from all the level of society to be able to travel from one place to the other most convenient and efficiently as possible. As time passes, passengers find that train has become more convenient as well as time-saving in compare to other road transportations.

On the other hand, KTMB carries a crucial duty as to make the customer happy in every instant so that it can receive continuous support from the passengers. As such, the punctuality of the train to arrive at the designated station on time is very important. Thus, this close coordination shows the efficiency of the entire KTMB service (Ibrahim, Ahmad Nazrul Hakimi Borhan, Muhamad Zakaria Nur & Zainal Siti (2019).

The common problem that is produced by KTM every day is the number of journey that is not the same everyday because of system failure, rain, number of passengers that are entering and the slow pace of door closing. This unintentional reason natural changes the time, and resulted in delay of customers schedule and cannot be overcome easily based on the reasons mentioned. Although, reason like this may occur unexpectedly, the best at the time that the conductors could do is that they would announce the occurrences. The announcement become compulsory everyday basic train delay and at many points frustrating to hear. However, it does clear the negative mindset of the customers. The most important aspect of the KTM commuter is the fact that, it must be kept clean all the time and should not be overlooked at all cost because the majority of the customers are very cautiously hygienic, especially in public transports. Also, the stations are advised to maintain the cleanliness of their compounds and facilities. This is because, it will not only be embarrassing for the station but as well to distinguished, if a VIP was to visit and find the place to be horrible. This can ruin the

reputation of the KTM commuter, thus reducing the number of passengers of that particular station. The train is for universal recipients to use and will not be tolerated if fail to do so, universal meaning used by the enabled and the disabled.

Their modes of the entrance are very different, because the disabled are given priority accessibility on board the train. Stations marked as wheelchair accessible have a level, ramp or lift access to all platforms. However, not every entrance are accessible station may be wheelchair accessible. Furthermore, there are seats and rails, specially marked just for the disabled and wheelchairs safety as well as satisfaction. Other than, the station itself is equipped with various accessibilities, such as handrails for the elderly and injured. Tactile tiles on the edge of platforms and lifts for those who cannot walk up the overhead bridge. Seats marked for the disabled maybe satisfaction for them, but as we are human we all possess the same desire or intention towards the seating. Compared to the early types of trains, today the number of seating has increased to an extent where there are more seats than a place to stand.

The newly designed model called the Milometer is an extended and more state of the art technology to reduce the flaws that naturally occur on a daily basis. Additionally, the seat that is provided is not normal passenger seats they are more equipped with back support features and room to place the neck properly. This is because passengers are traveling a far distance and could injured themselves by standing for a long time with a bag and very exhausted.

Obviously, all the main factors stated showed how committed is the KTM towards perfection in order to gain people's heart and make profitable feedback. Generally, commuter services has affected the customer's satisfaction and KTM's perceived performance. By providing more facilities, customers' satisfaction can be considered at the finest level. However, that is not enough to define KTM's best performance delivery, if they are still having the same problems like delays or long time-gap journey. Also, the usage of old engines is the main cause why customers are still attached to their instinct instead of the trip schedule.

The prior purpose of the intercity KTM commuter is to provide a traveling manner that is appropriate and accurate to many customers for a better future. Moreover, it has a specific target to reach within certain groups to fulfillment and require feedbacks as well as suggestion which many customers are very kind enough to do so. When cooperation exists between the customers and the support center, they are able to understand one and another as many customers come from different background, hence many problems can be resolved easily (Ibrahim et al).

The ETP (Economic Transformation Programme) and GTP (Government Transformation Programme) our intrepid looms and it is the first time that an attempt of this nature has been embarked on in the history of Malaysia, or of any other developed nation. These are the two keys to develop the country into a high-income and develop country ranking by 2020. "This sector drives performance to deliver factual results in key economic and social areas for the people, and change Malaysia into an advanced nation by 2020, in accordance with the spirit of 1Malaysia." (Idris, 2012,p.12). Nowadays, Malaysia has four railway transportation systems, such as the KTM, Monorail and Start LRT and Putra LRT.

Literature Review

There are various studies that have been carried out in other parts of the world to evaluate the customer satisfaction over their respective railway services. The term customer satisfaction is defined as a state of perception of what the consumer holds pertaining to a product or service in which the consumer feels contented with the service quality been provided by a business in return for the cost of a product or service (Anderson & Fornell, 2000). It is a performance indicator of a gross nature of the success of a business since a direct relationship between consumer satisfaction and business success exists (Lake, Hickey, & Hickey 2001). Many businesses choose to allocate extensive resources and carry out rigorous research for their products or services in order to ensure full consumers' satisfaction are met.

Various scholars also have considered different dimensions of service quality. Gronoos (1984) considers technical, functional, and reputation quality, while Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982) consider interactive, physical, and corporate quality; and Hedvall and Paltschik (1989) focus on the willingness and ability to serve as well as the physical and psychological access to the service. In conceptualizing the basic service quality model, Parasuraman et al. (1985) identify 10 key determinants of service quality as perceived by the service provider and the consumer. Namely, reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding/ knowing the customer, and tangibility to formulate a service quality framework, SERVQUAL. Later (in 1988), they modify the framework to five determinants: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness, or RATER. This techniques of customer satisfaction analysis allow a critical aspects of the supplied services to be identified and customer satisfaction to be increased as well as to be evaluated constantly.

Agrawal (2008) identifies employees' behavior as the most important determinant of customer (passenger) satisfaction with Indian railway services. Eboli and Mazzulla (2007), measure customer satisfaction in the context of bus service on various factors, including availability of shelter and benches at bus stops, cleanliness, overcrowding, information system, safety, personnel security, helpfulness of personnel, as well as physical condition of bus stops.

Also, J. D. Power and Associates (2008) measures customer satisfaction with high-speed and dial-up internet service providers based on five factors: performance and reliability cost of service, customer service, billing, offerings and promotions. In another study on internet banking, it was found that consumers give the highest weight to the quality of service while selecting a particular bank (Geetika et al. 2008). Additionally, a study of customer satisfaction with banking services, shows that factors of customer satisfaction are traditional (basic) facilities, such as convenience, the behavior of employees, and the environment of the bank (Jham and Khan 2008).

Johnson, Gustafsson, Andreassen, Lervik, and Cha (2001, p.25) observe that "satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire". Kotler (2000, p.2), defines that satisfaction as: "a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome in relation to his or her expectations". Ehigie (2006) explains that satisfaction can be associated with feelings of acceptance, happiness, relief, excitement, and delight.

Kamal (2013), conducted a study on the customer's level of satisfaction towards KTM commuter, using 250 respondents, ranging from age 18-35 years old. It was found that the regression model shows a positive influence towards satisfaction level in terms of operation and services. Most of the customers were not happy in punctuality and safety. As such, the study suggested that customer's satisfaction should always be maintained to enable them have confidence in the quality and services given by the service provider.

Conversely, Amsori, Azizul, Ismail and Rizaati (2013) carried out a study on consumers' satisfaction of public transport monorail user in Kuala Lumpur. It was found that in 2012, there were 66,675 passengers per day, 3709 passengers per hour and the number of passengers from 2003-2012 amounted to 11.04 %. The number of passengers increases year by year. The data was collected from 400 respondents and showed that the consumers were satisfied with the condition as well as service quality. However, there was lack of quality in the waiting area, additional escalators needed to be fixed, there was need for improvement in the quality of the number of seats, coaches as well as expansion to several routes. Finally, the study suggested that the management should maintain their services since such services was only provide in Malaysia and Singapore among the South East Asian Country (Asian) as at then.

Aydin and Ozer (2005) explain based on their study that, majority of the respondents gave a favorable opinion towards the services but there were some problems that deserved the attention of the service providers. They needed to narrow the gap between the services promised and services offered. For

example, the overall customers' attitude towards cell phone services is that they are satisfied with the existing services but they still want more services to be provided.

A study was conducted by Chokaew, Haider, and Punyanuch (2008) on customer satisfaction toward TrueMove customer service. The purpose of the research was to evaluate "whether" and "how" TrueMove customers are satisfied or dissatisfied with the customer service provided at TrueMove shops in the Bangkok region with the help of evaluation of service quality by customers of the shop. The study was based on quantitative method via the used of questionnaires. It was aimed at measuring the level of customer satisfaction by comparing their expectation against the perception of the services provided and this serves as the theoretical framework for the research. In addition, SERVQUAL dimensions covering reliability, assurance, empathy, responsiveness, and tangibles were used in the development of theory and modeling of the questionnaires for the research. It was found that TrueMove customers were not fully satisfied with the range customer services was provided at the TrueMove shops in Bangkok region. The service quality perceived could not meet the expectation of customers in any SERVQUAL Dimensions. The recommendations called for an improvement in service reliability and other aspects needed an overhaul of existing systems and routines as well as equipping employees with required knowledge. There was also a need to establish and re-look specific services for a target group of customers.

Generally, adequate facilities and infrastructures are factors needed to support the goal of meeting objectives as a service providing company. Thus, infrastructure facilities should go together hand-in-hand when providing services to customers. Both physical facilities and additional funds are necessary to facilitate and accelerate the implementation of a business (Arikunto, 1998).

Consumers' satisfaction towards recreational facilities and services in Ayer Keroh forest recreational area, Melaka was also studied. There were four predictors of recreation valuation, namely; amount spend for the facilities and services, perception on sign facilities, participate in recreation activities and income. The result shows that respondents income have a significant influenced on the consumers' satisfaction (Abdul Rahman & Azman, 2007).

More so, customer satisfaction is a well-known and established concept in several areas of marketing, consumer research, economic psychology, welfare-economics, and economics. Parvez (2009), observes that satisfaction or dissatisfaction is the response of customers towards services provided. Meanwhile, Malhouse (2003), Mouwen (2015) and Perera, (2016) noted that customer satisfaction is a condition in which desires, expectations and customer needs are met. A satisfactory service is defined as services provided that meet the needs and expectations of customers.

As such, the measurement of customer satisfaction is an important element when looking at providing better service that is at the same time more efficient and effective. When customers are not satisfied with the services provided, it can mean that the services provided are either ineffective, inefficient or both. This is especially important when providing public service. The level of customer satisfaction for services provided is an important factor in developing a system that involves the provision of services from the perception of customers' needs, to minimize cost and maximize the impact of time as well as services to target populations (Malthouse, 2003).

Methodology

Setting

The present research was carried out at two well-known train stations: KL Sentral and KL stations. These were chosen due to their strategical location in which connects to the transit stations from Tanjung Malim to Sg. Gadut and Bt. Cave to Pelabuhan Klang and also the flexibility in approaching the respondents for their objective and subjective views as well as comments on the performance of commuter service in both stations. A set of questionnaire was distributed to selected KTMB passengers who were waiting for their respective train at both selected stations. An interview was also

conducted with some of the users of the commuter. However, this was fully depended on their willingness to give feedback on those highlighted issues. These responses were collected by travelling on the same train together with the respondents. Thus, allows the responders to have time to engage in communication while in transit.

Sampling

Purposive and convenience sampling have been widely used in qualitative and quantitative research (Creswell, 2008). Thus, a combined version of purposive and convenience samplings was used to determine the targeted sample for the present study based on the inclusion criteria and to obtain the voluntary responses from the selected respondents based on their aspects of convenience and willingness (Jackson, 2011). The targeted sample respondents were chosen based on certain criteria so as to make sure the results obtained may reflect the true scenario. Those criterions were; the respondents must be the passengers who are commuting train at KL Sentral and KL station. The age of respondents should be between 14 to 61 and the respondents should be consisting of students, working adults, and foreigners.

The above criteria was set to align with the need of the the present study. The questionnaire must be filled up by the passengers who use the KTM services regularly. Also, the study focuses on the age category of 14-61 and their status either are students, working adults or foreigners. This is because they are the frequent and regular user of the KTM services during peak hours, from morning 6 am until 10 am. As this is the prime time for school or college going student, as well as those working adults who are local and foreigners to travel for work daily. Another peak hour is from 1.00pm till 3.00pm used by after school or college students and for those foreigners who tour around the city. Hence, the above sampling was categorized under purposive and convenience sampling to the phenomena of interest as justified by Proctor et al. (2009); Landsverk et al. (2012); Palinkas et al. (2011) a; and Aarons et al. (2011).

To ensure the present study was well organized and achieve a fruitful outcome, some of the following basic guidelines and steps were applied. These stages are listed in the below table 1.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Step 1; calls for - Ethical Clearance. It is essential to have an ethical clearance because the present study involves human participants. Davydd and Levin (2007, p.45) note that “when dealing with any form of research involving human subjects, an approval should be obtained so that it does not cross any ethical boundaries in the process”. Hence, an approval letter was obtained from KTMB, granting permission to conduct the study. The participants were also asked whether they agreed to the interview for research purposes. The approval and the consent letter were provided.



Figure 1: Permission Letter From KTMB



6th November 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

**CONFIRMATION FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE (MANAGEMENT) BY RESEARCH
CANDIDATE OF ASIA e UNIVERSITY**

This letter serves to certify that **MR. ISAI AMUTAN A/L KRISHNAN** (STUDENT ID NO: M60201100006) is a Master of Science (Management) By Research candidate with School of Management, Asia e University (AeU).

He is currently conducting a research entitled, "Customer Satisfaction and Commuter Service: An Evaluation of Intercity Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) Performance Delivery."

I would be most obliged if you could kindly assist him in whichever way possible for his study. Please do not hesitate to contact us at 603-27850000 if you need further clarifications.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sayed Mushtaq Hussain'.

PROF. DATO' DR. SAYED MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN
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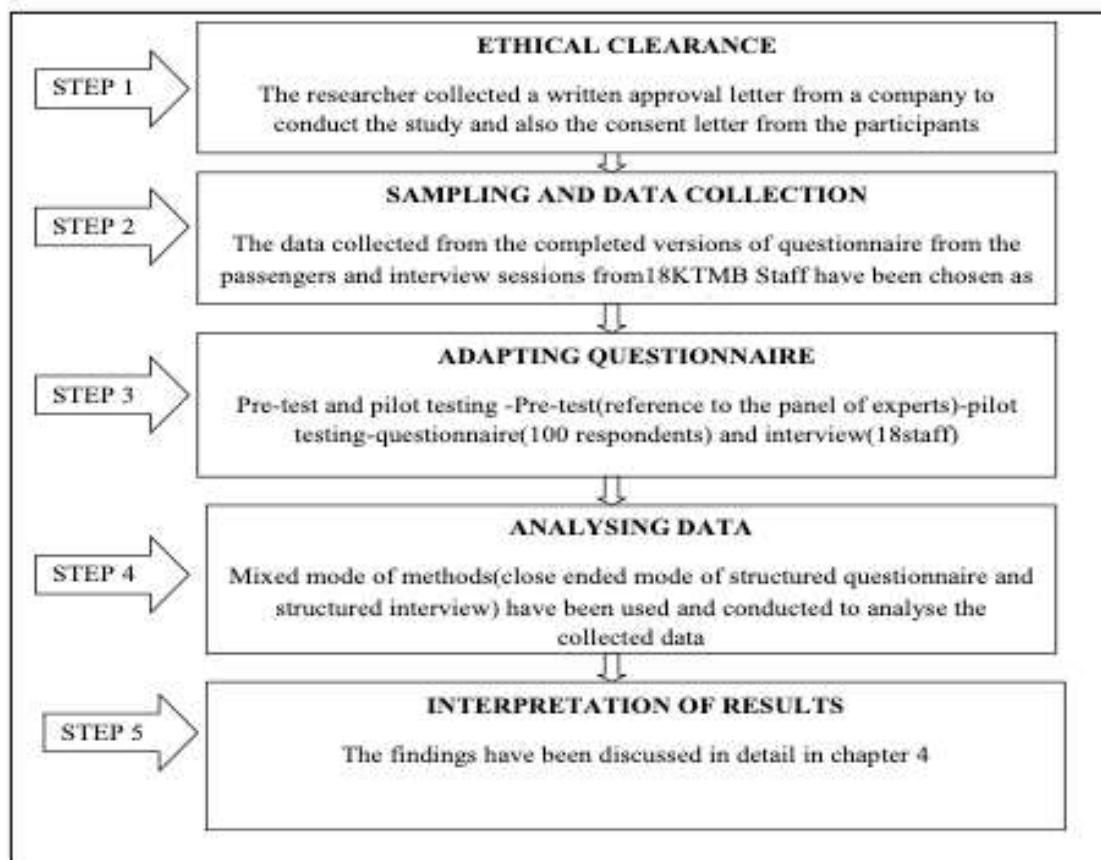
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Figure 2: Permission Letter From AeU

Step 2; emphasizes the data collection. The data was collected based on a prepared structured questionnaire as well as the set of questions to be interviewed. The respondents were targeted at passengers who are waiting for the train at KL Sentral and KL stations. The age ranges were between 14 to 61 and the targeted groups were students, working adults, and foreigners. As for the interview session, 18 KTMB staff participated in the study.

Step 3; preparing the adapted questionnaire. These questionnaires were designated on a Likert Scale, where; 4= Excellent, 3= Good, 2= Satisfactory and 1= Poor. Per Zamalia (2011) Likert Scale is a type of measurement that concludes the perception of the observer ranging from very positive to very negative. It is constructed to let the respondents indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement. The questionnaire was adapted from (Fazlina Waris, June 2010) and was translated from English into Malay for the better comprehension of the respondents. Thus, both languages were also used during the questionnaire & the interviewing session.

Table 1: Stages of research



Step 4; as for analysing data, the gathered data from the questionnaire and semi-structured interview were analyzed based on analytical framework.

Step 5; indicates the last action of the study, which is the interpretation of results. The collected data were carefully analyzed and interpreted accurately so that the true situation is reflected. The purpose of the data interpretation and findings is to “transform the data collected into credible evidence about the development of the intervention and its performance of the study” (Creswell, 2014, p. 471).

The pilot testing of the present research was done to the distribution of the questionnaire to 100 respondents to check the reliability of the statements through quantitative reliability testing. Besides that, the responses to some questions on the structured interview was used to verify the reliability and validity of the statements.

Results and Analysis

This study evaluated and discusses the results through dual modes of quantitative and qualitative approaches that are tied up with the close-ended type of structured questionnaire as well as structured interview. This section reflected the flow of the statistical results from the basic explanations (Frequency distribution and descriptive statistics) to pre-requisite test (normality tests) and tests of differences (Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests).

Quantitative Analysis

Tables 2 and 3 are designed to explore the frequency distributions on the different aspects of discussions, which are tied up with demographical information, It can be observed that 51 percent of

the respondents are females, 60 percent of them are working adults and 23 percent deals with respondents within the age of 27 to 42, in which 50 percent of them are females. Based on this, it can be asserted that working adults showed a higher level of interests in getting in touch with the issues of the commuter service in both stations (KL Sentral and KL). This may be due to the fact that they are tied up with an urgency to get to their working places on time by train and it is based on the flexibility of traveling.

Table 2: Frequency distribution on a demographical profile of selected participants

Demographical profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	295	49
Female	305	51
Status		
Student	111	19
Working adult	316	53
Foreigner	173	29
Age		
14-20	55	9
21-26	68	11
27-35	140	23
36-42	135	23
43-50	103	17
51-60	99	17

Table 3: Frequency distribution on a demographical profile (status and age) of selected respondents by gender

	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Status				
Student	60	54	51	46
Working adult	127	40	189	60
Foreigner	108	62	65	38
Age				
14-20	31	56	24	44
21-26	30	44	38	56
27-35	76	54	64	46
36-42	62	46	73	54
43-50	40	39	63	61
51-60	56	57	43	43

Majority of responses were consistent with the positive mode of expansionary effects on the degree of satisfaction. Although, there are minor biases among responses within the context of gender. Also, there was a moderate form of responses which shows the fact that female working adults made up of higher levels of beliefs in terms of satisfaction in moving towards the positive approach of service continuation compared to males. In general, it can be seen that the females showed positive response towards their level of satisfaction in different dimensions compared to males as more than 50 percent are associated with the combined version of two options (satisfactory and good). This might be due to the variations of expectations on the selected dimensions that are tied up with quality, safety, and security, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities, as well as services. Clearly, this indicate the point that males do have higher expectations on their levels of satisfaction towards the existing performance of commuter service. Hence, favored the option to say that the performance of commuter service is poor as more than 50 percent was supported.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of the responses for selected dimensions of interest among selected respondents by gender

Dimensions	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
a) Quality				
Over the last year, do you think that the reliability of traveling by train has improved?				
Poor	143	60	97	40
Satisfactory	134	44	169	56
Good	18	32	39	68
How do you rate the behavior of Commuter staffs?				
Poor	84	63	50	37
Satisfactory	171	47	193	53
Good	40	61	62	39
Does the train station provide necessary information? Are they useful?				
Poor	72	58	53	42
Satisfactory	149	47	171	53
Good	74	48	81	52
If any errors due to train system occur, is the problems solved immediately?				
Poor	85	51.5	80	48.5
Satisfactory	132	51	126	49
Good	78	45	97	55
Excellent	0	0	2	100
Overall, how do you find the Malaysian Commuter service?				
Poor	86	56	67	44
Satisfactory	154	51	150	49
Good	55	38.5	88	61.5
b) Safety and Security				
Is it safe to travel using the train at night?				
Poor	177	51	173	49
Satisfactory	107	47	122	53
Good	10	50	10	50
Excellent	1	100	0	0
How do you rate the workers in helping customers recover their lost or missing objects?				
Poor	130	48	141	52
Satisfactory	147	49.8	148	50.2
Good	18	53	16	47
Are there any safeguard at any time of the day for security reasons?				
Poor	78	49.7	79	50.3
Satisfactory	148	48	158	52
Good	67	49.6	68	50.4
Excellent	2	100	0	0

How do you rate the Commuter waiting arrangement?				
Poor	77	53	68	47
Satisfactory	154	49.8	155	50.2
Good	63	44	81	56
Excellent	1	50	1	50
Is any police/security looking after the passengers?				
Poor	94	53	83	47
Satisfactory	145	46	174	54
Good	56	54	48	46
c) Punctuality				
How satisfied are you with the Commuter service schedule?				
Poor	121	55	99	45
Satisfactory	156	46	180	54
Good	18	41	26	59
Does the train reach on time?				
Poor	88	57	66	43
Satisfactory	189	48	205	52
Good	18	35	34	65
How do you find the queuing system? Are you able to buy tickets in time?				
Poor	76	57	58	43
Satisfactory	155	49	162	51
Good	64	43	85	57
Should the frequency of train arriving increased (within a minute)?				
Poor	74	54	64	46
Satisfactory	145	50.2	144	49.8
Good	73	43	96	57
Excellent	3	75	1	25
If there is any delay occurred during the traveling period, do the technicians put the effort of rectifying the service immediately?				
Poor	81	49.4	83	50.6
Satisfactory	174	52	158	48
Good	40	38.5	64	61.5
d) Price				
Are the tickets sold for each destination has a reasonable price				
Poor	93	61	60	39
Satisfactory	167	46	197	54
Good	35	42	48	58
If you were charged to visit the facilities at the train station, did you feel this value the money?				
Poor	50	66	26	34
Satisfactory	204	48	223	52
Good	41	42	56	58
How do you rate the pricing of the things sold in mini shops at				

the train station?				
Poor	65	53	57	47
Satisfactory	137	50	137	50
Good	93	46	111	54
Does the 'touch and go' system smoothen your traveling?				
Poor	75	51	71	49
Satisfactory	145	51	137	49
Good	74	44	95	56
Excellent	1	33.3	2	66.7
Do you find it easy to use the kiosk service that is newly introduced for the purchase of tokens of traveling?				
Poor	83	59	58	41
Satisfactory	174	47	196	53
Good	36	42	50	58
Excellent	2	66.7	1	33.3
e) Cleanliness				
Is the train station clean?				
Poor	64	60	43	40
Satisfactory	136	47	154	53
Good	95	47	108	53
Does the train station have an appealing surrounding that supports our green environment?				
Poor	60	62	37	38
Satisfactory	141	48.5	150	51.5
Good	94	44	118	56
What do you think of the public convenience at the train station in terms of cleanliness, hand washing facilities, smell, etc?				
Poor	75	58	55	42
Satisfactory	135	47	150	53
Good	85	46	100	54
Do the traveling conditions bring pleasant during travel? Are the trains monitored for cleanliness?				
Poor	54	50	54	50
Satisfactory	182	49.7	184	50.3
Good	58	47	66	53
Excellent	1	50	1	50
How do you find the maintenance of the train station and its facilities?				
Poor	75	56	59	44
Satisfactory	163	47	182	53
Good	56	47	64	53
Excellent	1	100	0	0
f) Facilities and Services				
Is the ticket machine functioning very well?				
Poor	220	52	205	48
Satisfactory	67	43	90	57
Good	8	44	10	56

Does train ticket was useful and important?				
Poor	191	48	205	52
Satisfactory	93	50.3	92	49.7
Good	11	58	8	42
Does the sound of the announcement made in the station and inside the train be understandable and clear?				
Poor	125	53	112	47
Satisfactory	133	46	157	54
Good	37	51	36	49
Does the security in charged in the train works accordingly, especially in the women's coach?				
Poor	46	55	37	45
Satisfactory	203	49.9	204	50.1
Good	46	42	64	58
How do you find the comfortableness at the station while waiting for the train?				
Poor	96	58.5	68	41.5
Satisfactory	160	47	183	53
Good	39	42	54	58

Table 5: Frequency distribution of the responses for selected dimensions of interest among selected respondents

Dimensions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
a) Quality		
Over the last year, do you think that the reliability of traveling by train has improved?		
Poor	240	40.0
Satisfactory	303	50.5
Good	57	9.5
How do you rate the behavior of Commuter staffs?		
Poor	134	22.3
Satisfactory	364	60.7
Good	102	17.0
Does the train station provide necessary information? Are they useful?		
Poor	125	20.8
Satisfactory	320	53.3
Good	155	25.8
If any errors due to train system occur, is the problems solved immediately?		
Poor	165	27.5
Satisfactory	258	43.0
Good	175	29.2
Excellent	2	3
Overall, how do you find the Malaysian Commuter service?		
Poor	153	25.5
Satisfactory	304	50.7

Good	143	23.8
b) Safety and Security		
Is it safe to travel using the train at night?		
Poor	350	58.3
Satisfactory	229	38.2
Good	20	3.3
Excellent	1	2
How do you rate the workers in helping customers recover their lost or missing objects?		
Poor	271	45.2
Satisfactory	295	49.2
Good	34	5.7
Are there any safeguard at any time of the day for security reasons?		
Poor	157	26.2
Satisfactory	306	51.0
Good	135	22.5
Excellent	2	3
How do you rate the Commuter waiting arrangement?		
Poor	145	24.2
Satisfactory	309	51.5
Good	144	24.0
Excellent	2	3
Is any police/security looking after the passengers?		
Poor	177	29.5
Satisfactory	319	53.2
Good	104	17.3
c) Punctuality		
How satisfied are you with the Commuter service schedule?		
Poor	220	36.7
Satisfactory	336	56.0
Good	44	7.3
Does the train reach on time?		
Poor	154	25.7
Satisfactory	394	65.7
Good	52	8.7
How do you find the queuing system? Are you able to buy tickets in time?		
Poor	134	22.3
Satisfactory	317	52.8
Good	149	24.8
Should the frequency of train be arriving increased (within a minute)?		
Poor	138	23.0
Satisfactory	289	48.2
Good	169	28.2
Excellent	4	7
If there is any delay occurred during the traveling period, do the technicians put the effort of rectifying the service immediately?		
Poor	164	27.3
Satisfactory	332	55.3

Good	104	17.3
d) Price		
Are the tickets sold for each destination has a reasonable price?		
Poor	153	25.5
Satisfactory	364	60.7
Good	83	13.8
If you were charged to visit the facilities at the train station, did you feel this value the money?		
Poor	76	12.7
Satisfactory	427	71.2
Good	97	16.2
How do you rate the pricing of the things sold in mini shops at the train station?		
Poor	122	20.3
Satisfactory	274	45.7
Good	204	34.0
Does the 'touch and go' system smoothen your traveling?		
Poor	146	24.3
Satisfactory	292	47.0
Good	169	28.2
Excellent	3	5
Do you find it easy to use the kiosk service that is newly introduced for the purchase of tokens of traveling?		
Poor	141	23.5
Satisfactory	370	61.7
Good	86	14.3
Excellent	3	5
e) Cleanliness		
Is the train station clean?		
Poor	107	17.8
Satisfactory	290	48.3
Good	203	33.8
Does the train station have an appealing surrounding that supports our green environment?		
Poor	97	16.2
Satisfactory	291	48.5
Good	212	35.3
What do you think of the public convenience at the train station in terms of cleanliness, hand washing facilities, smell, etc?		
Poor	130	21.7
Satisfactory	285	47.5
Good	185	30.8
Do the traveling conditions bring pleasant during travel? Are the trains monitored for cleanliness?		
Poor	108	18.0
Satisfactory	366	61.0
Good	124	20.7
Excellent	2	3
How do you find the maintenance of the train		

station and its facilities?		
Poor	134	22.3
Satisfactory	345	57.5
Good	120	20.0
Excellent	1	2
f) Facilities and Services		
Is the ticket machine functioning very well?		
Poor	425	70.8
Satisfactory	157	26.2
Good	18	3.0
Does train ticket machine be useful and important?		
Poor	396	66.0
Satisfactory	185	30.8
Good	19	3.2
Does the sound of the announcement made in the station and inside the train be understandable and clear?		
Poor	237	39.5
Satisfactory	290	48.3
Good	73	12.2
Does the security in charged in the train works accordingly, especially in the women's coach?		
Poor	83	13.8
Satisfactory	407	67.8
Good	110	18.3
How do you find the comfortableness at the station while waiting for the train?		
Poor	164	27.3
Satisfactory	343	57.2
Good	93	15.5

The aggregated responses on the six dimensions of interest (quality, safety and security, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities and services) were computed by summing up the subjective responses of respondents for the items within each stated dimension.

Table 6: Uni-variate form of descriptive statistics of all the selected continuous variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Quality	9.70	2.37	5.61	5	15	10	0.14	-1.10
SS	8.91	2.21	4.90	5	16	11	0.47	-0.77
Punctuality	9.53	2.22	4.92	5	15	10	0.11	-1.04
Price	10.02	2.21	4.89	5	16	11	-0.06	-1.10
Cleanliness	10.46	2.42	5.86	5	15	10	-0.40	-1.11
Facilities and Services	8.35	2.13	4.53	5	15	10	0.75	-0.34

Note: SS refers Safety and Security

These aggregated responses were continuous variables due to the fact that, they do not deal with the static position of values. All the variables reflected consistent gap of divergence between values within the dimensions. Although, there were some minor differences that captured through the values of standard deviations and variances. The variables were free from the notion of outliers due to the homogeneity of variations. Furthermore, none of it really captured the classical mode of Jargue Bera's

normality test, as it stated that normality condition should be followed by the values of skewness that are near to 0 and kurtosis that are close to 3. However, it was validated by other relevant normality test, such as Kolmogorov, Shapiro Wilk and graphical form of normality test (Normal Q-Q plot).

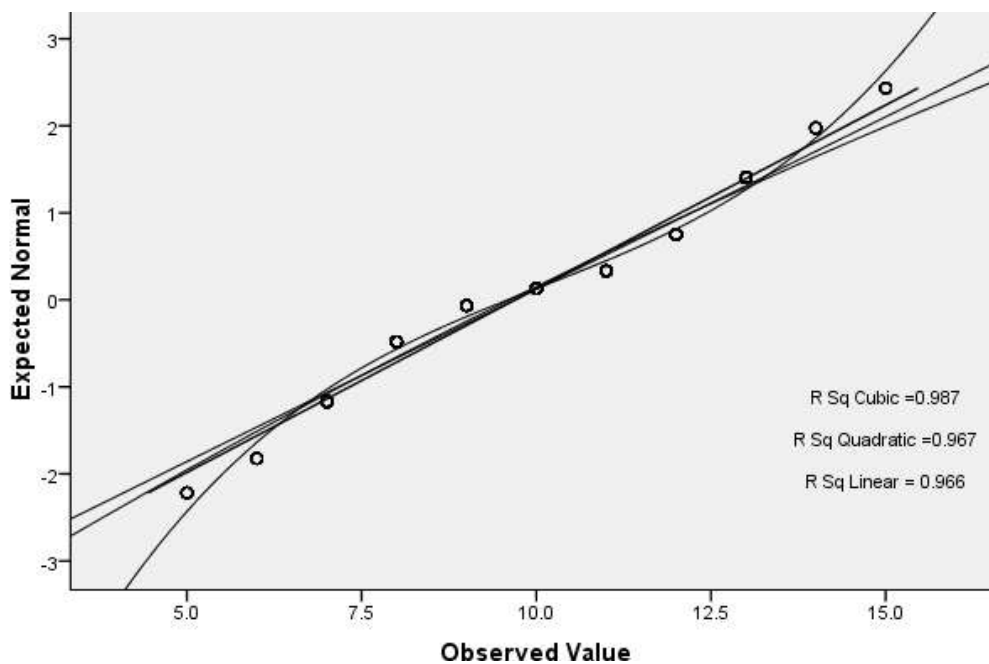
Table 7: Results of the Quantitative mode of normality tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk)

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		Shapiro Wilk	
	Statistic	P-value	Statistic	P-value
Quality	0.19	0.00	0.93	0.00
SS	0.20	0.00	0.92	0.00
Punctuality	0.18	0.00	0.94	0.00
Price	0.18	0.00	0.93	0.00
Cleanliness	0.19	0.00	0.90	0.00
Facilities and Services	0.24	0.00	0.89	0.00

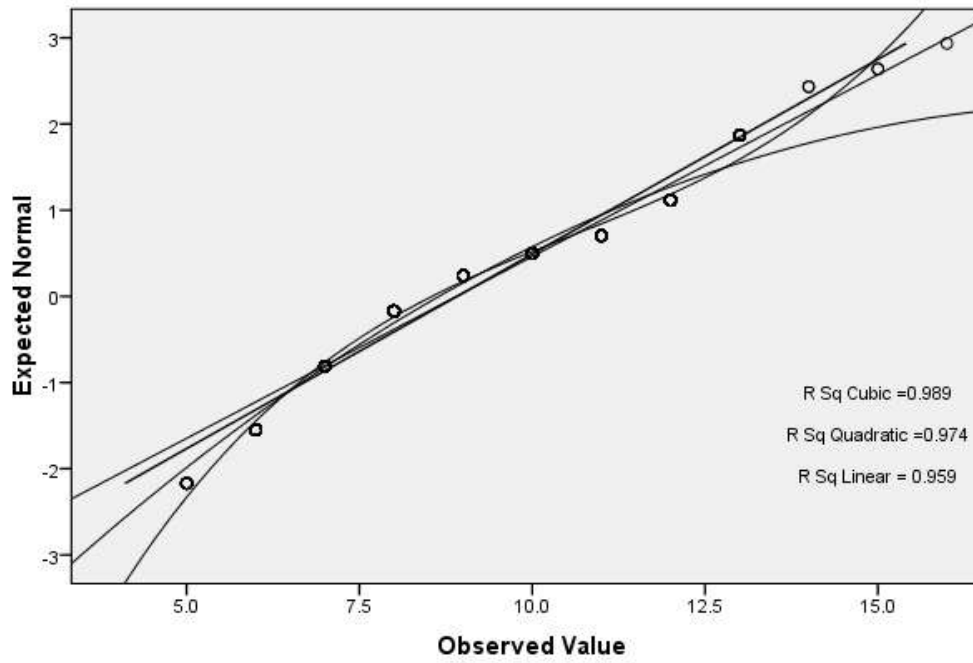
Note: SS refers to Safety and Security

Through the dual utilization of normality tests (tests of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk), it can be identified that all the variables were not normally distributed. This indicates that the selected variables followed the non-linear mode of heterogeneity. Thus, very much tied up with the issue of heteroscedasticity. As such, a normal Q-Q plot should be used to verify the contradiction of it and to check the validation of the quantitative model of normality testing. The normal Q-Q plot was then used to verified the approximate distribution of variables through R-squares (coefficient of determination) and it is purely consistent with results of normality that was reflected through Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk.

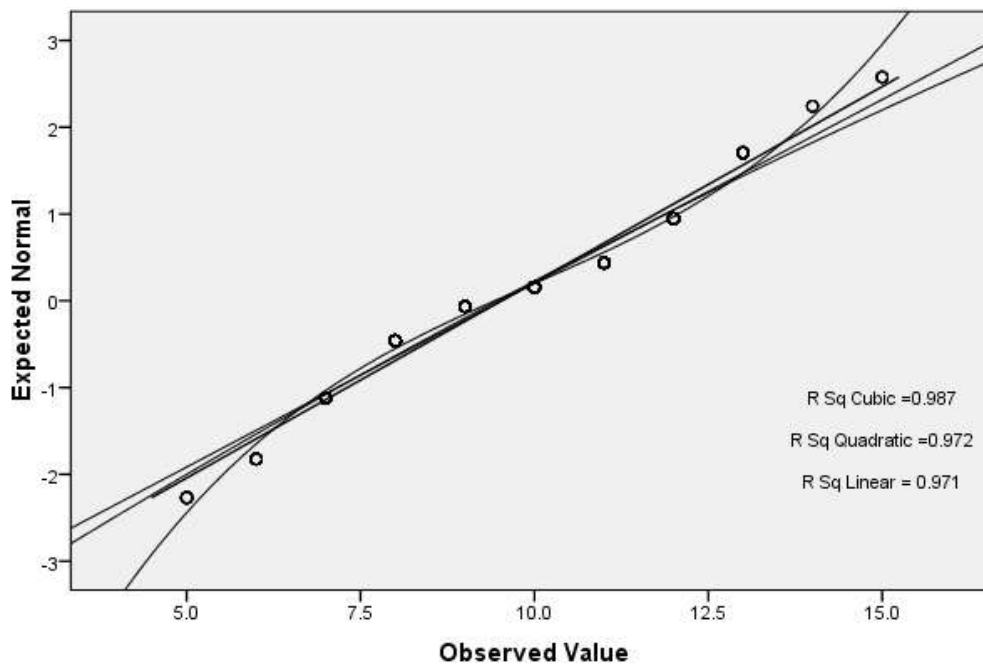
Quality



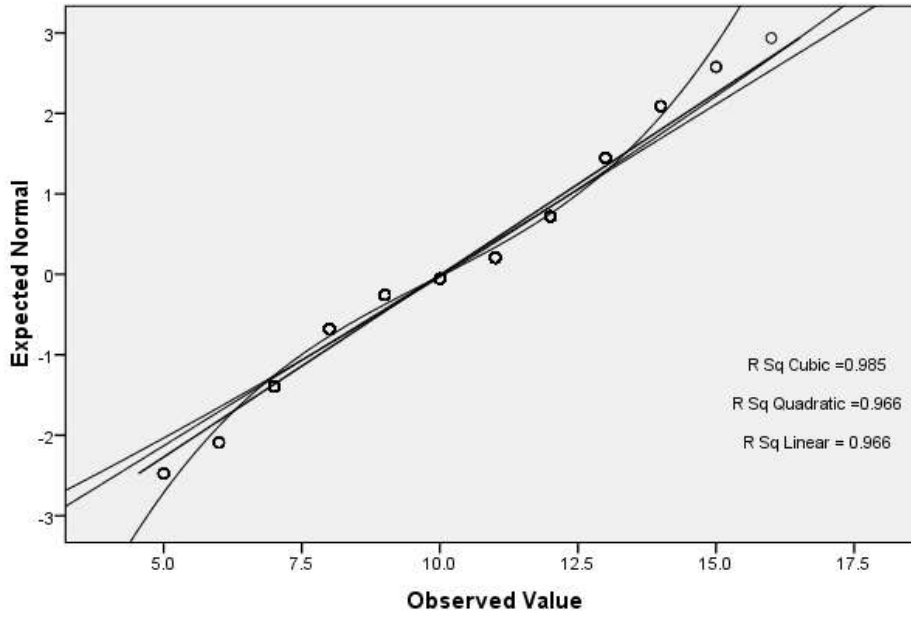
SS (Safety and Security)



Punctuality

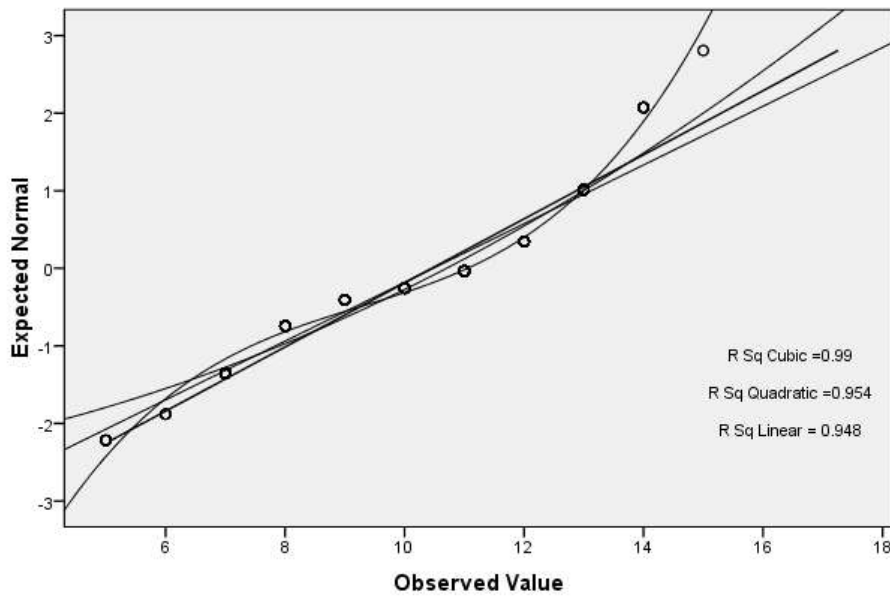


Price

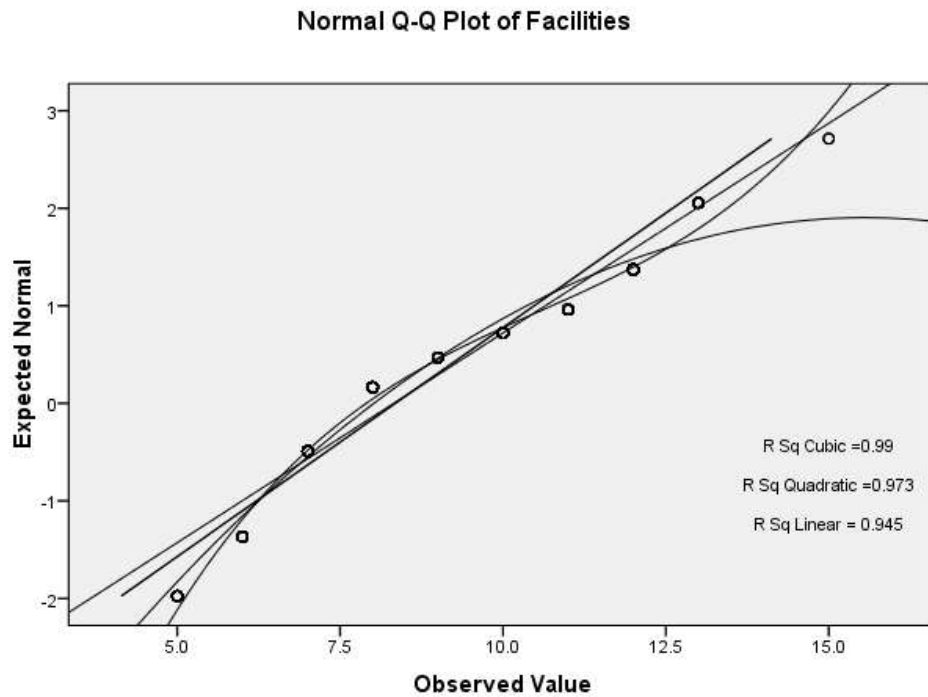


Cleanliness

Normal Q-Q Plot of Cleanliness



Facilities



Mann Whitney version of the non-parametric test which is also known as the non-parametric version of independent sample t-test was used. The utilization of it was due to the non-normal mode of distribution and the independent variable deals with two groups. Thus, it was employed to test if there is a significant difference between categorical variable (gender) and continuous variables (responses for quality, safety, and security, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities, and services) that are not normally distributed. From the overall results, it was indicated that categorical variable has no influence on the safety and security except the significant difference between gender, quality, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities and services.

Table 8: Non-parametric version of independent sample test (Mann-Whitney test)

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Means of ranks	N	Wilcoxon's Z-test	
				Statistic	P-value
Quality	Male	271.0	295	-4.15	0.00**
	Female	329.0	305		
SS	Male	297.6	295	-0.41	0.69
	Female	303.3	305		
Punctuality	Male	279.6	295	-2.94	0.00**
	Female	320.7	305		
Price	Male	278.8	295	-3.06	0.00**
	Female	321.5	305		
Cleanliness	Male	284.9	295	-2.20	0.03**
	Female	315.6	305		
Facilities and Services	Male	284.7	295	-2.27	0.02**
	Female	315.8	305		

**Significant at the level of significance (5%). Note: SS refers to Safety and Security

Kruskal Wallis version of the non-parametric test that is also known as the non-parametric version of ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was carried out in the present study. The usage of it was due to the non-normal mode of distribution and it deals with more than two groups. It was used to test if there is a significant difference between categorical variables (status and age of respondents) and continuous variables (responses for quality, safety, and security, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities, and services) that are not normally distributed. From the overall results, it was indicated that status and age of respondents have no significant influence on safety and security, cleanliness, facilities, and services, except the significant differences between the categorical variables, quality, punctuality and price that were tied up with the performance of Commuter service.

Table 9: Non-parametric version of independent sample test (Kruskal-Wallis test)

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Means of ranks	N	Chi-Square	
				Statistic	P-value
Quality	Student	353.0	111	12.94	0.00**
	Working adult	286.7	316		
SS	Foreigner	292.0	173	4.28	0.12
	Student	321.4	111		
	Working adult	287.2	316		
Punctuality	Foreigner	311.4	173	11.27	0.00**
	Student	342.5	111		
	Working adult	281.0	316		
Price	Foreigner	309.2	173	16.02	0.00**
	Student	359.0	111		
	Working adult	288.6	316		
Cleanliness	Foreigner	284.7	173	5.43	0.07
	Student	327.6	111		
	Working adult	302.5	316		
Facilities	Foreigner	279.6	173	1.17	0.56
	Student	296.1	111		
	Working adult	295.7	316		
	Foreigner	312.2	173		

**Significant at the level of significance (5%). Note: SS refers to Safety and Security

Table 10: Non parametric version of independent sample test (Kruskal-Wallis Test)

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Means of ranks	N	Chi-Square	
				Statistic	P-value
Quality	Age			34.81	0.00**
	14-20	373.0	55		
	21-26	358.0	68		
	27-35	271.3	140		
	36-42	271.0	135		
	43-50	265.7	103		
	51-60	338.4	99		

SS	14-20	336.6	55	7.11	0.21
	21-26	321.5	68		
	27-35	304.9	140		
	36-42	283.9	135		
	43-50	276.2	103		
	51-60	307.7	99		
Punctuality	14-20	355.5	55	22.20	0.00**
	21-26	339.0	68		
	27-35	296.2	140		
	36-42	292.2	135		
	43-50	243.6	103		
	51-60	320.1	99		
Price	14-20	375.0	55	34.80	0.00**
	21-26	357.1	68		
	27-35	283.6	140		
	36-42	284.1	135		
	43-50	242.5	103		
	51-60	327.0	99		
Cleanliness	14-20	349.4	55	9.16	0.10
	21-26	317.6	68		
	27-35	297.2	140		
	36-42	308.5	135		
	43-50	272.5	103		
	51-60	284.6	99		
Facilities	14-20	343.5	55	10.98	0.05
	21-26	283.6	68		
	27-35	323.2	140		
	36-42	291.5	135		
	43-50	268.3	103		
	51-60	301.9	99		

***Significant at the level of significance (5%). Note: SS refers to Safety and Security*

Qualitative Analysis (Interview sessions)

Question 1: Why there are still problems exist even though KTM has launched My Commuter?

The respondents' feedback was jotted down.

'...the person that handles the project did not study well enough before launched my commuter...'

'...timing not punctual, the trains are slow and the train always stop or too many stations to stop during the journey...'

'...slow, no punctuality and need to enhance the quality...'

'...there are some weakness and need to be improved...'

'...lack of services rains during the peak hours...'

'...the weather factor will cause delay the trip and need more train to cater the passengers...'

'...since the implementations of MyKomuter, there are some lacks in terms of service and must meet the customer's requirements...'

'...counter service poor, need to upgrade and the train was so slow and poor counter service...'

'...the service is too slow as well as a ticket counter...'

'...cannot rely on the service and breakdown especially pick hours...'

'...KTM needs to monitor what exactly should be done...'

From all the responses that were pointed out by interviewees, the most significant reason for the persistence of the problems was the launched of KTM My commuter, which was refers to the unbalanced momentum of systematic management. With reference to the responses, it was realized that the heterogeneous variations of lower fairness within the system will affect the punctuality, functions of commuter, the breakdown of the trains, limitation of commuters, and, etc in a negative direction. Important areas of priorities for the improvisation of commuter service are the holistic coordination of effective and continuous monitoring of system in terms of systematic management.

Question 2: What will be the future efforts to maintain the effective management of KTM service?

'...railway should have a separate track...'

'...to be more punctual and frequent, have additional coaches and replace old train...'

'...poor customers service especially in the counter...'

'...upgrade a better service with good environmental...'

'...improve in all sectors...'

'...enhance the quality of how other countries improve their services...'

'...continuously improve the service...'

'...need to improve the services. research should be done in order to enhance the quality'

'...monitoring on the implementation time to time...'

'...increase the train coaches...'

'...increase in the quality...'

Important reflection on the efforts for enhancement of effective performance of commuter system was almost similar to the previous responses on the first question. This is a continuous system of monitoring and it should be activated on a daily or weekly basis in order for the management staffs to fulfil the needs of their clients or users of commuter service. The second point of interest deals with the combined version of monitoring with the inclusion on the environmental effects of it and should be integrated with an enormous number of stakeholders to maintain the assessment of the system.

Question 3: In your point of view, what are the causes of dissatisfactions among the clients of KTM Service?

'...timing not accurate from one station to another station...'

'...the punctuality of the service and the cleanliness of the KTM coach...'

'...too pack and crowded, not hygiene and should always maintain good hygiene for passenger's health...'

'...services need to be improved...'

'...poor punctuality...'

'...enhance the services and meet the customers' requirements...'

'...reach the destinations on time...'

'...delaying in train services...'

'...time management and service provided is not satisfactory...'

'...increase the quality and meet the customers' satisfaction...'

'...most of the ticket machines, not function and the schedule not on time...'

'...poor system and quality need to be improved to meet the customers' satisfaction...'

'...lack of improvement by the management...'

'...the consumer needs efficient service such as peak hours' time but always late and more '...service during pick hours...'

'...need to improve the quality...'

'...punctuality and ticket counter need to be improved...'

'...poor quality - in fact, menyusahkan customer example kena ada small notes/touch n go pun KTM problem...'

The responses of respondents on these questions were almost similar to their feedback on the questionnaires. The major direction of significant causes of dissatisfaction are stated as follows:-

- i. Ineffectiveness in maintaining the quality of the Commuter system
- ii. Poor time management
- iii. Poor maintenance of equipment that is related to Commuter service (Touch n

Go, ticket machine and etc).

Question 4: Do you consider the internal and external factors?

Most of the respondents said yes and need to be upgraded. From the overall responses, it was seen that the tacit and explicit factors were needed to reduce the probability of inefficiencies or damages that were caused by the system and heterogeneous agents of management. The critical evaluation of responses reflected a higher level of awareness among the respondents on the important issues that are inline with the performance of Malaysian commuter service.

This elucidates the four forms of thoughts that are tied up with the summarisation of results that were obtained through the utilization of relevant statistical tests, holistic forms of discussions on the results, directions for future research and limitations of the research. The first section deals with the summarization of results based on the heterogeneous mode of intellectual connections between the highlighted research problems, framework, statistical tests, and results. The second section illustrates contradictions, consistencies, and neutrality between the results, theoretical thoughts, and existing empirical evidence. The third strand discusses the dual mixtures of positive and negative reflections of the research. Forth section deals with the constraints and challenges of the research, whereas the last provided some possible ideas for future research.

Discussion

The expansionary waves of reality have created a growing space for the evaluation on pragmatism which combines the quantitative and qualitative methods. Thus, the present research utilized the close-ended mode of a structured questionnaire as a quantitative method and structured interview as a qualitative method for purpose of data collection. The research was carried out at two well-known train stations: KL Sentral and KL stations due to the physical locations, which refers to the transit stations from Tanjung Malim to Sg. Gadut and Bt. Cave to Pelabuhan Klang as well as nature of flexibility in approaching the respondents for their objective and subjective views, including comments on the performance of commuter service in both stations. The questionnaire was distributed to selected clients who have to wait for the train at two selected stations and interview was conducted with some users of commuter based on their willingness in giving feedbacks on those highlighted issues. A combined version of purposive and convenience samplings was used to determine the targeted sample for the present study based on the inclusion criteria and to obtain the voluntary responses from the selected respondents based on their aspects of convenience as well as willingness. The inclusion criteria for the selection of targeted sample of respondents are: a) The respondents must be clients who are waiting for a train at KL Sentral and KL stations. b) The age of respondents should be between 14 to 61. c) The respondents can only be students, working adults, and foreigners. Furthermore, the research utilized the combined version of dual theories (Theory of planned behaviour and Expected-value theory) in illustrating the beliefs in terms of satisfaction that can be evaluated through the subjective responses on the selected dimensions (Quality, safety and security, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities and services) to influence the dual approaches of behaviour (positive or negative approach) and by looking into the demographical information that are tied up with status, gender and age of respondents. From the overall results, Kruskal Wallis test indicated that the status and age of respondents have no significant influence on safety and security, cleanliness, facilities, as well as services except the significant differences between the categorical variables, quality, punctuality and price that were tied up with the performance of commuter service. Also, Mann-Whitney test indicated that categorical variable has no influence on the safety and security except the significant difference between gender, quality, punctuality, price, cleanliness, facilities and services. Thus, a multidimensional model of holistic coordination within the system is very much needed in enhancing the positive approach of using commuter service among the clients for the purpose of their traveling.

The importance of the issues on the performance of commuter service is crucial in highlighting the effectiveness of the transportation system that deals with flexible facilitation. The combined version of

theories (theory of planned behavior and expectancy-value theory) is very important in highlighting the role of beliefs and expectations in terms of satisfaction towards the usage of the commuter system through the heterogeneous demographical information that is tied up with status, age, and gender (Mouwens, 2015; Perera, 2016). The study also revealed that females do have the lower level of expectations on the usage of commuter service through their moderate mode of responses compared to males. In general, males do have higher expectations on the services as they can not easily accept the current trends of services and this can be seen from the fact that more than 50 percent have voiced up their dissatisfaction on the services (Ibrahim et al. 2019). Hence, the KTM management should take the demographical information into consideration when planning for a systematic mode of management. Besides, the structured interview also revealed the fact that the clients of commuter service are not really happy with the current movement of services due to the some argument presented on the lack of systematic management that takes up the benefits of all the stakeholders into consideration and poor rating of maintenance of machines as well as internal equipment.

Recommendations for further research

If the debate is to be moved forward, a better understanding of this field of study needs to be developed. Customer satisfaction is essential to meet customers' requirements. In order to improve customer satisfaction. The following are the possible directions for further research on the performance of commuter service. The first would be the utilization of complex stages of stratified or cluster samplings to deal with the broader classification of clients from different backgrounds. The second would be an extensive mode of items within the dimensions should be used to deal with the method of data reduction (factor analysis), as the factor analysis requires a large number of items in order to capture the greater variations of the significant items for each of the dimensions. The third would be following extension on the mode of triangulation methods-more than a structured questionnaire and interview-open to content analysis, conversational analysis, focus group discussion etc. The last one would be a comparative study between KTMB commuter and KTMB ETS services.

Limitations of the Study

A number of caveats need to be noted regarding the present study as the case with all research endeavors. The limitation of the present study is sampling type-convenience mode of sampling that does not represent the estimated targeted population. This is followed by preliminary mode of statistical tests, such as Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis tests as well as limited quantitative and qualitative methods. Also, further factor analysis was not conducted in the present study, since it deals with overlapping items with each of the dimensions, and with the subjective measurement of satisfaction (poor, satisfactory, good and excellent) and possess limited number of items within each of the dimensions. Due to the hectic schedules of the staff, the management did not allow to do a recording. Only structured interview question was used so as to be eased or convenient for the staff.

Conclusion

The present study is able to answer the research question in evaluating intercity Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad (KTMB) performance delivery on customer satisfaction and commuter service. The findings were only applicable to KTMB commuter services. It is important that KTMB commuter needs to become more efficient and consistent to compete with other rail services as customers are more demanding with the quality of the services (Mitra, 2002; Ibrahim et al. 2019).

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