

Consumer Preferences For Price And Taste In The Gultik Culinary Business At Blok M Jakarta: A Conjoint Analysis Approach

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the effect of service quality and price perception on consumer purchasing decisions at Gultik Blok M, a well-known street food destination in South Jakarta. The research adopts a quantitative approach, using a questionnaire distributed to respondents who have purchased food from the vendors at Gultik. The findings indicate that both service quality and price perception play a significant role in shaping consumer decisions. Service quality, reflected in promptness, friendliness, and cleanliness, is found to influence consumer trust and satisfaction. Meanwhile, competitive pricing and perceived value for money also encourage repeat purchases. The results support the notion that consistent quality and affordability are key factors in customer retention within the informal culinary sector. These findings have implications for micro-entrepreneurs and street vendors, suggesting the need to focus on improving service standards and maintaining fair pricing to strengthen customer loyalty in competitive urban food markets.

Keywords: Service Quality, Price Perception, Purchasing Decision, Street Food, Consumer Behavior, Micro-Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

The street food sector has become a vibrant part of urban economies in many developing countries, including Indonesia. In cities like Jakarta, street food not only fulfills basic food needs but also serves as a cultural marker and economic lifeline for micro-entrepreneurs. As the competition intensifies, understanding what drives consumer decisions in this segment becomes increasingly vital for business sustainability and growth (Tanjung & Prasetyo, 2022).

Consumer purchasing decisions are shaped by multiple factors, but service quality and price perception consistently stand out. Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2018) emphasized that in service-dominated industries, perceived service quality significantly influences repeat purchase intention and customer satisfaction. Meanwhile, Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that price, as a cue of value, becomes a critical determinant in low-involvement purchase settings such as street food.

The informal nature of street food businesses often means service interactions are short and transactional. However, these brief encounters still influence consumer perceptions deeply. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) proposed that reliability, responsiveness, and assurance are core dimensions of service quality that determine whether customers feel valued and respected in the buying process.

In parallel, price perception plays a fundamental role in determining consumer choice, especially among lower- and middle-income consumers who frequent street food vendors. According to Monroe (2003), consumers don't just consider the nominal price but rather their perceived value in comparison to other options available. When the perceived benefits outweigh the cost, the likelihood of a purchase increases.

The current economic landscape marked by inflation and rising living costs has made price even more salient in consumer decision-making. Tjiptono (2017) notes that in price-sensitive segments, even minor fluctuations in perceived value can shift consumer loyalty dramatically. This dynamic challenges street food vendors to offer both affordability and quality.

In Indonesia, the rise of culinary tourism and digital platforms such as food delivery apps has further complicated consumer preferences. As Prabowo and Nugroho (2020) highlighted, consumers now compare vendors not only based on taste and price but also on presentation, hygiene, and delivery speed. These additional expectations amplify the importance of understanding the dual roles of service quality and pricing.

Despite the growing attention on street food from economic and sociocultural perspectives, empirical studies exploring the intersection of service quality and price perception on consumer purchasing decisions remain limited. Most available research focuses on formal restaurants or franchise outlets (Saragih & Hamzah, 2021), leaving a significant knowledge gap in informal food sectors.

This study aims to fill that gap by investigating how perceived service quality and price influence purchasing decisions among customers of street food vendors around the Blok M area in South Jakarta. This area, known for its dense street food activity and diverse customer base, offers a fertile context for analyzing these dynamics in practice.

By anchoring the analysis in established marketing theories and drawing insights from the local urban food ecosystem, the research seeks to offer both theoretical contributions and practical recommendations. The study is expected to benefit street food entrepreneurs in designing strategies to attract and retain customers in an increasingly competitive culinary landscape. Ultimately, this research positions itself within the broader discourse on consumer behavior and microenterprise development. In doing so, it echoes the calls of scholars like McCarthy and Perreault (2017) who urge for more context-sensitive studies that reflect real-world complexities in developing economies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of service quality and price perception on purchasing decisions among street food consumers in the Blok M area of South Jakarta. The choice of a quantitative method was guided by the objective of identifying measurable relationships between clearly defined variables. By using numerical data, this study aims to offer statistically reliable insights into what drives consumer choices in informal food markets.

The research was conducted in Blok M, a well-known urban center in South Jakarta that features a vibrant ecosystem of street food vendors. This area was selected purposively due to its high customer traffic and diversity of food options, making it an ideal site for capturing a wide range of consumer experiences. The setting also reflects the real-life dynamics of urban street food consumption in Indonesia, offering high ecological validity to the findings.

To gather primary data, the researchers distributed a structured questionnaire to street food customers in the area. The questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale format, allowing respondents to rate their perceptions of service quality, price fairness, and their purchasing decisions. Prior to full deployment, the questionnaire underwent a pilot test with a small sample to ensure clarity, consistency, and relevance of the questions.

The population in this study includes all consumers who regularly purchase food from street vendors in the Blok M area. Due to the large and dynamic nature of this population, the sampling technique used was purposive sampling. This technique enables researchers to target respondents who meet specific criteria, namely, individuals who have made multiple purchases from street vendors within the past month and are familiar with the service and pricing.

A total of one hundred respondents were selected to participate in the survey. This sample size was deemed sufficient to perform statistical analysis while maintaining feasibility in terms of time and

resources. Respondents were approached on-site during peak hours and invited to complete the questionnaire voluntarily, with assurances of anonymity and confidentiality.

The study measured three core variables: service quality, price perception, and purchasing decision. Service quality was assessed using dimensions adapted from the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Price perception included indicators such as price fairness, affordability, and value for money. Purchasing decision was operationalized through indicators of purchase frequency, willingness to recommend, and brand loyalty.

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent characteristics and variable distributions. Inferential analysis, particularly multiple linear regression, was employed to test the influence of the independent variables (service quality and price perception) on the dependent variable (purchasing decision). The level of significance was set at conventional thresholds to determine the robustness of the relationships.

By applying this methodological framework, the research seeks not only to uncover significant correlations but also to inform practical interventions. The goal is to enable street food vendors to make data-driven improvements to their services and pricing strategies. This, in turn, contributes to the resilience and competitiveness of small-scale food businesses in Indonesia's urban economy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Description and Instrument Testing

The quality of a research instrument is determined by its validity and reliability. Validity assesses how accurately the instrument measures what it is intended to measure, while reliability evaluates the consistency of the measurement over time (Arikunto, 2010). An instrument is considered valid when it accurately captures data without deviating from actual conditions, and reliable when it consistently produces trustworthy results.

The validity test aims to evaluate how well an instrument performs its function, specifically, whether the questionnaire items truly measure the intended constructs. In this test, each item is assessed by correlating it with the total score of its respective variable using Pearson's correlation coefficient. A questionnaire item is deemed valid if its calculated correlation (r-count) exceeds the critical value from the r-table.

The criteria for interpreting validity are:

- If $r\text{-count} > r\text{-table}$ (at 5% significance, two-tailed), the item is valid.
- If $r\text{-count} < r\text{-table}$ or negative, the item is not valid.

In contrast, the reliability test determines the consistency of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha.

According to Ghozali (2018), an instrument is considered reliable if Cronbach's Alpha exceeds 0.60, indicating internal consistency. If the coefficient falls below this threshold, the instrument is considered unreliable.

In summary, these tests are essential to ensure that the research instrument produces accurate and dependable measurements that reflect the underlying variables being studied.

Results of Validity Testing

Table 1. Validity Test Results of Service Quality (X1)

No.	Statement Code	Validity Coefficient	Significance	Description
1	X1.1	0.343	0	Valid
2	X1.2	0.262	0.008	Valid
3	X1.3	0.538	0	Valid
4	X1.4	0.43	0	Valid
5	X1.5	0.535	0	Valid

Based on the validity analysis of variable X1, all statement items tested have a significant correlation coefficient with the total score (TOTAL_X1), indicated by p-values less than 0.05. This confirms that all five items are valid.

The validity coefficients range from 0.262 to 0.538, suggesting moderate to strong correlations between each item and the total score. Notably, items X1.3 and X1.5 show relatively strong correlations of 0.538 and 0.535 respectively. This indicates that the items effectively represent the construct of variable X1. Overall, the instrument demonstrates good reliability in measuring the X1 variable, as all items are statistically valid and significantly related to the total score.

Table 2. Validity Test Result for Price (X2)

No. (Statement)	Validity Coefficient	Significance	Description
1. (X2.1)	0.234	0.019	Valid
2. (X2.2)	0.69	0	Valid
3. (X2.3)	0.699	0	Valid
4. (X2.4)	0.43	0	Valid
5. (X2.5)	0.347	0	Valid

The validity test results for variable X2 indicate that all items demonstrate a significant correlation with the total score (TOTAL_X2), with p-values below 0.05. The validity coefficients range from 0.234 to 0.699, showing moderate to strong relationships. Notably, items X2.2 and X2.3 exhibit particularly strong correlations. These findings suggest that the items accurately reflect the overall construct of the Price variable. Overall, the instrument is considered reliable in measuring variable X2, as all items are statistically valid and meaningfully correlated with the total score.

Table 3. Validity Test Results for Customer Satisfaction (Y)

N (Item)	Validity Coefficient	Significance	Explanation
1. (Y.1)	0.506	0	Valid
2. (Y.2)	0.726	0	Valid
3. (Y.3)	0.727	0	Valid
4. (Y.4)	0.686	0	Valid
5. (Y.5)	0.626	0	Valid

Based on the validity analysis of variable Y (Customer Satisfaction), all statement items tested exhibit significant correlation coefficients with the total score (TOTAL_Y), with p-values less than 0.05. This confirms that all five items are valid. The validity coefficients range from 0.506 to 0.727, indicating a strong to very strong relationship between each item and the overall score, particularly items Y.2 and Y.3, which demonstrate high correlation values of 0.726 and 0.727, respectively. These results suggest that each item accurately reflects the construct of Customer Satisfaction. Overall, the instrument shows good reliability and is statistically valid in measuring the intended variable.

Reliability Test Results

Table 4. Reliability Test Result of Service (X1)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.575	6

The reliability test result shows a Cronbach's alpha of 0.575 for an instrument consisting of 6 items. Although this value is below the commonly accepted minimum threshold of 0.70, it is still considered acceptable for exploratory research or early-stage studies. This indicates that the instrument demonstrates a moderate level of internal consistency in measuring the intended variable, though not yet optimal. Therefore, the instrument is considered sufficiently adequate for use in this study, with the recommendation for future improvement to enhance its reliability.

Table 5. Reliability Test Result for Price Variable (X2)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items

The reliability test revealed that the Cronbach's Alpha value for the six-item instrument was 0.670, which is slightly below the standard threshold of 0.70. However, this value is still considered acceptable, particularly for exploratory or early-phase research. It indicates that the instrument has an adequate level of internal consistency in measuring the intended variable. Although improvements are recommended to enhance its reliability, the instrument can still be regarded as appropriate for use in this study.

Table 6. Reliability Test Result for Customer Satisfaction Variable (Y)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.758	6

The reliability test shows that the Cronbach's alpha value for the six-item instrument is 0.758, which exceeds the commonly accepted minimum of 0.70. This indicates that the instrument has good reliability and consistent internal measurement. Therefore, the instrument is considered adequate and reliable for use in this study.

Discussion

1. Validity and Reliability Analysis
All items in the service, price, and customer satisfaction variables are valid, with significance levels below 0.05 and positive correlation to the total score.
2. Reliability Test
The service variable has low reliability ($\alpha = 0.575$), the price variable is acceptable ($\alpha = 0.670$), and customer satisfaction is reliable ($\alpha = 0.758$). Instruments for price and satisfaction are usable, while service items need revision.
3. Effect of Service
Fast and friendly service improves customer satisfaction. Customers feel valued and are more loyal. Consistent service quality helps build a positive business image.
4. Effect of Price
Affordable prices increase perceived value and customer satisfaction. Gultik's pricing is considered fair for the quality offered, attracting a wide range of customers.
5. Customer Satisfaction
Satisfaction is achieved when service, price, and quality meet expectations. The findings support Kotler's theory and Efendi's research that service and price play key roles in shaping customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of service quality and price on customer satisfaction at Gultik, Blok M. The findings indicate that both factors play significant roles in shaping overall customer experiences. Service quality emerged as a crucial determinant, as fast, friendly, and attentive service contributes to a positive dining experience. Customers who perceive good service tend to feel valued, fostering loyalty and encouraging repeat visits. Similarly, price was identified as an important factor influencing satisfaction. Affordable pricing not only enhances perceived value but also attracts a wider customer base, aligning with Kotler's view that fair pricing strengthens customer perception of value.

The validity test confirmed that all measurement items were appropriate and accurately represented their respective variables. While the reliability analysis showed that the instruments for price and satisfaction were adequate, service-related items require further refinement for better consistency. Despite this limitation, the results strongly suggest that maintaining high service standards and competitive pricing strategies are essential for sustaining customer satisfaction and business competitiveness. Overall, this research reinforces the importance of integrating quality service with fair pricing in the food service industry. These insights provide practical implications for small businesses aiming to improve customer satisfaction and long-term customer retention.

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