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VALUE FOR MONEY AND YOUTH RIDERSHIP IN URBAN PUBLIC TRANSPORT: EVIDENCE FROM KUALA LUMPUR

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Abstract:

This study examines public transport usage behaviour among young adults in Kuala Lumpur, with particular emphasis on travel frequency, mode choice, perceived affordability, service quality, and future usage intention. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Public Choice Theory, and the Value-for-Money framework, the study analyses survey data collected from 108 respondents aged 18 to 25 years. Descriptive and inferential analyses are employed to evaluate patterns of use and identify key determinants of ridership behaviour. The findings indicate that while public transport is widely perceived as affordable and cost-saving largely due to government subsidy schemes such as student discounts and monthly passes usage remains irregular for many young adults. Rail-based services, particularly the LRT and MRT, emerge as the most preferred modes owing to their speed and network coverage, alongside increasing evidence of multimodal travel. Correlation results reveal that affordability, subsidies, safety, service sufficiency, and cleanliness significantly influence intention to continue using public transport, with safety and service sufficiency exerting the strongest effects. The study is significant in highlighting the need to have an

overall strategy in place to retain young commuters to promote sustained youth mobility through public transport in developing cities. The findings also provide implications for public transport planning and public transport strategies in developing cities in general.

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Public Transport; Young Adults; Affordability; Subsidies; Service Quality; Ridership Intention; Urban Mobility



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Introduction

The past decade has seen heavy government expenditure on the transportation network in Kuala Lumpur, specifically on the MRT and LRT networks, but little change in the use of these systems and public transportation in general; hence, the use of private cars stands high and contributes significantly to congestion on the road network, the environment, and transportation cost (Irtema et al., 2018). These problems are even more acute regarding young adults in society, considered vital for upgrading the mode of transportation through their needs and economy (Sukor et al., 2021). Although short-term rise trends have been experienced in transportation use, such as Rapid Rail registering over one million users in one day (Choong, 2024), these remain short-term and continue to accentuate the problem of underuse of the transportation systems offered (Free Malaysia Today, 2024).

Using the Theory of Planned Behavior approach, the research investigates intentions of young adults and the roles of factors such as cost, usability, cleanness, and accessibility associated with transportation (Irtema et al., 2018). The study focuses on those between the ages of 18 and 25 years old in Kuala Lumpur and studies their value, habit, and barriers to frequently using public transportation in Malaysia. Though the study has revealed that the cost of the transport is affordable and there is a good policy support, quality, extension, and satisfaction still stand as barriers to frequent transport usage. The study uses a specific survey approach and offers academic perspectives on transport habits among the youth in the Malaysian context. The imperatives of balancing the affordability of the transport toward improvements in its level are supported and encouraged by this study together.

Literature Review

This section reviews theoretical and empirical literature on the use of public transport, with a particular emphasis on the travel behaviour, perceived value, affordability, and service quality of young adults. With the continued reliance on private vehicles in Kuala Lumpur, it is important to understand youth perceptions for sustainable urban mobility.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour, that considers individual intention because of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control, still retains its influence on modern-day decision-making illustrates in Figure 1. From the recent literature, the success of the Theory of Planned Behaviour can be ascertained if it is complemented by consideration of context and psychology, especially in the domains of technology and sustainability. In the field of digital transformation, the work of Ivanov et al. (2024) employs the TPB model to assess the adoption process of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) within the higher education institution. This study indicates that perceived usefulness and functional capability are the driving factors of attitude and intentions to adopt GenAI, despite the variance of risk perception between students and instructors. This validates the continued application of the TPB framework within the context of technology adoption. Other sustainability-based applications have stretched the TPB model to encompass economic and context factors.

Ogiemwonyi (2022) combined Green Contextual Factors and identified that the most important predicting factors of the purchasing decisions of Generation Y based on the proposed model were the green price sensitivity and the perceived behavioural control. Accommodating the above, the study by Wang et al. in 2023 adds the personality trait construct into the TPB model and identifies that the impact of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control can differ from one individual to another, and therefore, the need for more accurate behavioural predictions. Based on the above, the last five years of evidence reveal that the TPB still remains a reliable theoretical model, but the addition of certain contextual, psychological, and economic constructs into the model, in a way, helps the TPB transcend from the conventional focus on tourism and turns out to be a more valuable tool in the areas of technology adoption and sustainable behaviours.

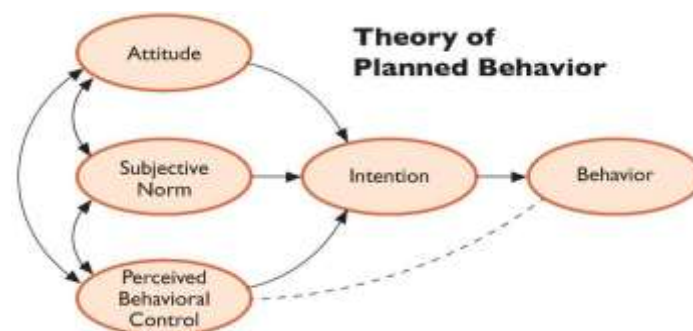


Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviour

Public Choice Theory

The Public Choice Theory is the application of economic principles to political decision-making. This is because politicians, bureaucrats, and voters are treated as self-seeking actors operating in certain structural settings. This goes beyond assuming that governments are doing good for their citizens and is relevant in modern times as there has been recent application of this Public Choice Theory in various settings. Samuel (2024) has utilized the political economy framework in understanding the fuel subsidy regime in Nigeria and found that deregulation in this sector led to cost and benefit redistribution in society in such a way that while living costs rose, efficiency and investment in market sectors improved. Chohan (2024) has made a comparison between Public Choice Theory and Public Value Theory and found that while Public Choice Theory is useful in understanding ineffectiveness and corruption in public bureaucracies in developing countries, Public Value Theory is useful in understanding governance as in cases of pandemics like COVID-19.

In terms of theoretical insight, Bangura et al. (2023) highlight the application of Public Choice Theory in the African scholarship circles, calling for theoretical diversity and adaptability in tackling community socio-economic issues. Complementing the theoretical perspectives, Pingle and Lim (2021) extended Public Choice Theory and its application using behavioural economics to illustrate how feelings of guilt and altruism can impact self-interested behaviour toward cooperation in public policymaking. Similarly, in other elaborations, Kayzel (2021) demonstrated the way in which Public Choice Theory informed the public debate for the Dutch Labour political party, proving its huge scope past the confines of mere conservative politics and into social democratically controlled governance structures and frameworks. By this evidence, Public Choice Theory does apply and maintains validity in understanding policy changes and behaviours within modern governance structures and frameworks.

Value-for-Money (VfM) Framework

Value for Money (VfM) is an evaluation method used in public sectors to evaluate whether public spending meets economic, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity objectives in an optimized way. Unlike other methods where only costs are considered to optimize them more, VfM works in terms of accountability while achieving maximal social value in conjunction with quantitative evaluation methods. Several new works have reiterated the growing practice of VfM in different sectors. Scott et al. (2025) have also drafted an eight-step VfM model of evaluation for disaster risk financing instruments to establish that financial value is not optimized on uniform cost terms in distinct risk conditions. In terms of transport public-private partnerships in infrastructure administration, Zhao (2024) has also explained why VfM is usually misconstrued in terms of optimized costs.

Similarly, the study by Pattamatta et al. (2024) illustrates the VfM criteria within the context of health economics and shows that preventive periodontal treatments produce VfM significantly higher compared to clinical treatments, especially within poorer sections of society, although it also recognizes the limitations of available study methodologies. Supporting these viewpoints, the study conducted by Ong et al. (2023) shows that value for money, safety, and service quality are the core determinants of users' satisfaction levels regarding public transport services. In the wake of the determination of the current literature, HM Treasury (2022) emphasizes the crucial aspect of the underlying strategic alignment of the investment decisions achieved while striving for optimal VfM delivery, rather than solely

addressing the measurable aspect of the C-B balance. Today, the literature continues to reflect that optimal VfM delivery can be achieved by the implementation of the multidimensional approach to the evaluation paradigm, highlighting the alignment between financial optimality and value-based considerations of sustainability.

Empirical Studies

Young Adult Mobility and Transit Dependence

Young adults represent a vital demographic for mass transport in rapidly modernizing cities, owing to low economic capacities and a low rate of car ownership. Recently, research has shown that several factors, together with service affordability, reliability, safety, and individual values, play a combined role within the dependence level among transport users. By employing the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Sukor et al. (2021) demonstrated the immense influence of economic constraints, subjective norms, and control beliefs among Malaysian youth regarding the use of mass transport. Subsequent research by Hamidun et al. (2023) revealed the immense influence of service levels, time, and connectivity among other environmental awareness perspectives within the dependence level among Malaysian youths regarding the use of MRT. The study by Almlöf et al. (2021) provides conclusive proof of the dependence level among the low-income demographic, although they depended even during the COVID-19 period owing to the absence of alternatives. However, other research has emphasized the practice of youth involvement in the planning process. For example, research by Homer et al. (2024) provides conclusive evidence among the youth demographic that dependence levels can be addressed by the adoption of cheap and youth-oriented transport systems, especially if the transport network has strong last-mile connectivity.

Perceptions Of Fare Affordability And Public Transport Subsidies

The affordability of fares remains another critical fare attribute for youth to use public transport. Kim Mee et al. (2022), for example, demonstrates that cost barriers, discounts, and value for money are important factors for increasing public transport usage, with youth considering the quality of services and disregarding the cost. Wong et al. (2022), on the other hand, reveals that young people show strong commitment to sustainable transport but do not like paying more for transport. Evidence for gender-sensitive research by Olabayonle et al. (2023), for instance, reveals that young female transport users tend to prioritize fares, safety, and cleanliness. Research focused on free or subsidies transport, for example, Sukor et al. (2021), has already established that youth will be willing to contribute up to certain affordable fares if reliability and regularity of transport accessibility are guaranteed. Finally introducing fare subsidies, Guzman, and Hessel (2022), clearly quantifies fare subsidies that boost transport usage, especially by low-income youth, and therefore addressing inequality.

The Influence of Cleanliness, Reliability, And Coverage on Ridership

Service quality factors such as cleanliness, reliability, and coverage are critical to engaging the youth as riders and satisfying them. Ibrahim et al. (2022) show that cleanliness, comfort, speed, and staff treatment are significant to user satisfaction of LRT services; however, delayed services and overcrowded LRTs erode user trust in public transportation. Hamzah et al. (2023) verify via the SERVQUAL model that the reliability of services, perceptions of safety, and physical evidence of services play a significant role in retaining the current user base and

promoting the LRT services via word-of-mouth communication among the youth. The role of cleanliness and safety as key issues adversely affecting females' willingness to use public transportation emerges from insights generated via a qualitative study conducted by Harumain et al. (2024) to address the question. In addition to these considerations derived from the current body of research on LRT services from a user's viewpoint, research on LRT accessibility suggests that a lack of supportive infrastructure weakens reliability of services to Persons with Disabilities (Ramli et al., 2023). In accordance with research on the significance of LRT services on a significant subset of individuals due to environmental attitudes to LRT services among other considerations underlining its significance to environmental activism as a significant aspect of environmentalism due to environmental attitudes to LRT services because of environmental activism; a study conducted by Chee Hoo et al (2023).

Public Attitudes Toward Future Transit Investment

Community sentiment surrounding future transport investment plays an important role in ridership, as well as transport policy, especially after the pandemic. Palm et al. (2024) clearly illustrate that health-related risks, as well as socio-demographical characteristics, led Gen Z, as well as immigrants, in Canadian cities, to show interest in car ownership. Along similar lines, Downey et al. (2022) clearly illustrate those pre-existing beliefs of risk from COVID-19, as well as personal transport usage, decrease future transport usage in Scotland. On the other hand, transport-related infrastructure can contribute positively to altering transport-related opinion, as illustrated in Guzman et al. (2023) in Colombian Bogotá, where cable transport network improvements in poor areas increased transport user satisfaction. Transport innovation research effectively establishes that, despite strengthened transport-related sustainability advantages, safety, as well as trust, are primary influencers, especially about self-driving technology, as illustrated in Goerlandt & Pulsifer (2022). Finally, Thomas et al. (2022) illustrates that opinions on energy as well as transport transitions are influenced by climate opinion, as well as politics, suggesting that transport usage opinions on future expenses will mostly depend on socio-political, as well as long-term, perspectives.

Methodology

The methodological approach employed to analyse the usage, affordability perceptions, quality perceptions, and behavioural intentions related to the usage of public transportation by young adults in Kuala Lumpur. The choice of methodology aims at satisfying the objectives of the study by applying quantitative methods to evaluate the perceptions associated with the behaviours. This chapter will not only encompass the study's research methodology but the underlying theory, sampling technique, methods of obtaining information, and considerations to guarantee the validity of the study.

Research Design

A quantitative, descriptive research design was adopted to analyse patterns of public transportation usage and perceptions among young adults aged 18-25 years. In this approach, attitude, service evaluation, and behavioural intention are measured in a systematic way through structured survey data. Data collection was performed through a self-administered online questionnaire, using Google Forms from 15 May to 15 June 2025. This research adopted a cross-sectional design in a bid to capture the views of respondents within a specified period, which could allow for associations between key variables such as affordability, service quality,

and usage intention to be identified. The statements used in the questionnaire, on Likert-scales and multiple-choice options, enabled both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 2 shows the expected connection of fare cost, service quality, reliability, and coverage variables as independent variables, while perceived value and affordability act as mediating variables. Additionally, rider behaviour and intentions to use public transport services are dependent variables. Based on the theory of planned behaviour, certain service variables are predicted to relate to users' behaviour and perceived control, which then relate to travel behaviour. This framework allows for the objective assessment of factors that act together to determine young people's use of public transport services.

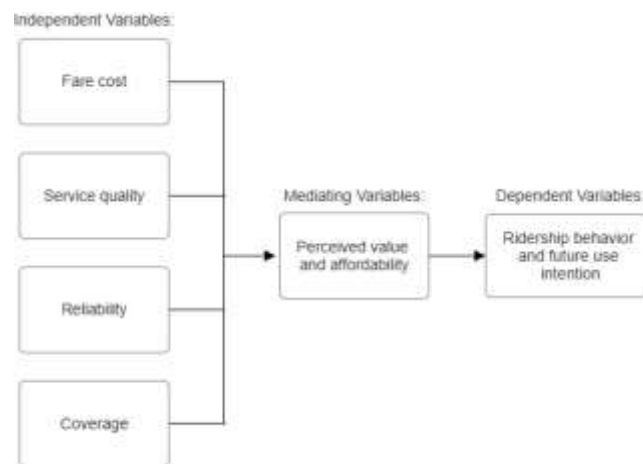


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Theoretical Framework

The current research is based on both the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Value-for-Money concept. The Theory of Planned Behaviour is utilized in understanding the concept of behavioural intention in terms of attitude toward public transport, subjective norms, and perceived control, which are measured using variables such as satisfaction, safety, accessibility, and price. The values-for-money concept is utilized alongside TPB and will help in understanding users' perspectives of value in terms of cost and value received in financial terms.

Population and Sampling

The study population is composed of people aged between 18 to 25 years who reside in or around Kuala Lumpur, using public transport in this demographic as an essential part of society. Due to time constraints and ease of participation in this process, research used an appropriate non-probability technique known as convenience sampling in university circles as well as online mechanisms. Even though this process does not promote generalization to society, it is acceptable in case of behavioural research. The minimum required number in this study is pegged at 100.

Research Instrument

The structured questionnaire was designed using the Google Forms website. It consisted of five sections: demographic information, travel behaviour, perceived affordability, service quality, and attitudes to policy and future use. Items were adapted from established studies and reflected TPB and VfM constructs. Most questions were closed-ended and measured using Likert scales to ensure consistency, ease of response, and suitability for statistical analysis. This instrument was succinct and therefore accessible for digitally literate young adults.

Data Collection Procedure

The collection of data was done between the 15th of May and the 15th of June 2025. This was done through a combined distribution of the questionnaire, both physical and online. Participants were targeted on college campuses and from social platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. Any possible participant was given information about the process of the experiment and the purpose of conducting the experiment before they decided to participate. This combined process of distribution increases the response rates and keeps the sample representative of the population.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Data summary and description were conducted using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics included cross-tabulation and chi-square tests to determine associations between variables, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analyses to determine the effect of service quality and cost of ridership behavior and future intention to utilize.

Results

The findings presented target the opinions and travel habits of young people between the ages of 18 and 25. The findings for the study relate to research questions raised by the first chapter, concerning travel habits, value for money, and service quality, as factors influencing the usage of public transport among young people. The research findings are presented by first presenting the demographic characteristics of the respondents and then employing descriptive and inferential statistics to investigate variables. These analyses help explain the findings, relate them to known concepts of literature, and draw implications for transport practices and development. This research allows the detection of factors that affect public transport usage and contributes to enhancing the viability of public transport for young people of Kuala Lumpur.

Demographic Profile of Respondents: The demographic composition of the respondents is of prime importance regarding the usage of transport. The major categories of research respondents, based on age, include respondents between 21 & 23 years (50.9%), respondents between 24 & 25 years (31.5%), and respondents between 18 & 20 years (17.6%), which represents the demographic composition of the research study essentially comprising students and freshers who may be in higher numbers utilizing the transport services owing to monetary issues. The major categories of research respondents based on gender include females (60.2%) compared to the male counterparts (39.8%), which signifies higher usage of transport services

by females and reiterates the necessity of parameters like safety and convenience. As far as the research study is concerned, the major categories of research respondents based on employment status include students enrolled as full-time students (64.8%), individuals employed on a full-time basis (25%), individuals employed in a part-time capacity and comprise students (9.3%), and finally, those individuals unemployed (0.9%), which signifies the transport service type and frequency in accordance with the dependence and need owing to higher dependency upon academic commitments given the students' nature.

Despite the fact that 73.1% of research respondents hold valid licenses pertaining to the operation of cars, the usage of transport services is a habit owing to monetary and feasibility issues. The restrictions regarding the usage of private transport seem relatively equal since 54.6% research respondents do not hold cars compared to research respondents holding a car (45.4%), which reiterates the level of independence and dependence regarding transport use and signifies the necessity and role played by the services of the transport system, which is currently a necessity within the context of Kandy through which they could fulfil their transport requirements.

Descriptive Analysis: This section presents an overview of the respondents' travel behaviour, affordability, value, and perception of service quality, and their future attitude and willingness towards using the public transport system in the city of Kuala Lumpur.

Travel Behaviour and Service Use

The majority of the respondents use public transport occasionally (57.4%), followed by 15.7% who use public transport daily, with 13.9% who use public transport on a weekly basis. The usage rate can still be considered low. Train systems are the largely preferred choice of transportation, with 68.5% favouring the LRT/MRT, followed by the bus (47.2%), KTM/commuter trains (36.1%), and monorails (11.1%). Public transportation is generally used for social visits (50.9%), visits with family and friends (46.3%), but less so for studying (37.0%) or working (24.1%). In general, though the choice may be for the rail systems, public transportation is still not a foremost means of transportation for the respondents.

Perceived Affordability and Value

The majority of the respondents pay between RM0 and RM20 (55.6%), or RM21-RM50 (36.1%), a month for public transportation. Just 8.3% pay more than RM50. Looking at the data, respondents find public transportation generally affordable, with 87.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing, though 12.9% actually disagreed. Significantly, 93.5% agreed that the public transportation service helps cut down on expenditures. Support for a subsidy scheme is enormous, with 96.3% agreeing that the scheme, including the My50 pass scheme, is a useful service.

Perceptions of Service Quality

Attitudes toward service quality were positive. The level of agreement with reliability and punctuality was very high, with 64.8% agreeing and 18.5% strongly agreeing, although 16.7% disagreed. In regard to safety, 75.0% agreed, with 13.9% strongly agreeing, although 10.2% disagreed. Cleanliness and maintenance were positively assessed, with 70.4% agreeing and

22.2% strongly agreeing. However, attitudes toward coverage were split, with 55.6% agreeing and 18.5% strongly agreeing, although 26.0% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Attitude Toward Future Use and Policy

The large majority were prepared to continue to use public transport even with their own vehicle, with 60.2% agreeing and 18.5% strongly agreeing, although 21.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The commitment to government support for public transport remains almost universally strong, with 99.1% agreeing to continue developments in public transport. Clearly, there is a high level of commitment to public transport usage and government-level policy support in the community among young people.

Inferential Analysis

Frequency and Purpose of Public Transport Use

Statistics: On the analysis of 108 respondents, it has been found that the usage of the public transport service is not regular among the youth in Kuala Lumpur. The service is available, but it is not used extensively. (Table 1)

Table 1: Statistic

		Frequency Public Transport	Modern Public Transport	Main reason
N	Valid	108	108	108
	Missing	0	0	0

Frequency Public Transport: The greatest number of respondents recorded their use of public transport as rare (57.4%), which clearly indicates that public transport is not often used as mode of transport. Less than one fifth (15.7%) of those who responded said public transport is used daily, while 13.9% and 10.2% said so several times a week and weekly, respectively. Additionally, 2.8% of respondents had never utilized public transport in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency Public Transport

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	17	15.7	15.7	15.7
2	11	10.2	10.2	25.9
3	15	13.9	13.9	39.8
4	62	57.4	57.4	97.2
5	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Mode Public Transport: By mode, LRT/MRT is the overall most preferred main mode with a preference of 25.9%, followed by Buses with 16.7%, and KTM/Commuter trains with 10.2%. The combination of using LRT/MRT and KTM/Commuter services amount to 8.3%, and other

combinations of modes like Buses, Monorail, and KTM/Commuter amount to 2.8% to 6.5%. The preference for modes of transport with rail technology is prominent. (Table 3)

Table 3: Mode Public Transport

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Bus	17	15.7	15.7	15.7
Bus, KTM, Commuter	6	5.6	5.6	21.3
Bus, LRT/MRT	18	16.7	16.7	38.0
Bus, LRT/MRT, KTM/Commuter	7	6.5	6.5	44.4
Bus, LRT/MRT, KTM/Commuter, Monorail	3	2.8	2.8	47.2
KTM/Commuter	11	10.2	10.2	57.4
LRT/MRT	28	25.9	25.9	83.3
LRT/MRT, KTM/Commuter	9	8.3	8.3	91.7
LRT/MRT, KTM/Commuter, Monorail	3	2.8	2.8	94.4
LRT/MRT, Monorail	6	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Main Reasons: The use of public transports is generally for education and social events. Going to university or college, errands, and leisure, and visiting relatives and friends comprise 17.6%, 17.6%, and 13.9%, respectively. An additional 8.3% of the people use public transports for both employment and education. The mentioned findings in Table 4 indicate that public transports are of significant use for education and socializing rather than for traveling to and from work.

Table 4: Main Reasons

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Going to University/College	19	17.6	17.6	17.6
Going to University/College, Going to work	2	1.9	1.9	19.4
Going to University/College, Going to work, Running errand/leisure, Visiting family/friend	1	0.9	0.9	20.4
Going to University/College, Going to work, Visiting family/friend	2	1.9	1.9	22.2

Going to University/College, Going to work, Running errand/leisure	2	1.9	1.9	24.1
Going to University/College, Going to work, Running errand/leisure, Visiting family/friend	7	6.5	6.5	30.6
Going to University/College, Visiting family/friend	7	6.5	6.5	37
Going to work	9	8.3	8.3	45.4
Going to work, Running errand/leisure	3	2.8	2.8	47.2
Going to work, Running errand/leisure, Visiting family/friend	6	5.6	5.6	52.8
Going to work, Visiting family/friend	4	3.7	3.7	56.5
Running errand/leisure	19	17.6	17.6	74.1
Running errand/leisure, Visiting family/friend	13	12	12	86.1
Visiting family/friend	15	13.9	13.9	100.0
Total	108	100.0	100.0	

Perceived Value and Affordability

Descriptive Statistics: Public transport is viewed as affordable, with a high mean of 3.18 (SD = 0.667). Additionally, it was agreed that public transport assists in the reduction of monthly spending (mean = 3.19, SD = 0.532), showing its significance as a money-saving alternative. In table 6 shows views on government subsidy support for public transport are very positive, with a high mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.571), showing a high degree of agreement on the impact of youth passes and discounted rates on improving affordability.

Table 5: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.634	4

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics Perceived Value and Affordability

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Affordable Cost	108	1	4	3.18	.667
Reduce Monthly Expenses	108	2	4	3.19	.532

Beneficial Subsidies	108	2	4	3.46	.571
Valid N (listwise)	108				

Service Quality from a Ridership Perspective

Descriptive Statistics: Reliability, punctuality, and safety were accepted with moderate acceptance (mean = 3.02, SD = 0.596), whereas safety is also of moderate acceptance (mean = 3.02, SD = 0.529). The slightly higher value comes from cleanliness (mean = 3.14, SD = 0.555), whereas the lowest value comes from the sufficiency parameter with a mean of 2.87 (SD = 0.775), which is somewhat dissatisfied with the cover, frequency, or capacity. The other parameter comes under the moderately category. (Table 8)

Table 7: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.634	4

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics Service Quality from a Ridership Perspective

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reliable and Punctual	108	2	4	3.02	.596
Safe	108	1	4	3.02	.529
Clean	108	1	4	3.14	.555
Sufficient	108	1	4	2.87	.775
Valid N (listwise)	108				

Factors Influencing Ridership Behaviour and Future Intention

Correlations: In table 9 shows the affordability exhibits a significant positive association with the intention to continue the use of public transport at $r = 0.256$ and $p = 0.007$. Subsidies are more impactful with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.373$, at $p < 0.001$, hence confirming the usual belief in their effectiveness in encouraging the use of public means of transport. The factor that is most highly correlated with future intentions is safety, $r = 0.413$ at $p < 0.001$, hence confirming the basic aspect of feeling safe. Service sufficiency is significantly positively correlated at $r = 0.329$, at $p < 0.001$, thus suggesting that an increase in service efficiency will translate positively into an increase in the promotion of the use of public transport means. The moderate positive correlation factor is displayed by cleanliness, which has a significant impact factor of $r = 0.256$ and $p = 0.009$, thus promoting satisfaction among users. It is, therefore, concluded that youths will continue to patronize public transport services that are affordable, subsidized, and which provide an environment of safety, sufficiency of the services, and are clean.

Table 9: Correlations

		Continue personal	Affordable cost	Reduce monthly expenses		Beneficial subsidies	Reliable and Punctual	Safe	Clean
Continue personal	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.256**	.251**	Continue personal	.373**	.132	.413**	.258**
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Affordable cost	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.256**	1	.618**	Affordable cost	.324**	.180	.282**	.363**
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Reduce monthly expenses	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.251**	.618**	1	Reduce monthly expenses	.392**	.137	.154	.355**
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Beneficial subsidies	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.373**	.324**	.392**	Beneficial subsidies	1	.057	.219*	.208*
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Reliable and Punctual	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	Reliable and Punctual	.558	1	.023	.031
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Safe	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.132	.180	.137	Safe	0.57	1	.384*	.332*
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Clean	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.174	.063	.159	Clean	.558	<.01	<.001	<.001
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
Sufficient	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.413**	.282**	.154**	Sufficient	.219*	.384**	1	.596**
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.003	.112		0.23	<.001		<.001
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.256**	.363**	.355**		.208*	.332**	.596**	1
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	<.001	<.001		.031	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.329**	.316**	.354**		.327**	.67	.302**	.216*
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	.083	.001	.025
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108
	N	108	108	108		108	108	108	108

Discussion of Findings

The results broadly confirm theoretical expectations and are in line with previous studies but also reveal nuanced context-specific variations. According to TPB, young adults' intention to use public transport is based on attitudes toward affordability and value for money of public transport, perceived control of the behaviour, and social influence. Such positive attitude is expressed in the wide view that public transport cuts down monthly expenses and hence is an important motivational attitude. Thus, perceived control is linked to the quality attributes of the service such as coverage, safety, and reliability. While all these qualities are given above-average scores, the various deficiencies of the services in the scores of coverages and sufficiency reduce users' perceived control and account for the irregular and casual use of the service among young adults. Results also correspond well with Vfm, emphasizing a balance between costs and benefits of public service provision. Most of the interviewees viewed the subsidy to public transport, especially students' discounts and the My50 pass, as offering value for money. This would suggest that public spending on subsidies is socially productive.

However, it stresses that value for money is not defined by fare levels but by service quality and consistency, building up the users' perception whether the system is worth using regularly. In comparison to the existing literature, this study confirms earlier evidence that affordability, reliability, and lack of private vehicle access are facilitators in using public transport by young adults. Simultaneously, it departs from some earlier findings when indicating that despite acceptable reliability, problems related to service coverage, cleanliness consistency, and personal safety are the most cogent deterrents. These contrasts suggest that infrastructure improvements are not good enough unless accompanied by sustained improvements in service delivery. This concludes that improvements that should be brought about in the use of public transport by young adults must be addressed in an integrated way, simultaneously dealing with economic incentives, service quality, and behavioural perceptions.

Conclusion

The evidence suggests that public transportation is generally viewed as affordable and valuable to youth, especially because of the subsidy provided, while still having some constraints from a services point of view. Train services involving LRT and MRT are most preferred because of their speed and reach, while signs of a multi-mode behavior pattern are emerging. The most important aspect of public transportation from a passenger's point of view in a developing economy such as Malaysia is its affordability because of the resultant saving and the effectiveness of subsidy programs such as the current My50 pass.

Nevertheless, differences in perceptions of affordability indicate that cost sensitivity remains with lower-income group users. On the other hand, mixed views are observed regarding perceptions of service quality. Although views on cleanliness, safety, and reliability are modestly positive, views on the efficiency of the level of coverage, demand, and capacity are identified to be the most important shortcoming. The overall impact of inadequate connectivity in the suburbs, peak-hour congestion, and lack of safety in the incited Peak times hampers perceived behavioural control and habitual usage. Aggregated perspectives here indicate that retaining youth users would require more than just low fares; instead, integrated policies are needed that interact increased financial aid with demands on improving coverage and reliability and last-mile connectivity for sustaining lifelong commitment to public transport systems in Kuala Lumpur.

Implications and Future Research Directions

Results from this study demonstrate the importance of theoretical contributions as well as implications for transport policy in terms of encouraging transit usage among youth in Kuala Lumpur. In line with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, affordability attitudes as well as perceived control beliefs based on sufficiency, safety, and reliability of facilities remain major influencers of continued usage. These findings also support the Value-for-Money model, which considers student fares or transit passes as an effective means of promoting sufficiency in terms of improving affordability. Notably, from the lens of Public Choice Theory, the high priority placed on transit sufficiency and provision of subsidies indicates that transport behaviour can, in part, be driven by public policy.

From a policy point of view, findings indicate that ridership among youth in Malaysia requires more than transit affordability. Service coverage, service frequency, and service capacity that remain inadequately addressed can result in findings contrary to or even undermining those assessing the strength of the PBC. On this foundation, it's imperative to transcend the purely subsidy-oriented policy based on the modulation of the change of behaviour in the topic of urban mobility. The potentialities in this research can be limited, based on the consideration of the convenience sampling that provides results difficult to generalize, and based on the consideration of the study's impossibility to observe the determinants, and the evolution of the findings in the topic of the influence of the PSC on individual habits.

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