

Consumer Empowerment in Transportation Sector

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Consumer empowerment,
Public transportation,
Socio-demographic characteristic,
Media of consumer education

Kata Kunci:

Pemberdayaan konsumen,
Kendaraan umum,
Karakteristik sosio-demografis,
Media edukasi konsumen

Awareness of rights and obligations as a consumer became one of the problems faced by consumers. One way to increase consumer awareness is to provide access to consumer education through media used by consumers. This article aimed to identify and analyze the effect of socio-demographic characteristics and consumer education media toward consumer empowerment on public transportation. This research used a cross-sectional study through an online survey of 100 users of public transportation. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results showed that the consumer empowerment index is 44.56 and categorized as capable level. Also, female, early-aged adults (18 - 40 years), high education, employee, income range from IDR 2 000 000 to IDR 3 000 000 per capita per month, and an urban area were the most empowered consumers. In addition, employment status and media of consumer education positively and significantly influenced consumer empowerment.

SARI PATI

Kesadaran akan hak dan kewajiban konsumen merupakan salah satu masalah yang ditemui oleh konsumen. Salah satu cara untuk meningkatkan kesadaran konsumen adalah dengan menyediakan akses terhadap edukasi konsumen melalui social media yang digunakan oleh konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis pengaruh karakteristik sosial-demografik, dan media edukasi terhadap keberdayaan konsumen dalam bidang transportasi umum. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain cross-sectional, dan online survey dengan 100 responden pengguna transportasi umum. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis regresi berganda. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa indeks keberdayaan konsumen mencapai 44.56 dan termasuk dalam kategori mampu. Responden yang merupakan perempuan, dewasa awal (18-40 tahun), berpendidikan tinggi, pegawai, pendapatan berkisar Rp2 000 000 hingga Rp3 000 000 per kapita per bulan, dan tinggal di area kota adalah konsumen yang paling berdaya. Status pekerjaan dan media dari edukasi konsumen berpengaruh secara positif signifikan terhadap keberdayaan konsumen.

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INTRODUCTION

Transportation is an essential service for consumers to support their needs in economic, social, and cultural aspects. As modern times progress, people turn to faster, more effective, and efficient public transportation services. Part of the transportation system that can support people's daily needs and cannot be separated from city development is public transportation (Widayanti et al., 2015). Public transportation is one of the core components to support sustainable growth in the centre of the city (Dahalan et al., 2015). Public transportation is divided into three types: land, sea and air transportations. People usually use land transportation such as buses, trains or commuter lines, city transportation, taxis, even motorcycle taxis. Ships are used as marine transportation and aircraft as air transport.

Various incidents that violate consumer rights often happen in many sectors, from simple to complex cases (Safari & Simanjuntak, 2020). Awareness of rights and obligations as a consumer turns out to be one of the most frequent issues with consumers. According to Sumiyati and Fatmasari (2006), in general, consumer awareness about the rights and responsibilities of consumers is still relatively low. One of the consumers' rights under the Consumer Protection Act No.8 of 1999 Article 4 have pointed out that the consumer's right is "the right to be heard of his opinions and his complaints on the goods and/or services used." Indonesia Consumers Foundation (YLKI) indicated that in 2013 the complaints are 934 cases. This number enlarged to 1192 cases in 2014 and decreased to 1030 cases by 2015. However, judging from the type of transportation commodity, the problem was 52 cases (5.05 percent). This has been increased from the previous year, which is 51 cases. Therefore, many consumers do not know their rights as consumers to assert complaints to the producers. This shows the consumer complaints behavior is still tiny, caused by a lack of consumer knowledge of existing consumer protection institutions.

Consumers consider being empowered to determine

the best price and quality, submit their complaints, and assert their rights (Nardo et al., 2011). Law No. 8/1999 on Consumer Protection Article 1 Point 1 stated that consumer protection is an effort that ensures legal certainty to protect consumers (Sakti et al., 2015). A way to increase consumer awareness is to provide access to consumer education. Education enables consumers to function effectively and responsibly in an increasingly complex market (Mazlan et al., 2014). Consumer education becomes a key because of the complexity of the circulation of goods and services; hence, it is needed to strengthen consumers' capacity to build a powerful consumer (Simanjuntak, 2014).

There is only a small amount of research concerning consumer empowerment in public transportation held in Indonesia. The previous study regarding consumer empowerment is done in the packed food service field by Simanjuntak (2014), which stated that the empowered level in Bogor city and Bogor district is still low. Other earlier studies had specifically been conducted in the fields of food, telecommunications, education, electronic products, online purchases, the digital economy (Simanjuntak et al., 2013; Simanjuntak, 2015; Simanjuntak, 2016; Gazzola et al., 2017; Simanjuntak, 2018; Simanjuntak & Putri, 2018; Simanjuntak, 2019; Simanjuntak, 2020; Simanjuntak & Mubarakah, 2020; Simanjuntak & Umiyati, 2020; Simanjuntak & Putri, 2020). As explained before, research about consumer empowerment in the public transportation field is fascinating to do by researching social, economic, demographic, and consumer access to education on consumer empowerment in the public transportation field

METHODS

The research used the cross-sectional study design that is done in a certain period and not sustainable, using the survey method by using an online survey site from google form. The sample of this research is men and women aged between 18-60 years who have used all public transportation services such as city bus, intercity bus, train, train, regular

taxi, online transport, aircraft, and ships sea within the last three years. However, research on the use of ships was removed because respondents have rarely used such transportation. The technique of selecting samples was done by using the convenience technique. This research method was chosen based on respondents' criteria following the characteristics that have been set. The convenience sampling method was used in the research. A total of 138 responses were obtained, which were then visually scrutinized for incomplete or duplicate responses. One hundred responses were then selected for further research.

Variables, Data Types, Measurement and Assessment

These variables include demographic, social, economic characteristics, access to educational media and consumer empowerment in public transportation services. Demographic characteristics measured were gender, age, geographic location. Gender was measured by nominal data scale, age by the scale of data ratio, and geographical location measured by nominal data scale. Social characteristics include the level of education and employment status. The level of education was measured by ordinal data scale with educational level from non-primary school, elementary, junior high school, senior high school, diploma, undergraduate, and postgraduate. Employment status measured on a nominal scale of data divided into unemployed, traders/entrepreneurs, private employees, civil servants/military/police, labourers, and others. The economic characteristics of income are measured by monthly income. Consumer education consumer access variables use a nominal data scale.

Consumer empowerment in the public transportation field stands for a subjective condition of consumers who search for information, know their rights and obligation as consumers, choose suitable public transportation, and are brave enough to complain if they are unsatisfied while using the service. Information retrieval stands for the respondent's frequency of searching for

information while using public transportation. Knowledge of the law and consumer protection agency stands for how much the respondent knows about consumer protection, right as a consumer protected by law, advocacy right (law protection) as a consumer, and consumer protection agency in Indonesia. Local service preferences stand for respondent's tendency to pick local service or overseas service (that operated in Indonesia) on using public transportation. Finally, selecting public transportation services refers to how capable the respondent is while choosing public transportation service that appropriates for the ticket, the place that sells the ticket, and the payment method for the ticket.

Usage behavior refers to the respondent's frequency of reading the term and conditions and checking the price of public transportation tickets. The tendency to talk is the respondent's frequency of reminding others to be more thorough when using public transportation and telling others about the bad experience after using the public transportation service. Finally, complaint behavior is the respondent experience on file a complaint to the service provider regarding the use of transportation service.

Consumer empowerment is measured using instruments adapted from Simanjuntak et al. (2014a). The Consumer Empowerment Index (CEI) is classified into three buying phases: pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase. Mapping stages of purchase based on the dimensions of questions are as follows:

1. Pre-Purchase
The dimensions of the questions in the pre-purchase stage are information searching with 14 questions and knowledge of the law and consumer protection agencies with six questions.
2. On Purchase
The question dimension in this stage is the selection of five domestic service preferences questions with three questions and 27 questions of usage behavior.

3. Post-Purchase

The dimension at this stage is the tendency to talk to 8 questions and the dimension of complaint behavior with 22 questions.

Data Collection Procedure

The online survey method was chosen to collect the data. Researchers spread links/links from google forms that contain questionnaires to the public. The spread of the online questionnaire was done through groups in social media applications such as Line, Whatsapp, and Instagram, as well as through friends and relatives. Furthermore, respondents who are willing to fill in the questionnaire. The response most obtained by researchers to collect data was through Line and Whatsapp.

Data Analysis

The scale used for consumer empowerment variables is the scale with the answer choices, the one for “exact” scores and the zero scoring score for “inappropriateness”, one rating score for “know” and zero scoring score for “do not know”, score one for “yes” and a zero scoring for “no”, as well as a score of one for “local services” and a zero scoring for “non-local services”. In addition, the Likert Scale was used to measure the dimensions of questions that describe the intensity or frequency of the assessment scores one for the “never” answer option, the two scores for the “sometimes” three scorings for the “often” answers and the four rating scores for answer choices. Finally, the instrument

had been tested for reliability and validity. Test reliability to test the instrument’s consistency, while the validity test aimed to determine the accuracy of a research instrument.

Each dimension of the compilation of consumer empowerment index conducted weighting in order to obtain the value index of consumer empowerment. For example, weighting done on the dimensions of information retrieval is 20 percent, 10 percent in the knowledge dimension of laws and consumer protection agencies, 5 percent in service selection dimensions, 5 percent in domestic service preferences, 15 percent in usage dimensions, 5 percent in dimensions the tendency to talk, and the greatest weight is in the dimension of complaint behavior that is 40 percent (Simanjuntak & Yuliati, 2015; Simanjuntak, 2019). The dimension of complaint behavior is rated as the highest because the consumer’s highest protection is the complaint effort.

The composite score for each dimension of consumer empowerment, all dimensions are averaged. The grouping of empowerment is done by dividing into five groups, i.e., conscious (CEI score of 0.0-20.0), comprehend (CEI score 20.1-40.0), capable (CEI score 40.1-60.0), critical (CEI score 60.1-80.0), and empowered (CEI score 80.1-100.00). Descriptive analysis to describe the characteristics of respondents who studied with the distribution of each variable. Inferencing analysis to look at the

Table 1. The reliability value of research instrument

| Dimensions of Consumer Empowerment | Number of questions | Item deleted | Reliability |
|---|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Information searching | 14 | - | 0.896 |
| Knowledge of Consumer Protection Agencies | 6 | - | 0.874 |
| Selection of services | 5 | KKA 3, KKA 4 | 0.185 |
| Usage behavior | 27 | - | 0.918 |
| Preference for local services | 3 | - | 0.309 |
| Tendency to talk | 8 | - | 0.890 |
| Complaint behavior | 22 | - | 0.884 |

relationship and influence of social, demographic, economic, and consumer media education attitudes toward consumer empowerment in the field of public transportation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of respondents

This study divides the characteristics into three categories: demographic characteristics, social characteristics, and economic characteristics. Demographic characteristics consist of age, gender, and geographic location. Social characteristics consist of the length of education and occupation. Economic characteristics consist of income. As many as 52 percent of respondents have been educated for more than 12 years. The average length of education was 13.75 years or equivalent to high school graduation, and no respondents did not complete primary school.

The study results also showed that the largest percentage of respondents in this study were unemployed (65.0 percent). Most respondents (97.0 percent) were in the early adult age category (18-40 years), with the average of respondents' age being 23.81 years. The highest percentage of gender was female (75.0 percent). A total of 60 percent of respondents live in urban areas, while 40 percent of respondents live in rural areas. Based on Table 4, the average income of respondents is IDR 2 525 500 per month, with the largest percentage of monthly income being in the range of IDR 1 000 000 - IDR 1 999 999 (40.0 percent). The minimum income of respondents in this study is IDR 200 000, while the

maximum income of respondents is IDR10 000 000.

2. Consumer Education Media Access

Consumer education media access is a variation of media used to access consumer education. Radio is a consumer education media access less desirable by respondents (4.0 percent) to gain access to consumer education. A total of 14 percent of respondents also get access to consumer education in addition to the media. Information that respondents got is through lecture materials on consumer education (Table 2).

3. Consumer Empowerment

Consumer Empowerment Pre Use of Services

Dimensions of information retrieval. Based on power theory (Shibly, 2009), communication and information flow are some aspects of power and consumer empowerment. The results showed that 44.0 percent of respondents never ask or seek information about public transportation fares, as many as 42.0 percent of respondents sometimes ask for bus stops. As many as 38.0 percents of respondents are looking for information on where to purchase train tickets. The result of the index score of the information search dimension is 45.11 from 100. That is, respondents are in the category capable of finding information before using public transportation. On the other hand, the highest percentage of information search frequency categories were in the inactive category (78.0 percent). That is, more than half of respondents are not active in finding information.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents used consumer media education access to obtain consumer education

| Consumer Education Media | Yes (%) | No (%) |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Internet | 58.0 | 42.0 |
| Friends, neighbours, and family | 36.0 | 64.0 |
| Television | 32.0 | 68.0 |
| Brochure | 23.0 | 77.0 |
| Magazine | 12.0 | 88.0 |
| Radio | 4.0 | 96.0 |
| Others* | 14.0 | 86.0 |

Notes: *courses materials

Dimensions of knowledge about consumer laws and institutions of protection. The dimensions of knowledge about the law and consumer protection institutions are how to know the consumers related to UUPK, the rights as consumers are protected UUPK, advocacy rights (legal protection) as consumers, consumer protection institutions in Indonesia. More than half of respondents understood three of the six attributes of knowledge of the Law and LPK, among others, consumer protection laws (50.0 percent), consumer liabilities (58.0 percent), and consumer rights (64.0 percent). The average score for this dimension is 49.83 out of 100. Hence, respondents fall into capable of the knowledge of laws and consumer protection agencies category.

Consumer Empowerment During Usage

The dimension of domestic service preferences. The preference dimension of domestic services is whether consumers tend to choose domestic or abroad services related to public transportation. The research results show that three out of five respondents chose domestic taxis rather than international rivals. The index score of this dimension is 57.0 out of 100. In conclusion, many respondents still tend to use non-domestic services for public transportation.

The dimension of selection of public transportation services. The dimensions of the selection of public transportation services that some can afford to choose public transportation services following the tariffs for ticketing/ticketing and the manner of ticket payment. Respondents have a perfect understanding of the official place in purchasing the train tickets (97.0 percent), the information contained in train tickets (80.0 percent), and an understanding of regular taxi fares (76.0 percent). The average score for this dimension is 84.3 out of 100, which means that respondents belong to the powerless category in choosing public transportation services.

The dimension of service usage behavior. This dimension is the frequency of consumers in

reading the terms and conditions, check the fares of transport services—two out of five respondents whose ojek online users always check its rates. Two out of five respondents never bought bus tickets between cities at the bus agency directly, more than half of respondents (54.0 percent) often use “ngetem” public transportation, and more than half (54.0 percent) of respondents sometimes check fares on buses intercity. The index score of the usage behavior dimension is 54.06 out of 100. Thus, the respondents are still categorized as low in having good behavior when purchasing public transportation services.

Consumer Post-Use Consumer Empowerment

The dimension of a tendency to talk. It is the consumer frequency in reminding others to be careful when using public transportation and telling a bad experience after using public transportation services. More respondents reminded others to look back before using public transportation (45.25 percent) than telling a bad experience (39.00 percent). The index score of this dimension is 43.62 out of 100. Therefore, respondents still tend to be passive to tell a bad experience to others.

The dimension of complaint behavior. Dimensions of complaint behavior are whether the consumer ever complained to the business actors related to public transportation services. The results showed that as many as 47.0 percents of respondents are in the category of significantly less in making complaints which is the largest percentage compared to the other categories. This showed the lack of awareness of respondents when they got a disadvantage when using public transportation services. The index score of this dimension is 33.0 out of 100. That is, respondents are still less aware of complaints if they got dissatisfaction after using public transportation.

Consumer Empowerment Index. Figure 1 shows that the Consumer Empowerment Index (CEI) in the field of public transportation is 44.56 out of 100. Based on its dimensions, public transportation



Figure 1. Average index of consumer empowerment in public transportation

service selection behaviour has the highest index compared to other dimensions. Thus, respondents in the field of public transportation have a way to choose good public transportation services. Meanwhile, the dimension with the lowest index is the complaint behavioral dimension. This is because the respondents still lack the awareness to complain when they are unsatisfied or disappointed with the services in transportation. Otherwise, Simanjuntak and Yuliati (2015) research showed that the lowest index of consumer empowerment is in the dimension of knowledge about the Act and the Institute of Consumer Protection. Other researches also showed that the lowest dimension was complaints behavior (Simanjuntak, 2019; Wandani & Simanjuntak, 2019). In comparison, complaints about business actors are very useful for the sustainability of selling activities (Simanjuntak & Hamimi, 2019).

Based on Figure 2, the average female CEI score is higher than males. By age, the average score of CEI for early adults (18-40 years) is higher than the middle adult age group (41-59 years). This is in line with Yuliati and Anzola (2009) research that 20-40 years old were making more complaints than those 41-65 years old. Finally, based on education, the average of high educated CEI (> 12 years) is

slightly higher than the level of education, which is only 12 years. Similarly, Simanjuntak and Yuliati (2015) found that the average of CEI was higher educated respondents greater than the level of education below.

Based on earnings, the highest average CEI scores were in groups with incomes in the range of IDR 2 000 000 - 3 000 000. Based on employment status, the highest average CEI score of the respondents was the one who worked compared to the non-working respondents. Based on the geographical location, the average scores of respondents in urban areas are higher than those in rural areas. According to Simanjuntak and Yuliati (2015), the category of CEI is aware, comprehend, capable, critical, and empowered. Based on Figure 3, less than half (45 percent) of the respondents are included in comprehending, and 35 percent are included in the able category. This is in line with Simanjuntak and Yuliati's research (2015) which measured the consumer empowerment index in 13 provinces in Indonesia. As a whole, more than half of consumers are included in the category of comprehend and none in the empower category. This shows that consumer empowerment in the field of public transportation is still relatively low.

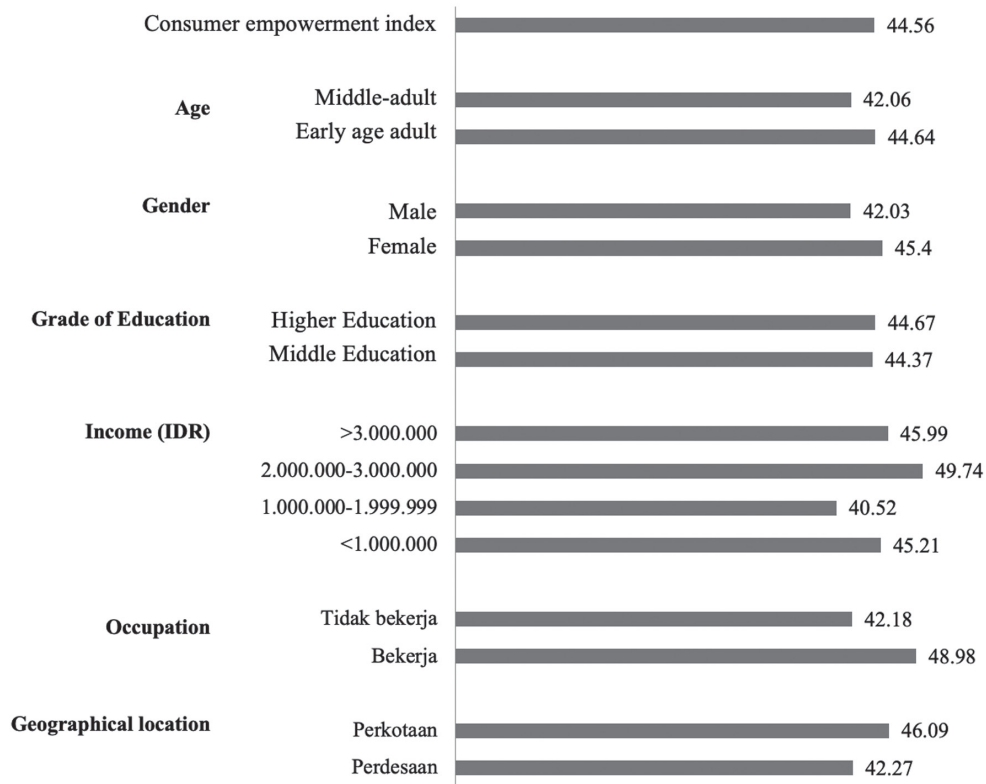


Figure 2. The index of Consumer Empowerment in public transportation based on demographic, social, and economic characteristics

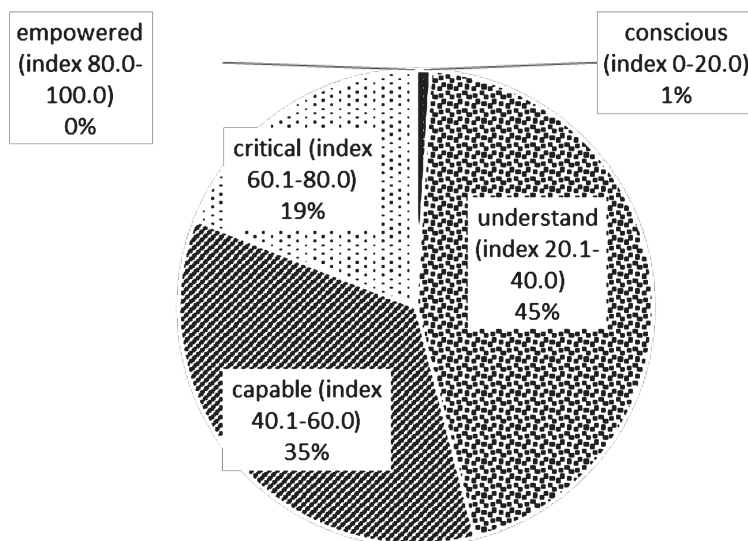


Figure3. Category of Consumer Empowerment Index

The results of multiple linear regression analysis using a backward method of the fourth model of six models indicate that there are independent variables (employment status and access to educational media) to the variables dependent, namely consumer empowerment in the field of general transportation with the value of 4.325 F and adjusted R² of 0.118. This means that 11.8 percent of consumer empowerment is influenced by the independent variables studied. The remaining 88.2 percent is influenced by not examined variables (Table 3).

Employment status has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.167$; $p = 0.086$) on the consumer empowerment index. If respondents are employed, then it will increase the index of consumer empowerment by 5.339 points. Based on this study shows that respondents who work are more empowered than those unemployed. This is in line with the study of Nardo et al. (2011); unemployed consumers have less power than those who employ. In addition, consumer education media access has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.303$; $p = 0.002$) on consumer empowerment index. The more media used by respondents in getting consumer education, the higher the index of consumer empowerment.

Consumer education media access is the most widely used by respondents, i.e. the internet,

television, and reference groups, while the least desirable by respondents is the radio. This contradicts Simanjuntak et al. (2014a), who concluded electronic media such as television and radio are the most widely used sources of information by respondents who access consumer education.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This research provides a scientific contribution in family and consumer sciences, namely social, demographic, economic characteristics and consumer empowerment in public transportation. For consumer protection institutions such as the Consumer Protection Institution Foundation (YLKI), this research can support data for formulating policies and programs to increase consumer empowerment. For the theoretical side, this research contributes to scientific development, especially in consumer science. Finally, for consumers, this research is a source of information about social, demographic and economic characteristics of consumer empowerment in the field of public transportation.

Based on the results of the study, the empowerment of consumers in the public transportation field is still relatively low, especially in the behavior of complaints, so there need to be more efforts put to increase consumer awareness to seek

Table 3. Regression results

| Independent Variables | B unstandardized | β standardized | P-value |
|---|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Constants | 32.886 | | 0.000 |
| Gender (X1) (0 = male, 1 = female) | 3.149 | 0.089 | 0.350 |
| Employment Status (X2) (0 = unemployee; 1 = employee) | 5.339 | 0.167 | 0.086* |
| Geographical Location (X3) (0 = rural; 1 = urban) | 3.247 | 0.104 | 0.280 |
| Consumer education media access (X4) (index) | 2.895 | 0.303 | 0.002*** |
| F | 4.325 | | |
| Adj. R ² | 0.118 | | |
| Sig | 0.002** | | |

Note: * significant at $p < 0.1$ *** significant at $p < 0.01$

information before purchasing, knowing their rights as consumers and daring to use their rights as consumers to file complaints when they are not satisfied or disadvantaged. Therefore, the government and consumer protection institutions are expected to comprehend the implementation of consumer protection that guarantees the rights and obligations of consumers. Consumers can also be keen, critical, and have the awareness to act if they feel disadvantaged. In addition, it is essential to increase the quality and quantity of information to improve consumer understanding regarding consumer protection laws and institutions.

Consumer education that can be given is the importance of knowing the rights and obligations of consumers, information about consumer protection institutions, instruction on how to carefully choosing public transportation services, and guide them to be braver complaining if one's disadvantaged. This education can be given to all consumers, especially helpless consumers, like consumers in middle-aged adult groups (18-40 years), secondary education, unemployed consumers, and consumers who live in rural areas. This was also in line with findings from other researches that one of the efforts to empower consumers was to activate consumer education involving the government, NGOs, and the private

sector (Simanjuntak et al., 2014a; Simanjuntak et al., 2014b). Consumer education content that needs to be promoted includes the introduction of consumer protection laws and institutions and the introduction of consumer rights and obligations (Simanjuntak & Mubarokah, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Respondents were dominated by early adulthood (18-40 years), female, higher education, IDR 2 000 000-3 000 000 income, living in the urban area, and employed were the most empowered compared to other respondents. The achievement of the consumer empowerment index in public transportation was only 44.56, categorized as capable. Less than half (45 percent) of respondents are categorized as comprehend, and 35 percent are categorized as capable. This can be demonstrated by the respondents' low level of information retrieval before using public transportation and the low complaint behavior performed by the respondents when dealing with discontent in using public transportation. Employment status and consumer education media had a significant positive effect on consumer empowerment. The media most widely used by respondents in obtaining consumer education is the internet. ■

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