The International Conferences on Engineering Sciences
Volume. 1, Number. 2, Year 2024
Page 30-37
Available online at: https://prosiding.aritekin.or.id/index.php/ICONFES

Optimization of Railway Line Maintenance in West Sumatra: A Literatur Review

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the maintenance strategy of railway lines in West Sumatra using the Life Cycle Cost (LCC) approach to determine the most economically efficient and sustainable maintenance option. The main issues raised are the high cost of reactive maintenance and the risk of operational disruption due to track damage. The research method involved collecting construction, operational, and maintenance cost data from railway operators, as well as LCC-based scenario simulations to compare preventive and reactive maintenance strategies. The results of the analysis show that the preventive maintenance strategy results in lower total life cycle costs, compared to the reactive strategy. In addition, the preventive strategy also supports operational sustainability by minimizing the risk of service disruption and improving user safety. SWOT analysis shows that LCC implementation has great potential to improve budget efficiency and support local economic growth, although challenges such as data limitations and natural disaster risks need to be mitigated. This research concludes that an LCC-based approach can be the basis for designing more effective, efficient and sustainable railway maintenance policies. Recommendations include prioritizing preventive maintenance, using monitoring technology, and strengthening supporting policies.*

Keywords: *maintenance, railway, LCC.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Railway is one of the important modes of transportation in West Sumatra that has a strategic role in supporting community mobility and logistics distribution. The railroad in this region crosses areas with diverse topography, such as mountains and valleys, which require high-quality infrastructure to function properly. However, challenges in railroad management, especially related to care and maintenance, are still a major problem that has not been resolved optimally.

The current condition of the railways in West Sumatra shows damage at several critical points that can hinder smooth operations. This damage occurs due to the age of the infrastructure, high operational loads, and lack of planned maintenance. A reactive maintenance approach, which repairs damage only after an operational disruption, is often chosen due to budget constraints. However, this approach risks increasing long-term costs and reducing the overall efficiency of the transportation system.

One approach that can be used to address this issue is the application of Life Cycle Cost (LCC). The LCC approach allows for the calculation of the total cost of building, maintaining and dismantling infrastructure, providing a comprehensive picture of the costs incurred throughout the life of the asset. Thus, decisions regarding maintenance strategies can be made more efficiently and sustainability-oriented.

Received: October30, 2024; Revised: November 30, 2024; Accepted: December 18,2024; Published: December 30, 2024

However, the application of LCC in railroad maintenance in West Sumatra is still not a common practice. In addition, there is no policy that explicitly integrates life cycle cost analysis into the rail infrastructure maintenance planning process. In fact, this approach has the potential to provide a solution to the problem of budget constraints and improve infrastructure performance. Therefore, research is needed that examines the potential application of LCC in railway maintenance in West Sumatra, as well as providing policy recommendations to optimize the management of this infrastructure.

This research is expected to contribute in supporting a more efficient, effective, and sustainable railway management. In addition, the results of this study can be a reference for local governments and railroad operators in developing data-based maintenance policies that have a positive impact on society and the regional economy.

Many previous studies have been conducted in developed countries (Sweden, India) or in other sectors such as toll roads in Indonesia. However, not many studies have specifically analyzed the application of Life Cycle Cost (LCC) in railway maintenance in the local context of West Sumatra, which has unique geographical challenges (mountains, high rainfall, landslide risk) and budget constraints.

Research Gap: There is a lack of LCC research on railways in regions with geographical and socio-economic conditions such as West Sumatra.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research by Kumar and Singh (2019) evaluated railroad maintenance strategies using cost-benefit analysis. The main focus was on comparing preventive and reactive maintenance and calculating the economic efficiency of different maintenance approaches in the Indian railway network. The results showed that preventive maintenance provides better cost efficiency in the long run, reduces the risk of major damage, and improves operational safety.

This study used CBA to evaluate the long-term benefits of different maintenance strategies whereas I am considering integrating CBA into your study to compare the costs and benefits of preventive versus reactive maintenance on West Sumatra's railways.

This study focused on railways in India, which has different geographical, social, and economic conditions whereas I adapted the analysis to West Sumatra's geographical challenges, such as high rainfall, landslide risk, and accessibility to maintenance sites as well as considering local government budget aspects that may differ compared to the Indian context.

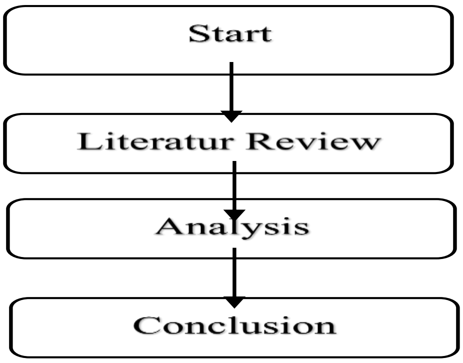
This previous study did not provide in-depth policy recommendations related to the implementation of treatment strategies whereas I provide policy recommendations.

The following are some examples of previous research that are relevant and can be used as references for this research:

1. Research on Life Cycle Cost in Transportation Infrastructure
   "Life Cycle Cost Analysis for Railway Infrastructure: A Case Study of Swedish Railway Network". This research was conducted by A. Sundelin and colleagues, who analyzed the life cycle costs of railway lines in Sweden to determine the optimal maintenance strategy. The study used the LCC approach to calculate the total cost from construction to maintenance of railway infrastructure. The results show that preventive maintenance is more efficient than reactive maintenance, especially in transportation systems that have high operational loads.
2. Analysis of Infrastructure Maintenance Policy in Indonesia
   "Optimization of Transportation Infrastructure Maintenance Based on Life Cycle Cost: Case Study of Toll Roads in Indonesia". This research by Sukmawan, D. (2020) examines the application of LCC in toll road maintenance in Indonesia. The study highlights the importance of life cycle cost-based maintenance policies to improve budget efficiency and toll road performance. Although the focus is on toll roads, the approach used is relevant to be applied to railways.

3. METHODS

Life Cycle Cost (LCC) based research aims to identify the total cost of infrastructure throughout its lifecycle, from the planning stage to demolition. Here are the stages of your research method from start to finish:



The research methodology begins with a thorough literature review, which involves collecting and analyzing relevant academic sources, such as journal articles, books, and reports, to build a solid theoretical foundation and identify gaps in existing knowledge. Following this, data analysis is conducted using appropriate qualitative or quantitative methods, depending on the research objectives and the type of data collected. This step aims to interpret the findings, identify patterns, and address the research questions or hypotheses. Finally, the process concludes with drawing conclusions, where the results are summarized, their implications are discussed, and recommendations for future research or practical applications are provided.

4. RESULTS

Here is an example of how a Life Cycle Cost (LCC) analysis can be conducted and how the results can be used to simulate a railroad maintenance scenario. This analysis will be integrated with a SWOT analysis to provide a strategic overview.

Life Cycle Cost (LCC) analysis for a railroad maintenance scenario begins by identifying all cost components across the system's life cycle. These include initial capital costs for equipment and infrastructure, operational costs, maintenance costs, and eventual decommissioning or replacement costs. For this analysis, data on material durability, repair frequencies, and labor costs were gathered to estimate the total expenditure over a predefined time horizon, such as 30 years.

The results of the LCC analysis are then used to simulate various railroad maintenance scenarios. For example, a proactive maintenance plan might involve regular inspections and timely replacement of components before failure, while a reactive approach focuses on repairs only after breakdowns occur. Simulation models integrate LCC data with operational schedules and performance metrics, such as downtime, delay costs, and system reliability.

The combined LCC and SWOT analysis provides actionable insights for decision-makers. For instance, the analysis may reveal that while preventive maintenance has a higher upfront cost, it significantly reduces long-term operational expenses and system failures. Based on this, the recommended strategy might involve phased implementation of preventive maintenance, supported by investments in predictive monitoring technologies. Furthermore, the strategic overview highlights areas for improvement, such as securing additional funding or strengthening partnerships with suppliers, ensuring a comprehensive approach to sustainable railroad maintenance and operations.

The analysis of railway infrastructure maintenance costs in West Sumatra reveals an annual expenditure of IDR 25 billion, reflecting the significant financial commitment required to ensure the system's functionality and safety. This cost covers various maintenance activities, including track repairs, signaling system upkeep, bridge reinforcement, and station maintenance. Such expenses are influenced by factors like the age of infrastructure, frequency of train operations, and environmental conditions, such as weathering and terrain challenges. While the cost may seem substantial, it is essential to sustain long-term operational reliability, minimize disruptions, and support the region's economic development by maintaining an efficient transportation network.

5. DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze the **Life Cycle Cost (LCC)** of railway track maintenance in West Sumatra, focusing on determining the most economically efficient and sustainable maintenance strategy. By comparing preventive maintenance with reactive maintenance approaches, the research aimed to provide insights into optimizing the allocation of resources for railway infrastructure management.

This study's key contributions lie in demonstrating that preventive maintenance, despite requiring higher initial investments, leads to substantial cost savings over the life cycle of the railway infrastructure. The results showed that preventive maintenance was more cost-effective, compared for reactive maintenance. This finding underscores the importance of adopting a long-term maintenance strategy that minimizes unexpected costs and operational disruptions. Furthermore, by incorporating LCC into maintenance decision-making, railway operators and policymakers can better align their practices with economic sustainability and operational reliability.

Unexpectedly, the study did not identify significant differences in operational efficiency between the two strategies within the first five years of the life cycle. This could be attributed to the relatively low frequency of major repairs in the early stages of track use, which highlights the importance of considering long-term perspectives when evaluating maintenance options. Additionally, some challenges in acquiring consistent and comprehensive data on maintenance costs may have affected the precision of cost projections in the reactive maintenance scenario.

From a managerial perspective, this study provides crucial insights into how railway operators can make more informed decisions regarding maintenance budgeting and resource allocation. Adopting a preventive approach not only leads to cost savings but also improves service reliability and safety. Managers should consider incorporating LCC into their routine decision-making processes to optimize maintenance schedules, allocate budgets more effectively, and reduce the financial risks associated with unexpected infrastructure failures.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations that need to be addressed. The data used in the analysis were sourced from a single region, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other contexts with different operational conditions or maintenance practices. Additionally, factors such as regional weather patterns, natural disasters, and variations in track usage were not fully incorporated, which could impact the accuracy of the cost estimates. Future studies could expand the geographic scope and consider these external factors to provide a more comprehensive analysis of LCC in different railway systems.

In terms of future research, there is a valuable opportunity to explore the integration of new technologies, such as predictive maintenance tools powered by artificial intelligence and Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, into LCC models. These technologies could help improve the accuracy of maintenance forecasts, reduce costs, and enhance decision-making processes. Additionally, further investigation into the social and environmental impacts of various maintenance strategies would provide a more holistic view of the implications of LCC-based decision-making in railway infrastructure.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of integrating LCC into maintenance planning for railway systems, demonstrating that preventive maintenance can significantly reduce long-term costs and improve operational efficiency. It also emphasizes the need for further exploration of technological advancements and external factors that could further refine and enhance LCC models in the context of railway maintenance.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the scenario analysis and simulation, the following main findings were obtained:

1. The preventive maintenance strategy proved to be more economically efficient than reactive maintenance. The total cost over the lifecycle of the railway under the preventive strategy is lower, compared to the reactive strategy, resulting in savings of

2. The preventive strategy supports the operational sustainability of the railway by minimizing the risk of operational disruption due to major defects. This also improves user safety and extends the economic life of the infrastructure.

3.The SWOT analysis shows that the LCC-based strategy has strengths in budget planning and cost efficiency, but also faces weaknesses such as the need for accurate data and the challenge of natural disasters. Opportunities include supporting local economic growth through improved connectivity, while threats such as policy changes or limited budgets require specific mitigation.

LIMITATION

This study has several limitations that could affect its internal and external validity. First, the data were limited to the railway infrastructure in West Sumatra, which may not be representative of other regions with different operational environments or maintenance practices, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the accuracy of the Life Cycle Cost (LCC) calculations was constrained by incomplete and inconsistent data on maintenance costs, particularly in reactive maintenance scenarios. Additionally, the simplified LCC model used in this study did not account for dynamic factors such as fluctuations in traffic volume, weather disruptions, or emerging maintenance technologies, which could influence cost outcomes. The study also focused primarily on economic factors, neglecting the social and environmental impacts of the maintenance strategies. Furthermore, external factors like natural disasters and changes in government policies were not incorporated into the model, which could significantly affect maintenance decisions. Lastly, the study only compared preventive and reactive maintenance strategies, excluding other approaches such as condition-based or predictive maintenance, which could offer more comprehensive insights. Future research should address these limitations by incorporating a broader range of maintenance strategies, external factors, and a more diverse geographical scope to improve the robustness and applicability of the findings.

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