

Service Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction in the Pathao Service Market in Kathmandu Valley

Resham Raj Pathak, PhD¹  | Dr. Top Lal Panthi, PhD² 

Esmika Udas³ | Dev Raj Rai⁴ 

¹Faculty of Management
Nepal Commerce Campus
Tribhuvan University
Email: resham.pathak@ncc.edu.np

²Faculty of Management
Baneshwor Multiple Campus

³Kanya Multiple Campus, Pokhara
Email: netra.ca@gmail.com

⁴Faculty of Management,
Madan Bhandari Memorial College,
Email: devraj.career@gmail.com

Corresponding Author

Dr. Top Lal Panthi, PhD

Email: panthibro@gmail.com

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Abstract

Customers play a conclusive role in the survival, growth and success of the service provider. The ability of a service provider to attract and retain their customers has been becoming more crucial factors in the long run. This study assesses major four dimensions influencing customer satisfaction of Pathao services within the Kathmandu Valley, focusing on dimensions of service quality such as acceptability, availability, safety and security and sustainability. Using quantitative and explanatory research design to fulfill the objective of this study; primary data were collected from 390 Patho service users as respondents using structured questionnaires at the February 2026. Correlation analysis reveal that all service dimensions were positively correlated with customer satisfaction. Among these used variables, sustainability emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by safety and security as well as acceptability, while variable called availability with the p value of 0.464 showed no significant impact in regression analysis of this study. The results of this study indicate that customers highly valued environmentally responsible, reliable and secure services. The study concludes that the enhancing key service quality dimensions leads to improved customer satisfaction among the used variables. The findings of this study also provide useful insights for managers, policymakers and researchers

to improve service quality within the Pathao users, promote sustainable urban mobility and guide future research in ride-hailing services throughout the world.

Keywords: Pathao service dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

1. Introduction

These days, customers hold a decisive role in determining the survival, growth and success of the service provider. The ability of a service provider to attract and retain their customers has become a key determinant of its long-term sustainability in competitive environment. Firms across industries are increasingly striving to deliver superior value and enhance customer satisfaction, recognizing it as the foundation for long-term profitability and success of the firm (Tien, 2017, 2019; Tien et al., 2019; Oliver, 2010).

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2010), services comprise that a set of behaviors, processes and performance methods designed to create value of products and fulfill customer expectations. Kotler (2006) similarly defined that a service as any activity or benefit that one party offers to another, where the offering is intangible which does not result in possession of a physical product. Similarly, Albinsson and Hansemark (2004) defined customer satisfaction as overall attitude toward a service provider, reflecting that the extent to which the received service fulfills customers' needs, goals and desires as well.

Recently, app-based ride-sharing services like Pathao services, Tootle services, Indrive services and Yango services have been emerged as popular alternatives to conventional conveyance modes, particularly in urban centers like in the Kathmandu Valley and other major city of Nepal. These digital platforms as service connect to passengers with drivers using smartphone applications, enabling users to appeal rides, track drivers in real time, evaluation fares and make even cashless payments from the users. The rise of these services reflects that a global trend toward digital transformation and shared mobility, providing convenience, affordability and elasticity to urban commuters throughout the world (Joshi, 2023).

In this regard, the objective of this study is to assess the key elements of customer satisfaction in the Pathao service within the Kathmandu Valley. Precisely the study focuses on different dimensions of service quality, pricing, safety, reliability, convenience and user experience to examine that how these magnitudes shape customer perceptions and behavioral intentions toward Pathao service within Kathmandu Valley.

1.1 Statement of the problem

No doubt, the survival, growth and success of any service provider is determined by the level of its customers satisfaction. The capability of a service provider to appeal and hold their customers has been becoming a key determinant of its long-term sustainability in the competitive market. Firms across industries are progressively determined to deliver superior value and enhance customer satisfaction, recognizing it as the foundation for long-term profitability and success of the firm (Tien, 2017, 2019; Tien et al., 2019; Oliver, 2010).

These days, the trend of Pathao service in Nepal is growing up, the Pathao riding job is done as self-sustain job in the Kathmandu, Narayanghat and Pokhara city. It seems necessary to manage as professionally occupied job for this Patho riding job here in Nepal. Despite studies conducted regarding ridesharing services (Ma et al., 2013; Chan and Shaheen, 2012; Akbari et al., 2021). Nepal lacks a consistent and empirical study of app-based mobility specially for Pathao service in Kathmandu Valley along with user-focused evaluations of acceptability, availability, safety and sustainability are scarce even in the international level. No single study in Nepal has examined how these dimensions jointly affect customer satisfaction in Pathao service area. A systematic rider balanced assessment is needed to identify the strengths and actionable developments in Pathao service of Kathmandu valley. By evaluating these valuable

aspects for the societal development of the Nepal, this study aims to provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Pathao's services within the Kathmandu valley, offering guidance for improving service delivery and attractive customer satisfaction in a inexpensive urban mobility market. Research questions for this study are designed under deductive approach as following:

1. What are the present situations of Pathao services within Kathmandu Valley?
2. Is there any relationship between Pathao's service dimensions and customer satisfaction within Kathmandu valley?
3. How do existing Pathao services impact on customer satisfaction within Kathmandu Valley?

1.2 Objectives of this study

The objective of this study is to assess the dimensions of quality service of Pathao service influencing on customer satisfaction in Kathmandu Valley. Unambiguously, this study aims for the following above research questions through the research objective as under mentioned.

1. To assess the current status of Pathao services in Kathmandu Valley.
2. To examine the relationship between service dimensions and customer satisfaction of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley.
3. To evaluate the impact of Pathao services on customer satisfaction in Kathmandu Valley.

Through using these above research objectives, the study seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Pathao's service distribution and deliver important insights for improving service quality and attractive customer experience in the competitive ride sharing market within the Kathmandu valley.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study customer satisfaction in Pathao service holds significant importance as it delivers valuable insights into customer satisfaction of Pathao services in Kathmandu valley including quickly growing urban mobility market of Nepal. By analyzing these key service dimensions acceptability, availability, safety and security and sustainability, the study also helps to identify factors that affect customer perceptions and loyalty on Pathao service.

1.4 Limitations

This research service dimensions and customer satisfaction in Kathmandu valley is grounded solely on structured questionnaire responses collected from Pathao service customers within Kathmandu valley only, which may bound the complexity of insights associated to qualitative approaches. The data used for this study relies entirely on primary data only, excluding secondary evidence that could deliver broader context.

1.5 Literature Review

Service quality is intricate to define and measure, as perceptions differ across customers and contexts Wisniewski (2001). Similarly, Lewis & Mitchell, 1990 and Asubonteng et al., 1996 defined that service quality is the extent to which a service lights or surpasses customer prospects, while Parasuraman et al. (1988) observed it as the gap between expectations and supposed performance refers the performance falls short of expectations, customer unhappiness arises.

Customer satisfaction has been defined by Oliver (2000), as psychological state ensuing from the contrast between expectations and actual experiences of the customers. Kotler (2000)

also described it as a feeling of pleasure derived from supposed performance comparative to expectations of the customers. Pleased customers are more likely to purchase again and endure loyal (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2001; Singh, 2006). Major factors influencing customer satisfaction include many things such as employee behavior, service accuracy, billing clarity, competitive pricing and service speed to the customer (Hokanson, 2006).

Furthermore, customer satisfaction centrals to loyalty and retention of customers, which improve organizational performance including competitive advantage of the firm (Fornell, 1992; Anton, 1996). Contrariwise, dissatisfaction of customers may cause defection or negative word of mouth (La Barbera & Mazursky, 1983). Therefore, managing service quality is important for satisfying customer satisfaction, long-term loyalty and overall business success in the competitive market.

The term customer satisfaction is commonly defined as post-purchase evaluation associating prepurchase prospects with actual performance received by service provider (Oliver, 2000; Zeithaml et al., 1990). The link between various service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction has been widely explored in marketing and management research, emphasizing their interdependent relationship.

Many research scholars have recognized that service quality positively effects customer satisfaction and vice versa, customer satisfaction also strengthens perceptions of quality as well (Jun & Cai, 2010). Higher service quality centrals to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty and positive behavioral outcomes such as willingness to recommend to other customers, reduction in complaints and long-term retention of the customers (Heskett et al., 1997). Moreover, another research scholar Bedi (2010) emphasized that recalling existing customers through better service quality is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, highlighting the strategic standing of customer satisfaction in enhancing profitability as well as organizational success in long run.

Similarly, several fragmented study on dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction have been conducted in Nepal, mainly in the banking sector. Study conducted by Redman et al. 2013 found that the magnitudes of service quality such as reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness significantly influence customer satisfaction in commercial banks of Kathmandu Valley. Likewise, other study conducted by Gnawali (2017) revealed that these dimensions of service quality have a positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction across public, private and joint-venture banks in Nepal.

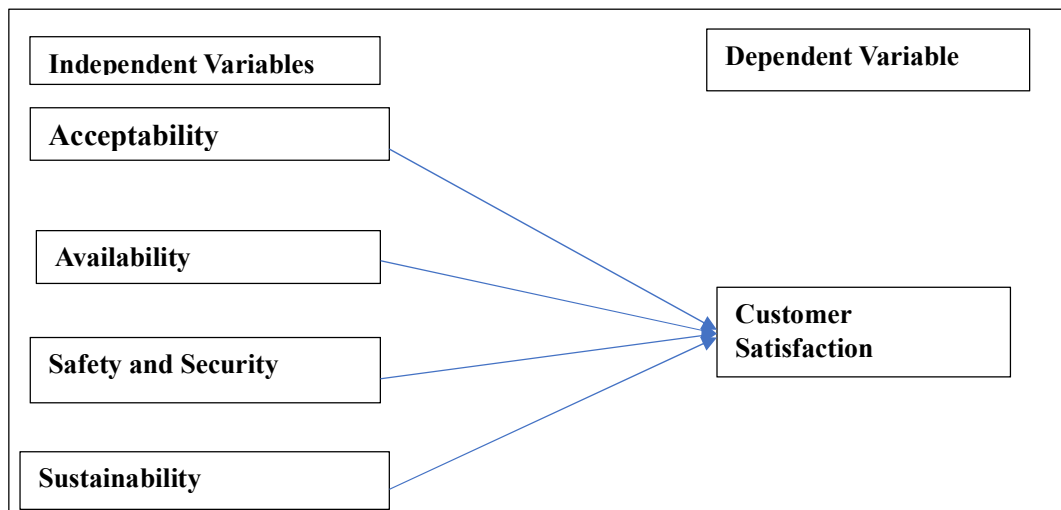
1.6 Research Gap

Despite studies conducted by different researchers such as Ma et al., 2013; Chan & Shaheen, 2012; Akbari et al., 2021 regarding ridesharing, Nepal lacks a all-inclusive empirical study of app-based mobility. In Kathmandu valley, rider-centered evaluations of Pathao covering acceptability, availability, safety and sustainability continue limited and their mutual effect on customer satisfaction is underexplored in Nepalese context. Other existing research relies heavily on outmoded SERVQUAL dimensions of overlooking factors like technology adoption, digital experience and sustainability (Jun & Cai, 2010; Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004). This study discourses all these gaps by analyzing key service quality dimensions influencing customer satisfaction in Kathmandu Valley. Service quality theory defines that service quality is regarded as the gap between customers' expectations of any service providers and their perceptions of actual service performance conducted by the service provider, a smaller gap leads to the higher customer satisfaction and stronger brand loyalty (A. Parasuraman et al., 1988).

1.7 Conceptual Framework

This study sightsees that the factors influencing customer satisfaction of Pathao services in Kathmandu Valley, focusing on four independent variables namely acceptability, availability, safety and sustainability, with customer satisfaction of Pathao users as the dependent variable for the model applied. The conceptual framework for this study is based on the service quality model by Zeithaml et al., 1990, highlighting that the importance of service dimensions in shaping customer perceptions among the Pathao service in Kathmandu valley.

Figure: 1: *Conceptual Framework*



2. Research Methodology

The study followed comprehensively a quantitative and correlational method grounded on deductive approach with reasoning framework to achieve the objectives of the study. It also outlined that the overall research design including the target population of the study, sample size and sampling techniques used in this study. This study adopted quantitative explanatory research design through utilizing primary data with quantitative research methods to analyze the relationship between various service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction of Pathao users in Kathmandu valley. In this study, independent variables included different four key service indicators such as acceptability, availability, safety and sustainability while customer satisfaction serves as the dependent variable. In this study, it is hypothesized that these dimensions of service quality of Pathao service significantly influence customer satisfaction in Kathmandu valley. Primary data through structured questionnaire has been collected from both Pathao service providers in Kathmandu Valley to test the hypothesis developed.

2.1 Population

The population for this study was considered that all Pathao users in Kathmandu Valley. It included that individuals who regularly used Pathao's ride-hailing and delivery services, representing different demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. This population formed on the basis of understanding customer perceptions and evaluating the impact of service dimensions on overall Pathao user's customer satisfaction in Kathmandu valley.

2.2 Sampling Technique

To fulfill the objective of this study, purposive sampling technique was applied to facilitate the research work for the efficient and timely collection of data. It was designed to

easy reach the Members of the target population willing to participate or conveniently located in the Kathmandu valley at the time of data collection were included in the sample for this study. However, purposive sampling is practical and cost-effective, it may not provide a fully representative sample of the entire population which could affect the generalizability of the findings, but the situation is that Pathao service facility is available only in Kathmandu valley, till the date of study conducted. Despite these limitations of the study, it remains suitable for exploratory and also preliminary studies supported by the study of Etikan et al., (2016).

2.3 Sample Size

Since the exact number of Pathao users in Kathmandu Valley was not known till the date of study conducted, so the population was considered as infinite population. For this case, the sample size for this study can be determined using the formula of Cochran's for unknown population which is given as follow:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

n = required sample size for the study

Z = Z-value at the chosen confidence level (1.96 for 95% confidence) in the observed situation

p = estimated proportion of an attribute present in population (0.5 for maximum variability)

e = margin of error (5%, i.e., 0.05)

Substituting the values:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16 = 385$$

Based on this above calculation, a minimum of 385 respondents were required. To ensure sufficient sample size of data, 480 structured questionnaires were distributed. Out of these questionnaires, only 390 completed questionnaires were received and analyzed to fulfill the objective of the study.

2.4 Questionnaire Structure and Data Processing

To achieve the objective of this study, primary data were collected from Pathao users in the Kathmandu valley. The questionnaire included all tested statements related to the dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction and measured using a five-point Likert scale fluctuating from 1 to 5 where 1 denotes to strongly disagree and 5 refers to strongly agree. The format of survey questionnaire was divided into two sections where the first section was covered respondents' characteristics such as gender, frequency of Pathao service use and the type of service mostly used on the other hand the second section of this questionnaire contained statements assessing various dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. The collected responses from Pathao users as respondents were systematically coded and processed for further statistical analysis such as correlation analysis and regression analysis.

3. Analysis of Data

In this study, 390 respondents were participated for questionnaire survey in the year 2025 on Pathao service users in Kathmandu Valley. The gender composition shows that the 52.05% of respondents were male as majority and 47.95% were female as minority among them, indicating that a nearly balanced participation between both genders' male and female. Among the independent variables, the variable named acceptability is highly rated, with an overall mean score of 4.37 and SD 0.83, indicating that courteous, knowledgeable and reliable

service. Concurrently other independent variable called availability scores an overall mean score of 4.24 and SD 0.93, reflecting that strong accessibility, reasonable waiting time and prompt service. Another independent variable called safety and security received a mean score of 4.28 and SD 0.92, showing that confidence in transaction safety, problem resolution and Pathao drivers' professionalism also sustainability is positively perceived, with a mean score of 4.22 and SD 0.96, highlighting modern vehicles and eco-friendly urban mobility contributions. Finally, the dependent variable called customer satisfaction has a high mean score of 4.24 and SD 0.91, driven by service quality, consistent performance and recommendation intentions. All constructs used in the study show that Cronbach's alpha above 0.83, indicating a strong reliability and internal consistency of the used items to address respective variable in the study.

3.1 Service Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

In this study, the correlation analysis has been performed to analyze the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables presented in the table no 1.1 shows that the strength and direction of the relationships between various service dimensions and customer satisfaction among the selected Pathao users in Kathmandu valley. All correlation coefficients are positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, also indicating that the improvements in these service dimensions of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley are strongly associated with higher levels of customer satisfaction among the responses analyzed.

Table 1: Various Service Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Customer Satisfaction
Acceptability	.524**
Availability	.473**
Safety and Security	.579**
Sustainability	.712**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Among the studied independent variables of service dimensions for the Pathao services, sustainability ($r = 0.712$) demonstrates that the strongest positive correlation with customer satisfaction. These results also suggest that customers place a high value on Pathao's sustainable practices such as environmental consciousness, long-term service reliability and social responsibility which substantially improve their satisfaction levels where availability ($r = 0.473$) show moderate but meaningful correlations with dependent variable as customer satisfaction within the responses analyzed for this study. This indicates that the users appreciate the ease of access, service coverage and responsiveness, as well as the acceptability of fare rates and service quality in determining their satisfaction level of the Pathao users in Kathmandu valley.

3.2 Customer Satisfaction on Service Dimensions

To fulfill the objective of this study, the multiple regression analysis has been performed presented in table no 4.2 examines that the impact of four service quality dimensions such as acceptability, availability, safety and security and sustainability on customer satisfaction of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley. The model used in this study shows that these four dimensions collectively influence the customer satisfaction of the Pathao users in Kathmandu valley, with sustainability emerging as the most significant predictor among the responses analyzed.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Customer Satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		t	Sig.	VIF
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	.851	.180	4.737	.000	
	Acceptability	.134	.052	2.600	.010	1.965
	Availability	.033	.045	.733	.464	1.778
	Safety and Security	.139	.047	2.939	.003	2.024
	Sustainability	.490	.045	11.011	.000	1.962

Among the independent variables used in this study, sustainability ($\beta = 0.531$) and ($p < 0.001$) has the strongest effect on customer satisfaction, indicating that customers highly value sustainable practices, such as environmentally responsible operations, reliability and long-term service viability. Safety and security have a β coefficients of 0.144 and p value of 0.003 as significant and also a significant contributor, emphasizing that the safe and reliable services enhance customer satisfaction of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley. Acceptability with the β coefficients of 0.126 and p value of 0.010 has a moderate but significant impact on customer satisfaction of pathao service in Kathmandu valley which is suggesting that the customers of Pathao service appreciate services that are acceptable in different terms such as pricing, convenience and overall quality of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley.

In this study, independent variable availability with the β coefficients of 0.034 and with the p value of 0.464 does not significantly affect customer satisfaction in the model used in this study indicating that service availability is important factor among the dimensions of service quality and also it is perceived that it alone may not energy customer satisfaction statements when considered alongside other factors like sustainability and safety in the studied period. The variance inflation factor values for all variables are fluctuating between 1.778 to 2.024, which are well and below the critical threshold of 5 for Likert scale data used in the study, suggesting that there is no serious multicollinearity matters among independent variables used in the model. Availability, however important may require balancing improvements in other dimensions to significantly enhance customer perceptions among the respondents surveyed in Kathmandu valley.

4. Discussions

The findings of this study with the analysis of correlation and regression analysis indicate that the Pathao's service quality various dimensions such as acceptability, availability, safety and security including sustainability have fluctuating impacts on customer satisfaction of Pathao service in Kathmandu Valley. The independent variable acceptability received a high rating mean score of 4.37 and it showed the standard deviation of 0.83, reflecting courteous, knowledgeable and reliable service of Pathao riders in Kathmandu valley. This result also aligns with the broader literature of service dimensions and customer satisfaction where reliability and assurance to customer service are highlighted as most significant drivers of customer satisfaction, studied by Redman et al. (2013 & 2019) and Chhetri, (2024). Similarly, the variable availability showed that though positively perceived mean score of 4.24 and standard deviation of 0.93, did not significantly influence the customer satisfaction of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley when measured together with other dimensions used in the model studied. This result of this study also suggests that the accessibility which is insufficient and must be complemented by other quality aspects that service quality provided to the customer is multilayered and inter-reliant is consistent with the study of Gnawali, (2017).

Other independent variable safety and security with the mean score of 4.28 and with the standard deviation of 0.92 were found to strongly enhance customer satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of trust, fortification and professionalism in service delivery of Pathao service within the responses collected and analyzed in Kathmandu Valley. This finding of this study is consistent with the study conducted in Nepalese BFIs, where assurance and reliability were critical in fostering satisfaction of customer studied by Redman et al. (2013) and Joshi, (2023). One of the major independent variables of the study is sustainability, with the strongest positive influence on customer satisfaction with the mean score of 4.22 and with the standard deviation of 0.96 which highlights that the growing consumer awareness of environmentally responsible service practices of Pathao service in Kathmandu valley. While the literature of banking area in Nepal till the date study conducted does not directly address sustainability, the emphasis on modern, reliable and consistent service in previous studies vibrates with the positive insight of long-term among the respondents, responsible service performs in this study.

Four service quality dimensions were used to measure quality service with the R square value of 54.3 which means independent variables used in the model explain that 54.3% of the variance in customer satisfaction, indicating a healthy predictive model. This finding reinforces that prior research demonstrating that improving service quality is a key strategy for enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty in Nepalese context studied by Gnawali, 2017; Joshi, 2023 and Chhetri, 2024. In this study, the value of cronbach's alpha values where above 0.83 which value confirm that strong internal consistency, supporting the reliability of the measurement items in the model. The findings of this study verify existing Nepalese literature, spreading the application of service excellence theory from banking to mobility services and prominence the nuanced role of sustainability in determining modern Pathao service user's perceptions in Kathmandu valley.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the various service quality extents such as acceptability, availability, safety and security and sustainability absolutely stimulus customer satisfaction in Pathao services in the Kathmandu Valley. Other variables sustainability and safety have the strongest impact, highlighting that the importance of eco-friendly practices and trustworthy, secure service in the Kathmandu valley. Another variable acceptability moderately affects to the customer satisfaction, while availability contributes indirectly, suggesting that the accessibility alone is not enough to drive satisfaction of the Pathao users in Kathmandu valley. The results indicate that the enhancing service quality leads to higher customer satisfaction, accenting the need for consistent, reliable and sustainable service delivery among the respondents measured. This study found that the all-service dimensions of Pathao service in the Kathmandu valley positively correlate with customer satisfaction among the surveyed respondents. Sustainability was regarded as the strongest and most significant predictor in this study, also followed by safety and security and acceptability, whereas availability showed that there is no significant effect in the regression model used in the study.

6. Implications

These findings of this study have implications for various stakeholders such as for policy makers, managers and for the further researcher. The study highlights the need for managers to prioritize sustainability and safety in service delivery of service, as these dimensions have the strongest impact on customer satisfaction, similarly importance of indorsing safety, reliable service and eco-friendly urban flexibility practices as reliable Pathao transport for policy makers. Finally, including exploring additional service quality dimensions, such as pricing, digital convenience and customer engagement to understand their stimulus on

satisfaction of the customer of Pathao service for future research and also longitudinal studies can capture more deviations in customer expectations and perceptions over time.

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