

## Mobile app based vehicle services and customer satisfaction: A case of Kathmandu Valley

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### Abstract

This study examines the Mobile app based vehicle services and customer satisfaction: A case of Kathmandu Valley. Customer satisfaction is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort. The study is based on primary data of 121 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of mobile app based vehicle services and customer satisfaction: A case of Kathmandu Valley.

The study showed a positive impact of tangible on customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the tangibility, higher would be the customer satisfaction. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of reliability on customer satisfaction. It indicates that reliable information about the app based service leads to increase customer satisfaction. Likewise, the study revealed a positive impact of price on customer satisfaction. It indicates that affordable price leads to increase in customer satisfaction. Further, the study showed a positive impact of promotion and coupon redemption on customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the numbers of promotion and coupon redemption, higher would be the customer satisfaction. In addition, the study showed a positive impact of comfort on customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the comfort for travelling, higher would be the customer satisfaction.

*Keywords:* tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, comfort, customer satisfaction

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### 1. Introduction

Vehicle sharing service was pioneered by Uber, which started in 2010 in San Francisco (Chaudhary *et al.* 2018). In developing countries like Bangladesh, one of the key indicators for economic development is the advancement of transportation and communication system and ride-sharing is

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one of them. Hence, the wide array of online based service industries such as app-based ride-sharing, travel tickets, online procurement, etc. are in a boom which reduces the amount of effort needed, time, and cost of mobility from one place to another (Tang *et al.*, 2017). The vehicle sharing services have an immense role in case of social, economic, sustainability and environmental issues by reduction traffic jams, making minimum number of vehicles on the road (Hansan *et al.*, 2010). Due to the availability of smartphones and wide access to the internet, different app-based services have increased drastically as it is helpful to identify the nearest vehicles within the shortest possible time. Apart from this, it facilitates to easily track driver's location, expected destination, and computerized fixation of fares virtually on screen by mobile app (Chen *et al.*, 2011). The ride-sharing services have got a lion share acceptability in the developed as well as developing countries especially, among young generations, investors, business persons, government officials and so on. As it reduces the hassle of maintaining private transportation vehicles tremendously and removes the tiresome, boredom and harassment of public transportation (Mishalani *et al.* 2011). Burki *et al.* (2018) stated that smartphone applications have turned around the life of consumers.

Vij *et al.* (2020) examined the consumer preferences for on demand transport in Australia. The study found that ODT services have the ability to both increase public transport use among existing public transport customers, and to draw new customers to public transport services. Similarly, Zhou (2019) investigated the app based vehicle services based on smart card data. The study showed that some low-demand transit routes can probably be replaced by Uber at a lower level of overall costs and also indicates that the replacement can be challenging in reality given issues such as unwillingness or difficulties of local transit agencies and ride-sharing service providers in sharing financial information regarding their services, latent demand for private ride-sharing services, social equity and political/legal concerns over the introduction of private ride-sharing services into the transit-service market and usage of public funding for residents/riders to use private vehicle services. Likewise, Chaudhary *et al.* (2018) analyzed on passenger safety in ride sharing apps. The study found that ride-sharing service has facilitated public usage of commute but the safety of passenger is still a much debated issue across the media. Further, Kuswanto *et al.* (2019) assessed the determinants of customer loyalty in Indonesian vehicle services: offline and online. The study revealed a strong and positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. The study also found that the quality of offline services is more influential than the

quality of online services in the case of ride sharing services provided by two major companies in Indonesia. In addition, Wang *et al.* (2018) determined the collaborative activity based vehicle services. The study found that the app substantiate the capacity of a car to increase favorable rides without sacrificing more detour time, which potentially increases public acceptance of app based vehicle services. Similarly, Sakib *et al.* (2019) investigated the ride sharing services in Bangladesh. The study found that the ride sharing services are considered as an infant sector in Bangladesh as people are not aware of it. Likewise, Gaber *et al.* (2021) stated the critical role of customer's expectations for the benefits they can get from using the apps in their transportation. Moreover, Granada *et al.* (2018) examined the ride sharing apps and reallocation of Motor Park. The result showed that the customers have positive response regarding the services provided by ride sharing applications. Further, Sakib (2019) investigated the ride sharing services in Bangladesh. The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between attitude and passenger intention towards grabcar ride caring services.

Hayder (2020) examined the factors affecting customer satisfaction of online taxi services in Dhaka city. The study found that price has a most significant relationship with customer satisfaction. Similarly, Tang *et al.* (2020) found that the app based ride sharing services are permanently available, car purchases will not be influenced by users and app based ride sharing services attract people who pursue fast, affordable and around 10-30 minutes point-to-point transport. Likewise, Ziyad *et al.* (2020) investigated the influence of service excellence on consumer satisfaction of ridesharing industry. The study showed that all the service quality dimensions have positive impact on consumer satisfaction. In addition, Paundra *et al.* (2020) assessed on ridesharing platform entry effects on ownership-based consumption in Indonesia. The qualitative findings highlighted that lack of adequate transportation infrastructures in Indonesia set the scene during pre-ridesharing platform period entry, whereby informal transportation suppliers become an integral part of the transportation system. Further, Ahmed *et al.* (2020) investigated on passenger satisfaction and loyalty for app-based-ride-sharing services. The study indicated that perceived quality and value for money positively and significantly influence passengers' satisfaction. Similarly, Dey *et al.* (2021) examined the evaluation and analysis of user satisfaction of ride sharing services (RSS) in Bangladesh. The study found that users are confident enough to use the services frequently as they found services are safe and reliable.

In the context of Nepal, Hamal *et al.* (2021) examined on making markets gendered: Kathmandu's ride-sharing platforms through a gendered lens. The study found that Kathmandu's vehicle apps platforms contribute to expanding further conservative gender boundaries by enabling women's independent mobility - especially for those who have their own income but not their own means of transport. Similarly, Vaidya (2019) analyzed the online Shopping in Nepal: Preferences and Problems. The study found that the working class involved in online shopping is facing problems, nevertheless, they expected easiness, while doing online shopping. The majority of the customers expect hassle-free shopping while online shopping although, they have been facing various problems. Likewise, Adhikari (2019) examined the determinants of e-banking in Nepal. The study found that convenience, time savings, security and communication are the major factors of acceptance of e-banking in Nepal.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the mobile app based vehicle services and customer satisfaction. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the mobile app based vehicle services and customers satisfaction: A case of Kathmandu Valley. Specifically, it examines the relationship of tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort with customer satisfaction in Kathmandu Valley.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

## **2. Methodological aspects**

The study is based on the primary data which were collected from 121 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, comfort and customer satisfaction. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

### *The model*

The model used in this study assumes that customers' satisfaction depends upon mobile app based vehicle services. The dependent variable selected for the study is customers' satisfaction. Similarly, the selected independent variables are tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

$$CS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TAN + \beta_2 REA + \beta_3 PRI + \beta_4 PC + \beta_5 COM + e$$

Where,

CS = Customer

TAN = Tangible

REA = Reliability

PRI = Price

PC = Promotion and coupon redemption

COM = Comfort

Tangible was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Mobile app based vehicle services has sufficient riders to provide services", "Mobile app based vehicle services provide safety equipment" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.769$ ).

Reliability was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Services through vehicle services app is authentic and confidential", "I feel secure using mobile app based vehicle services" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.763$ ).

Price was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Price is the most important factor while using mobile app based vehicle services", "I compare prices of other mobile app based vehicle services before I choose one" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's

alpha ( $\alpha = 0.725$ ).

Promotion and coupon redemption was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I will probably redeem the digital coupons provided by vehicle service apps”, “I always look for coupons before using mobile app based vehicle services” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.764$ ).

Comfort was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel comfortable to travel in two wheelers”, “Riders make sure that the seats are comfortable enough” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.702$ ).

Customer satisfaction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I use vehicle services when I am in hurry”, “I prefer to travel no matter what is the price” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.784$ ).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

### *Tangible*

Tangible is a benefits such as cost savings, improved safety, and faster travel times, which can be quantified and measured (Kuo *et al.*, 2019). Similarly, Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) defined tangible as a person’s appearance, physical facilities like settings, decorations, display, and equipment. Zeithaml *et al.* (2006) showed a positive relationship between tangibility and customer’s satisfaction. Similarly, Husseni *et al.* (2016) found that tangibility influence on customer satisfaction. Similarly, Mikhaylova *et al.* (2015) identified assurance and tangibility as the service quality gap of public transport user’s expectations and perceptions in Kaliningrad, Russia. By adding more tangibility to services, the customer will be able to evaluate the offering before and after purchase (Carson *et al.*, 1989). Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between tangible and customer satisfaction.

### *Reliability*

Reliability is a significant predictor of customer satisfaction with ride-sharing services (Lee *et al.*, 2019). Narteh (2015) examined the perceived service quality and satisfaction of self-service technology: A case of automated teller machine. The study revealed that reliability dimensions have positive impact on customer satisfaction. Similarly, Berry (1988) revealed that reliability has a positive impact on consumer perception. Likewise, Yeboah *et al.* (2015) found that continuous service, comfort, affordability and reliability have significantly positive influence on customer satisfaction. Further, Barry *et al.* (2014) noted that the reliability of machine or product is considered as consistently good in quality or performance which is able to be treated at any time. In addition, Georgiadis *et al.* (2009) found reliability as fundamental criterion of superior electronic service quality. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction.

### *Price*

Price can be defined as the amount of money or other resources that a buyer has to give up in exchange for a product or service. In the context of ride-sharing apps, price is the fare charged to the customer for using the service. Researchers have studied the relationship between price and customer satisfaction in the context of ride-sharing apps, and have found that it is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Price is the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that customers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Belkhir and Elharrar (2019) examined the impact of price on customer satisfaction in ride-sharing apps. The study found that customers are generally satisfied with the prices charged by ride-sharing apps, but that there is a significant negative relationship between price and customer satisfaction when prices are perceived as unfair. The study also found that customers are more likely to switch to a competitor when prices are perceived as unfair. Similarly, Gwin *et al.* (2003) revealed that consumer perception of a product is based on maximizing utility from the product features subject to its financial status or price. Likewise, Antilla (2007) stated that consumer's price perception has a positive impact on consumer perception. Furthermore, Hensher *et al.* (2001)



stated that price is an important indicator in transportation industry which has affect the affordability. Moreover, Dai *et al.* (2016) found that reliability, responsiveness, price and satisfaction directly affected customer satisfaction. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between price and customer satisfaction.

#### *Promotion and coupon redemption*

Lovelock and Wright (2002) stated that promotion is to persuade the target market on how the consumer make decision to buy a product or service. Similarly, Lee and Lee (2018) examined the impact of promotions and coupon redemption on customer satisfaction. The study found that promotions and coupons have significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. The study also found that customers who redeemed coupons are more likely to be satisfied with the service than those who did not. Similarly, Traver *et al.* (1982) discovered that in-pack coupons and coupons with a greater face value are linked to increased redemption rates. Higher face value coupons and direct mail coupons have higher redemption rates, according to Davis *et al.* (1978). According to Tibrewala *et al.* (1985), redemption rates rise as a function of the services a product offers. Additionally, Clarke *et al.* (1987) discovered that the factors influencing consumers' choices of taxi services included the ability to use discounts. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between promotion and coupon redemption and customer satisfaction.

#### *Comfort*

Comfort can be defined as the feeling of physical ease and relaxation that is associated with a product or service. Kim *et al.* (2017) examined the relationship between comfort and customer satisfaction in the ride-sharing industry. The study found that comfort is a significant predictor of customer satisfaction, along with other factors such as reliability and pricing. The study also found that customers were more likely to use ride-sharing apps when they perceived the service as comfortable and safe. Similarly, Lee *et al.* (2019) investigated the impact of comfort on customer loyalty in ride-sharing apps. The study found that ride-sharing apps could increase customer loyalty by improving the comfort and convenience of the service, such as by providing more comfortable vehicles or offering in-vehicle amenities. Further, Budiono



(2009) found that comfort is the most influence factor on customer satisfaction of public transport. Similarly, Soltani *et al.* (2012) found that there is still much room for improvement and that women passengers still experience a high level of insecurity when using public transportation. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between comfort and customer satisfaction.

3. Results and discussion

*Correlation analysis*

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

**Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix**

This table presents Kendall’s Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 121 observations. The dependent variable is CS (Customer satisfaction). The independent variables are TAN (Tangibility), REA (Reliability), PRI (Price), PC (Promotion and coupon redemption) and COM (Comfort).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	CS	TAN	REA	PRI	PC	COM
CS	3.235	0.820	1					
TAN	3.144	0.873	0.244**	1				
REA	3.036	0.812	0.233**	0.423**	1			
PRI	3.279	0.831	0.376**	0.267**	0.162**	1		
PC	3.155	0.900	0.175**	0.205**	0.183**	0.293**	1	
COM	3.319	0.865	0.348**	0.299**	0.367**	0.292**	0.166**	1

Note: The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that tangibility is positively correlated to customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the tangibility, higher would be the customer satisfaction. Similarly, reliability is positively correlated to customer satisfaction. It indicates that reliable information about the app based service leads to increase customer satisfaction. Likewise, price is positively correlated to customer satisfaction. It indicates that affordable price leads to increase in customer satisfaction. Further, promotion and coupon redemption

is also positively correlated to customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the numbers of promotion and coupon redemption, higher would be the customer satisfaction. In addition, comfort is positively correlated to customer satisfaction. It indicates that higher the comfort for travelling, higher would be the customer satisfaction.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of tangible, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption and comfort on customer satisfaction.

Table 2

Estimated regression result of tangibility, reliability, price, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort on customer satisfaction

The results are based on 121 observations using linear regression model. The model is  $CS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TAN + \beta_2 REA + \beta_3 PRI + \beta_4 PC + \beta_5 COM + e$  where the dependent variable is CS (Customer satisfaction). The independent variables are TAN (Tangibility), REA (Reliability), PRI (Price), PC (Promotion and coupon redemption) and COM (Comfort).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R_bar2	SEE	F-value
		TAN	REA	PRI	PC	COM			
1	2.801 (10.536)**	0.283 (3.509)**					0.086	0.489	12.310
2	2.815 (11.644)**		0.273 (3.810)**				0.101	0.485	14.519
3	1.919 (6.844)**			0.494 (6.491)**			0.255	0.441	42.139
4	3.021 (12.350)**				0.196 (2.909)**		0.059	0.496	8.461
5	2.099 (8.612)**					0.479 (6.747)**	0.271	0.437	45.526
6	2.571 (9.103)**	0.160 (1.641)**	0.190 (2.173)*				0.114	0.482	8.709
7	1.620 (5.128)**	0.035 (0.386)	0.128 (1.605)	0.427 (5.142)**			0.271	0.437	15.873
8	1.566 (4.715)*	0.034 (0.373)	0.126 (1.568)	0.410 (4.618)**	0.036 (0.548)		0.267	0.438	11.908
9	1.103 (3.465)	0.007 (0.087)	0.021 (0.264)*	0.369 (4.513)**	0.021 (0.350)	0.381 (4.859)**	0.386	0.40124	16.104

Notes:

- i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- ii. The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- iii. Customer’s satisfaction is dependent variable.

Table 2 show that the beta coefficients for tangibility are positive with customer satisfaction. It indicates that tangibility has a positive impact on

customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the findings of Zeithaml *et al.* (2006). Similarly, the beta coefficients for reliability are positive with customer satisfaction. It indicates that reliability has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This finding is similar to the findings of Yeboah *et al.* (2015). Likewise, the beta coefficients for price are positive with customer satisfaction. It indicates that price has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the findings of Hensher *et al.* (2001). Further, the beta coefficients for promotion and coupon redemption are positive with customer satisfaction. It indicates that promotion and coupon reduction has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lee and Lee (2018). In addition, the beta coefficients for comfort are positive with customer satisfaction. It indicates that comfort has a positive impact on customer satisfaction. This finding is similar to the findings of Budiono (2009).

#### **4. Summary and Conclusion**

In the context of ride-sharing apps, customer satisfaction is a crucial factor that determines the success of the service. Various independent variables, including tangible, reliability, pricing, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort, have been studied to understand their relationship with customer satisfaction. The ride-sharing industry can improve customer satisfaction by focusing on tangible factors such as the quality of vehicles, reliability, pricing fairness, and customer comfort. Promotion and coupon redemption can also be effective in increasing customer loyalty and acquisition. By understanding these factors, ride-sharing companies can better meet the needs and expectations of their customers and improve customer satisfaction.

This study attempts to examine the mobile app based vehicle services and customers satisfaction: A case of Kathmandu Valley. The study is based on primary data of 121 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that price, comfort, tangible, reliability, promotion and coupon redemption, and comfort have positive impact on customer satisfaction. The study also concludes that price followed by comfort is the most influencing factor that explain the customer's satisfaction to use mobile app based vehicle services in Kathmandu Valley.

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