# Do Quality Service, One Stop Service and Strong Brand Belief Work as Factors of Monopoly in Travel Service?

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**Abstract**

*Service has a predominant role against price by its quality long since for a product. The keys to success depend on quality, speed, and timelines and so on for service oriented industry. Though there are many transport services available both direct and local services on the way of Feni to Chittagong, but passengers' choices are varied with influence of the factors like quality service, one stop service, waiting time, price, income, brand belief and so on. The fact comes to reality keeping faith on brand with anonymous flexibility exceeding the most common consideration for selecting a transport services from earlier research. For justification of ideas, 120 samples were considered and used multiple regression analysis through SPSS 22.0. Depending on the predicted relationships, hypotheses were set and tested and strongly supported at the end with standardized Beta Coefficient of 0.753, 0.398, 0.397 & 0.306 for quality service, one stop service, brand belief and waiting time respectively. In this aspect, the multicollinearity, normality and reliability issues have been checked. Finally, the model is explained 66.8% variation of satisfaction by the predictors. The consideration of those factors' role might become convincing and favorable elements for customer satisfaction in future in passenger travel service of Bangladesh.*

Key terms: Transport service; brand belief; one stop service; waiting time

## Introduction

Transport services is one of the most growing and profitable sector in Bangladesh. Passenger transport service is a part and parcel of our daily lives. Its influence and role cannot be avoided and without its existence, life becomes miserable and unimaginable. In earlier, the transport sector in Bangladesh is termed as weak public and private institutions and low level of investment. However the general quality of services at all levels and by all modes has been poor along with unreliable service operations and safety and security issues (Mahmud et. al., 2012).Very specifically, the road sector of Bangladesh, one of the significant role players in transporting both passengers and freight, is the most likely investment option along with its inherent advantage to

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provide point to point service carrying over 80% to 88% as per the Bangladesh National Conservation Strategy, 2016. Again, quality of road score as per the infrastructure score report of Bangladesh was 2.9 particularly on roads according to the Global Competitiveness Report of the year 2014-15 of World Economic Forum.

Service Companies particularly on transport, the brand/company needs to match resources to the demand by evaluating relationships between the nature of demand, the capacity requirement and related risk measures on the basis of multiple influencing factors and internal capabilities (Heskett, Sasser & Hart, 1990). By increasing facilities and capacity, it is possible to meet the increased demand in transportation system adopting "supply side" strategies (Wilson & Shirazi, 1991). Transport prices can be structured in various ways and price structures affected through the consumer responses like timing, perceived cost structures, perceived fairness, attitudes, distances, age and gender (Bonsall et.al., 2006); trip types, distances and users (Dargay, 2007); transport modes, and travel time (Small & Winston, 1999); population size & income (Burt & Hoover, 2006). For transport and travel cost and price purposes, fuel price (Buehler, 2010), household demographics, income and location (Whelan, 2007); vehicle types & traveling options (Giuliano and Dargay, 2006) and socioeconomic factors and travel conditions (Karlaftis and Golias, 2002). Finally, to evaluate the travel and transport impacts, distance, real household income, age of head of household, number of children or family tour, employment status, occupational class, availability of transport, and density are considered as most influential factors (Santos et.al., 2011).

For intercity bus carrier to get a competitive advantage, effective marketing strategies play the key role to endure in the long-distance transportation market whereas loyalty worked as a measure (Flavian et. al., 2001). The attachment of loyalty is characterized by advocacy to others, resistance to change and relative preference of the brand in competition (Butcher et. al., 2001).Finally, to identify the key service related factors that passengers consider for choosing a transport and to evaluate the role of each factor on satisfaction of transport services are the prime concerns of this study.

**Research Problem**

Feni, a small and populated district located in the South-eastern part of Bangladesh, is bounded by Comilla district on the North, Chittagong district and the Bay of Bengal to the South, Tripura (Indian State) and Chittagong district to the East and Noakhali district to the West (Banglapedia).That's why passengers are always remain vigilant & traveling from Chittagong to Feni and Feni to Chittagong. On the way of Feni to Chittagong and vice-versa, there are a number of transport services available which can be categorized as (i) direct service without stoppage at Feni, (ii) direct service with

stoppage at Feni and (iii) local services. The major concern of our study is to the latter two options and their area of service and passenger perceptions on the same.

The transports available for direct services with stoppage at Feni are Starline, Soudia, Ena, Tisha, Gram Bangla Paribahan Limited etc. Very recently, the Ena, one of the transport service providers introduced direct passenger services from Feni to Dhaka. Starline is one of the oldest service providers in this region particularly on passenger travelling services in Feni region. As a local service provider, the passengers are habitual to the services of Starline and have a good faith about the services, though its cost is Tk.150 which is comparatively high. Again, one-stop-service is one of the unique focus of Starline service means to no stoppage in the middle of the pathway from Feni to Chittagong but the other direct services are sub-station based i.e. on the way of Dhaka to Chittagong or Comilla to Chittagong or Noakhali to Chittagong, they pick up the passenger or wait for a while in sub-station counter to get the passenger. The usual queuing time is 15-20 minutes, but in some cases delay for prerequisite number of passengers or changed time schedule whereas local services are uncertain both for queuing time and reaching to the destination. The usual time to reach the destination is less than or equal to one and a half to two hours for direct services about to 90 kilometers journey. In comparison with other direct travel services, price (Tk. 130) of Soudia & ENA are preferable than Starline travels in some cases, the Soudia & ENA reached the destination before Starline. On the other hand, the transport named Shahi, Jonaki, Hanif, and Shyamoli provide the same services regarding Seat comfort, Supervisor service, one stop service, prayer break if necessary or request from passenger like Starline, but passengers prefer the Starline service irrationally in these context. That's why, in this study, we try to find out the perceptions of passengers' preference on transport service by considering factors of satisfaction.

**Literature Review**

Desired service expectation is worked for being customers happy and worked as a-heading factor against over competitors (Davidow and Uttal, 1998).Personal needs educate customers on ways the service addresses their needs whereas perceived service alternatives used to aware of competitive offerings and possibility to match appropriately with needs. A fact that is also taken into consideration company's reputation generally described as a combination of the stakeholders' assessments between company's earlier role and how well the company's general performances coping with the social and political environment (Logsdon & Wood, 2002).Finally, self - perceived service roles educate customers to understand their roles and perform better. In order to predict travel behavior, it is important to understand how individual characteristics of a person interact with the characteristics of the situation, therefore understanding the positive and negative evaluative factors influencing destination

choices of the people (Holloway, 2004; Laws, 1995; March & Woodside, 2005). Waiting time works as an influential factor depending on urgency where one stop service no passenger should uplift other than counter and location of counters are in a short distance from starting point based on the destination.

Satisfaction is an emotion based feeling, a degree of pleasure and contentment and a distance between performance and expectations in service (Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Cronin et.al., 2000; Dick and Basu, 1994; Fornell et.al., 1996). Satisfied customers have a higher price tolerance for their preference and they find that switching to competitors becomes less attractive (Fornell et.al., 1996). Several studies have confirmed a direct positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty (Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Bloemer and Kasper, 1995; Butcher et. al., 2001; Cronin et.al., 2000; Dick and Basu, 1994; Fornell et.al., 1996; Hellier et. al., 2003; Ostrowski et. al., 1993; Stank et.al., 1999). A switching cost increases the intention of customer loyalty (Andreassen and Lindestad, 1998; Dick and Basu, 1994; Lee and Cunningham, 2001; Jones et. al., 2000).

Trust that lead to a higher level of loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) is based on the belief that guided to and motivated for favorable and positive intentions toward the welfare and interests of the object (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman, 1999). True brand loyalty not only repeats purchasing behavior but also commits to brands through psychological and evaluative decision making approach (Bloemer and Kasper, 1995).Customer satisfaction is treated as one of the most frequently used indicators to measure the success of a marketing strategy (Flavian et.al., 2001). More specifically, customer loyalty is the degree to which the customer has exhibited repurchasing behavior of a particular company service and the significance of that expenditure on that particular type of service (Hellier et. al., 2003).

Brand image focuses on mental image of the consumer with symbolic meanings that the consumers associate with the specific attributes of a product or service (Cretu & Brodie, 2007; Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). A deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand set purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior (Oliver, 1997) and the psychological attachment to a service (Beatty et. al., 1988).

Service quality is addressed with expectation and perceptions of service (Parasuraman et.al, 1985) whereas the monetary price and the nonmonetary price particularly on time, search, and psychological costs would be considered under perceived price (Zeithaml, 1988; Dodds et. al., 1991). Price is a strong factor limiting the buying

power or consumer choices and preference for price sensitive consumers. Discomfort, time of travel and risk are considerable factor for transport prices though changes in price affected through location decisions, vehicle type, type of service selected, frequency of (Litman, 2013). The resulting statistics tend to overlook or undercount off-peak travel, short trips, poor people's travel, children's travel, and non-motorized travel in survey (May et. al., 2008). Rystam (1998) suggested counting the alternative's so-called hard standard factors, travelling time, fare etc. and soft standard factors such as comfort, information etc., as objective factors. The objective factors also include socio-economic factors, such as gender and age, and also trips related factors such as purpose. Subjective factors here include valuations of the alternative's characteristics, attitudes and lifestyle. These factors are based on the individual's perceptions and are often more difficult to quantify. The transport related attributes that describe the travel standard into timetable, comfort and service factors, and quality satisfaction and safety (Kottenhoff, 1999).

After reviewing the literature, the perception of the customers based on the variables like one stop service, waiting time and brand belief in transport and travelling service satisfaction particularly in monopoly type is rare. That's why; the matter is found interesting and needs to find out the impact on customer service satisfaction.

**Methodology**

The objective of the research is to examine the relationships among predictors and criterion variable of transport sector of Bangladesh in general and Feni region in particular. The study based on quantitative view for generating credible and reliable result (Hyde, 2000) and cross-sectional study for at one point of time survey (Saunders et. al., 2009) through self-administered survey for better and complete response with short period of time (Muijs, 2004). Due to absence of clear idea about population size, items-scale ratio ranged from 1:4 to 1:10 for each set of scale (Hinkin, 1995). That's why; sample size of 120 respondents was considerable for 21 items for descriptive purposes. For easy access and saving of time, money and effort, convenience sampling was considered here (Marshall, 1996). The perception survey questionnaire measured through earlier suggested measures opined by the researchers/experts and also changes made by states using a five-point closed order Likert scale, where 1 indicates that the variable is not important at all and 5 is very important with extensive support from the literature. The sample size was targeted 150 initially, 120 were selected based on avoiding missing responses.

Here the variables - Quality Service (QS), Price (P), Income (I), Waiting Time (WT), Brand Belief (BB), and One Stop Service (OSS) have been considered to justify the role as predictors and Satisfaction (S) as a criterion variable. Based on past literature

review, the hypotheses set for analyzing the relationships were:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between quality service and satisfaction in transport industry.
Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between price and satisfaction in transport industry.
Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between income and satisfaction in transport industry.
Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between waiting time and satisfaction in transport industry.
Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between brand belief and satisfaction in transport industry.
Hypothesis 6: There is a significant relationship between one stop service and satisfaction in transport industry.

**Data Analysis**

To assess relationships among the studied variables the researchers have performed multiple regression analysis through SPSS 22. These analyses supposed to help to understand which model fits the data best while presenting a credible assessment on the antecedents of satisfaction of transport industry.
The typical multiple linear regression is:

$$\hat{Y} = B_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \ldots + b_nX_n + e$$

Where,
$\hat{Y}$ = Dependent Variable
$B_0$ = Intercept
b = Slope for any corresponding change in one unit of X.
X = Independent variable.
*e* = Error term (Normally distributed about a mean of zero)
The above formula can be converted as follows depending on the variables [Quality Service (QS), Price (P), Income (I), Waiting Time (WT), Brand Belief (BB), One Stop Service (OSS) as predictors and Satisfaction (S) as criterion variable]considered for the study:

$$S = B_0 + b_1QS + b_2P + b_3I + b_1WT + b_2BB + b_3OSS$$

**Result**

Statistical techniques were applied to assess the reliability and validity of the survey and to obtain more clarity regarding the influence of the selected variables on satisfaction.

**Reliability**

In measuring reliability coefficient for the different constructs were computed using the reliability procedure in SPSS 22. The reliabilities of the entire construct used in this study found to be above the standard set which is 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The range of Cronbach's alpha shows the reliability of the variables of research ranges from $\alpha$ = 0.971 to $\alpha$ = 0.991; mean scores had been computed by equally weighting the mean scores of all the relevant to each construct.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

| Items | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | Overall Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Satisfaction | .987 | **.955** |
| Price | .983 | |
| Brand Belief | .971 | |
| Income | .976 | |
| One Stop Service | .991 | |
| Waiting Time | .991 | |
| Quality Service | .974 | |

Table 1 shows the Cronbach's Alpha of each of the variables where the variables one stop service and waiting time have the highest alpha values and brand belief has the lowest but all are within acceptable limit of 0.70.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

| Factors/Variables | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | | Kurtosis | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Satisfaction | 120 | 2.31 | .906 | .658 | .221 | -.006 | .438 |
| Quality Service | 120 | 2.13 | .798 | .762 | .221 | .525 | .438 |
| Brand Belief | 120 | 3.72 | .822 | -.446 | .221 | .289 | .438 |
| Price | 120 | 3.65 | .904 | -.563 | .221 | .182 | .438 |
| Waiting Time | 120 | 2.27 | .985 | .620 | .221 | -.372 | .438 |
| Income | 120 | 2.26 | .893 | .615 | .221 | -.256 | .438 |
| One Stop Service | 120 | 2.22 | .945 | .462 | .221 | -.619 | .438 |

**Descriptive Statistics**

The followings are the attempts undertaken to justify the result of the study:

**Normality Test:** With the previous set guidelines for checking normality through Skewness and Kurtosis were used where positive and negative value indicates the direction of positive and negative relations respectively (Saunders et. al., 2009) and the threshold values for justification were +/- 3 and +/- 10 for Skewness and Kurtosis respectively (Kline, 2005). Table # 2 results that the mean for brand belief (3.72) is the highest while for quality service (2.13) and one stop service (2.22) are the lowest though highest dispersion goes with Waiting Time (0.985). The skewness and kurtosis are ranged from -0.563 and -0.619, but within the expected values of skewness and kurtosis. Hence the data is normally distributed.

**Multicollinearity Test:** To test the linear association among predictors and the degree of relationship, Pearson Correlation analysis has been used with the issue of multicollinearity having score more than +/- 0.90 (Hair et. al., 2006).

**Table 3: Pearson's Correlations**

| | Satisfaction | Quality Service | Brand Belief | Price | Waiting Time | Income | One Stop Service |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Satisfaction | 1.000 | .745 | .130 | .051 | .614 | .628 | .657 |
| Quality Service | .745 | 1.000 | .212 | .158 | .670 | .835 | .696 |
| Brand Belief | .130 | .212 | 1.000 | .895 | .208 | .135 | .242 |
| Price | .051 | .158 | .895 | 1.000 | .266 | .019 | .188 |
| Waiting Time | .614 | .670 | .208 | .266 | 1.000 | .704 | .704 |
| Income | .628 | .835 | .135 | .019 | .704 | 1.000 | .809 |
| One Stop Service | .657 | .696 | .242 | .188 | .704 | .809 | 1.000 |

From the table - 3 of Pearson's correlation analysis, the highest coefficient value shown is 0.895 which is close to the limit of multicollinearity issues.

**Multiple Linear Regressions**

The study under Multiple Linear Regressions is perfect due to more than one independent variables and a single dependent variable (Zikmund et. al., 2010). To identify the relative significance, regression coefficient is used whereas coefficient of

multiple determinations (R2) provides the true predictor of multiple regression equation (Saunders et. al., 2009). The threshold value of p is less than 0.05.

**Table 4a: Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .817[a] | .668 | .651 | .535 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), One Stop Service, Price, Quality Service, Waiting Time, Brand Belief, Income
b. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

**Table 4b: ANOVA[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 65.208 | 6 | 10.868 | 37.924 | .000[b] |
| | Residual | 32.383 | 113 | .287 | | |
| | Total | 97.592 | 119 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction
b. Predictors: (Constant), One Stop Service, Price, Quality Service, Waiting Time, Brand Belief, Income

As per the table-4a, the $R^2$ of the model is 0.668 means to 66.8% variation in Satisfaction can be explained by the predictors (Quality Service, Price, Income, Waiting Time, Brand Belief, One Stop Service). The rest of 33.2% due to other factors' influences namely, service reputation, safety & security issue, etc.

Now, the regression equation is:

$S = B_0 + b_1QS + b_2P + b_3I + b_1WT + b_2BB + b_3OSS$

**Table 5: Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Un-standardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95.0% Confidence Interval for B | | Correlations | | | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | Zero-order | Partial | Part | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | .785 | .249 | | 3.153 | .002 | .292 | 1.278 | | | | | |
| | Quality Service | .854 | .117 | .753 | 7.302 | .000 | .623 | 1.086 | .745 | .566 | .396 | .276 | 3.626 |
| | Brand Belief | .437 | .151 | .397 | 2.900 | .004 | .139 | .736 | .130 | .263 | .157 | .157 | 6.383 |
| | Price | -.569 | .145 | -.568 | -3.921 | .000 | -.857 | -.282 | .051 | -.346 | -.212 | .140 | 7.157 |
| | Waiting Time | .281 | .084 | .306 | 3.336 | .001 | .114 | .448 | .614 | .299 | .181 | .350 | 2.860 |
| | Income | -.589 | .140 | -.581 | -4.197 | .000 | -.867 | -.311 | .628 | -.367 | -.227 | .153 | 6.523 |
| | One Stop Service | .381 | .095 | .398 | 4.002 | .000 | .193 | .570 | .657 | .352 | .217 | .297 | 3.370 |

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

Hence, the equations valued as-

S = 0.785+ (0.854)QS -(0.569)P- (0.589)I + (0.281)WT + (0.437) BB+ (0.381)OSS

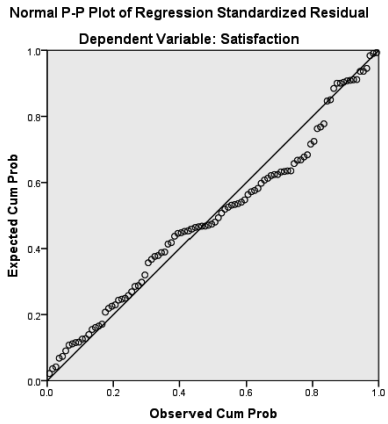


Figure 1: Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

The model for the chart is found to be accurate being strong correlation between the models' prediction and its actual result in the fig # 1.

Table 6: Summary of the Multiple Regression Result

| Hypothesis | β | *P* | Statistically supported or not. |
|---|---|---|---|
| There is a significant relationship between quality service and satisfaction in transport industry | .753 | .000 | Supported |
| There is a significant relationship between brand belief and satisfaction in transport industry | .397 | .004 | Supported |
| There is a significant relationship between price and satisfaction in transport industry | -.568 | .000 | Supported |
| There is a significant relationship between waiting time and satisfaction in transport industry | .306 | .001 | Supported |
| There is a significant relationship between income and satisfaction in transport industry | -.581 | .000 | Supported |
| There is a significant relationship between one stop service and satisfaction in transport industry | .398 | .000 | Supported |

The above table (table-6) summarizes the relationship between dependent and independent variables. All other hypotheses are supported statistically and quality service has the most significant impact on satisfaction (0.753).

**Discussion**

The study demonstrated the use of multiple regression approach as a powerful tool to identify the understanding of travel behavior and real causes of passenger's fascination toward the Starline service in Feni region. It was found that quality service (0.753), one stop service (0.398), brand belief (0.397), and waiting time (0.306) are the significant positive attitudinal factors for showing enormous loyalty toward the particular transport service provider. These factors help define the desired market position and can be used to identify those services and strategies that are critical to creating monopoly in this particular area. It is also worth mentionable that the passengers have an extreme level of enthrallment about the services of Starline due to long time presence and only the quality service provider in this region. Passengers whether passionate or not, do not try the other services for high switching cost and absence of services. The factors namely, price (-0.568) and income (-0.581) are negatively related to the satisfaction in a sense that the passengers have no option other than Starline for standard service at offered price and passengers' different levels of income. In this aspect, few high income holders are expectations of better services than existing and even though they are still agree to pay high price for better quality

services. Consequently, the negativity among the particular group of customers shows aggressive response in this study. More importantly, when passengers have confidence in reliability and integrity of a transport service provider like Starline, trust exists and will lead to a higher level of satisfaction. In fine, this research has pragmatically achieved encouraging empirical results for the transport service of this region and has implications for both transportation policy makers and industry leaders.

## Conclusion

The transport and travel services of Bangladesh provide service variety in context to the varying nature of demand and buying power. The customers prone to quality service at a fair cost are tremendously wanting. Though the study covered only a specific region with limited number of samples, the intensity of customers toward the brand is not negligible. In reality, the factors imposed to be a monopoly business concern in this territory particularly on passenger travel service by quality service. The trust achieved by the brand and one stop service got unique psychological positioning among the customers. The future researcher can justify the situation with more sample size and identify such situation in other regions of the country. The situation is one way alarming as monopoly business concern being chances to deteriorate services in the long run or entry barrier to prospective investment option for new investors as well.

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