

Perception of Beauty Services and Practices in Bangladesh: Business Prospects Analysis

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Abstract:- The prospects for the beauty services business in Bangladesh depend on how Bangladesh's people perceive it, especially in rural areas. So, this study aimed at analyzing the customers' Perception of beauty services and practices for its business prospects. Primary data were collected through a survey of 413 respondents from June to September 2020 in Jashore district, Bangladesh. Frequency distribution, chi-square test, and binary logistic regression analysis were used as statistical tools. The respondents' perceptions were considered as the predictor. It was revealed that a vast number of the respondents perceive beauty practices as an integral part of their personality, self-confidence, and even work efficiency. Respondents' age and religion are associated with P₃ and P₄, respectively. The younger and the Non-Muslim are more likely to make P₃ and P₄, respectively. It was revealed that 87.9% of the respondents had a need for beauty services which is the output of positive Perception. **Conclusion:** There has been a positive perception of beauty practice and exposure, so there are business prospects for beauty services in the rural area of Bangladesh.

Keywords:- Bangladesh, Beauty services and practices, Business prospects, Perception.

I. INTRODUCTION

Beauty service and beauty practices are not a new concept. According to Tubergen (2002), women took proper care of their beauty and skin with natural healthy ingredients in ancient times. They focused on beautifying their appearance to get to the superior rank in society and to draw the attention of the opposite sex (Al-Hashimi and Al-Dhari, 2019). This is why both men and women, for centuries, have been trying to be more attractive based upon how society defines attractiveness (Hunt and Dodds, 2011). Nowadays, people's consciousness regarding hygiene, personal grooming, and self-care has increased (Siddique and Wajidi, 2019). Several studies revealed that irrespective of gender, people are more aware of their looks and personality (Panicker and Mohammad, 2017; Ali and Rana, 2016) who believe that physical beauty makes a man more confident (Khan and Tabassum, 2010 and Tooy and Lapien, 2018), intelligent (Kanazawa and Kovar, 2004) and more privileged in the society (Dermer and Thiel, 1975) and professions (Sultana *et al.*, 2016). And so, there resulted in the beauty service business, which is termed as a beauty

parlor. A beauty parlor or beauty salon is a business that deals with cosmetic treatments for both women and men (Yaman *et al.*, 2012). It is one of the most popular businesses run by females (Siddique and Wajidi, 2019) with tremendous growth due to the changing lifestyle of the people (Priya *et al.*, 2019). In recent years, it has been observed that the growth in the market of beauty parlors and salons has seen an exponential proliferation (Karmakar and Chanu, 2017). As it is a female intensive business, with the flourishing of this business the involvement of females in enterprises has increased around the globe (Jabeen and Ahmad, 2018) enhancing female entrepreneurship which deserves considerable attention around the globe (Jamali, 2009; Langowitz and Minniti, 2007; Martinez and Marlow, 2017) for contributing economically in terms of growth and job creation (Orhan and Scott, 2001; Audretsch *et al.*, 2006; McMullen and Warnick, 2016) and for improving quality of life (McMullen and Warnick, 2016; Baumol *et al.*, 2007) undergirding female empowerment and catalyzing their liberation (Yunis *et al.*, 2018). Besides, women participation in business is highly expected to address issues like poverty alleviation in developing countries (Scott *et al.*, 2012), post-conflict empowerment (Tobias *et al.*, 2013), poverty of refugees (Al Dajani and Marlow, 2010), flexible working and unemployment in developed countries (Jayawarna *et al.*, 2013). So, for the empowerment of the women of Bangladesh beauty parlor may play a pivotal role because the environmental condition of beauty parlor business in Bangladesh seems favorable for women entrepreneurs (Islam *et al.*, 2018). It is seen that the beauty salon industry is booming rapidly in urban areas in Bangladesh (Islam *et al.*, 2018). As the most significant portion of Bangladesh's population lives in rural areas, for the empowerment of rural women, this business has to be extended to the rural area.

But commercialization of any product or service depends on the need for the product or service. The need for any product or service is the primary drive or stimuli for consumer behavior. According to Belch and Belch (2012), to satisfy intended needs and desires, the behavior of searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services is termed consumer behavior. A marketer has to know the factors on which the consumer bases their purchasing decision. A motivated customer is influenced by how he perceives the situation and the process by which people select, organize, and interpret information to form a meaningful picture of the world is Perception

(Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). Because of selective attention, distortion, and retention, people can form different perceptions of the same stimulus. Each customer fits incoming information into an existing mindset. They retain information that supports their beliefs and attitudes and is likely to remember good points made about a brand he/she favors (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). The customer makes a favorable behavior with the product or service that meets their need. And marketing is the process of meeting the needs profitably (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). This is why knowing the way how the target customers perceive the product or service is the prerequisite for commercializing the product or service because customer perception shapes or is shaped by other personal factors that influence the purchasing decisions like the lifestyle of customers (Kardes *et al.*, 2014), age (Kotler and Keller, 2011 and Tanner and Raymond, 2012), educational qualifications and monthly expenditure (Shahbazi and Akareem, 2013). And body image has both a perceptual component that denotes how one sees one's body size, shape, weight, physical characteristics, movement, and performance and an evaluative component which denotes how one feels about these attributes and how those feelings influence one's behavior (Roosen and Mills, 2013) and as beauty service has its connection with one's perceptions, emotions and feeling (Suresh, 2020), a perception analysis is very important for extending the beauty services business in the rural area of Bangladesh.

There are some studies on beauty parlor, beauty practices, and its business (Ali and Rana, 2016; Khan and Tabassum, 2010; Panicker and Mohammad, 2017; Afroz, 2016; Alam and Kabir, 2015; Deb *et al.*, 2016; Yunis *et al.*, 2018; Dixit and Pandey, 2020; Ting Ip, 2017; Tooy and Lopian, 2018; Priya, Balaji and Priya, 2019; Siddique and Wajidi, 2019; Islam *et al.*, 2018; Karna, 2020; Al-Hashimi and Aldhari, 2019; Shahbazi and Akareem, 2013; etc.) but there is no sound study on customer perception of beauty services and practices in rural areas of Bangladesh. So, this study aims to analyze customer perception of beauty services and practices in Bangladesh, especially in rural areas.

II. DATA AND METHODS

A. Sources of data:

It is primarily qualitative. Both the primary and secondary sources were used to collect the requisite data. A sample of respondents was surveyed, and primary data were collected from the female respondents (students, teachers, and employees) using a questionnaire survey technique.

B. Sampling:

As almost all the women of 18 and above all over Bangladesh go through the same socio-economic condition, the researcher selected Jashore District (administrative unit) as the study area. In Jashore District, Jashore University of Science and Technology is one of the largest institutions with a mass affiliation of women (students, teachers, and employees) of almost the same socio-economic background. And so, to ease the research, the researchers selected Jashore University of Science and Technology (JUST), Jashore, Bangladesh, as the study area.

In JUST, there are 26 departments, and each of the departments was considered for this study. In the case of sampling, the researchers used the multistage stratification sampling technique (Fig. 1). In the 1st stage, the researchers selected the Khulna division out of eight divisions in Bangladesh. In the 2nd stage, the Jashore district was selected out of eight districts. At the 3rd stage, a public university (JUST) was selected. At last, at the 4th stage, a random sampling technique was used to select the women (respondents). By dint of the following formula, the sample size (n) was determined:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{\epsilon^2},$$

where n = sample size, Z = tabulated value = 1.96 (for large sample at 5% level of significance), p = 0.05 = proportion of success, $q = 1 - p$ = proportion of failure, and ϵ = margin of error = 0.05.

Based on the above formula a sample of 384 respondents was supposed to be selected from all the departments with a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error. But, to improve the research 413 respondents were taken. The survey was conducted mostly on the young female students ($n_1=380$), female teachers ($n_2=17$), and female employees ($n_3=16$).

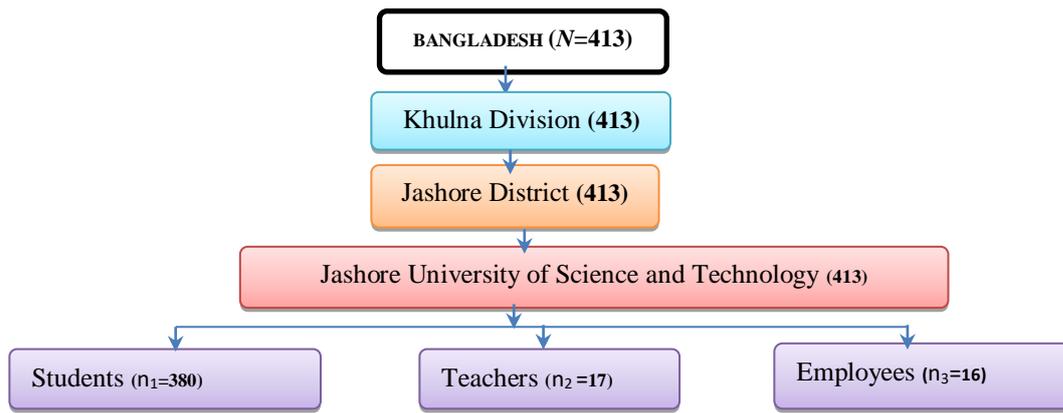


Fig. 1: Sampling flow chart

C. Data collection:

From June to September 2020, a sample of 413 respondents was surveyed to collect primary data relevant to the study objective.

D. Data analysis:

As per the demonstrable indicators of the study objectives, the collected data were arranged and scrutinized. Statistical tools like frequency distribution, chi-square test, and binary logistic regression analysis were used to analyze the data. In bivariate analysis, χ^2 test and Fisher's exact (for cell frequency less than 5) were used to find out the associations between the dependent and independent categorical variables.

The researcher developed five statements to test the Perception of beauty services and beauty practices, and each respondent was questioned about the five statements. Every 'yes' response was coded '1', and every 'no' response was coded '0'. The five statements regarding the perceptions were the independent variables- (i) beauty parlors play an important role in enhancing beauty {perception 1 (P₁)}; (ii) beauty practices play an important positive role in daily life {perception 2 (P₂)}; (iii) external beauty bears testimony to personality {perception 3 (P₃)}; (iv) regular beauty practices

enhance self-confidence {perception 4 (P₄)}; and (v) beauty practices enhance work efficiency {perception 5 (P₅)}.

At first, a frequency distribution was made based on the responses the respondents made. Then, it was tried to see whether there was any association between the perceptions (P₁, P₂, P₃, P₄, P₅) and the independent demographic variables (age, residence, religion, monthly family income, and family type) by dint of chi-square test.

Lastly, for binary logistic regression analysis, the perceptions were converted into two-point ('Yes' was coded '1', and 'No', was coded '0') Likert scale to measure the degree of effects of demographic variables which are significantly associated with perceptions. In the binary logistic regression model, the Perception (Y) was treated as the dependent variable. The dependent variables (Y_i) were classified as follows:

$$Y = \{0, no, 1, yes\}$$

Data were analyzed by means of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

III. RESULTS

A structured questionnaire survey was conducted on the respondents and the background characteristics are in table 1.

Variables	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (in years)	Below 22	272	65.9
	Above 22	141	34.1
Residence	Rural	221	53.5
	Urban	192	46.5
Religion	Non-Muslim	56	13.6
	Muslim	357	86.4
Monthly family income (in Taka)	Low	185	44.8
	Medium	188	45.5
	High	40	9.7
Family type	Joint	55	13.3
	Nuclear	358	86.7

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (N=413)

Table 1, shows that most of the respondents were from the undergrad level (65.9%), and there is a good representation of the students who were brought up in the rural (53.50%) and urban (46.50%) areas. It was also observed that almost all of the respondents (86.40%) were Muslims. Nearly half of the respondents were from the low (44.8%) and medium (45.5%) income categories. It was also

divulged that almost all of the respondents (86%) were from nuclear families.

The results regarding perceptions of the respondents considering different issues of beauty parlor and beauty practice (P₁, P₂, P₃, P₄, P₅) are presented in table 2.

Perception	Types of response				
	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
Perception 1 (P ₁)	45 (10.9)	246 (59.6)	77 (18.6)	31 (7.5)	14 (3.4)
Perception 1 (P ₂)	109 (26.4)	239 (57.9)	48 (11.6)	13 (3.1)	4 (1.0)
Perception 1 (P ₃)	65 (15.7)	154 (37.3)	80 (19.4)	79 (19.1)	35 (8.5)
Perception 1 (P ₄)	77 (18.6)	244 (59.1)	64 (15.5)	24 (5.8)	4 (1.0)
Perception 1 (P ₅)	96 (23.2)	229 (55.4)	68 (16.5)	19 (4.6)	1 (0.2)

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents as per their Perception about beauty parlor and practices (N= 413)

In table 2, it was seen that the majority of the respondents (70.50% strongly agreed and agreed) perceived that a beauty parlor plays an important role in enhancing beauty (P₁). Almost all of the respondents (84.3%) perceived that regular beauty practices play an important positive role in daily life (P₂). More than half of the respondents (53.0%) perceived that external beauty is a part of their personality (P₃). Most of the respondents (77.7%)

believed that beauty practices enhance self-confidence (P₄), and 78.6% of the respondents believed that beauty practices enhance work efficiency (P₅). Chi-square analysis was done to analyze whether there is an association between perceptions of beauty parlors and practices (P₁, P₂, P₃, P₄, P₅) and socio-economic factors, and the results are presented in Table 3.

Factors	Perception 1 (P ₁)			Perception 2 (P ₂)			Perception 3 (P ₃)			Perception 4 (P ₄)			Perception 5 (P ₅)		
	Yes	No	p-values	Yes	No	p-values	Yes	No	p-values	Yes	No	p-values	Yes	No	p-values
Age (in years)															
Below 22	194	78	0.593	233	39	0.278	157	115	0.005	213	59	0.271	216	56	0.252
Above 22	97	44		115	26		61	80		103	38		105	36	
Religion															
Non-Muslim	38	18	0.646	49	7	0.474	34	22	0.201	49	7	0.037	46	10	0.393
Muslim	25	10		29	58		18	17		26	90		27	82	
Residence															
Rural	159	62	0.478	190	31	0.306	119	102	0.643	165	56	0.341	170	51	0.675
Urban	132	60		158	34		99	93		151	41		151	41	
Family income (in Taka)															
Low	128	57	.761	155	30	.969	101	84	.125	144	41	.570	141	44	.779
Medium	133	55		159	29		102	86		144	44		149	39	
High	30	10		34	6		15	25		28	12		31	9	
Family type															
Joint	34	21	0.131	48	7	0.510	25	30	0.242	39	16	0.292	38	17	0.098
Nuclear	257	101		300	58		193	165		277	81		283	75	

Table 3: Associations between Perception about beauty parlor and practices and socio-economic factors (N=413)

Note: Bold *p* values indicate that they are statistically significant.

The Chi-square test identified that the perception items' external beauty bears the testimony to personality (P₃)'was significantly associated with respondents' age ($p < 0.005$),

and 'beauty practices enhance self-confidence P₄'was significantly associated with respondents' religion ($p < 0.037$).

Characteristics	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp (B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		
							Lower	Upper	
Model 1	Age	-.582	.210	7.718	1	.005	.559	.370	.842
	Constant	.311	.123	6.433	1	.011	1.365		
Model 2	Religion	-.858	.422	4.137	1	.042	.424	.185	.969
	Constant	1.946	.404	23.193	1	.000	7.000		

Table 4: Logistic Regression predicting the likelihood of deserving P₃ and P₄ based on age and religion

Variables: age and religion

The logistic regression model 1 used to determine the effects of age on the likelihood that respondents make the perception 3 (P₃) was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 7.798$, $p < .005$. It explained .025% (Nagelkerke R²) of the variance in perception 3 (P₃) and correctly classified 57.4% of cases. However, increasing age was associated with a reduction in the likelihood of making the perception 3 (P₃); that is, those who are above 22 years in age are 0.559 times less likely to make perception 3 (P₃) than those who are below 22 (Table 4).

The logistic regression model 2 used to determine the effects of religion on the likelihood that respondents make the perception 4 (P₄) was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 4.900$, $p < .027$. It explained .018% (Nagelkerke R²) of the variance in perception 4 (P₄) and correctly classified 76.5% of cases. However, being Muslim was associated with a reduction in the likelihood of making the perception 4 (P₄); that is, a Muslim is .042 times less likely to perceive P₄ than a Non-Muslim (table 4).

Then an effort was made to see whether the positive Perception of Beauty Services and Practices had any impact on the need for beauty service, and the result is depicted in table 5.

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	363	87.9
No	50	12.1

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents based on their needs for beauty services

It was seen that almost all the respondents (87.9%) had needs for beauty services.

IV. DISCUSSION

The objective of this study was to reveal customers' perceptions about beauty services and practices in Bangladesh. This study divulged the respondents' Perception of the issues of beauty services and beauty practices. It was seen that a vast number of the respondents perceived beauty practices as an integral part of their personality, self-confidence, and even work efficiency. They believed that regular beauty practices played an important positive role in their daily lives. This positive Perception bears the testimony to the positive change of people's attitudes towards beautification and beauty parlor carefully in a positive manner which resembled the findings of the studies conducted by the other researcher (Ali and Rana, 2016; Sultana et al., 2016; Islam *et al.*, 2018 and Karna, 2020). That means the demand for beauty parlors among young women is increasing. The study also revealed that in most of

the cases, there was no association between independent and dependent variables, which means most of the respondents, irrespective of their age, religion, residence, family structure, and even family income, perceive beauty parlors and beauty practices in the same way.

'External beauty bears testimony to personality' is significantly associated with respondents' age, which disagrees with the findings of a study (Shahbazi and Akareem, 2013). 'Beauty practices enhance self-confidence' was significantly associated with respondents' religion. The Non-Muslims are more motivated in this regard. This may be because beauty exposure is confined to a certain limit by Islamic law. But as there was huge demand (table VI) for beauty services among the respondents, it may be concluded that there are huge opportunities for beauty Parlor business in the JUST campus area. Further, it may be said that people's attitudes toward beautification and beauty parlors are changing comprehensively; their attitudes toward beauty parlors and beautification are positive.

The limitation of this research work was that it was confined to the JUST campus area because of time and economic constraints. Beyond the study area and the methodology followed here, the results may vary.

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that there is a positive perception of beauty parlors in JUST areas, leading to the creation of demand for beauty parlors and beauty services. It is divulged that there is latent demand for beauty services among the people in the study area. There are substantial needs for beauty services in this area. Most of the respondents were much more aware of their beauty, irrespective of their socio-economic status. They perceive beauty practices as ancillary to personality, efficiency, and self-confidence. This indicates the business prospects of beauty parlors in the Jashore area, especially in the JUST campus area. Further research works may be conducted on need assessments and business prospect analysis for beauty parlors.

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- **COMPETING INTEREST**

The authors declared that they have no competing interest.

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