

A Qualitative Research on Customer Satisfaction on Online Shopping

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Abstract

Online Shopping has been considered as a trendy phenomenon with various technological support and usability. Generally the main users of this type of shopping are those who have easy access to internet technology and the educated. The significance of customer satisfaction on this online shopping has been recognized in various academic research studies and for business purposes. But study in this area is vast and also remain fragmented as it can be seen on different perspectives and purposes. Therefore, the aim of this study is to measure the satisfaction of the customers using online based shopping services based on different theoretical assumption. This is a qualitative research paper using purposive sampling method. According to the study, most respondents preferred online shopping for its convenience and variety, with almost everyone unlikely to repurchase from a shop if their expectations were not met. Satisfaction levels were high, and influenced mainly by product quality and price, while many spent under one hour daily on online shopping. The study suggest government should priority this issue and take appropriate policy measure realizing the potential of online business.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Online Shopping, Qualitative Study, Contributing Factors, Policy Recommendation

Introduction

The advent of internet use has been bringing a revolutionary change in business and e-commerce sector. It has also empowered the consumer to make their choice with a very limited time form a variety of products. The consumer have unlimited expectation within limited time and they also get many facility to shift from one store to another by their virtual presence. In this sense, Customer satisfaction is the degree of to what extent the expectation of the customer varies to the reality of products or product performance. Satisfaction according to Oliver, is “*The summery psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding unconfirmed*

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expectations are coupled with a consumer's prior feeling about the consumer experiences." (Oliver, 1997). Online shopping has been considered as the easiest way to reach customer. It is a mode of business to consumer (B2C) communication through using online shop, web store or online store. It is mostly popular to the educated youth group for their easy and regular access to internet and the variety of products within a limited time without their physical presence. The contrast between the expectation of consumer and the product performances results in customer satisfaction in online purchasing. This paper is more specifically focuses in finding the customer satisfaction based on the factors affecting the main variables consumer's expectation and product performance. The customers (Target people) are the students of Dhaka University.

Transactional e-commerce sites started to enter online market in Bangladesh in 2004-2006 period with the launch of online marketplace CellBazaar.com, online gift delivery service UpoharBd.com etc. (Rahman, 2015). But the market started to develop sharply in 2011-2012 period with the help of foreign investment in Bikroy.com (Moshiur, 2014; Rahman, 2015), transformation of early entrant CellBazaar.com to Ekhanai.com as a competitor of Bikroy.com and the entry of Rocket Internet to operate online businesses such as FoodPanda.com.bd for online food order and home delivery with cash on delivery option, Kaymu.com.bd as online marketplace and property website Lamudi.com.bd. While these medium to large size multinational companies were expanding their operations in Bangladesh, individual entrepreneurs started to buy and sell using the social group and brand pages in Facebook.com, which tops the web traffic chart in Bangladesh (Alexa, 2015). Starting a business on Facebook is much more convenient than opening and operating a .com or .com.bd website which requires fund. Pre-research conversation with young university students in mid-2014 found an existing and growing trend towards Facebook shopping in Bangladesh as the traditional online shops are not providing all the products that they are expecting. Research in developed online market supports this trend and found that co-creation value, social value and usage intensity influence consumer engagement with social media brand pages (De Vries&Carlson, 2014).

The gap between the performance of traditional and online shopping services have been moving the expectation level of customers. Besides, the involvement of educated youth both in the sector of consuming and selling in online shops and Facebook pages have created the attention of most of the researcher in finding out the young generation's intention to this sector. Again as it is a virtual system based communication, there is still some security and risk issues that affects most of the customers concern. Besides the mind set for the traditional buyers and the general user of online shopping have different level of expectations and reality. So, this makes the ground of my study that to what extent the educated youth involving with

technology are satisfied with their online shopping services. Scope of the study specifies the dimensions of the study in terms of the geographical area covered. This paper sees the online shopping from the perspective of customer satisfaction. The area of the study comprises the four faculties of University of Dhaka. It deals with the student's expectation from the online shops and based on that what are the products performances or how much the shops meet up their expectations. It finds out the factors influencing the student's mental situation or their expectation and measures the influential factors of the product performances. It also sees the satisfaction perspective of both the male and the female students. About 27 respondents have participated from different faculties of the university. Both the graduating and post graduating students have participated in the study; give their opinions to make an assumption about situation.

The main objective of the study is to find out whether the students are satisfied or not with their online based shopping services. The associated objectives are to find out the factors related to customer's expectation and the factors related to products performances. In contrast of these factors to find out that to what extent the consumer satisfaction varies, exists or not.

This paper will chronologically present the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, methodologies, data collection, findings and analysis of the study. Based on these sections, this paper will end up with the limitations, conclusions including the recommendation.

Literature review

According to Kotler & Keller (2009), a buyer goes through five stages while making a decision to purchase. These stages are best explainable when a buyer goes for buying costly items, such as a house, a car, diamond jewelry etc. However, in day-to-day purchase, consumers may not go through all these stages, since some commodities do not need information, and based on buyer's previous experience they will visit a store for the purchase. These stages are: "problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and purchase behavior" (Kotler & Keller 2009).

Online shopping being a trendy phenomenon can be illustrated in various perspectives. And this broad sector has also encouraged researchers to be studied in different ways. As this research paper is on the survey of the young students and about their satisfaction on online shopping prospects. It is mostly related to all the relevant studies of online shoppings, young customers' intentions and experiences and the customer satisfaction theories. Though there are many knowledgeable literatures on this vast topic, but my work is more precisely focused on the young students satisfaction on this trendy sector is as far I know yet has not been published. And, it seems that this paper will also add value on the existing knowledge

and will recommend interesting area for further study. So, here is a very little sum of the relevant literature for my study.

Jayawardhena et al. (2012) in their study considered the purchasing orientation of potential buyers and assessed its impact on purchase behavior, but found that individual orientation is independent of purchasing decision, which reinforces the views of Liu et al. (2008) and Source et al. (2005) that every stage of the purchasing decision making cycle may have impact on a potential buyer's decision to buy online or not. Demangeot and Broderick (2007) reported that "information search experiences affect the attitudes towards the site and its brands". In the Koo et al. (2008) study, which was conducted on 279 online customers in Korea, it was found that "32.5 per cent use the internet for news and information, 32.5 per cent for communication, 7.5 per cent use it for entertainment while 7.1 percent for online shopping".

Customers can access a virtually unlimited variety of brands, products and merchants. They can try different products or switch brands in a single click. However, customers have limited time and unlimited selections. Customers would normally stick to those internet sellers who meet their wants and provide them with quality products. A study indicated that 80% of the highly satisfied online customers would shop again within two months, and 90% would recommend the internet merchant to others. On the other hand, 87% of dissatisfied customers would permanently leave their internet sellers without making any complaints (Abedeldayem, 2010).

But, most of the cases, online payment methods, reliability of payment gateways and availability of credit card are barriers to the growth of e-commerce, especially in the developing countries such as India and Bangladesh where credit system is very much closed (Rahman, 2015). Besides the growth of Internet, Mobile Communication, which has given rise to M-commerce, is one of the rapidly growing industries in the 21st century. Early day's researchers in Bangladeshi e-commerce contributed to understand the factors affecting the adoption of e-commerce in a developing market (M. A. Islam, Khan, Ramayah, & Hossain, 2011). Government and private sectors invested in the development of m-commerce in Bangladesh to help create success stories such as bKash in very short time (Chen & Rasmussen, 2014). bKash tends to be the pioneer and fastest growing mobile banking service provider in Bangladesh (Hasan& Dona, 2014) with 22% of adult population as its customer in 2013. Besides bKash, a new venture named Union Digital Centres(UDC), has taken an initiative to e-government services to the rural people. This has opened new doorways to the fact that mobile banking and mobile payment shall grow to be more widespread in the nation, engaging a wider rural base (Zainudeen, A., Samarajiva, 2011). The growing popularity and convenience of online and mobile payment will complement the overall growth of e-commerce in Bangladesh.

In other words, the Contrast Theory would assume that “outcomes deviating from expectations will cause the subject to favorably or unfavorably react to the disconfirmation experience in that a negative disconfirmation is believed to result in a poor product evaluation, whereas positive disconfirmation should cause the product to be highly appraised” (Oliver, 1977, p. 81). If the Contrast Theory were applied to a consumption context, then the poor performance would be worse than simply poor, and good performance would be better than a rating of good would suggest (Oliver, 1997).

Methodology

Study Design: Using a narrative technique, this cross-sectional, qualitative research study investigated people's experiences with internet purchasing. Convenience sampling was used to rapidly collect pertinent data from reachable respondents.

Method: The research entailed gathering accounts of noteworthy occurrences or facets of life that were connected to internet buying. Open-ended, closed-ended, and mixed questions from a semi-structured questionnaire were used in interviews and surveys to collect data. When asking closed-ended questions, the Likert scale was employed.

Sources of Data: Primary and secondary sources were used to gather data. Students at Dhaka University contributed the primary data, and secondary data offered the theoretical and conceptual framework.

Sampling Strategy: A purposive sample with 27 respondents was employed. Time restrictions and restricted access to respondents led to the selection of this non-probability sampling technique, which allowed for an economical and successful data collection process.

Tools for gathering data: These included digital gadgets, paper, and pens. The study employed a semi-structured questionnaire that included multiple question types and the Likert scale to effectively gather a diverse variety of responses.

Field Work: In-person interviews were used to augment the online survey that was primarily used to collect data using Google Forms.

Data Analysis: Following the questionnaire as a guide, data was manually arranged, categorized, then classified. To summarize and understand the results, analysis used qualitative techniques, such as content analysis, then illustrated using graph, chart, bar.

Limitations of the Study:

No such research is fully free from limitations and weakness. Though making all the attempts to make more reliable study, there are some limitations regarding my data collection, analysis, methodologies. The challenges and limitations of this study are:

- In order to generate a reliable conclusion, it is necessary to collect

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respondents from as many respondents as possible; however, since the number of respondents to be used for this study was predetermined, the study was conducted with only 15 respondents, which is not sufficient to draw a very reliable conclusion. Qualitative research requires a deeper understanding of the research topic with an interpretive and naturalistic approach in terms of the meaning people bring to them. So, to make broader generalizations, this is the actual aim of conducting research. More respondents should have been taken.

- Non-probabilistic Sampling is not considered a very reliable way for making broader assumptions and generalizations; most researchers tend to prefer random or probabilistic sampling methods. But for easier access to respondents and also due to access time and budget limitations, we opted for non-probabilistic methods. The research would have been most acceptable if we could have taken a few more respondents.

Analysis

The analysis section explores the gender, age education, occupation, usage, reason, influence, repurchase, time spent, and satisfaction dynamics for online shopping. Each analysis is presented with graphical illustration along with description.

Figure 1: Gender and age of respondents

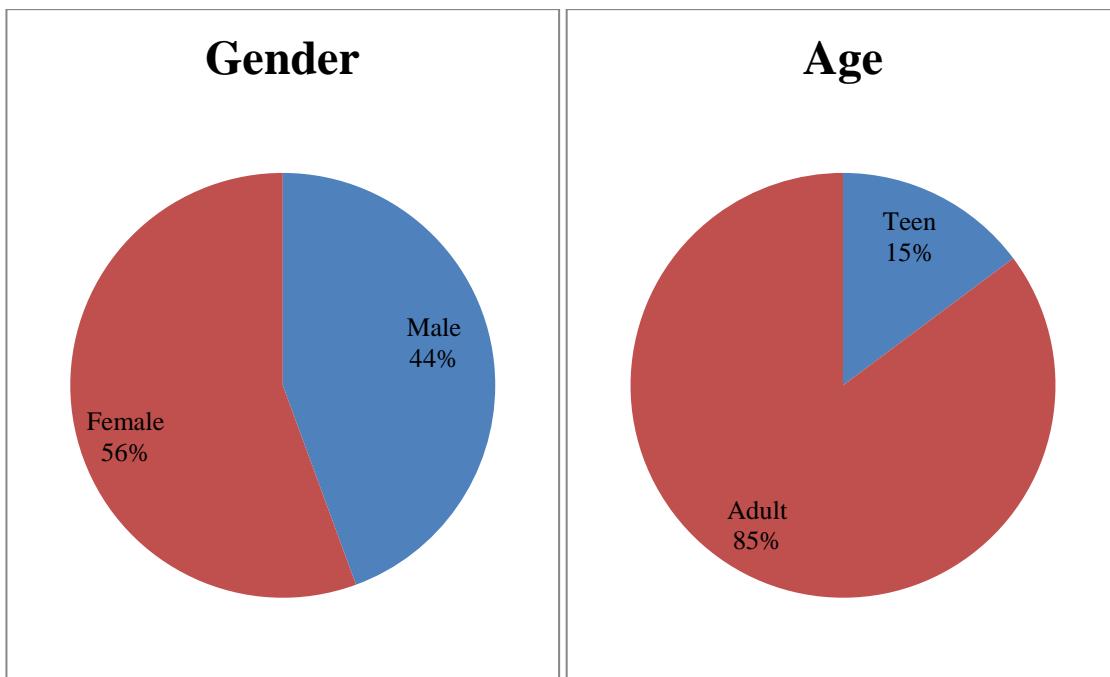


Figure 1: The survey provided the demographics with regards to the respondents And 44.4% of the respondents are male, 55.6% are female. 21 – 25 years of age most participated about 85.2% of the respondents. The other

14.8% were aged between 15 and 20 years, which means that younger adults do tend to shop online than teenagers.

Figure 2: Education and occupation of respondents

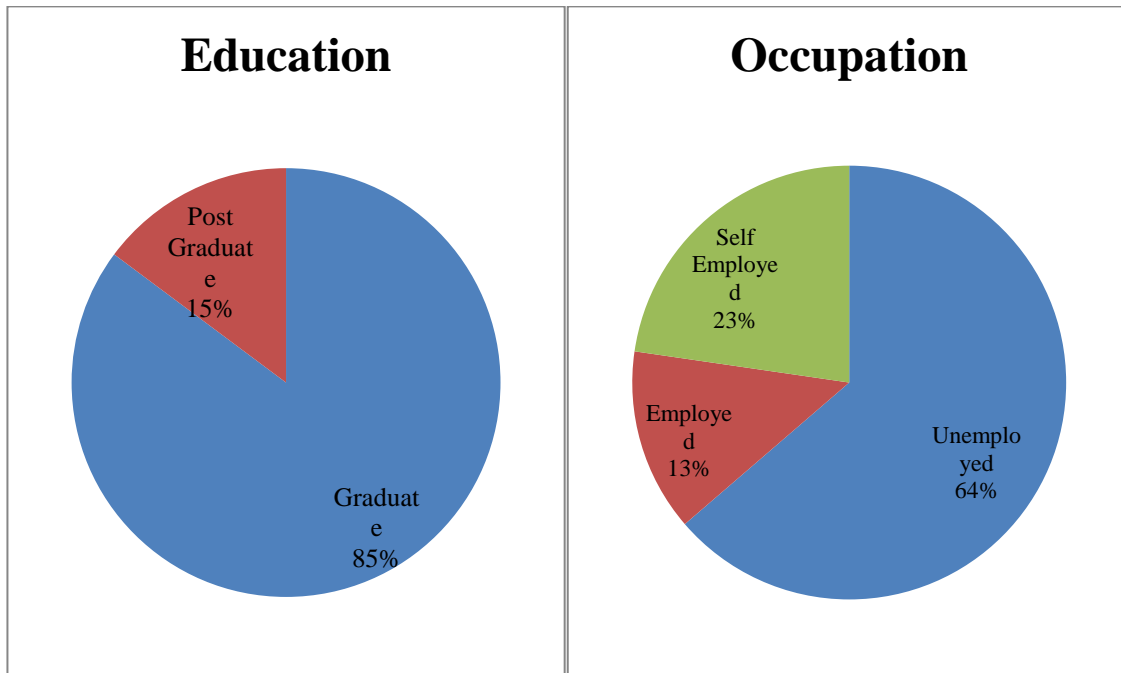


Figure 2: Regarding educational background, a substantial 85.2% of the respondents had completed their undergraduate degrees, while the remainder held post-graduate degrees. Employment status among respondents showed that 51.9% were dependent on others financially, 11.1% were employed, and 18.5% were self-employed, highlighting a diverse range of economic situations.

Figure 3: Use of Online Shopping

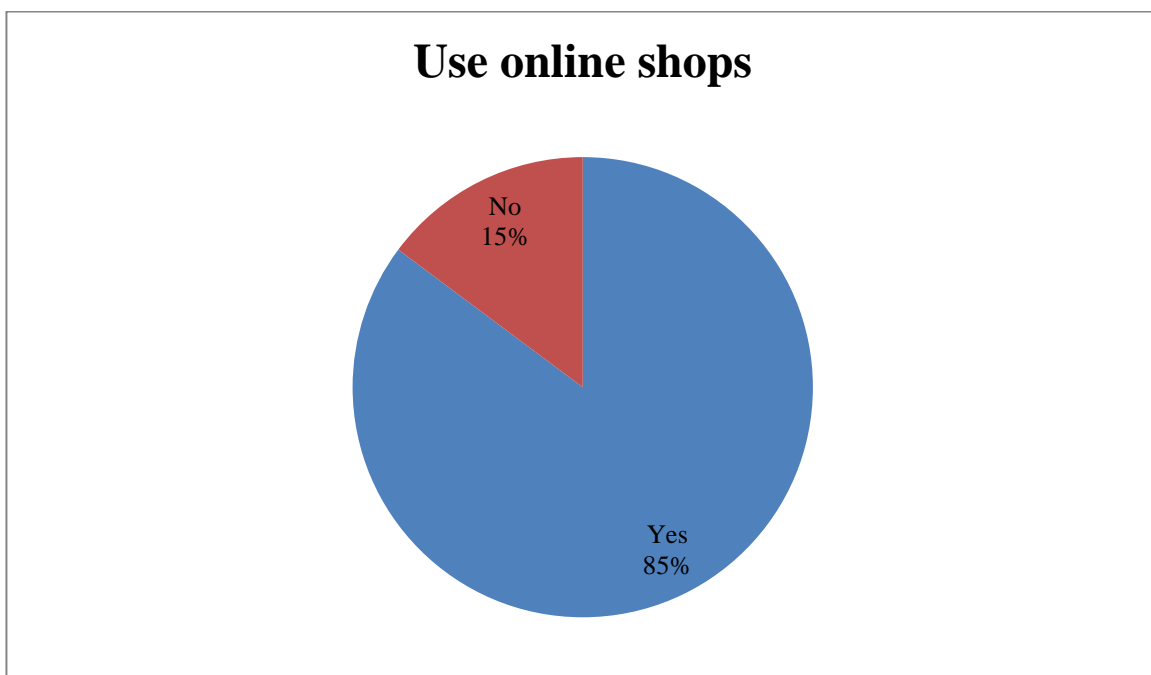


Figure 3: A significant majority, 85% of the respondents, expressed a

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preference for online shopping. Conversely, 15% of the participants did not prefer online shopping, indicating a clear inclination towards digital retail among the majority.

Figure 4: Reason for Online Shopping

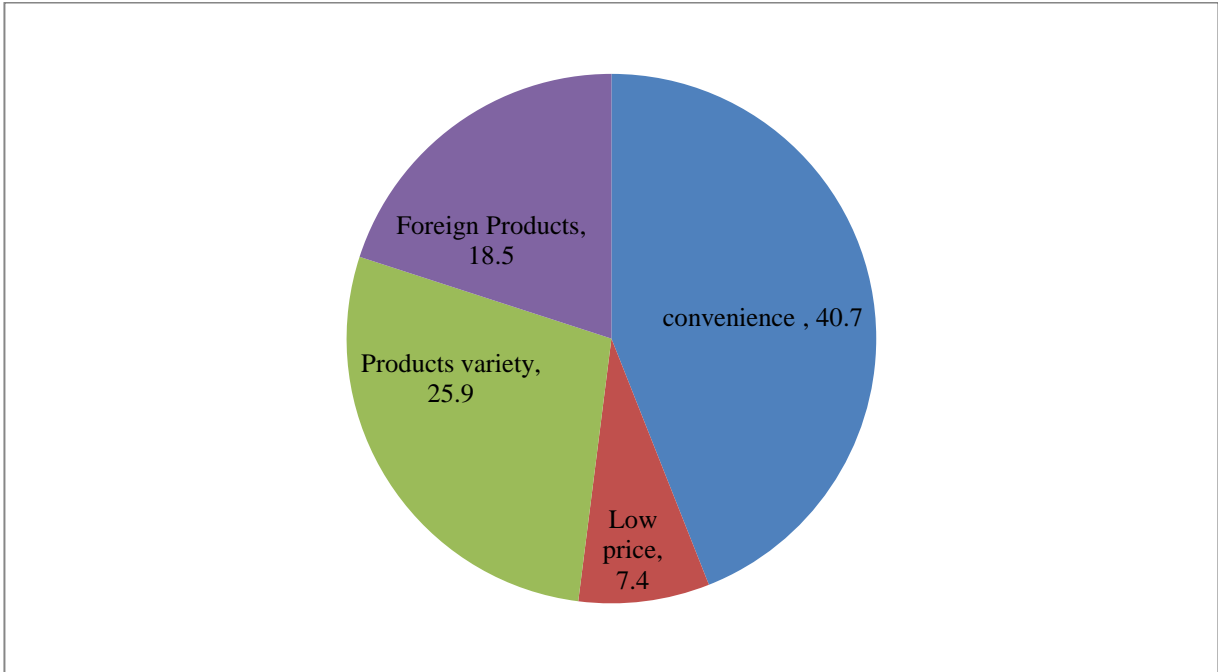


Figure 4: When asked about their reasons for choosing online shopping, respondents highlighted several factors. The most significant reasons included convenience and time-saving (40.7%), product variety (25.9%), the ability to purchase foreign products (18.5%), and lower prices (7.4%). These factors collectively underscore the attractiveness of online shopping.

Figure 5: Influence for Online Shopping

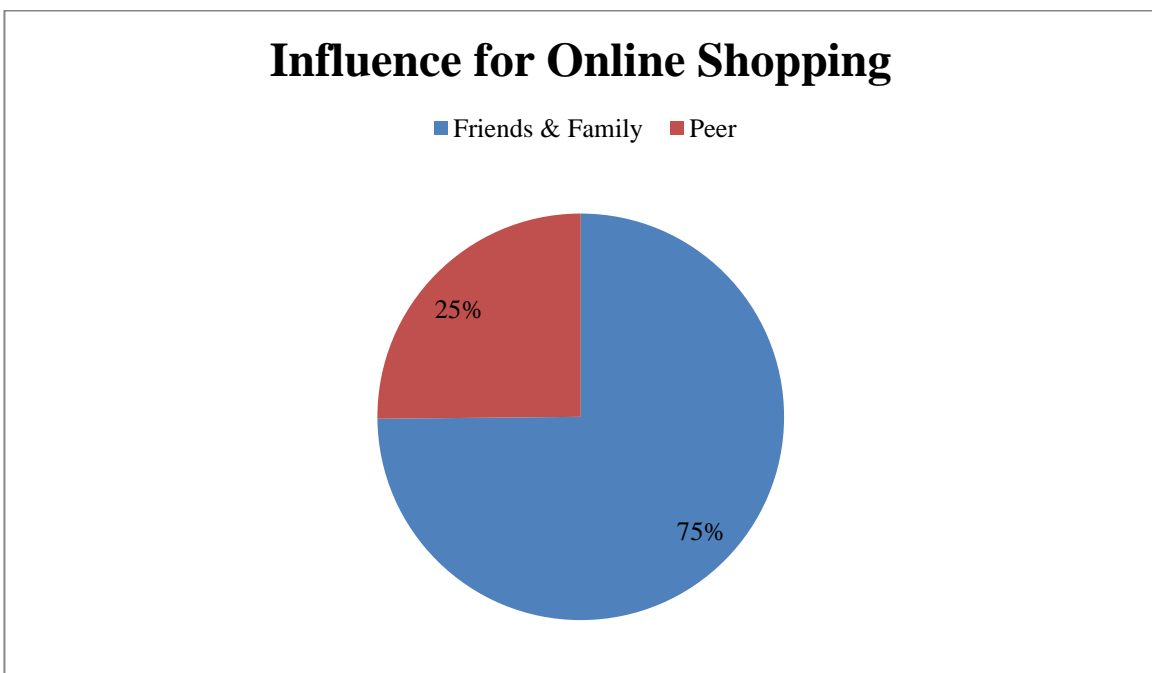


Figure 5: Social influence played a notable role in online shopping habits, with 74.1% of respondents being influenced by recommendations from friends or family, while 24.9% were influenced by peers or colleagues. This suggests that personal networks strongly impact online shopping decisions.

Figure 6: percentage of respondents repurchasing from the same shop

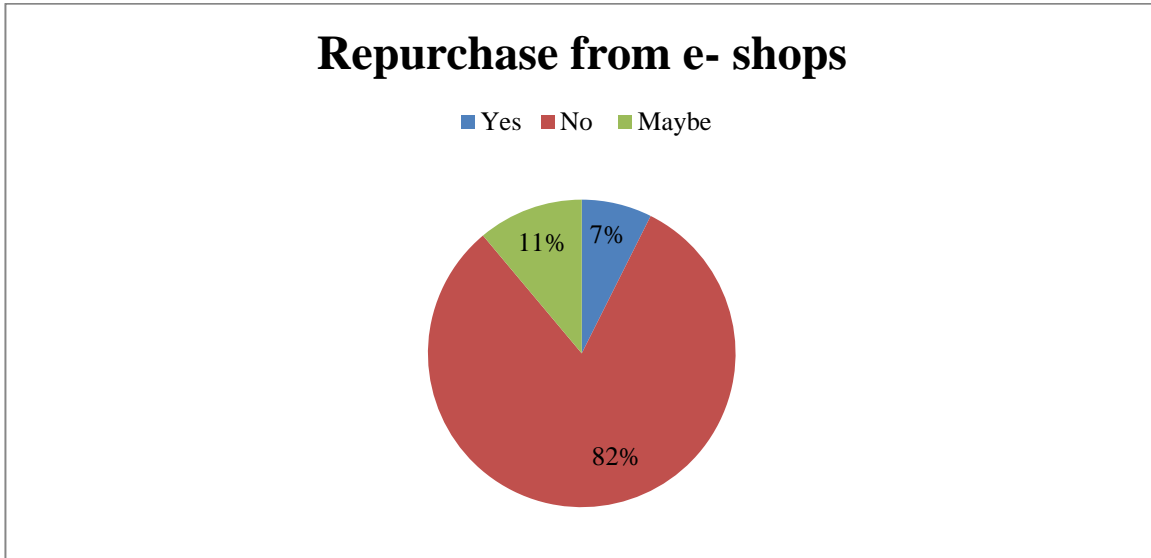


Figure 6: A considerable 81.5% of respondents indicated they would not repurchase from the same online store if there was a significant discrepancy between their expectations and the actual product received. In contrast, only 7.4% would consider repurchasing under such conditions, with 11.1% remaining uncertain about their repurchase decisions.

Figure 7: Factors affecting Satisfaction on Online Shopping

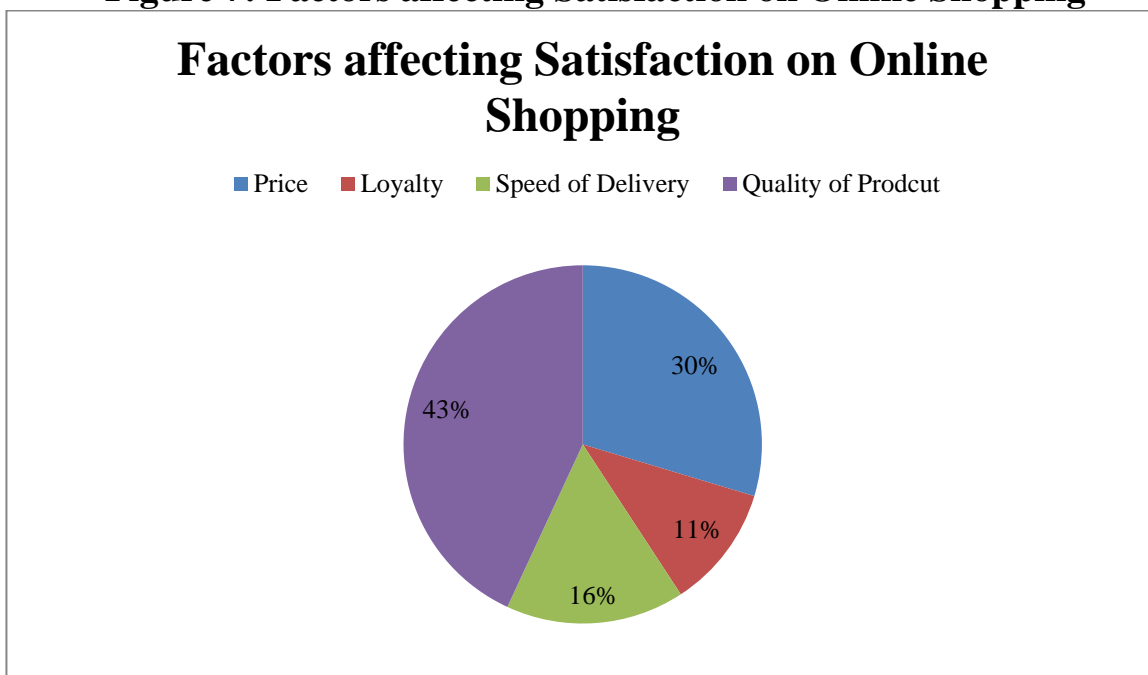


Figure 7: The factors affecting satisfaction with online shopping were predominantly centered around product quality (43%), price (30%), speed of delivery (16%), and loyalty to online shopping platforms (11%). This

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indicates that product quality is the most critical factor in determining customer satisfaction.

Figure 8: Time spent online for shopping

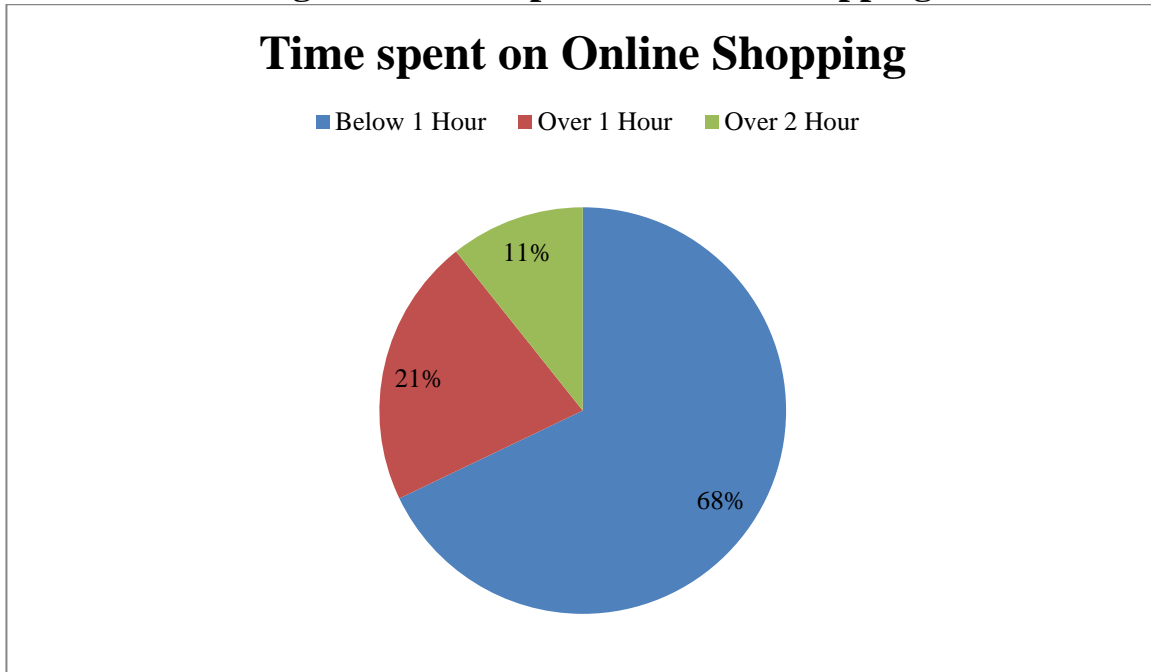


Figure 8: 68% of those surveyed said they visited online retailers for less than an hour every day. In the meantime, 11% of respondents and 21% of participants, respectively, reported engaging in daily internet shopping for longer than two hours

Figure 9: Overall satisfaction on Online Shopping

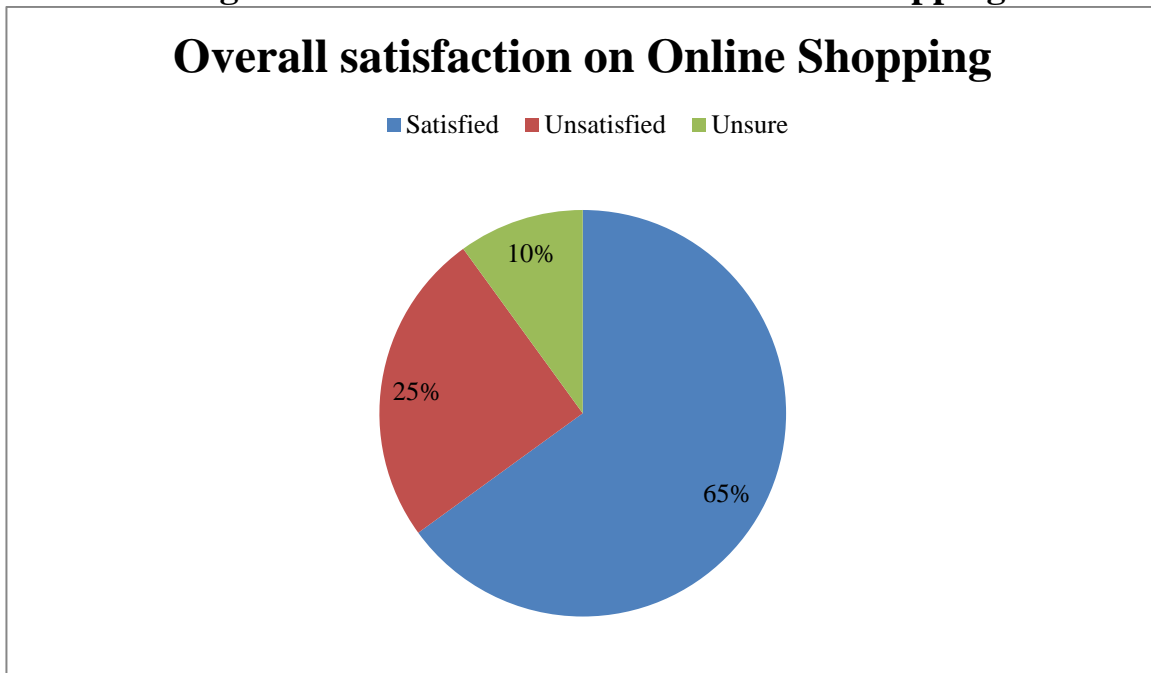


Figure 9: About 65% e-commerce users are very satisfied with their online shopping experience. By comparison, 25% expressed a likely negative impression while 10 percent remained uncertain about their level of satisfaction as well; not the strongest set of experiences or opinions.

Findings

These findings highlight a strong preference for online shopping among young, educated individuals who value convenience, variety, and quality, and are influenced by their social circles. Satisfaction is generally high but impacted by the quality of products and pricing. Specific findings are as follows;

- **Demographics:** From the respondents to the survey, 44.4 % were males and 55.6 % were females. On the other hand, the most (85.2%) percentage of online shoppers was among ages 21-25 and the rest 14.8 were aged 15-20. Most of the respondents (85.2%) were the holders of a graduate degree and the rest held a post-graduate degree. Regarding the employment status, the dependent were at 51.9%, the employed were at 11.1% and the self-employed were at 18.5%.
- **Online Shopping Preferences:** An overwhelming majority (85%) of the respondents stated their preference online shopping than any of the other methods. And the main reasons for this preference were convenience and time savings 40.7%, a variety of products 25.9%, possibility to purchase foreign goods 18.5%, and cheaper prices 7.4%. Furthermore, 74.1% were influenced by friends or family to shop online, while 24.9% were influenced by peers or colleagues.
- **Repurchase Behavior:** Of the respondents, 81.5% indicated that they would not purchase the same products from the same internet shop again, where the expectations are not matched by the actual product to a great degree, while just 7.4% would otherwise repurchase. The remaining 11.1% did not know how they would act in that situation.
- **Factors Affecting Satisfaction:** The primary drivers of satisfaction when shopping online are: the quality of the product (43 percent), the cost (30 percent), the rate of delivery (16 percent), and the loyalty aspect (11 percent).
- **Shopping Habits and Satisfaction:** in the sample, the respondents mostly (70.4%) devoted one hour or less within the day to the activity of browsing online shops, while 22.2% allocated about an hour. Satisfaction with online shopping was high among the respondents, with 65 percent reporting that they were satisfied, 25 percent were dissatisfied while 10 percent were unsure of their satisfaction level.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research addresses the levels of customer satisfaction of young educated consumers, especially the students of Dhaka University, about online shopping. The study points out that the bulk of the respondents which is a very large proportion I do not more than 90% expresses to the online shopping for the convenience that comes along with it where a variety of assignment help is also offered and foreign goods are on sale. Social

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influence, for instance from friends and family, emerges as one of the many determinants of the social purchasing behavior in this context. Nonetheless, purchase satisfaction is often linked to the quality of items, cost of items, and speed of delivery as most respondents state that they will not shop at a retail online store again after being disappointed. The study also emphasized that the most important reason for purchase satisfaction is product quality, while price and delivery speed follow it in the ladder of importance. However, the level of satisfaction was reported to be high yet it was observed that issues of product performance trust and reliance on the e-retailers in general were present. Considering the increasing pattern of e-commerce and its prospects of further growth among Bangladeshis, there is a realization that clients should not be disappointed anymore but rather value addition services need to be enhanced. To this end, the government has limited foresight into this rapidly expanding industry and in relevant areas of policy to enable a secure and consumer focused e-commerce.

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