

Investigating consumer interest and satisfaction with online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Online shopping received significant attention during the COVID-19 pandemic around the world. In Bangladesh, people also preferred online shopping amid the pandemic due to the usefulness, quick service delivery, quality of service, and trustworthiness. This study investigated the relationship between the consumer profession and online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh. In particular, the study also explored the relationship between the consumer professions and the interest in online shopping and the relationship between the consumer profession and satisfaction with online shopping amid the pandemic. We conducted the study using the positivist research philosophy, which guided the quantitative research approach. We conducted a cross-sectional survey on various professionals who engaged in online shopping during the pandemic. A total of 161 respondents participated in the cross-sectional survey in the Mymensingh district, Bangladesh. The study used a probability random sampling technique to gather data. The findings of the study revealed that the relationship between consumer interest in online shopping and different professions was found statistically significant. These findings indicate that e-commerce platforms should implement suitable marketing strategies since the professional background of the consumers significantly influences their online buying behavior. However, future research may investigate the specific challenges of online shopping during the pandemic in Bangladesh, which the study did not explore.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, online shopping, quality of services, consumer interest, consumer satisfaction

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1. Introduction

E-commerce platforms have had a significant impact on how people shop online and conduct purchases. The global revolution in communication between production and customer interaction can be attributed to the emergence and widespread use of e-commerce technologies and websites (Ranjan et al., 2021). Especially, e-commerce is the practice of conducting business using computer telecommunications networks, keeping up relationships, and selling goods, services, and information (Zwass, 2024). E-commerce has revolutionized the retail industry by substantially promoting online purchasing, which offers consumers a wide range of products and a comfortable browsing experience (SONU, 2023). Businesses today have more possibilities to prosper due to online trading (Palanisamy, 2022). Moreover, customers' attitudes on internet shopping have changed as a result of the high speed of the internet and the greater accessibility of digital devices, as well as its efficiency and accessibility (Nasidi et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on major e-commerce platforms (Ahmed, 2023), changing the way businesses do business to some extent. During that time, the quantity of e-commerce users increased dramatically due to lockdowns, restrictions (Ahmed & Akter, 2023), and health risks (Ji, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly altered the commercial trajectory of global business, particularly with business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic's social isolation and other measures have prompted urban customers to increasingly choose e-commerce. In Bangladesh, e-commerce saw a remarkable rise of 166% in 2020, surpassing its typical annual growth rate of 50% (Nasidi et al., 2021). At the same time, due to economies of scale that allow consumers to negotiate better pricing with suppliers and lower overhead costs like staffing and rental fees, online shops frequently offer lower prices. To remain competitive, offline vendors have been forced to reduce their pricing (Wang, 2023). Despite the fact that the intention to purchase during the pandemic is correlated with consumers' opinions of the simplicity of utilization (Phetnoi et al., 2021), it remains mostly uncertain how the coronavirus affected consumer purchasing decisions involving brands and online resources (Sharma & Jhamb, 2020; Wisetsri et al., 2021).

The professions of the consumers significantly influence the related factors of online purchasing, including transaction anxiety and faith, the complexity of online shopping, the reputation of service providers, experience, security and product information, and trustworthiness (Daroch et al., 2021). At the same time, consumer income stability and

technology accessibility significantly stimulate them toward online shopping (Çera et al., 2020). Consumer satisfaction with online purchasing is contingent upon the quality of information, perceived security, product variety, and product delivery. Consumer satisfaction and information quality influence their loyalty in online shopping (Mofokeng, 2021). In addition, website design and customer reviews and ratings, together with societal characteristics such as consumer profession and income, significantly influence consumers' purchasing intentions on online platforms in Bangladesh (Zahid Hasan et al., 2024). Among the several variables, consumer profession is considered the most influential factor in online shopping (Hossain et al., 2022).

However, e-commerce presents both technical and non-technical issues. Technical issues encompass security concerns, problems with stable internet connections, and credibility issues related to online payments, credit card fraud, and software bugs. On the other hand, non-technical issues include the inability to test items first-hand before buying, a lack of personal touch, delivery delays, cost and product feature comparisons, and damage during transportation and delivery (Taher, 2021). Several studies substantially emphasize the traits that impact online purchasing during the pandemic; yet, it was hardly discovered that any specific studies illustrate the manner in which an individual's profession affects their online shopping behavior. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the relationship between consumer professions and the landscape of online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh. In particular, the study identified the relationship between the consumer professions and the interest in online shopping and explored the relationship between the consumer profession and satisfaction with online shopping amid the pandemic.

2. Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered global consumer buying behaviors, particularly in Bangladesh, as many migrated to online platforms owing to lockdowns and safety apprehensions. Numerous researches were undertaken to examine aspects such as technological availability, trust, perceived risk, and usefulness in influencing online buying behavior. This research review seeks to assess customer interest and satisfaction with internet purchasing during the pandemic.

2.1 Consumer Intentions Toward Online Shopping

Murad et al. (2022) conducted a study exploring associated factors that were affecting consumer intentions toward online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study gathered data from 817 respondents with diverse educational backgrounds, ages, genders, and marital statuses. In addition, the investigation employed a comprehensive analysis that included path analysis, multiple regression, and factor analysis. According to the study, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived risk, and subjective norms all have a big impact on consumer intention, with consumer attitude playing a role in this too. The research included many factors to ascertain demographic information; however, it lacks characteristics such as employment, which might provide insights into income-related information and the influence of these variables on online buying intentions. Individuals from comparable income brackets across various jobs may have divergent spending behaviors. Individuals in white-collar occupations often operate at desks, irrespective of their educational qualifications, whereas those in blue-collar roles mostly engage in physical labor and possess little technological proficiency.

In another study, Pham et al. (2020) explored how online shoppers respond to their buying behaviour during COVID-19. A quantitative approach guided the study, with 472 respondents taking part in the cross-sectional survey. Factor analysis, the Cronbach alpha coefficient, and structural equation modelling were used to analyse the data. The study's findings indicate that online shopping is perceived as unpretentious due to awareness of COVID-19 and marketing strategies. While the study tested multiple hypotheses using SEM, it still did not test the correlation of the buying behavior with the variables like income, and even the variables like occupation are missing. Participants from various occupations, including students, have different screen times; therefore, it is predictable that professionals will have less time to engage in purchase decisions, while students will be able to spend significantly more time on them. On the other hand, professionals can purchase in a short time and will not likely switch for a slight cost change, which can bring more profits to the shops. Therefore, examining these effects is crucial for online shops to enhance consumer satisfaction and retention.

A study was carried out by Sumi and Ahmed (2022) looked into how young Bangladeshi consumers' purchasing habits changed toward online shopping during the pandemic. A structured questionnaire was used to gather data from 395 respondents who

engaged in online shopping during that time. The study was conducted following a quantitative approach under an exploratory philosophy. Besides factor analysis and descriptive analysis, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to find the relationships among latent variables. The study findings illustrate that perceived enjoyment, utilitarian attributes like price, convenience, health aspects, perceived usefulness, and ease of use positively influence online buying attitudes, leading to a significant impact on consumers' online buying behavior. However, the study failed to investigate the relationship between consumer profession and online shopping behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 Consumer Online Shopping Behavior

Daroch et al. (2020) conducted research on the variables constraining consumers' online buying behavior by employing a quantitative methodology using identified six variables, including apprehension regarding bank transactions and trust, the convenience of traditional shopping over online alternatives, reputation and service quality, experience, insecurity and inadequate product information, and a deficiency of trust. This research has significant potential to examine the relationship between consumer profession and online buying intentions; however, it did not address the impact of consumer profession on online shopping behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. In another study, Khan and Bhuiyan (2021) explored the online shopping behaviour of consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh using primary and secondary data. The findings revealed that during the pandemic, above 60% of people preferred online purchasing, and below 40% preferred offline. The findings also revealed that 33% of respondents were service holders, 27% were businesspersons, 26% were house workers, and 14% were involved with other activities, such as students, etc. This study also found that the income level (from 61,000 BDT to 80,000 BDT) of respondents involved the highest number (49%), and the income level (from 10,000 BDT to 20,000 BDT) of respondents involved the lowest (18%) number with online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the investigation failed to elucidate the reasons for the substantial proportion of individuals who preferred online purchasing and the correlation between their income, profession, and online shopping behavior.

Alam (2020) investigated the factors affecting online shopping behaviour of the consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh. The study was conducted following a quantitative approach, using a structured questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale;

data were collected from 155 buyers through an online survey. The study employed factor analysis, reliability analysis, ANOVA tests, and regression analysis. The study findings showed that health, price, product, and place aspects have significant relationships with the online purchasing behaviour of consumers in Bangladesh. However, the study gathered data using an online survey approach, which may not adequately represent the wider population. Furthermore, it lacks a comprehensive theoretical framework and is unable to account for various confounding factors that may influence the findings. On the other hand, Molla (2023) investigated people's behaviour and perceptions of online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh. The study examined a few variables that influence people's behaviour and perceptions of online shopping, including convenience, website features, security, time value, and internet accessibility, which were formed into a conceptual framework and are explained by 19 variables. In this cross-sectional study, stratified sampling was used to collect data from 150 respondents in Dhaka City, Bangladesh, through email invitations for an online survey featuring both open-ended and closed-ended questions. In this cross-sectional research, descriptive statistics, the chi-squared test, and multiple regression are statistical methods used. The study findings demonstrate that security, ease of use, website features, time value, and internet accessibility are pivotal factors significantly influencing online purchasing decisions. The study also highlights that demographic aspects such as age, gender, income, and education significantly impact online buying behavior (Molla, 2023).

Another study was conducted on the behavioral intention of the consumers in terms of assessing consumers' online purchasing. The study used a technology acceptance model (TAM) analysis, which investigated and forecasted the online buying intentions of local consumers. The study's findings demonstrated a significant correlation between consumers' buying intentions and perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, perceived ease of use, and subjective norms (Islam et al., 2023). The preliminary focus of this study was on psychological factors, including perceived utility and fulfillment, however, it failed to incorporate external variables, such as trust, security, and service quality, which are also essential in online purchasing. Furthermore, Uddin (2021) conducted a study to explore the consumers' online buying behavior during the pandemic in Bangladesh. The study was conducted following a quantitative approach, whereas survey data were collected from 221 respondents who utilized online shopping. The study incorporated several online shopping platforms, including daraz.com.bd, rokomari.com, bagdoo.com, pickaboo.com, priyoshop.com, and sheba.com,

while gathering data from the consumers. Structured equation modeling (SEM), frequency distribution, percentage measures, mean and standard deviation, collinearity statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficient, composite reliability (CR), the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) were used to look at the data. The findings of the study demonstrate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers with a higher income level (30–50 thousand) were involved in online shopping. The study also reveals that 72% of consumers were service holders, and 28% were involved in other occupations and were concerned about purchasing online during COVID-19.

2.3 Research Gap

Although the studies demonstrated the importance, challenges, and people's perceptions of online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh, no holistic study has been conducted yet in terms of exploring the relationships between the consumer profession and online shopping during the pandemic in Bangladesh. The previous literature demonstrated several factors that influence online shopping during the pandemic period, but no study addressed how consumer professions influence online purchasing. Indeed, no specific study has yet explored consumer preference and satisfaction with online shopping in Bangladesh. Additionally, the study differs significantly from the previous research in terms of the study area, sampling process, study methods, variables, and data assembly procedure. Therefore, the findings of the study will incorporate new insights on how the consumer profession influences online shopping as well as measure its implications on the e-commerce sectors in Bangladesh. Furthermore, the findings of the study will enhance the existing literature both theoretically and practically, assisting consumers in making decisions about online purchasing during any epidemic circumstances worldwide.

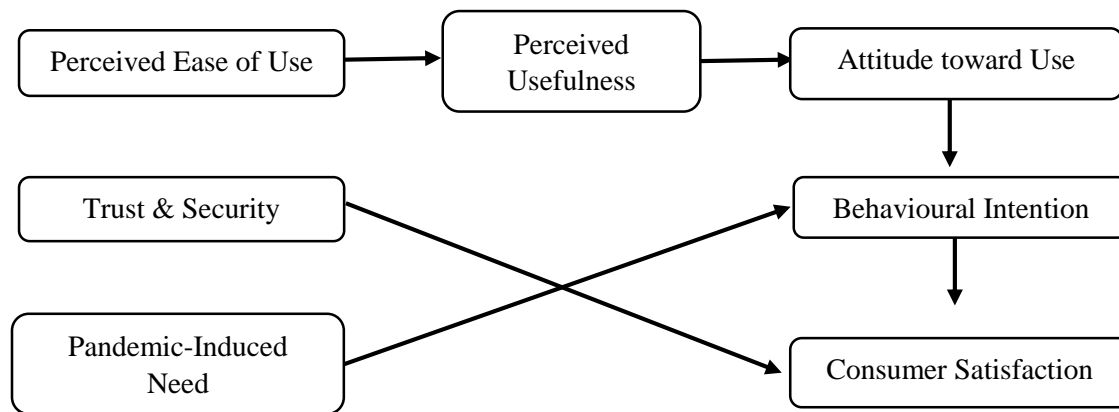
2.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was conducted focusing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Davis (1986) developed this model, which is commonly used to predict and elucidate users' adoption of technology. TAM can effectively elucidate the factors that influence consumers' interest and satisfaction with online purchasing during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh. This study investigates how perceived ease of use, trust and security, and

pandemic-induced need influence the attitude of the consumers and impact on their satisfaction.

Figure 1

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1993)



This research highlights the relevance of the technology acceptance model (TAM), since individuals might perceive online transactions as convenient and readily embrace them during a pandemic. Furthermore, internet platforms streamline consumer purchases by providing access to multiple sites offering the desired products. The convenience and utility may also attract the consumer to online buying (Davis, 1993). Individuals with interest might use internet platforms to execute transactions. From this standpoint, this model illustrates how the perceived ease of use, trust, and security, as well as pandemic-induced need, stimulate consumers toward online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Methodology

Research methodology is the cautious and analytical framework used for planning a study, ensuring valid and reliable outcomes that correspond with the research objectives and aims (Jansen & Warren, 2020). It is essential for any research to establish the process of organizing a study and to validate the selected research design. This assures the efficient organization of data collection, processing, and interpretation (Andrews, 2019). This study was conducted based on the TAM following a positivist research philosophy, quantitative research approach and survey methods whereas a descriptive statistics employed to analyze data.

3.1 Research Philosophy

This study adheres to the positivist research philosophy, which prioritizes objectivity, empirical observation, and statistical analysis to investigate the relationship between the consumer profession and the landscape of online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh. Positivism is predicated on the notion that reality is measurable and can be investigated through structured methodologies. To collect empirical data and analyze trends, this study employed a quantitative approach to investigate the particular research objectives.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a quantitative approach. The primary reason for selecting this approach was its ability to enable researchers to measure and analyze large amounts of data in a methodical manner. Additionally, the quantitative approach employed research questions to explore the relationships between the variables under investigation. Moreover, it allowed for the use of statistical analyses, such as the chi-square test, to demonstrate the significance of relationships among the variables. In this context, the researchers used a cross-sectional survey methodology to collect data from a specific group of respondents, individuals who use online shopping. This approach enabled the researchers to examine the correlation between consumers' professions and their interest in online shopping, as well as the relationship between profession and satisfaction with online shopping during the pandemic.

3.3 Participants of the Study

Data were collected randomly following the probability sampling technique from the different professionals (day laborers, government job holders, students, housewife, non-government job holders, and businessman) who used online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, a cross-sectional survey was conducted in different areas in Mymensingh District in Bangladesh. However, on the basis of strategic, contextual, and demographic factors, researchers selected the Mymensingh district as the data collection area. In particular, the Mymensingh district was a suitable study area for this study, as most of the educated and urban people live there. This renders it an appropriate and dynamic region for the investigation of evolving consumer behaviors, such as the increasing prevalence of online purchasing, particularly during the pandemic.

3.4 Instrumentation and Data Gathering Process

The study employed a structured questionnaire to collect data both physically and electronically. When data was collected through corporeal means, a face-to-face interview was conducted, and when data was collected electronically, respondents were provided with a structured Google form. The participants found both offline and online methods to be convenient during their participation in the cross-sectional survey. It was worth mentioning that researchers conducted a pilot survey in a limited mode amid the pandemic to ensure the overall quality, reliability, and validity of the research instrument and methodology of the study.

As a result of the complete lockdown and health concerns that accompanied the pandemic in 2021 in Bangladesh, a total of 161 respondents who were employed in various professions and engaged in online purchasing participated in the cross-sectional survey. Data collection was conducted in accordance with the z-score formula. According to the study population, this method (z-score, 90% confidence level, and a 5% margin of error) recommended collecting data from 385 respondents. However, study was unable to reach 385 respondents due to health concerns and a stringent quarantine. Moreover, the researchers were unable to optimize the sample size as a result of the self-funded research. At the same time, technological barrier, time and resource constraint and psychological stress made the data collection impractical that posed unexpected barrier in the process of data collection. Researchers acknowledged that this is a potential limitation of this study.

3.5 Data Analysis

Since the study was conducted using a quantitative approach, the collected data were organized systematically, and the coding activities were performed manually. In particular, the data were analyzed using both MS Excel and SPSS software. The study used descriptive statistics to summarize participants' demographic information and to identify significant relationships between the dependent and independent variables. This technique provided valuable insights into respondents' attitudes toward online shopping during the pandemic in Bangladesh.

3.6 Research Ethics

Research ethics is the application of ethical principles and regulations to the collection, scrutiny, formulation, and disclosure of data in the context of research works (Okorie et al., 2024). In this context, this research was systematically interconnected to the ethical doctrines of social responsibility (Banaszkiewicz, 2013). It is noteworthy that researchers upheld ethical standards when collecting data from the respondents. However, researchers assert that the study's results provide substantial insights into the efficacy of e-commerce platforms in Bangladesh, their preparedness, their capacity to deliver quality and timely services, and the present condition of the country's digital infrastructure.

4. Findings

The desire among consumers to purchase online increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, using a cross-sectional survey, the research examined how the consumer's profession and interest in online shopping relate to each other and how satisfied Bangladeshi consumers were with online shopping throughout the pandemic.

Table 1

Demographic profile of the participants

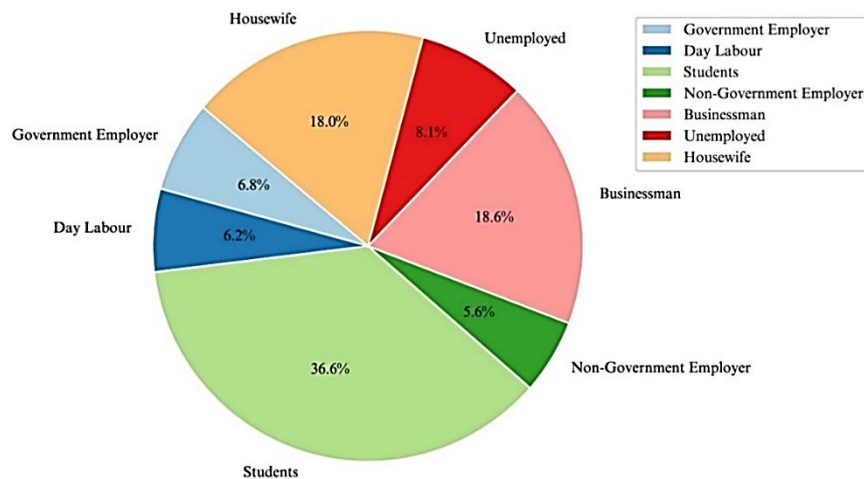
Variables		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Male	76	47.2	47.2
	Female	85	52.8	100.0
Age	15-30	95	59.0	59.0
	31-50	59	36.6	95.7
	51-above	7	4.3	100.0
Marital Status	Married	85	52.8	52.8
	Unmarried	76	47.2	100.0
Educational Level	Basic Education	13	8.1	8.1
	Secondary Education	58	36.0	44.1
	Higher Education	82	50.9	95.0
	Illiterate	8	5.0	100.0
	Housewife	29	18.0	100.0
Living Area	Urban Area	113	70.2	70.2
	Rural Area	48	29.8	100.0
Total		161	100	

Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

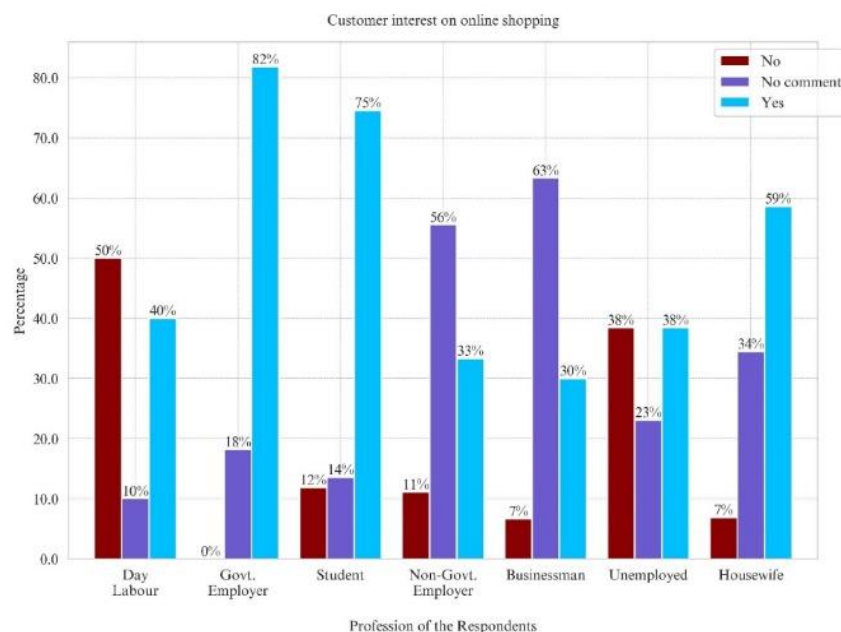
Table 1 indicates that the proportion of female participants (52.80%) somewhat exceeded that of male participants (47.20%) in the sample. The research findings reveal gender consistency regarding the intention of purchasing through the internet throughout the pandemic in Bangladesh. Nearly two-thirds (59%) of respondents belonged to the 15–30 age group; over one-third (36.60%) were from the 31–50 age range; and the remaining participants, comprising a minor portion (4.30%), were older than 50 years. These data indicate that those aged 15–30 had a greater inclination towards online shopping during the pandemic. Researchers believe that this may have occurred because of gaps between generations and more advanced characteristics in the current world. Additionally, the research examines the marital status of the respondents. The data reveal that over half of the population (52.80%) was married, suggesting that married individuals exhibited more interest in online shopping during the pandemic in Bangladesh. The research also examined the respondents' educational levels, which were seen as the most relevant characteristic for online shopping during the pandemic. Survey findings reveal that 50.90% of consumers had higher education, the greatest percentage, while just 5% were illiterate. Moreover, 36% of the consumers completed secondary education, while 8.10% only had access to basic education. These data imply that educated people were significantly active in online purchasing during the pandemic. Researchers assert that they may possess more awareness of the potential benefits of online shopping compared to those with lesser education or understanding.

The research examines consumers' residential areas. The study's results revealed that almost two-thirds (70.20%) of respondents were in urban regions, while the remaining 29.80% were from rural areas, indicating that the bulk of consumers were urban dwellers. This may have occurred because of the availability of internet access facilities and gadgets in urban areas compared to rural regions.

The survey also examined the respondents' various professions. The profession of the respondents has mostly been used as the dependent variable in this research. The field survey indicated that 6.20% of respondents were day laborers, 6.80% were government employees, 36.60% were students, 6.60% were non-government employees, 18.60% were businessman, 18% were housewife, and 8.10% were unemployed individuals who engaged in and benefited from online shopping during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data reveal that most respondents were students, entrepreneurs, and homemakers who exhibited significant engagement in online shopping throughout the pandemic.

Figure 3*Profession of the participants**Source:* Filed Survey, January to August 2021

Due to the transition to e-learning during the pandemic, students, as a technologically adept demographic, were increasingly familiar with online purchasing. Likewise, business stakeholders maintained their activities online throughout the pandemic. Simultaneously, owing to the pandemic and social distancing measures, the majority of housewife limited their physical shopping, prompting them to opt for online platforms for their purchases. However, some professionals also use online shopping because of its accessibility and features.

Figure 4*Consumer interest in online shopping**Source:* Filed Survey, January to August 2021

The consumer interest in online shopping has been investigated based on several factors, including convenience, accessibility, and socio-economic context. In this context, a chi-square test of independence was used to examine the relationship between consumer interest in online shopping and profession. A statistically significant difference in proportions is shown at χ^2 (50.5, $p < 0.001$).

According to the field survey, 40% of day labourers, 81.8% of government employees, 74.6% of students, 33.3% of non-governmental employees, 30% of businessman, 38.5% of unemployed, and 28.6% of housewife expressed their interest in online shopping. These findings indicate that government employees and learners exhibit significant interest in online shopping, presumably attributable to their steady income, enhanced access to digital resources, and the growing dependence on online platforms for professional and educational purposes. These groups are more likely to possess the requisite resources, including reliable internet connections and gadgets, to effectively participate in online purchasing. Conversely, day labourers, non-government workers, entrepreneurs, and homemakers show less interest, perhaps indicative of restricted access to technology or the internet, coupled with financial limitations that hinder their participation in non-essential activities such as online shopping. Similarly, housewife and businesspeople encountered more social or economic obstacles that hindered their engagement in the digital economy. The jobless demographic exhibits modest interest, which may be attributed to the increasing accessibility of online purchasing platforms as a cost-effective option. However, the overall findings indicate that consumer interest in online buying is shaped by socio-economic position, technological access, and the overarching transition to digital platforms that is transforming purchase behavior across many societal sectors.

Table 2

Online shopping during pandemic

Profession	Yes		No		χ^2 (p-value)
	F	%	F	%	
Day Labor	2	20	8	80	$\chi^2 = 20.5,$ ($p = 0.002$)
Government Employee	9	81.8	2	18.2	
Students	37	62.7	22	37.3	
Non-Government Employee	4	44.4	5	55.6	
Business-man	8	26.7	22	73.3	
Unemployed	4	30.8	9	69.2	
Housewife	13	44.8	16	55.2	
Total	77	47.8	84	52.2	

Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

The relationship between online shopping during the pandemic and profession was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 20.5$, $p = 0.002$). According to the survey, government personnel had the greatest number of online buyers (82%) during the pandemic, which imply a greater degree of job stability, consistent income, and improved access to technology or remote work locations that made online purchasing more viable. During lockdowns, government staff members could have had more time or less challenging physical work surroundings, which might have affected their interaction with online buying systems. Conversely, only 20% of day laborer participated in online buying, a figure much lower than that of government employees. This is likely attributable to day laborer facing less job security or income stability, hindering their ability to prioritize discretionary expenditures. Furthermore, day laborer may lack reliable access to digital devices or the internet, which are essential for online purchasing.

Approximately 44% of non-government workers and 45% of homemakers participated in online purchasing. The data indicates that the pandemic's influence on buying behavior was less significant in these demographics, owing to less urgency to participate in online shopping. Housewife, specifically, encountered additional restraints, such as managing domestic duties, which restricted their online shopping engagement. A smaller proportion of jobless persons (31%) and businesses (27%) were engaged in internet purchasing. The reduced rate of internet purchasing among the jobless was ascribed to financial limitations, since unemployment often coincides with restricted financial resources. Businessman's diminished participation with online buying indicates a preference for face-to-face interactions, dependence on bulk procurement, or distinct professional requirements. However, the overall findings emphasize the significance of socio-economic determinants in influencing the degree of individual participation in online purchasing during the pandemic.

Table 3

Enough device to access online shopping

Profession	Yes		No		χ^2 (p-value)
	F	%	F	%	
Day Labor	2	20	8	80	$\chi^2 = 53.4$, ($p < 0.001$)
Government Employee	11	100	0	0	
Students	58	98.3	1	1.7	
Non-Government Employee	9	100	0	0	
Businessman	24	80	6	20	
Housewife	22	75.9	7	24.1	
Total	139	86.3	22	13.7	

Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

A chi-square test of independence determined the association between the variables, profession, and adequacy of devices to access online shopping. The differences in these proportions are significant, χ^2 (53.4, $p < 0.001$). Data from this segment illustrates the interest of consumers in online shopping during the pandemic. According to the survey, except for day laborers, the majority of the respondents, including government employees, students, non-government employees, businessman, unemployed people, and housewife, had enough devices to access online shopping. In particular, 100% of government employees, 98.3% of students, 100% of non-government employees, 80% of businessman, and 75.9% of housewife had enough devices to access online shopping in Bangladesh amid the pandemic. These findings indicate that the increased availability of devices for online purchasing across diverse demographics in Bangladesh during the pandemic was ascribed to the extensive digital transformation catalyzed by COVID-19.

Government and non-government officials who shifted to distant work were equipped with crucial instruments, including computers and smartphones, and ensured thorough access to online shopping. Students who needed tools for online learning were provided access via technological equipment or instructional assistance, thereby allowing them to participate in online purchasing as well. While housewife, despite greater socioeconomic constraints, were nevertheless able to access devices, frequently via shared family usage, businessman, who kept their businesses digital, had access to devices, but at somewhat lower rates. These statistics demonstrate the preferences of different respondents toward online shopping throughout the pandemic.

Table 4

Stable internet connection

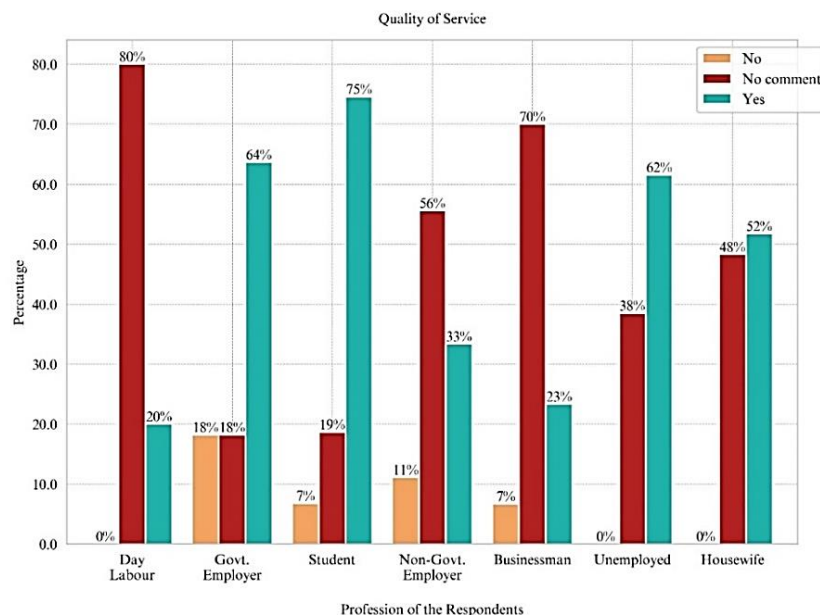
Profession	Yes		No		χ^2 (p-value)
	F	%	F	%	
Day Labour	2	20	8	80	$\chi^2 = 27.2,$ ($p < 0.001$)
Government Employee	9	81.8	2	18.2	
Students	43	72.9	16	27.1	
Non-Government Employee	8	88.9	1	11.1	
Businessman	13	43.3	17	56.7	
Unemployed	11	84.6	2	15.4	
Housewife	12	41.4	17	58.6	
Total	98	60.9	63	39.1	

Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

The chi-square test of independence shows a noteworthy correlation between respondents' profession and stable internet connection χ^2 (27.2, $p < 0.001$), thereby stressing the need for steady internet connectivity in facilitating online buying behaviour. The higher proportions of government employees, non-government employees, and the unemployed possessing stable internet connections (exceeding 80%) indicate that these demographics embrace greater access to reliable internet, which is crucial for undertaking online shopping activities, including searching, buying goods, and processing payments. Conversely, day labourers, who often possess less reliable access to technology and internet infrastructure, have a diminished proportion of stable internet connections, therefore restricting their capacity to engage in online shopping. Students, who depend on the internet for online learning, have a high rate of stable internet connections despite some difficulties in internet access (73%), especially in rural regions. Additionally, housewife and businesspeople have moderate rates of reliable internet access (60%), maybe attributable to restricted personal access to devices or internet infrastructure. The study indicates that a steady internet connection is a crucial facilitator of online buying, as those with more dependable access are more inclined to engage in the digital economy. The results emphasize the significance of internet stability in enabling professional and educational activities, as well as influencing consumer behaviour in the digital marketplace.

Figure 5

Standard of online shopping services



Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

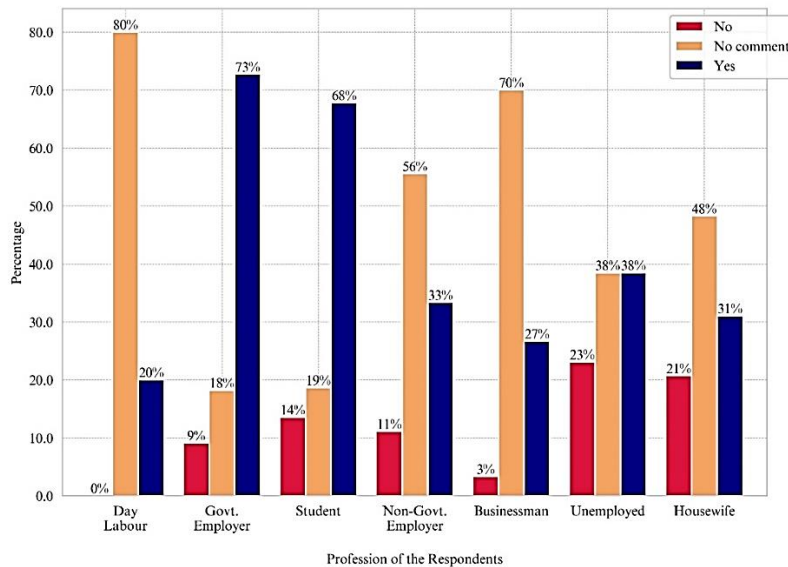
The study also investigates the standard of online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh based on the different consumer professions. The findings revealed that the majority of the government employees (i.e., 64%), students (i.e., 75%), unemployed people (i.e., 62%), and housewife (i.e., 52%) were highly satisfied with the standard of online shopping amid the pandemic. The satisfaction levels of government employees, students, unemployed individuals, and housewife over the quality of online purchasing services may be elucidated by examining several essential factors. Government personnel, benefiting from stable paychecks and structured schedules, may have seen online shopping as a convenient alternative to conventional retail outlets, especially during pandemic lockdowns. Students, generally adept with technology and acquainted with online platforms, would have loved the convenience, variety of items, and immediate shipping alternatives of online purchasing during the pandemic. The unemployed, having more time to browse and evaluate items, would have benefited from special discounts and doorstep delivery services, improving their shopping experience. Housewife, responsible for domestic supplies, may find online purchasing especially beneficial for procuring groceries, household items, and personal care products, therefore avoiding the hazards associated with crowded marketplaces. The convenience, accessibility, and perceived safety of buying goods online contributed to positive experiences. Conversely, a number of businessman (i.e., 70%), non-government employees (i.e., 56%), and day laborers (i.e., 80%) were dissatisfied with the quality of online shopping amid the pandemic in Bangladesh. The dissatisfaction expressed by businesses, non-governmental workers, and day laborers with the standard of online services may be associated with their distinct professional and economic challenges. Entrepreneurs requiring prompt and trustworthy delivery of items that facilitate their business activities may have experienced frustration due to delays, product unavailability, or logistical failures that impeded their operations. Individuals employed outside governmental entities, characterized by fluctuating income and irregular working hours, and may encounter challenges concerning product pricing, return rules, or consumer service response, thereby diminishing the allure of online purchasing. Day laborers, dependent on daily earnings and possessing little financial flexibility, might consider online purchasing as less economically feasible owing to higher product pricing, concealed expenses, or unreliable delivery services. The combination of economic uncertainties, inconsistent service standards, and the difficulty of transitioning to online purchasing channels undoubtedly contributed to their overall dissatisfaction.

Table 5*Consumer satisfaction with online product quality*

Profession	Yes		No		No comment		χ^2 (p-value)
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Day Labor	0	0	2	20	8	80	$\chi^2 = 45.4,$ (p < 0.001)
Government Employee	7	63.6	1	9.1	3	27.3	
Students	29	49.2	19	32.2	11	18.6	
Non-Government Employee	2	22.2	2	22.2	5	55.6	
Businessman	4	13.3	5	16.7	21	70	
Unemployed	7	53.8	1	7.7	5	38.5	
Housewife	15	51.7	0	0	14	48.3	
Total	64	39.8	30	18.6	67	41.6	

Source: Filed Survey, January to August 2021

The study investigated consumer satisfaction with online shopping during the pandemic by examining the quality of purchased products. The findings indicated that most respondents did not express their opinions on online product quality. This may have occurred owing to the intrinsic features and variety of the internet product. Nonetheless, the predominant proportion of housewife (51.7%) and students (49.2%) contend that they were satisfied with the quality of online products compared to other professions. The data indicate that a tech-savvy group of students picks the most suitable products they seek on online platforms, while the majority of housewife emphasize reputable online platforms and sellers. In contrast, 22.2% of non-government employees and 16.7% of businessman expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of online products. However, a significant portion of the respondents (80% day laborers, 55.6% non-government employees, 70% businessman, 38.5% unemployed, and 48.3% housewife) did not share their thoughts on online product quality. This may have happened due to the lack of direct experience with online shopping, the digital divide, economic barriers, fear of fraud, traditional shopping preference, among others. Overall, this suggests that they encountered inferior quality items or experienced fraudulent actions when buying online using digital channels. The field survey examined consumer professions and found a statistically significant association between satisfaction about product quality ($\chi^2 = 45.4, p < 0.001$).

Figure 4*Consumer satisfaction with product delivery time***Source:** Filed Survey, January to August 2021

In investigating consumer satisfaction with online shopping, the study also examined online product delivery time. Satisfaction with delivery time was evaluated using a chi-square test, which revealed a statistically significant result ($\chi^2 = 38.9$, $p < 0.001$). According to the field survey, most government employees (73%) and students (68%) were satisfied with online product delivery times. This suggests that these groups of consumers may be well-suited to using online platforms for purchasing. It also indicates that they may be more technologically aware and more likely to accurately provide specific delivery locations, which can reduce delivery delays in online shopping. Conversely, a majority of consumers, including businesspeople (70%), non-government employees (56%), housewives (48%), and day laborers (80%), were highly dissatisfied with the timing of product deliveries. This dissatisfaction may stem from several reasons, as these consumers come from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, their dissatisfaction could be linked to various important factors associated with their specific professional and personal responsibilities. Businesspeople, who often rely on timely deliveries for operations or customer service, may suffer financial losses and inefficiencies due to delays. Non-government employees, with rigid work schedules and limited availability to receive deliveries, may face inconvenience when orders do not arrive as expected. Day laborers, who depend on daily wages, may find it difficult to adjust their work schedules for late or unpredictable deliveries, thereby affecting their income. Housewives, who

play a central role in managing household needs, often rely on the prompt delivery of essential goods, including food and household items; delays can disrupt daily routines.

The varying backgrounds and distinct time constraints of these consumer groups mean that inconsistencies in delivery schedules across online platforms significantly impact their satisfaction levels.

5. Discussion

During the COVID-19 pandemic, online shopping became one of the most preferred methods for various types of consumers. Factors such as perceived usefulness, available devices, internet speed, trust, service quality, and satisfaction all positively influenced consumers' intentions to continue using online shopping during the pandemic. This study investigated the relationship between consumers' professions and their interest in online shopping during the pandemic in Bangladesh. To examine these relationships, the study conducted a cross-sectional survey involving individuals from different professional backgrounds. The majority of respondents were students and female, with most falling within the 15–30 age range. Additionally, most respondents resided in urban areas and had attained higher levels of education. This indicates that the majority were highly educated and showed a strong concern for the usefulness of IT tools in online shopping. A study by Ahmed (2023) supports these findings, highlighting that Bangladesh has developed a conducive environment for e-commerce, resulting in a significant number of people engaging in such platforms.

The study found that day laborers, housewives, and businesspeople struggled to adapt to online shopping during the pandemic due to limited knowledge, poor ICT skills, and the high cost of internet access. The survey also revealed that a majority of government employees (82%), students (75%), businesspeople (63%), and housewives (59%) were interested in online shopping during the pandemic. These findings indicate that online platforms became both popular and essential for individuals with adequate digital literacy, tools, and necessary resources. However, businesspeople (63%) and housewives (59%) lagged behind government employees and students in adopting online platforms, likely due to limited experience and skills in online shopping. Surprisingly, studies by Mahmood et al. (2022) and Sayed and Rashid (2021) found that women and educated individuals were more aware of e-services (e.g., e-commerce and e-health), and a high level of digital literacy facilitated their engagement in online shopping during the pandemic. It is likely that these studies collected data from highly

educated women and individuals, which may explain the difference in findings. Nevertheless, it is evident that education level and internet proficiency significantly influence the adoption of online shopping and digital payment systems. Furthermore, individuals with access to sufficient digital devices are more likely to become proficient in using them (Hossain et al., 2020).

The data also show that 100% of government employees, 98.3% of students, and 100% of non-government employees had adequate devices for accessing online shopping during the pandemic. This widespread accessibility of digital devices across professional groups reflects the broader digital transformation. These findings suggest that an individual's profession was a key factor influencing their engagement with online shopping during this period. Ahmed (2023) echoed this conclusion, noting that device accessibility facilitates online shopping. Despite this, many day laborers, businesspeople, and housewives lacked stable internet connections, while students, government employees, and non-government employees generally had reliable access. This discrepancy highlights the unequal distribution of internet connectivity. Consequently, day laborers, businesspeople, and housewives showed lower interest in online shopping compared to other demographic groups. Their limited digital literacy, lack of reliable internet or devices, and preference for traditional in-person shopping methods were major barriers. For example, day laborers often prioritize immediate, cash-based transactions and lack the time or trust to engage with online platforms. Many small-scale business operators rely on local supply chains and view online purchases as irrelevant to their business needs. Meanwhile, homemakers, especially those in rural or semi-urban areas, tend to be more cautious and may lack the autonomy or confidence to use digital platforms, reducing their participation in e-commerce. Thus, the study demonstrates a significant relationship between professional background and internet connectivity in the context of online shopping during the pandemic. These findings support the idea that consumer interest in online purchasing is influenced by device availability, stable internet access, trust, and digital competence. To frame these insights, the study employed TAM, which clearly captures the contributing factors identified.

The study also examined the relationship between respondents' professions and satisfaction with online shopping. A substantial proportion of government employees (64%), students (75%), and unemployed individuals (62%) reported high satisfaction with the quality of online shopping. These findings suggest that stable income, structured routines,

technological proficiency, familiarity with online platforms, and adequate time for browsing contributed positively to their online shopping experiences. In particular, tech-savvy students were able to select suitable products efficiently, while many housewives focused on using trusted platforms and sellers. Muharam et al. (2021) support these results, asserting that the quality of e-services fosters customer retention. Moreover, the survey found a statistically significant correlation between product quality satisfaction and professional background ($\chi^2 = 45.4$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, a significant proportion of businesspeople (70%), non-government workers (56%), housewives (48%), and day laborers (80%) expressed dissatisfaction with the delivery timeframe of online purchases. This dissatisfaction stemmed from various factors tied to their unique personal and professional responsibilities.

Previous research also indicates that factors such as product delivery time, perceived security, information quality, and product variety significantly influence online shopping satisfaction (Mofokeng, 2021). The study confirms this, finding a statistically significant relationship between satisfaction with delivery time and consumer profession ($\chi^2 = 38.9$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals across diverse professions turned to online shopping to reduce exposure to the virus, save time, and access convenient services. There is a statistically significant relationship between profession, interest in online shopping, and satisfaction levels. These findings are consistent with existing literature. However, a limitation of this study is that it did not explore the specific challenges faced by consumers when shopping online during the pandemic. Future research could address this gap and offer policy recommendations for improving online shopping experiences across all demographic groups.

6. Conclusion

The research emphasizes several key findings on consumer behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights that many individuals began to prefer online shopping due to the convenience and safety it offered during the global health crisis. Various factors, such as perceived usefulness, device availability, internet speed, trust, and service quality, significantly influenced consumers' intentions to continue making online purchases. The study revealed that consumer interest in online shopping varied by profession; government employees, students, businesspeople, and housewives showed the highest levels of interest and participation. The findings also indicated that those with access to reliable devices and stable

internet connections were more likely to engage in online shopping, highlighting a digital divide across different occupational groups. In particular, businesspeople and housewives faced significant challenges due to unstable internet connections and delayed product deliveries. In contrast, individuals with stable incomes, digital proficiency, and familiarity with online platforms, such as students and government employees, reported greater satisfaction with their overall online shopping experience. The research demonstrates that profession, internet accessibility, and delivery timelines significantly influence consumer satisfaction, while also emphasizing the increasing importance of e-commerce in Bangladesh.

The study suggests that policymakers, online vendors, and ICT providers can play a vital role in mitigating the challenges faced by day laborers, housewives, and businesspeople when engaging in online shopping under epidemic conditions. Policymakers should implement community-level digital literacy programs and subsidize internet and mobile connectivity for vulnerable populations, particularly day laborers and housewives, to raise awareness and build confidence in using online shopping platforms. Furthermore, online vendors could offer affordable bundles of essential items tailored to the needs of day workers, along with options such as free delivery or cash-on-delivery to enhance affordability and payment flexibility. At the same time, ICT providers should work to strengthen network infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted internet access for underserved populations, including homemakers and workers in remote or underdeveloped areas. Future research may examine the challenges faced by low-income individuals and rural consumers from underprivileged backgrounds when it comes to utilizing online platforms for online purchasing.

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