

ANTECEDENTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS SHOPPING MALLS: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify and develop measurement scales for antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping mall for less developed countries taking Bangladesh as a unit of analysis. This study also established three important outcomes of customer satisfaction - patronage intentions, word of mouth and trust - in that respect to strengthening existing literature on these relationships. The antecedents and items of their corresponding constructs were identified with the help of an expert panel and extensive literature review. The proposed model was tested using PLS-SEM with a sample size of 400 respondents collect from eight shopping malls around Dhaka city, Bangladesh. Identified antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls are convenience, atmosphere, security, food facilities and shop variety, and they were found to have significant positive effects customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction was found to have significant positive effects on patronage intentions, word of mouth and trust. This research aims to contribute to the scarcity of research regarding shopping malls in perspective of less developed countries. The developed scales of antecedents of customer satisfaction were formative, which regards to shopping malls is a pioneer.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Shopping Mall, PLS-SEM, Bangladesh

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction plays a vital role in consumer decision-making process. Especially for repetitive buying, previous experience is essential. Choosing a shopping mall is not an exception. Mall owners try to satisfy customers by offering them with a wide array of stores

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and merchandise under one roof. In recent years, mall developers have increased that offer to include service and entertainment outlets to drive in more customers. Not only can customers now consume a variety of services and products within the mall, but the mall itself offers consumable experiences like food outlets, cinema halls, video arcades and the likes. In other words, malls today are a product in itself that begs to be experienced (Darlow, 1972; Gregorson, 1988; Robert & John, 1982).

Although antecedents of customer satisfaction across various industries have been heavily investigated by researchers, studies concerning antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls have been far and few between. One of the widely known scale for measuring customers satisfaction of retail stores was validated by Westbrook (1981). However, it lacks the generalizability for applying to shopping malls as it is very store-specific. The most notable study was done by Anselmsson (2006) where eight antecedents of customer satisfaction were identified. However, since the field study was based on a developed country Sweden, the complete applicability of the model is questionable for less developed countries as market dynamics of less developed economies is quite different than that of a developed country. In that respect, the generalizability of the items of each antecedent constructs to the less developed country is uncertain too. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify mall antecedents of customer satisfaction and develop appropriate scales for these antecedent constructs for less developed countries taking Bangladesh as a unit of analysis. The outcomes of this study thus can be generalized to similar less developed countries like Bangladesh. This study also links three important outcomes of customer satisfaction regarding shopping malls - patronage intentions, word of mouth and trust - to richen the existing literature on these subject matters. While all the studies considered the antecedent constructs as reflective, in respect to growing popularity of formative scales, this study pioneers a formative approach for developing scales of measurement of the antecedent constructs in respect to shopping malls. Identification of antecedent constructs and their items were done through extensive literature review and the help of an expert panel. Antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls identified were convenience, atmosphere, security, food facilities and shop variety.

Furthermore, the relative importance of determinants of customer satisfaction varies from country to country. Research based on a shopping mall in Hongkong found that maintenance of communal facilities such as washroom significantly affects customer satisfaction (Hui & Zheng, 2013). On the other hand, in Sweden salespeople and merchandising policy generates customer satisfaction. They believe that a shopping mall becomes prominent because of shopping policy and customer service (Anselmsson, 2006). Taiwanese customers put more focus on personal interaction than any other factor (Keng et al. 2007). These findings suggest that each market needs to be investigated separately. Thus, this study is the first to investigate determinants of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls and their relative importance in the context of Bangladesh. Therefore, the outcome of the study will benefit shopping mall management and owners of Bangladesh.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

The central element of customer-driven marketing strategy is customer satisfaction. According to Philip Kotler “If the products match expectations, the customer is satisfied; if it exceeds them, the customer is highly satisfied; if it falls short, the consumer is dissatisfied” (Hill et al., 2007). Different scholars define the term “Customer Satisfaction” in different ways. Another definition of customer satisfaction is “Customer satisfaction is a measure of how your organization’s ‘total product’ performs a set of customer requirements” (Hill et al., 1999). More specifically it is customer reaction to the state of fulfillment, and customer judgment of the fulfilled state (Oliver, 1997). These definitions are very fundamental concepts of customer satisfaction. It’s all about what customers want in the first place. To measure customer satisfaction level, a comparison is required between customer expectation and performance level of a product/service (Hill et al., 1999). Customer satisfaction may be measured via different parameters. According to Yi (1990), customer satisfaction may be defined either based on outcome or as a process. The first step defines customer satisfaction as consumers end situation after having consumption experience. Another approach focuses the perceptual, evaluative and psychological process that leads to satisfaction (Figueira et al. 2010). The modern strategic marketing plan is customer-centric where customer satisfaction plays a vital role. Many companies use customer satisfaction level as their performance indicator (Figueira et al., 2010). Maintaining high customer satisfaction level is always beneficial for a company. It strengthens customer’s loyalty and prevents brand switching intention, lowers customers price sensitivity, overall operation and marketing costs goes down due to the increased number of customers and their repeat purchases, and enhances business reputation (Fornell, 1992).

2.2 Convenience

Convenience is acknowledged as one of the primary motivation in consumer decision-making process. Numerous factors give “Convenience” such high importance. A combined definition from the Collins, Oxford and Webster dictionaries illustrates convenience as anything that simplifies the task. Shopping convenience is defined as the consumer’s anticipated degree of saving time and effort linked with the entire shopping process (Berry et al., 2002). From the consumer point of view, shopping convenience is shopping speed and ease (Seiders et al., 2000). Researchers found consumers’ interest in serving time and effort (Gross and Sheth, 1989; Nicokols and Fox, 1983). This phenomenon encouraged retailers to create a convenient atmosphere for consumers’ (Berry et al., 2002). A social trend such as individual lifestyle, scarcity of time, the changing role of women, long working hours and increasing leisure orientation influences consumers’ devotion for convenience (Reimers and Clulow, 2004).

Customer convenience is the cause of most recent changes in retailing including supermarkets, convenient store, department store, discount store, specialty store and a regional mall. The importance that customers put on convenience has pushed retailers to think about one-stop shopping (Seiders et al., 2000). Kurt Salmon Associates (1996) found that most of the consumers' are struggling to balance between the task that they must do and the task they want to do. Most of them identify shopping as a "must do" job. They also acknowledge that they don't have sufficient time for shopping. Most of them agreed that if they spent less time for shopping, then they can use their limited time doing something more enjoyable. It is assumed that busy consumers will choose a retailer who will save their time and energy (Berry, 1996). Based on the above discussions:

H1: Convenience positively effects customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

2.3 Atmosphere

The influence of atmosphere on consumer behavior has long been acknowledged by experienced retailers. In general, the term 'atmosphere' refers to environment or surroundings. In retail industry/shopping perspective, the Cambridge Dictionary Online (2017) provides the most appropriate definition of atmosphere - "approving a feeling that a place has of being pleasant and interesting or exciting." The environment-behavior relationship has been studied systematically by psychologists, and this discipline is known as 'Environmental psychology' (Robert & John, 1982). Initially, psychologists didn't relate environmental psychology to store environment strongly. Later on, Mehrabian-Russel (1974) model proved that in the retail industry environment plays a vital role influencing consumer behavior. Mehrabian-Russel model identifies different store variables that affect buying behavior (Robert & John, 1982). From previous studies, market researchers concluded that if consumers are influenced by physical stimuli at store or shopping center, this atmosphere creation considered as an effective marketing strategy (Turley & Milliman, 2000). This kind of atmospheric strategy also determines success and failure of the business (Bitner, 1990).

Retailers spent a good amount of money for promotion purpose. Their main objective is to attract a customer. It is expected that more consumer brings more sale. In city life, most of the people are struggling to manage some free time for entertainment. That is why they tend to pick shopping malls where they could entertain themselves. Previous research found that customers want to spend more time on those shopping malls that have a variety of stores and merchandise (Ashley, 1997). Mall developers are aiming to create a customer friendly atmosphere which will entertain customer and keep them at the mall. Several in-store experiments found that single environmental elements such as music, scent, color have a positive effect on consumer emotion (Cheng et al. 2009; Mattila & Wirtz, 2001; Spangenberg et al., 2005). In some cases, multiple elements influence consumer emotion

(Wakefield & Baker, 1998). Based on the above discussions:

H2: Atmosphere positively effects customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

2.4 Security

Safety is one of the major concerns for customers and shopping center visitors. What security mean to us? According to Oxford Dictionaries (2017), security refers to “the state of being free from danger or threat”. Security concern influences shopping behavior. Therefore, ensuring customers’ security is the top priority for shopping mall authority. One research conducted in the USA found 37.1 consumers changed their shopping style just because they are scared of crime (Rickard, 1994). It is reported that consumers are also concerned about their security outside the shopping center for example parking lot. As a result management of shopping malls are trying to provide the highest level of protection for both their customers and facilities (Overstreet & Clodfelter, 1995).

Technically safety in a shopping mall is an idea that shoppers are not likely to face the fire, theft, harassment, assault or any form of violence within the area of the mall (Fernando, 1995). It is observed that shopping centers are a potential target of terrorist groups. Local law enforcement agencies should step forward and co-operate with mall management authority to deal with it. Another serious concern is the disappearance of children from crowded shopping malls. Safety concern negatively affects shopping behavior. A mall that provides safe and secured environment inspires shoppers to move around and take their time doing shopping. In that way shopping center becomes a source of enjoyment, leisure and community events (Hedhli et al., 2013). If shoppers are concerned about their security, they will not pay full attention to shopping. This tendency will make their stay shorter inside the mall. Based on the above discussions:

H3: Security positively effects customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

2.5 Food Facilities

Only having a variety of merchandise is not good enough to attract customers in the marketplace these days. It is important to create an exciting, convenient and entertaining atmosphere (Kingston, 1994). Now a day’s shopping centers are a source for a meeting or social, recreational activities. People tend to spend more time in the shopping center as part of their recreational activities. Most of the shopping centers today conjoined food corners, café, and restaurants with the main shopping mall (Sit et al., 2003).

As part of the promotional activity, mall management highlights their food facilities to attract consumers. Now the question may arise why food facilities are important to shopping

mall visitors? Enjoying break time is the primary reason considered. After spending hours for shopping, people get tired. Little refreshment or meal energize them. Especially kids and senior citizens can't stay without food for longer hours. Moreover, the food court is a wonderful place for social gathering. Shoppers love to spend some quality time at the end of shopping and food corner is the perfect place for that (Sit et al., 2003). Based on the above discussions:

H4: Food facilities positively effects customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

2.6 Shop Variety

Consumers are more inclined towards an environment which offers a pleasant atmosphere, high chances for social interaction, an environment which they perceive to be safe and where there is a large assortment of consumable goods and experiences (Bloch et al. 1994). Consumers prefer choices, or rather they need to think that they have choices, and that gives them the feeling of being in control (Hui & Bateson, 1991). Proshansky et al. (1974) suggest that people are more likely to behave positively when they feel like they have more control in the environment. This can be translated to a shopping environment too. Hence it can be said that an environment, much like what one can find in big shopping malls, where consumers can find a lot of varieties will put them in a place of perceived control. Wortman (1975) states that perceived choice can have a positive effect on psychological and behavioral outcomes. According to Shiv and Huber (2000), consumers arrive at a purchase decision with two different decision goals in mind: choice oriented and value oriented. The choice oriented goal is where customers seek choices from where they could pick and chose what they like. In a research done by (Starchan, 1997), the author found out that almost half of the shoppers said that they do not revisit a market which they believe to offer the lowest prices.

Customer choice seems to be a big criterion while deciding on which shopping malls to visit (Hutcheson & Moutinho, 1998). Variety means more choices, and more choices mean more information, and more information translates to more perceive control. According to Jacoby et al. (1977), customers are truly happy when they can evaluate from a satisfactory number of alternatives while making purchase decisions. This reduces cognitive dissonance (Hawkins, 1972). Hence it can be said that the chances of customer satisfaction are more when a customer has a myriad of alternatives to choose from. To summarize, customers want perceived control (Proshansky et al., 1974), and one of the ways they could get that if there exists the maximum amount of information in the form of alternatives which they can choose from. In a shopping mall setting, information can translate from the choices that are available to customers. Choices make customers feel that they are in control of the environment and decision that results from an environment of information and control can lead to the maximum amount of satisfaction. Based on the above discussions:

H5: Shop variety positively effects customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

2.7 Patronage Intentions

Shopping malls provide consumers with an atmosphere that attracts a ton of customers, keeps them busy and, it is for this reason, brings them back (Kowinski, 1985). Many researchers have studied the effects of mall patronage and tried to predict mall patronage (Darden & Dorsch, 1989; Sheth, 1981). Mall patronage is shown by the shoppers by their commitment to the mall and their willingness to shop there even if it takes them some extra efforts (Khong & Ong, 2014). One researcher, in particular, Huff (1964), in his retail gravity model tried to predict mall patronage based on two fronts: cost and satisfaction. He further goes on to explain that a larger mall is likely to attract more customers, as customers have access to more alternatives under one roof which also reduces customer's anticipated cost of patronage. In contrast, Peterson (1989) argues that rather than the size of the shopping mall, customers may show patronage towards that mall because of the qualitative satisfaction they might get from one particular store which might make them visit that mall time and time again showing patronage towards that mall. This idea that customers' attraction to the mall due to a few particular shop, has also been noted in other researchers' work (Nevin & Houston, 1980; Stanley & Sewall, 1976; Weisbrod et al., 1984).

Many researchers have shown that it is very important for a customer to be satisfied with the shopping atmosphere to display some form of patronage towards that shopping mall. The atmosphere of the shopping mall can make the shopping mall attractive to shoppers and patrons leading to a positive perception, experience, and an emotional response, leading to satisfaction (Burns & Warren, 1995; Jain & Bagdare, 2011; Michon et al., 2005; Stoel et al., 2004). Perception can be formed by paying a visit to the shopping mall and coming out with a favorable attitude due to the experience encountered in said mall; in other words, a positive perception of the mall is formed when the shopper is satisfied on his visit to the mall (Burns & Warren, 1995; Matzler et al., 2006; Michon et al., 2005; Stoel et al., 2004). Hence, malls must incorporate strategies to meet shoppers' preferences as they tend to pay more visits to the shopping malls where they are most satisfied. Based on the above discussions:

H6: Customer satisfaction positively affects patronage intentions towards shopping malls.

2.8 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth can play a vital role in a customer's decision to purchase (Richins & Root-Shaffer, 1988). Therefore, it can be safely said that consumer satisfaction is a post-purchase behavior, which means, consumers need to purchase something first and then show their satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) after their experience with the product (Yi, 1990).

Haywood (1989) terms word of mouth as a verbal exchange of information, whether positive or negative, regarding a business' offerings. The role of interpersonal communication in influencing people purchase behavior has been documented time and time again in consumer behavior research, with some studies examining the frequency of word of mouth and its positive influence on recipients (Arndt, 1967; Leonard-Barton, 1985).

A consumer engages in the word of mouth after they have experienced the product or service in question (Bolton & Drew, 1992). That experience can be either positive or negative, depending on which, the individual then chooses to either engage in a favorable word of mouth or a negative one. A positive word of mouth occurs when the user of a product or service is satisfied with the experience and vice-versa. The existence of a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and word of mouth has been demonstrated by several studies (Bolton & Drew, 1992; Holmes & Lett, 1977; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Swan & Oliver, 1989). The individual degree of satisfaction with consumption experience is considered as the key consequence of product-related word of mouth (Arndt, 1967; Bitner, 1990; Dichter, 1966; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Westbrook, 1987; Yi, 1990) hence linking consumer satisfaction with the phenomenon of word of mouth. Hunt (1977) and Oliver (1980) found out that a loyal, satisfied customer will engage in word of mouth favorable to the firm more than a dissatisfied customer (Bloch, 1986; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). However, the opposite is also true as dissatisfied customers will engage in negative word of mouth (Richins, 1983; Singh, 1990). Whichever the case may be, regardless of a positive or a negative word of mouth, it can be seen that customer satisfaction have a positive relationship with the phenomenon that is word of mouth. Based on the above discussions: H7: Customer satisfaction positively effects word of mouth towards shopping malls.

2.9 Trust

A critical factor in customer loyalty is the relationship that a customer shares with the salesperson. But the same idea also translates to a person-to-store relationship (Macintosh & Lockshin, 1997). Especially in today's world where a myriad of retail choices exists to customers, Berry and Gresham (1986) believe that 'relationship retailing' not only has the potential to increase sales among the current customer base but also can form a barrier for the current customers to be swayed away by competitors. Jacob and Kyner (1973), and Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) suggests that 'relationship retailing' is an antecedent to loyalty and that establishes trust. Morgan and Hunt (1994), while examining a connection between retail relationship and store loyalty, have identified trust and commitment as the key mediating variables. Trust has been one of the key variables while discussing relationships in marketing. Trust can be defined as one party's confidence in another's integrity and reliability (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Trust is built on past experiences consumer shares with the retailer. A bad experience is less likely to motivate trust than a good one. A good experience will induce trust which in turn will enable the customer to be more confident in the next purchase (Wong & Sohal, 2002). Hence it can be safely said that customer satisfaction induces trust. It can be noted from the literature that if customers are not satisfied with the prior experience with the service provider, the customer is less likely to trust the service provider during the next transaction and that hurts customer retention, which in turn hurts profitability. Based on the above discussions:

H8: Customer satisfaction positively effects trust towards shopping malls.

Based on the above literature review, the following conceptual framework is proposed for further empirical testing (See Figure 1).

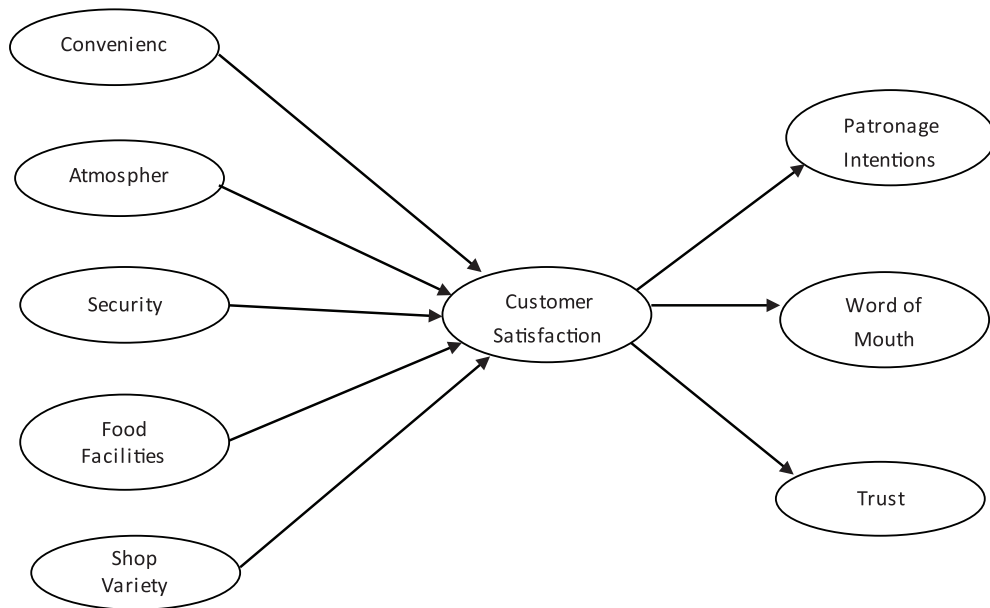


Figure 1:The conceptual framework

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling

A survey was carried out between October 3 and November 11, 2016. Eight popular shopping malls in Dhaka city were identified, and 60 respondents were surveyed from each mall based on convenience. Variables controlled for were gender, age, and income through stratified sampling approach. Respondents were approached via mall intercept method. The final sample size for analysis was 400 after discarding unusable responses leaving 50 responses from eight shopping malls. The questionnaire presented the respondents a set of statements regarding their experience of the shopping mall. Seven-point Likert statements were used (1 = "Strongly Disagree"; 7 = "Strongly Agree").

3.2 Measures

The model consists of five formative constructs; convenience, atmosphere, security, food facilities and customer shop variety. An expert panel consisting of three industry experts and two academic experts, and extensive literature review were used to identify the selected five antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls for investigation regards to Bangladesh, and items for these formative constructs. A pilot study was carried out. The result of the pilot study was then analyzed and discussed with the expert panel to finalize the items for each construct. A nine-item scale for convenience, a four-item scale for atmosphere, a four-item scale for security, a five-item scale for food facilities and a three-item scale for shop variety were finalized.

Reflective constructs in the model include customer satisfaction, patronage intentions, word of mouth, and trust. To measure customer satisfaction, a three-item scale was adopted by Shin and Kim (2008). Patronage intentions were measured using a three-item scale adapting store patronage intentions scale from Grewal et al. (2003). To measure word of mouth, a three-item scale was adopted from Babin et al. (2005). Trust was measured adapting a four-item scale from Aydin and Özer (2005). Also, for the purpose of validating the five formative constructs present in the model, five single-item scales were adopted from Westbrook (1980). These single-item scales were developed to summarize the essence of the formative constructs. Single-item scales rather than multi-item ones were developed not to lengthen an already long questionnaire as suggested by Hair et al. (2014). Table I lists all the items to their corresponding constructs along with mean and standard deviation.

Table I: Measures of constructs.

Variable	Item	Description	Mean	SD
Convenience	CN1	The number of lifts are adequate.	4.67	1.99
	CN2	The number of escalators are adequate.	5.14	1.80
	CN3	The corridors are spacious.	5.44	1.81
	CN4	There are adequate directory signboards.	3.81	2.05
	CN5	The number of direction signs are adequate.	4.32	2.04
	CN6	The number of parking spaces are adequate.	3.87	1.97
	CN7	The number of entrants and exists to the mall are adequate.	4.56	1.98
	CN8	It is easy to get around the shoppingmall.	3.97	2.00
	CN9	The number of rest rooms are adequate.	3.94	2.06
Overall Convenience Satisfaction	OFNS	Overall, it is convenient to shop at this mall for me.	4.44	1.34
Atmosphere	AT1	The mall is well air-conditioned.	5.47	1.81
	AT2	The decoration of the mall is pleasant.	5.19	1.77
	AT3	The background music is pleasant.	4.61	1.85
	AT4	The cleanliness of the mall is satisfactory.	5.27	1.77
Overall Atmosphere Satisfaction	OATS	Overall, I am satisfied with the atmosphere of this mall.	4.89	1.54
Security	SC1	Vehicles at the car parks are safe.	4.72	1.68
	SC2	There are no personal safety issues within the mall.	4.25	1.84
	SC3	The number of security guards are adequate.	4.79	1.69
	SC4	All areas of the mall are well covered by security guards.	4.78	1.73
Overall Security Satisfaction	OSCS	Overall, I am satisfied regarding the safety measures of this mall.	4.49	1.39
Food Facilities	FF1	The space of the food court is large enough.	5.00	1.89
	FF2	The number of sitting arrangements at the food court are adequate.	4.87	1.68
	FF3	The number of food shops at the food court are adequate.	4.88	1.61
	FF4	There are a wide variety of food shops available at the food court.	4.78	1.74
	FF5	Most of my preferred restaurants' outlets are present at the food court.	4.96	1.63
Overall Food Facilities Satisfaction	OFFS	Overall, I am satisfied with the food facilities of this mall.	4.94	1.46
Shop Variety	SV1	There are wide varieties of shops at the mall.	5.17	1.68
	SV2	Outlets of my preferred brands are available here.	5.16	1.65
	SV3	I found/always find the type of shop that I was/am looking for at this mall.	4.86	1.69
Overall Shop Variety Satisfaction	OSVS	Overall, I am satisfied with the variety of shop of this mall.	4.90	1.56
Customer Satisfaction	SAT1	I am satisfied with this shoppingmall.	4.93	1.71
	SAT2	This shoppingmall meets all the reasonable requirements.	4.63	1.80
	SAT3	This shoppingmall meets my all needs.	4.65	1.82
Patronage Intentions	PI1	The likelihood that I will shop in this mall again is very high.	4.94	1.98
	PI2	I will shop in this mall regularly.	4.03	1.98
	PI3	I prefer/will prefer to buy the products that are important to me from this mall.	4.36	1.91
Word of Mouth	WM1	I will say positive things about this shopping mall to other people.	4.74	1.78
	WM2	I will recommend this shoppingmall to someone who seeks my advice.	4.69	1.77
	WM3	I will encourage relatives and friends to visit this shoppingmall.	4.84	1.76
Trust	TR1	The shoppingmall is reliable for the goods I need.	4.74	1.65
	TR2	I believe shops at this mall do not sell any counterfeit products.	4.65	1.76
	TR3	I believe the mall management continuously works to make sure customers have the best experiences.	4.90	1.64
	TR4	I trust this shoppingmall.	5.00	1.68

4. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The structural equation model was analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0. Necessary outputs were generated running PLS Algorithm, Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples and Blindfolding with omission distance set at 7. For basic statistical analysis IBM-SPSS 21.0 was used.

4.1 Scales and Model Evaluation

The model consists of both formative and reflective constructs. As a result, separate evaluative measures were taken as they are based on different concepts. To assess the formative scales, steps requires are (1) assess convergent validity, (2) asses multi-collinearity issues, and (3) assess relevance and significance of the formative indicators. Redundancy analysis was performed to check convergent validity. This required assessing the path coefficients linking the formative constructs and their associate single-item scales. From Figure 2, path coefficients between convenience & overall convenience satisfaction (0.815), atmosphere & overall atmosphere satisfaction (0.804), security & overall security satisfaction (0.883), food facilities & overall food facilities satisfaction (0.841) and shop variety & overall shop variety satisfaction (0.866) are above the accepted level 0.80 (Chin, 1998) implying that convergent validity have been attained. Multi-collinearity issues among indicators of the same formative construct were assessed next. From Table II, variance inflation factors are below 5 for all the indicators, which is the suggested level (Hair et al. 2011) stating that there are no significant multicollinearity issues. Finally, the relevance and significance of the formative indicators to its construct were assessed. Outer loadings and significance of the outer weights of the indicators were investigated for this purpose. From Table II, all outer loadings are over 0.50, and all outer weights are significant for all indicators implying that all indicators have a relatively high contribution to its formative construct.

To assess reflective scales, step requires (1) check for internal consistency, (2) check for convergent validity, and (3) check for discriminant validity. To check internal consistency, composite reliability was investigated. All composite reliability values (Table II) are in the satisfactory range of 0.70 to 0.90 (Nunally & Bernstein, 1994). Outer loadings of the indicators and AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values of each construct were examined for checking convergent validity. From Table II, all the outer loadings are over 0.708, and all the AVE values are well over 0.5, which is the suggested threshold (Hair et al., 2014), stating convergent validity have been achieved. The latest discriminant validity checking criteria the heterotrait-monotrait ratios (HTMT) were investigated for evaluating discriminant validity. From Table III, all HTMT values are below the suggested level 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table II: Variance inflation factor (VIF),outer Loading, p-value (outer weight), average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability

Variable	Item	Variance inflation factor (VIF)	Outer Loading	p-value (Outer weight)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (ρ_c)
Convenience	CN1	1.926	0.630	0.000***	0.744	0.897
	CN2	1.924	0.629	0.001**		
	CN3	1.362	0.557	0.000***		
	CN4	2.431	0.731	0.001**		
	CN5	2.201	0.733	0.000***		
	CN6	2.506	0.730	0.002**		
	CN7	1.463	0.656	0.000***		
	CN8	1.249	0.572	0.000***		
	CN9	1.333	0.607	0.000***		
Atmosphere	AT1	1.985	0.762	0.000***	0.690	0.870
	AT2	2.370	0.869	0.000***		
	AT3	1.479	0.780	0.000***		
	AT4	1.765	0.793	0.000***		
Security	SC1	1.587	0.759	0.000***	0.743	0.897
	SC2	1.630	0.754	0.000***		
	SC3	1.778	0.763	0.000***		
	SC4	1.781	0.762	0.000***		
Food Facilities	FF1	1.447	0.730	0.000***	0.632	0.873
	FF2	2.289	0.820	0.000***		
	FF3	2.278	0.794	0.000***		
	FF4	2.043	0.840	0.000***		
	FF5	1.600	0.726	0.000***		
Shop Variety	SV1	1.843	0.835	0.000***	0.834	
	SV2	1.988	0.862	0.000***		
	SV3	2.064	0.903	0.000***		
Customer Satisfaction	SAT1		0.864		0.744	0.897
	SAT2		0.852			
	SAT3		0.871			
Patronage Intentions	PI1		0.804		0.690	0.870
	PI2		0.855			
	PI3		0.833			
Word of Mouth	WM1		0.849		0.743	0.897
	WM2		0.885			
	WM3		0.851			
Trust	TR1		0.812		0.632	0.873
	TR2		0.739			
	TR3		0.793			
	TR4		0.834			

Table III: VIFs (variance inflation factor) for related exogenous variables and HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) ratio

Variables	Customer Satisfaction <u>VIFHTMT</u>	Patronage Intentions <u>HTMT</u>	Word of Mouth <u>HTMT</u>	Trust <u>HTMT</u>
Convenience	1.279			
Atmosphere	1.469			
Security	2.387			
Food Facilities	1.236			
Shop Variety	2.578			
Customer Satisfaction				
Patronage Intentions	0.687			
Word of Mouth	0.738	0.748		
Trust	0.804	0.724	0.791	

Multi-collinearity issues among related exogenous variables, the explanatory power of the model through endogenous variables, and predictive relevance of the endogenous variables were investigated to assess the overall model. There are no multicollinearity issues among related exogenous variables as all VIF values are well below 5 (Table III). From Table IV, R² for customer satisfaction is 0.652, R² for patronage intentions is 0.304, R² for word of mouth is 0.377 and R² for trust are 0.450., which is implying that the model has good explanatory power. Also from Table IV, Stone-Geisser Q² values, for customer satisfaction is 0.474, for patronage intentions is 0.206, for word of mouth is 0.278 and for trust is 0.277, which were obtained through blindfolding procedure. Endogenous variables in the model are showing sufficient predictive relevance since the Q² values are over 0 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table IV: Path estimates

Path	Path Coefficient(β)	t-statistic	p-value
Convenience → Customer Satisfaction	0.111	2.528	0.012*
Atmosphere → Customer Satisfaction	0.215	4.076	0.000***
Security → Customer Satisfaction	0.170	3.284	0.001**
Food Facilities → Customer Satisfaction	0.126	2.863	0.004**
Shop Variety → Customer Satisfaction	0.405	8.474	0.000***
Customer Satisfaction → Patronage Intentions	0.552	14.721	0.000***
Customer Satisfaction → Word of Mouth	0.614	14.728	0.000***
Trust → Patronage Intentions	0.671	20.897	0.000***
R ² Customer Satisfaction		65.2%	
R ² Patronage Intentions		30.4%	
R ² Word of Mouth		37.7%	
R ² Trust		45.0%	
Q ² Customer Satisfaction		0.474	
Q ² Patronage Intentions		0.206	
Q ² Word of Mouth		0.278	
Q ² Trust		0.277	

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 were supported as convenience, atmosphere, security, food facilities and shop variety have significant ($p < 0.05$) positive impact on customer satisfaction (Table IV). A comparison of the path coefficients suggests that the effect size of shop variety is greater than others as its path coefficient is far greater than others. Atmosphere and security follow shop variety in terms of effect size. Evidence was found regarding customer satisfaction to have significant positive influence on patronage intentions (H6; $p < 0.001$; Table IV). Customer satisfaction was found to have significant positive effect on word of mouth (H7; $p < 0.001$; Table IV). Customer satisfaction was also found to significantly influence trust (H8; $p < 0.001$; Table IV).

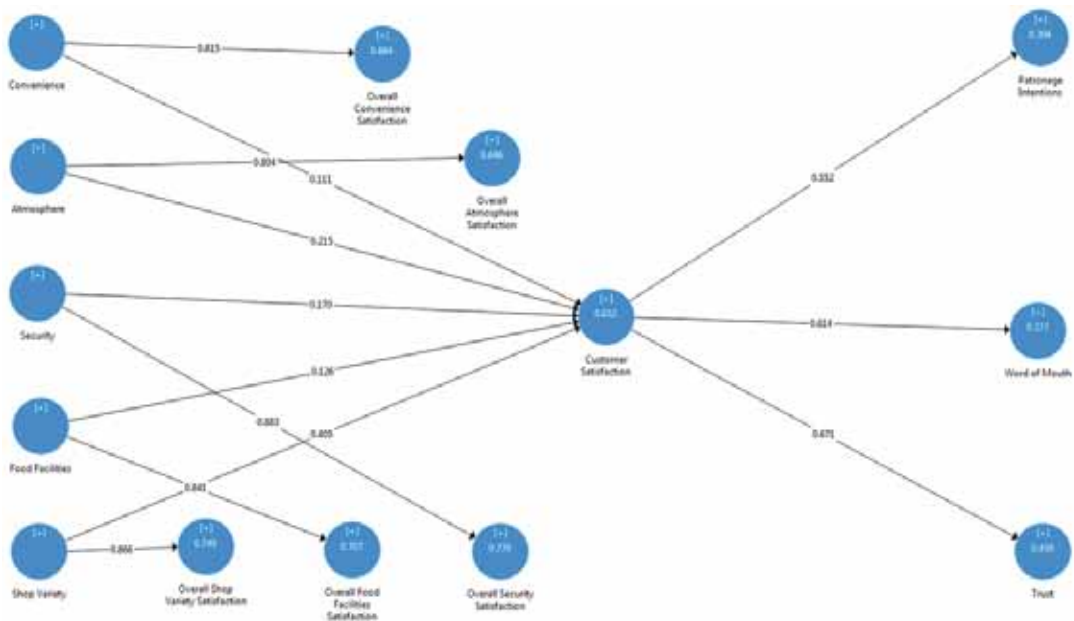
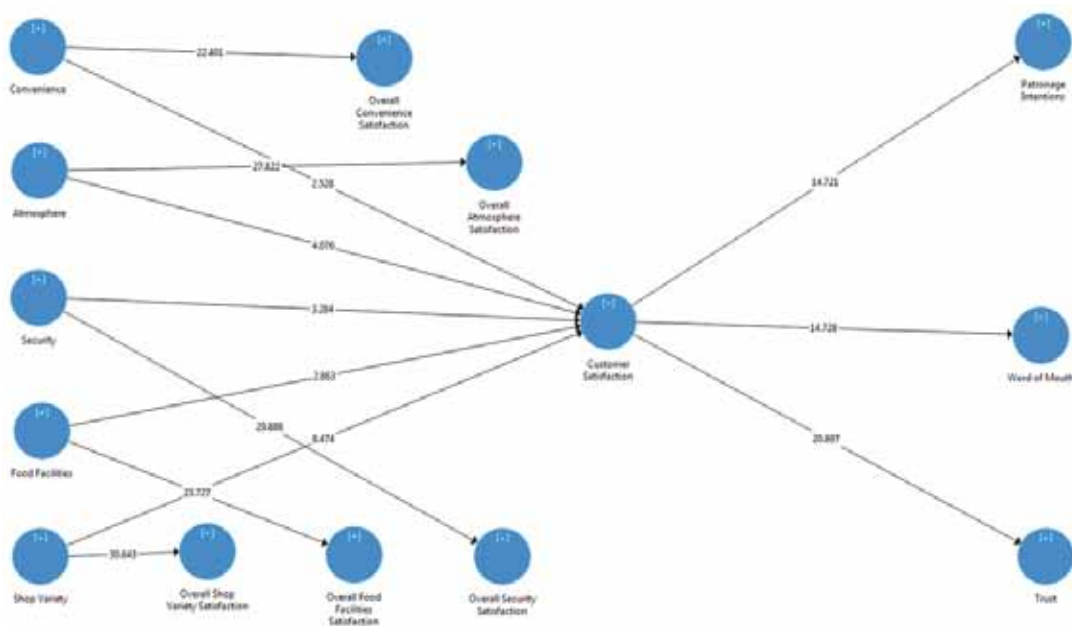


Figure 2: Path coefficients among constructs.



Note: A value greater than 1.96 indicates significant relationship among constructs at 0.05 level.

Figure 3: T Statistics after bootstrapping.

5. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Customer satisfaction is a significant issue for most business entities including a shopping mall. Customer satisfaction is the reflection of an overall impression of a customer. This study identified five antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls in perspective of Bangladesh which are convenience, atmosphere, security, food facilities and shop variety. This study also established the positive link between customer satisfaction and three outcome variables of customer satisfaction - patronage intentions, word of mouth and trust.

This research has both theoretical and practical implications. This study identified antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls for less developed economies. This was the first time a formative approach was taken to develop scales for measuring antecedents of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls. These scales can be applied to a similar less developed country like Bangladesh adjusting few items based on market characteristics.

From market specific context, this the first study to investigate and link the examined variables in the context of Bangladeshi shopping mall. Bangladesh is a country of almost 200 million people and a lucrative market indeed. The shopping mall industry is one of the most attractive and booming sectors in Bangladesh. The fact is, a credible research measuring customer satisfaction factors for Bangladeshi shopping mall does not exist. Therefore identifying the reasons that influence Bangladeshi customers' satisfaction regarding shopping malls have never adequately investigated. This study fills that gap.

The research results show shop variety, atmosphere and security are top three influential factors behind customer satisfaction. Other two influential factors are convenience and food facilities. To ensure customers' convenience mall management should think about its location, public transport access, parking space and other facilities. As the majority of the people in less developed countries depend on public transport, it is important to build a shopping mall in a convenient location. Atmosphere plays a vital role achieving customer satisfaction. It is recommended to ensure cleanliness, spacious space, music facilities, and kids' corner to make the atmosphere better. Security should be the topmost priority for a mall management authority to make customer satisfied. Different hazard prevention program should initiate by shopping mall management authority. It is better to conduct practice drill to avoid a big accident. Shopping mall management authority should accommodate different types of stores carrying a wide range of products. It will attract customer group and ensure their satisfaction. A food corner with various option is essential for customer satisfaction. A particular group of people may not be comfortable with certain types of food. So it is recommended to have food facilities with various options within a shopping mall.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study has few limitations. Firstly, five formative drivers of customer satisfaction were developed using a panel of three industry experts and two academic experts. Each item within a construct should be probed in detail in future research and possibly look into other probable items. In that context, a survey may be carried out among the consumers to fortify these items and the possibility of adding some new ones. Secondly, the location of the respondents was locked in Dhaka city. Further research may be implemented countrywide. Finally, investigation centered around selected determinants and outcomes of customer satisfaction, which were all direct effects. Future research may include some other outcome variables as well as some moderator and mediating variables to improve the model.

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