PURCHASING INTENTIONS OF CONSUMERS AT A CITY SUPERSTORE

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study strives to understand what drives suburban superstore customers to buy. With this information, businesses and marketers may better target and interact with these categories of consumers while also gaining insight into the areas that still require significant improvement to maintain their place in the minds of consumers.

Theoretical framework: Over the previous two decades, Bangladesh's superstore commerce has flourished. Multiple reasons have contributed to the rise in the popularity of superstores, which has resulted in intense competition among them. Because of this, researching shoppers' habits concerning supermarkets is crucial. (Alam & Noor, 2020). To broaden the subject of superstore literature in Bangladesh, more research is needed to understand customer behavior patterns, particularly the issue of loyalty.

Design/methodology/approach: This survey focuses on the inhabitants of Bangladesh's northern region. Before the survey, there was a brief discussion that aided in developing a descriptive research design regarding the purchasing behavior of supermarket customers. A research design has been developed using the original UTAUT model, first introduced in 2003 by V. Venkatesh and colleagues (Venkatesh, Morris , Davis , & Davis, 2003), and the study's hypotheses were evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha Correlation, structural equation regression analysis, Pearson's Correlation analysis, and Scatter plot for Regression analysis.

Findings: The study found a strong correlation between Purchase Intention and consumer awareness, promotional activities, Peer Group influences, and superstore amenities.

Research, Practical & Social Implications: Entrepreneurs find it challenging to develop super shops in urban and suburban areas of Bangladesh, an agricultural country in the lower middle class. Quality goods with a reasonable price strategy, positive word of mouth with celebrity endorsement, extra care, offer and discount, location, and cultural acceptance are all significant elements that require much more attention to attract mega shop customers than typical shops. Marketers and entrepreneurs can establish and successfully promote their super shop businesses in small cities with the help of this study.

Originality/value: Anybody concerned with the mentality of shoppers in an emerging economy should benefit from this research. Business owners and marketers can nudge consumers in that direction by creating exciting promotional activities that make buyers feel compelled to visit the super shop.

Keywords: Consumer Awareness, Purchase intention, Super-shop, Urban area, Consumer Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer psychology is a magical tool that can transform a business from conventional to chic, deep into the market to barely scratching the surface, and market copycat to industry pioneer. Consumer spending is the engine that drives the economy's expansion and contraction phases. Demand is the name given to an economy's circular flow of money. Demand from customers spurs several inventions that lead to prosperous circumstances, but on the other hand, the same consumer psychology also contributes to the failure of any organization. The hectic pace of modern life necessitates a relaxing setting where shopping can be done in comfort. A superstore may draw customers for various reasons, including its practical value, service alternatives, service staff, convenience and safety features, and design and aesthetic appeal. (Kiriri, 2019). There is a mutual influence between consumer habits, retail format (such as the prevalence of superstores), advertising approaches, and national economic conditions. Targeted marketing can assist in ascending to the top in small cities, whereas launching a superstore in a large city is straightforward but tough to maintain as a leader or competitor. Lots of theory about shopping has been developed to understand consumer purchase intentions. Theories of shopping concern the anthropological background of customers. (Miller, 2013).

Professor Malcolm P. McNair gave a vital concept about retail growth patterns, the term "THE WHEEL of retailing" by Professor Malcolm P. McNair. This theory says that when new store formats come onto the market, they do so as low-price operators, low-margin, and low-status (Duncan, 1950). With rising investments and higher operating costs, they gradually acquire more complicated premises and facilities. Finally, they develop into high-price, high-cost merchants susceptible to newer sorts that experience the same cycles. Department stores, which formerly battled with smaller businesses, now confront discount shop and superstore competition (Hollander, 1960).

Bangladesh has experienced the spread super shop concept, like other developing nations worldwide, since the 1990s (Islam K. W., 2021). However, after 2010, it began to take on an international dimension. The country's super shop industry has shown consistent expansion. Rise in per capita income and urbanization are hastening the profitability and evolution of this sector due to Bangladeshi people's shifting income levels toward the middle-income status. Bangladesh's retailing is experiencing shifts in three ways: The rapid expansion of retail space in urban and semi-urban locations, the rapid expansion of online shopping and e-commerce, and The beginning of selling through multiple channels. The fourth wave of retail development is reflected in how retailing is practiced in Bangladesh, based on a combined theory of products in the industry (Alam M. J., 2018).Customers will adore and greatly value the Super Shop's décor. The Super Shop's extraordinarily eye-catching and profitable décor entices consumers to buy the goods. Supermarkets are frequently seen to target affluent people in Bangladesh. The success of Bangladesh's supermarket chains can be attributed to various factors, including retailer friendliness, a desire to assist customers in solving difficulties, and precise criteria for service delivery. The proprietors of Bangladeshi supermarkets are advised to consider these factors while formulating plans for enhancing customer satisfaction and expanding their operations in Bangladesh (Islam, et al., 2017).

This study's primary goal is to examine the variables influencing suburban superstore patrons' propensity to purchase. Besides these, evaluating the current market practices, including positive and negative aspects of purchasing from the super shop, is also a concerning issue of this study. Moreover, this study will scratch the areas that need improvement to hold a position in consumers' minds.

Even though Super Shop is not a new chain in Bangladesh, it is unique to Rajshahi. Bargaining is permitted on most items sold in traditional markets in Bangladesh but not at the country's megastores. Products are categorized and sorted by specialty in the market. Due to the fact that only customers of superstores in Rajshahi City were included in this study, it is conceivable that the reflection of results for holistic will be ambiguous. Accuracy can be improved with more significant research into other areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A person's degree of satisfaction with their local supermarket is influenced by several factors, including but not limited to their income and expenditures, education level, gender, age, the frequency with which they shop there, the accessibility of (nearly) all the things they need, and the cost of those products. (Azad, Hossain, & Parveen, 2011).

A consumer's level of delight with a product or service directly affects how loyal that customer will remain. A leading U.K. retail shop research study discovered that policy implications such as customer

care, more personnel on the shop floor, training on customer care and items, and physical facilities should be essential concerns to generate loyal customers. (Gobiraj & Balasundaram, 2011).

In contrast to Western nations, Sri Lanka has yet to have mega markets divided into socioeconomic groups. To serve all the client segments, businesses must sell various product brands under different pricing points. Supermarkets may only sometimes be able to satisfy every customer's needs; therefore, they may feel like a one-stop shop (Gunarathne, 2014).

Cognitive legitimacy and risk propensity drive purchase intention, while perceived benefit plays a more moderate impact. Consumers' willingness to take risks is positively associated with their purchase purpose, as reported in a survey of 315 people in Shanghai, China. Additionally, the interaction points to perceived reward as a moderator of the association between cognitive validity and risk inclination (Li, Guo, Xu, & Yu, 2022). Consumer knowledge, experience, and familiarity with the product influence customers' purchasing intention. (Ateke & Didia, 2018).

Interpersonal interactions, Physical characteristics, dependability, problem-solving skills, and policy were found in the study to be significant factors for Bangladesh's supermarkets (Islam, et al., 2017).

Retail stores in developed and emerging countries use service quality as a marketing strategy to satisfy customers. Customer happiness at Sri Lanka's retail megastores is tied directly to the quality of the service they receive. Brand equity, customer loyalty, and retention should be related to retail service excellence to understand retail supermarket marketing better (Ushantha, Wijeratne, & Achchuthan, 2014).

The essential characteristics that affect customers' experiences in Bangladeshi supermarkets include staff assistance, time savings, responsiveness, flexible modes of payment, product authenticity with clear labeling, return policy, convenient location, and reasonable pricing (Rahman, Nower, Hassan, & Samiha, 2019). Higher customer satisfaction, increased revenue, and improved retail store performance result from high service quality. A survey of 400 Indian shoppers reveals that positive reinforcement and policy significantly affect the quality of services received as a whole and repeat business (Sirohi & Kumar, 2018).

The marketing strategies of retail supermarkets in Sri Lanka could benefit from a closer examination of how concepts like retail service quality relate to consumer loyalty, customer retention, and brand equity. Supermarket service quality is determined by physical factors such as appearance, convenience, dependability; promises, doing the right thing, personal interaction; instilling confidence, courtesy/helpfulness, problem solutions, and policy. (Sivathaasan, Ushantha, & Achchuthan, 2014).

An analysis of supermarkets in Pakistan reveals those factors such as store association, perceived quality, personnel services, awareness, conveniences, perceived price, and product assortments impact consumers' purchasing decisions. With store loyalty as a mediator, these factors have a strong positive relationship with purchase intention (Fareed, Tariq, Mian, din, & Hassan, 2016).

Another study has discovered eight significant factors affecting customers' decisions to buy FMCG products in Bangladesh. These include product characteristics, end-of-aisle displays, time restraints, in-store T.V. commercials, variety-seeking behavior, sales promotion, lack of brand availability, and product convenience (Ullah & Prince, 2012). Numerous macro and microeconomic factors have a tight relationship with the expansion of supermarkets, according to a study in the Sylhet district of Bangladesh. FDI, urbanization, women's employment, and GDP per capita are some of the macroeconomic factors. The development of supermarkets in Bangladesh is directly correlated with other microeconomic factors such as age, education, and income (Farid, Alam, Rahman, Barua, & Sarker, 2018).

Customer satisfaction, which rises with service excellence, has a more significant impact on purchase intention than service quality. Last but not least, customer satisfaction effectively mediates the impact of service quality on purchase intention (Maharsi, Njotoprajitno, Hadianto, & Wiraatmaja, 2021).

Superstores use several promotional methods to market their goods and services. Atmosphere engagement impact shows delight and attractiveness in superstore activities, while promotional effect uses discounts, presents, and lower prices. Curiosity-piques, kid-friendly areas, benefits-promising displays, celebratory activities, and internet access effectively draw people to superstores (Kiran, Majumdar, & Kishore, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

A thorough literature research and the outcomes of focused group discussions are used to determine the criteria in this study. Peer pressure, cashless transactions, the availability of international goods, and the shopping atmosphere are all factors identified in a study of millennial and Gen Z shoppers' decision to frequent urban megastores over smaller, independent retailers (Karmakar, Afrin, & Ahmed, 2023).

After cleaning up the incomplete data, 331 of the 344 respondents from the Google form survey were chosen for further investigation. An enlightening explanation of the store and consumer behavior was given before the survey. On a five-point Likert scale, all respondents voluntarily participated in and completed the self-administered questionnaire. The query is constructed to be answered using five Likert scales with five evaluation points each.

For analyzing data following method was used:
  I. Cronbach's Alpha Correlation test
 II. Structural Equation
III. Descriptive statistics
IV. Pearson's Correlation analysis.
 V. Regression analysis
VI. Scatter plot for Regression analysis

HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

In light of the previous research, the authors of this study intended to investigate the following four possibilities.

H_1: Customer Awareness (CA) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop have a positive relationship.

H_2: Promotional Activities (PA) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop have a positive relationship.

H_3: Facilitating Conditions (FC) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop have a positive relationship.

H_4: Peer Group Influence (PG) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop have a positive relationship.

Adopted by Venkatesh et al. (2003), the following model illustrates one dependent and four independent variables.

Figure 1. Hypothesis Model

Independent variables

Dependent variable
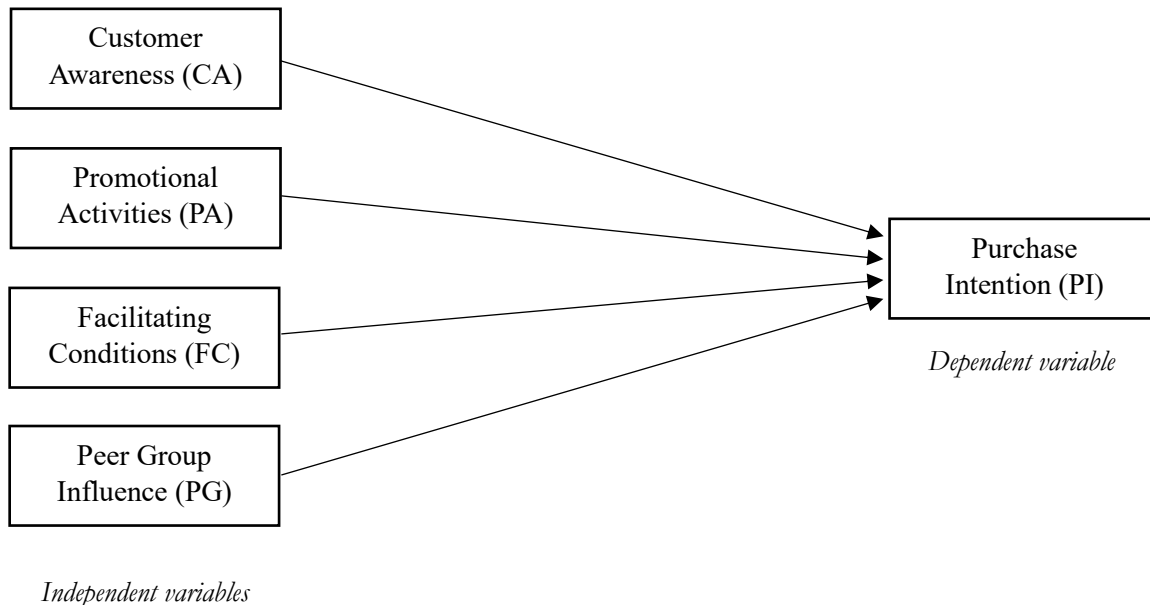
Source: Adopted from Venkatesh et al. (2003)

STRUCTURAL EQUATION:

The structural equation has been derived from the study model illustrated in Figure 1.

The equation:

$$PI = \beta1\ CA + \beta2\ PA + \beta3\ FC + \beta4\ PG + \epsilon1$$

Note: β = Beta ε = Epsilon, PI = Purchase Intention, CA = Customer Awareness, PA = Promotional Activities, FC = Facilitating Conditions, PG = Peer Group Influence.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

RELIABILITY TEST:

Table I: Statistics of Reliability.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.86	35

Source: Author's Illustration from SPSS results

A reliability test was conducted, and the questionnaire utilized in this study's analysis scored an acceptable 0.860 on the Cronbach Alpha scale.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

For this study, an online survey was administered, and data was collected from 331 respondents. Approximately 61.3% of respondents are men, while 38.7% are women; 91.3% of respondents fall between the ages of 15 and 30. Most respondents (68.7%) are currently enrolled in postsecondary education, while 15.4% are employed in the private sector. About 85.1% of respondents live in urban areas, while the remaining 14.9% reside in suburban areas.

Table II: Respondent profiles and demographics.

Attribute	Category	Percentage (%)
Age	15-30	91.3
	31-45	6.1
	46-60	1.7
	61-75	0.3
	76 to up	0.3
Gender	Male	61.5
	Female	38.5
Education Qualification	Below SSC	0.3
	SSC	0.6
	HSC	7.3
	Undergraduate	68
	Master's	22.6
	Above Postgraduate	1.2
Occupation	Student	71.1
	Govt.Job	2.3
	NGO	1.5
	Own business	4.7
	Private job	15.5
	Others	5
Residential area	Urban	84.4
	Sub urban	15.6

Source: Author's Illustration from SPSS results

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table III: Descriptive Statistics of consumer's purchase intention toward the super shop.

	Consumer Awareness	Promotional Activities	Facilitating Condition	Peer Group Influence	Purchase Intention
Minimum	8	5	6	7	6
Maximum	30	25	30	35	30
Mean	21.13	16.75	23.40	21.16	21.16
Std. Deviation	3.10	3.05	3.11	4.57	3.74
Skewness	-0.03	-0.34	-1.01	-0.03	-0.67
Kurtosis	1.17	0.80	3.90	-0.04	1.72

Source: Author's Illustration from SPSS results

CORRELATION ANALYSIS:

Table IV: Scale of Pearson's Correlation between the dependent and independent variables.

	Consumer Awareness	Promotional Activities	Facilitating Condition	Peer Group Influence	Purchase Intention
Consumer Awareness	1				
Promotional Activities	0.497**	1			
Facilitating Condition	0.442**	0.395**	1		
Peer Group Influence	0.439**	0.612**	0.272**	1	
Purchase Intention	0.564**	0.630**	0.539**	0.610**	1

** The significance level for correlation is 0.01 (2-tailed).

From a Person's Correlation analysis, the study found that Consumer Awareness (CA) is strongly correlated with Peer Group (PG) & Purchase Intention (PI).

Purchase Intention (PI) is strongly correlated with Promotional Activities (PA) (0.630). Also, the Peer Group (PG) strongly correlates with PI (0.610). Consumer Awareness (CA) & Facilitating Conditions (FC) positively correlate with PI, respectively 0.564, 0.539.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The SPSS regression analyses investigated hypothesized associations between independent and dependent variables. Standardized and unstandardized regression analyses are used to study the independent-dependent variable relationship.

Table V(a): Model Summary for Regression

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.77[a]	0.60	0.60	2.35

a. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Group Influence, Facilitating Condition, Consumer Awareness, Promotional Activities

Table V(b): Model Summary for Regression (ANOVA[a])

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2615.89	4	653.97	118.51	.000[b]

Residual	1765.89	320	5.52
Total	4381.77	324	

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Group Influence, Facilitating Condition, Consumer Awareness, Promotional Activities

Table VI: The Regression Analysis of the Coefficient between Consumer Awareness, Promotional Activities, Facilitating Condition, and Peer Group Influence on Purchase Intention

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-1.54	1.14		-1.35	0.18
Consumer Awareness	0.26	0.05	0.22	5.05	0.00
Promotional Activities	0.27	0.06	0.22	4.53	0.00
Facilitating Condition	0.32	0.05	0.27	6.49	0.00
Peer Group Influence	0.25	0.04	0.30	6.61	0.00

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

The equations from the result are as follows:

$$PI = 0.262\ CA + 0.268\ PA + 0.321\ FC + 0.246\ PG + \epsilon_1$$

Figure 2. The proposed structural model's outcomes
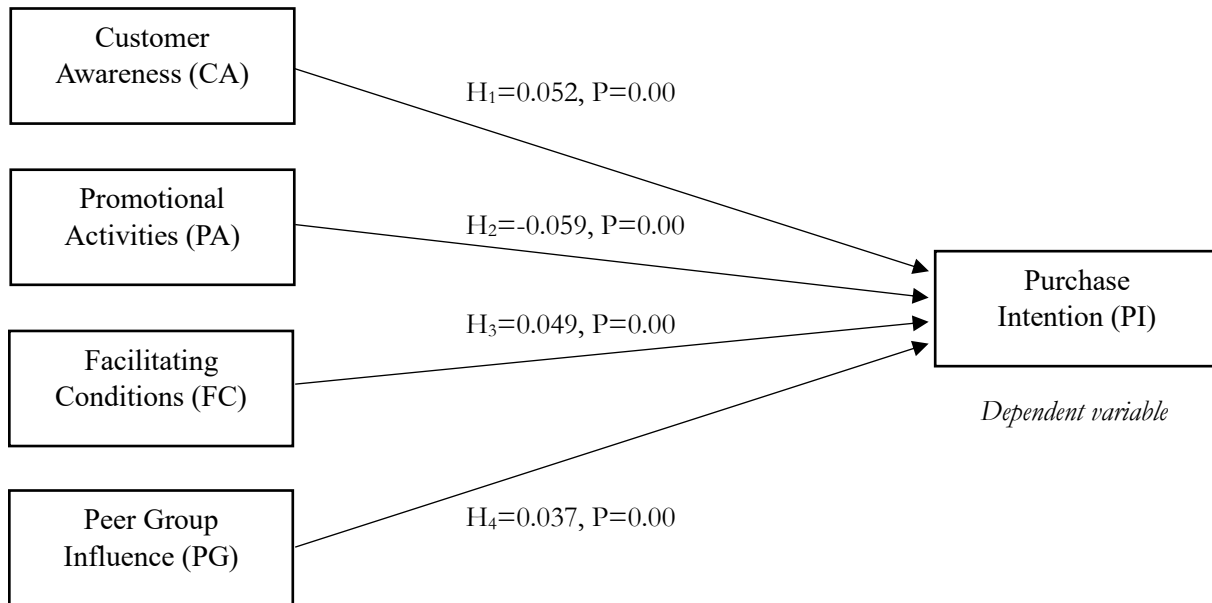
(Prepared by the Authors, 2023).

H1 (Customer Awareness on Purchase Intention): Regression analysis of coefficient shows the coefficient between Customer Awareness (CA) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop. There is a

positive effect of Customer Awareness on Purchase Intention. The standardized coefficient value is ß=.052, and the p-value of 0.00>0.05.

H2 (Promotional Activities on Purchase Intention): Regression analysis of coefficient shows the coefficient between Customer Awareness (CA) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop. Promotional activities (PA) and purchase intentions (PI) are related to one another in a way that is advantageous to the super shop. The standardized coefficient value is ß=.059, and the p-value of 0.00>0.05 strongly supported the hypothesis.

H3 (Facilitating Conditions on Purchase Intention): The standardized coefficient value is ß=.049, and the p-value of 0.00>0.05 strongly supported that a strong positive relationship exists between Facilitating Conditions (FC) and Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop.

H4 (Peer Group Influence on Purchase Intention): Purchase Intention (PI) towards the super shop and Peer Group Influence (PG) are positively related, proven by the standardized coefficient value is ß=.037, and the p=0.00.

Figure 3. Scatter plot for Regression analysis
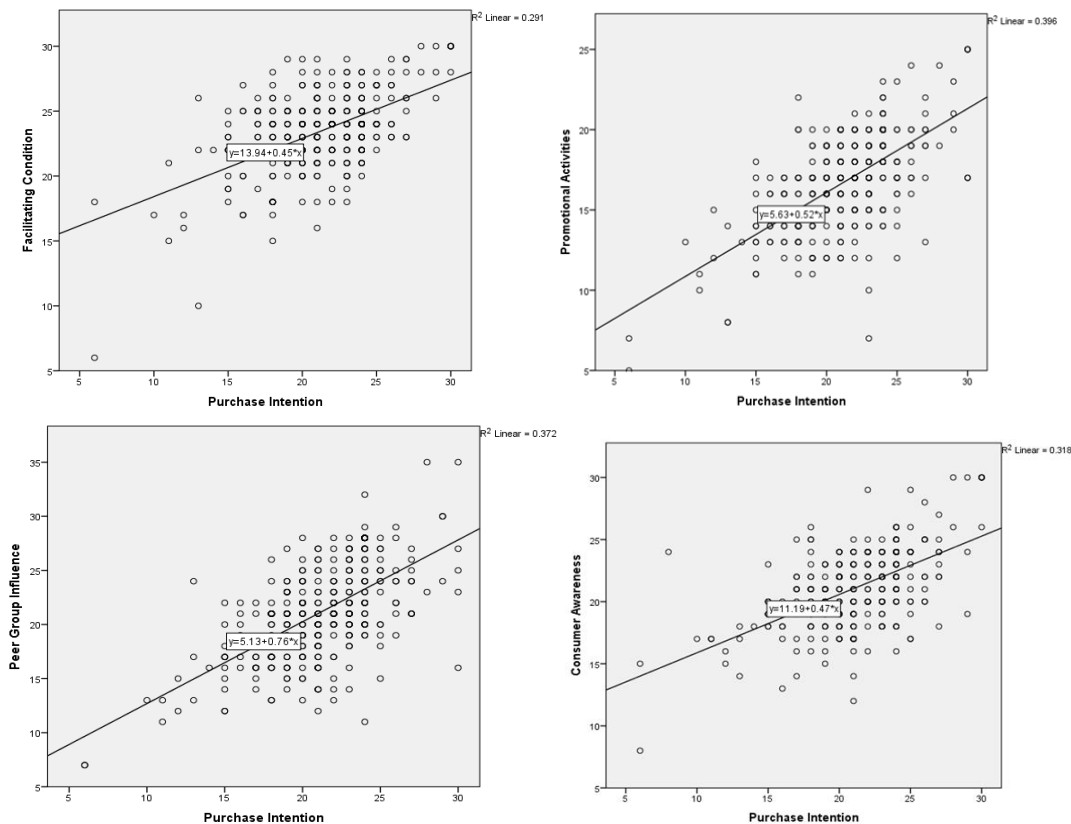
Source: Scatter plot analysis from SPSS

CONCLUSION

This study intends to gauge consumer acceptance of Rajshahi's supermarkets and their level of consumer awareness. Customer satisfaction in Bangladesh's large retail enterprises was linked to interpersonal communication variables. Super shops are a particular kind of supermarket that lets consumers shop on their own time and provide a variety of foodstuffs, drinks, and household items. This store format is more extensive and offers more products than its predecessors, the grocery store, but it

is less extensive than a full-scale traditional market. Rajshahi, a divisional city in Bangladesh's northern area, has recently embraced supermarkets' convenience. This study delves into the dynamics between shoppers' intent to buy and four key determinants of that intent concerning the megastores. These four groups comprise consumer awareness, promotional efforts, peer group influences, and superstore facilities. Through descriptive analysis, regression analysis, structural equation model, and scatter plot analysis, this study found positive effects of customer awareness, promotional activities, peer group influence, and facilitating conditions on the purchase intention (PI) towards the super shop. The study proves that the correlation between purchase intention and these four factors is strong. This research provides insight into customers' purchasing intentions for existing super-shop businesses as well as for entrepreneurs or companies that are about to launch or plan to launch their super-shop businesses. Establishing a superstore in a suburban location, where mom-and-pop stores still reign supreme, presents a more significant barrier for retailers than in a city. A study of urbanites found that factors such as local brands' quality, country of origin, price offers, promotional actions, and foreign brands' availability all shape consumers' decisions about which products to buy (Karmakar & Ahmed, 2019). Marketers should focus on demographic segmentation, with age and occupation as the most critical factors. As a bonus, raising customer consciousness is facilitated by providing high-quality goods at affordable prices. Marketers should prioritize locations, cleanliness, and hygienic standards to attract consumers more effectively.

Last but not least, more focus should be placed on promotional efforts. The right advertising campaign can draw customers to a certain megastore. Many people were influenced to purchase because of local celebrities' appeal and reliability. Electronic word-of-mouth can be a powerful instrument in the digital age. Research conducted on members of Generation Z reveals a positive if slight, correlation between e-WOM adoption and brand love (Sethuraman, G, & M, 2023). Endorsing a notable public figure is another critical factor in drawing consumers' attention. The celebrity's gender and type should remain the primary priorities to satisfy customers and foster favorable attitudes towards the business or product. Additionally, while considering celebrities, they should consider their overall reputation and reliability, deciding whether to endorse them (Khan, Istihad, & Ali, 2021). Product placement is yet another strategic method for attracting customers. Customers respond favorably to products featured in movies, reality TV shows, games, sports, and dramas. Super shops in urban locations might attract customers by engaging in various product placement initiatives (Karmakar, Ahad, & Hyder, 2021).

This research should benefit anyone interested in the psychology of shoppers in an economy still developing. Those in charge of advertising can encourage customers by offering tempting incentives to visit the megastore. It cannot be argued that the current study is entirely conclusive because it was limited to the northern region of Bangladesh, and because the responses could have been arbitrary, it would be good to perform similar research across many areas to see how different cultures and economies influence customers' propensity to make a particular purchase. In an additional study, GDP, and inflation rates should be considered when analyzing the factors influencing a customer's decision to shop at a superstore.

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