

Impact of Online Review on Consumers' Online Purchasing Intention: An Empirical Study on University Students in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Research purpose: This study examines how online reviews influence consumers' online purchasing intention in Bangladesh, a rapidly growing e-commerce market where trust, product quality verification, and delivery delays remain salient barriers.

Design/methodology/approach: Primary survey data were collected via a Google Forms questionnaire from Bangladeshi online shoppers. The relationships between online review attributes—review credibility, review valence, review contemplation, and review endorsement—and purchasing intention were analyzed using ordinal logistic regression.

Findings: All four review attributes exhibit statistically significant associations with consumers' online purchasing intention. Collectively, the results indicate that online reviews play a decisive role in shaping purchase intentions within the Bangladeshi context.

Originality/value: The study provides context-specific evidence from Bangladesh and differentiates the effects of distinct review attributes (credibility, valence, contemplation, endorsement), offering a nuanced understanding of how reviews translate into purchasing intention in an emerging e-commerce environment.

Practical implications: E-commerce platforms and sellers should strengthen review systems by promoting credible, informative, and well-endorsed reviews; facilitating thoughtful review content; and implementing mechanisms that enhance trust (e.g., verified-purchase badges, anti-fraud checks). Such actions can mitigate perceived risks, build consumer confidence, and increase conversion rates.

Research limitations: The use of self-reported, cross-sectional survey data collected online may limit causal inference and generalizability beyond the sampled population. Future research could employ longitudinal designs, incorporate behavioral purchase data, and test moderating factors (e.g., product type, platform trust) to validate and extend these findings.

Keywords: Online review, Consumer behaviour, Online purchasing intention, Online shopping

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1. Introduction

The economy of Bangladesh has witnessed a paradigm change in the last 10 years, taking a more digital and consumption-based turn. Being a lower-middle-income nation hoping to achieve higher economic progress, the digital connection of Bangladesh has been showing significant improvement, including the number of internet users that crossed 130 million in 2023 and an increased priority to use mobile-based services (BTRC, 2023). It has been under this pushing activity that retail behavior has greatly changed, particularly among the younger generation and, as such, there exists a thriving industry of e-commerce. The digitally literate and economically productive group, the university students, is also rapidly becoming a prominent member of this movement, the shift towards online consumption.

There is online shopping where websites like Daraz, Rokomari, and Chaldal have grown amid this growth. Nevertheless, there are still issues, such as delayed delivery, issues with the authenticity of the goods, and in general the unwillingness to trust online sellers. Online reviews as the source of information and assurance have become imperative in this context as the Bangladesh consumers adopt it as a part of their daily life. As Traore (2024) remarks, online reviews might have a considerable impact on a brand image and could even replace the presence of a product evaluation as the consumers base their attitude and behavior on an online review.

A number of researchers have supported the increased use of online reviews in the decision-making process among consumers. Othman et al. (2022) found out that university students in particular were likely to use online feedback as a decision-making tool prior to making a final purchase, which they did because they sought assurance concerning the quality of a product as well as satisfaction with it. Zhang et al. (2020) also indicate that the valence of a review, which is positive or negative, has a significant effect on the attitude that consumers will have toward the risk and the intention to purchase. Antczak (2024) agrees with this statement and adds that Internet marketing methods, such as online reviews, are weapons in the hands of leaders that get customers to favor them and tend to behave in a desirable way in the online market.

Nevertheless, most of the available literature focuses on global or Western settings, not including other culturally and economically different markets like Bangladesh. Sharma and Kumar (2023) do the research on how brands implement online reviews as their research activities; however, they are rather silent about South Asian countries. To this end, Uddin et al. (2024) call upon further research on the influence of social and economic dynamics in Bangladesh on consumer behavior, especially the one of the university student population that features high-level participation in the realm of the digital environment and operates within the confines of the budget and infrastructure.

Moreover, the general digital marketing of Bangladesh is changing, and consumers are increasingly sensitive towards online services and user-created information. According to Widyatmoko (2022), the new methods of marketing appearance where new methods are used taking advantage of social media and the implementation of digital feedback

systems that contribute to influencing buying decisions. According to Ennaouri and Zellou (2024), reliable online reviews can decrease information asymmetry not only but also guide consumers to distinguish credible products in the digital market, which is filled with many products.

Even though the phenomenon of consumer behavior that is shaped by the effect of online reviews has received significant scholarly attention on the global level, there is still an important empirical gap regarding the way such dynamics work in a rather distinct socio-economic and cultural environment of Bangladesh. The present research will fill that gap as it will analyse how credibility of reviews, valence of reviews, contemplation of reviews, and endorsements of reviews influence online purchase intention of university students in Bangladesh, a demographic group that will determine the digital and economic future of the country.

2. Research Objectives and Questions

The general objective of this study is to identify the impact of online reviews on consumers' online purchasing intentions in Bangladesh at present.

Specific objectives

1. To assess the influence of review credibility, valence, contemplation, and endorsements on purchasing intention.
2. To determine which factor has the most significant impact.
3. To explore how Bangladeshi students use online reviews in decision-making.

Research questions

RQ1: How does review credibility affect students' online purchasing intention?

RQ2: What is the impact of review valence on purchasing intention?

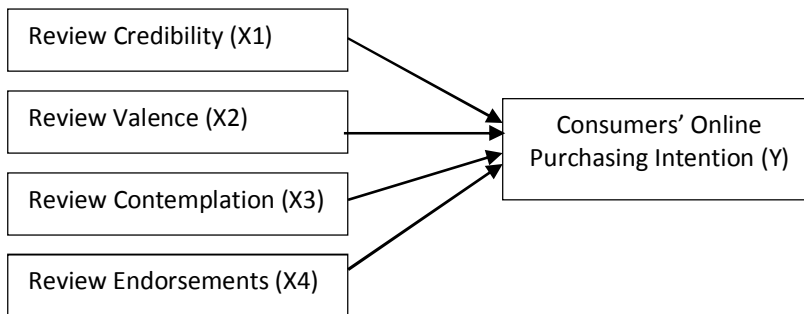
RQ3: How does review contemplation influence online purchase decisions?

Online shopping and online retailers are growing rapidly in Bangladesh. It is very important to determine the impact of online reviews on the buying intentions of consumers. So that the sellers of goods and services in Bangladesh can improve their product quality and other problems to make online shopping more trustworthy. The sellers will also know how the positive and negative reviews affect their business. This study will also help Bangladeshi consumers of online shopping find out how their purchasing intention is dependent on others' reviews.

3. Research Model

The following model is used to determine the impact of online reviews on consumers' online purchasing intention. In the model below, each factors shown have a particular impact on purchasing decision of any consumer. Ishaq et al. (2022) employed this model to assess the impact of prior product expertise, information influence, review consistency, review quality, and value expression influence on consumer purchasing intentions at the Lahore Institute of Education. Kevin et al. (2020) also employed the model to assess the

influence of source credibility, review quality, review quantity, and review valence on online purchasing intention in Tokopedia³.



4. Literature Review

Connections between online reviews and consumer shopping decisions matter a lot, mainly in emerging areas such as Bangladesh, where e-commerce is rapidly growing. This connection should be well understood, mainly by looking at it within the viewpoints of established theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Information Adoption Model (IAM). Such theories offer a means to see how online reviews affect consumers, including students at universities in Bangladesh.

It is believed by the Theory of Planned Behavior that how people behave depends on their intentions which in turn depend on factors like a person's attitude, their social influences and the control they feel they have. How someone feels about shopping online can be influenced strongly by online reviews. A lot of positive reviews on the internet typically makes people view the product favorably, making them more likely to buy it (Vionasafira & Sjabadhyni, 2018; Tjhin & Permatasari, 2019; Ananda et al., 2023). This relationship underlines the role of review valence (the feeling the review leaves behind, whether good or bad) in shaping customers' opinions and impressions about products and services.

In addition, online reviews are dependable and informative, so they carry a lot of weight in making purchases. When buying online, people usually look at these reviews for guidance due to their reliability. People usually trust online reviews, which, according to studies, have a direct effect on their decisions to buy products or services (Dwilestari & Erdiansyah, 2023; Ge et al., 2023; Stefanny et al., 2022). Review numbers seem to enhance their importance; studies report that more reviews are linked with customers being more trusting and likely to buy (Cheng et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2022; Helmi et al., 2024).

³Tokopedia stands as a preeminent marketplace among the citizens of Indonesia. Established in 2009, Tokopedia operates exclusively in Indonesia and is headquartered in Jakarta. While claiming to be present in 99 percent of the nation's cities, the company provides 865 million products from more than 12 million merchants.

The reliability of reviews can play a big role in persuading people to make a purchase. Trusted reviews increase the desire to buy, because they help lower the risk associated with the purchase (Dwilestari & Erdiansyah, 2023; Helmi et al., 2024). It has been pointed out in research that how well-written online reviews are, based on their clarity, detail, and authenticity, often predicts what consumers are likely to buy. According to Cheng et al. (2023), Xie et al. (2015), and Yu et al. (2016) state that both the reliability and quantity of online reviews influence a person's decision to choose a product in the market.

Reviews help consumers decide on purchases because the number and reliability of the reviews make things more understandable. When consumers pick reviews from persons with similar traits or backgrounds, it becomes easier for them to be trusting about what to purchase online. Real feelings triggered in reviews can encourage people to buy a product. Being aware of how different demographic aspects such as gender and age, play a role in processing or using online reviews gives more insight into how to shape marketing approaches (Ahn & Lee, 2024; Bae & Lee, 2010; Campos & Campos, 2024).

In addition, there is not much coverage in the research literature about online reviews and their role in South Asia, specifically in Bangladesh. Although there is lots of global research on how reviews impact how people buy, similar information from Bangladesh is not widely available. Because no such task has been completed yet, others can contribute more research. Studying how South Asian consumers behave online might lead to insights that contrast with what is seen in the West, contributing to our knowledge of e-commerce in this region, (Daowd et al., 2020; Cheong et al., 2020; Kwamboka & Owino, 2024).

Various hypotheses may be formed using the concepts and results discussed above. A possible example of a hypothesis is that the presence of more positive online reviews is linked to university students in Bangladesh being more likely to purchase items, which underlines the importance of maintaining a supportive online review atmosphere. Another suggestion is that belief in reviewers' credibility adds to the relationship between how a review is rated and whether a person decides to purchase, meaning that believable good reviews are even more effective than unbelievable good reviews (Shukla & Mishra, 2022; Ikhsan, Iqbal, & Akbar, 2024). Remote work also allows for thinking that the perceptions of online reviews could be shaped by demographic variables, including gender, thus affecting the decision to buy something (Ahn & Lee, 2024; Bae & Lee, 2010).

Starting from these hypotheses, we can examine in detail the role of online reviews in influencing the decision to buy for Bangladeshi university students. More research can shed light on the particular forms of consumer behavior observed in this context by using quantitative approaches. So, approaching online reviews with care can help businesses adapt to what customers want and make the most of new technological progress, improving their marketing strategies.

Clearly, more studies on the subject stress the great importance of online reviews on how people shop or choose products today. It helps both scholars in marketing and marketers themselves who are looking to respond and adapt to changes in consumer preferences because of the way online social spaces are getting more complex. Proper use of online reviews will continue to be important for e-commerce in Bangladesh and other rapidly growing regions.

5. Research Hypotheses

Drawing from the Information Adoption Model, the Theory of Planned Behaviour, and Elaboration Likelihood Theory, this study examines four key features of online reviews—credibility, valence, contemplation, and endorsements. Prior research highlights these features as central to shaping how consumers interpret reviews and make purchase decisions.

Review credibility refers to whether consumers perceive reviews as trustworthy and reliable. When reviews feel credible, they reduce uncertainty, build confidence in product evaluations, and ultimately encourage consumers to act on those evaluations.

H1: Review credibility is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions.

Review valence refers to the overall positive or negative tone of reviews. In line with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, reviews with a positive tone foster favourable attitudes toward a product and increase the likelihood of purchase.

H2: Review valence is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions.

Review contemplation describes the amount of attention and thought consumers give to processing reviews. According to Elaboration Likelihood Theory, when people engage more deeply with review content, they form stronger, more enduring attitudes that better predict purchase decisions.

H3: Review contemplation is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions.

Review endorsements (such as likes, “helpful” votes, or shares) serve as social proof that signals a review’s value to others. These visible cues enhance perceptions of usefulness and credibility, further motivating consumers to follow through with a purchase.

H4: Review endorsements are positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This research employs a case study with a quantitative research method. A case of university students is selected purposively. The selection of university students is justified as they are relatively more aware of the internet and online activities. They are more inquisitive in relation to online purchases. Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (JKKNIU), Trishal, Mymensingh, Bangladesh, was selected as the case site. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data. This study used quantitative data from 137 respondents. Customers, consumers, and end users who purchase from online shops are the units of analysis. The data was gathered using a self-administered 5-point Likert scale closed-question questionnaire. The Google Form questionnaire was delivered by email to the respondents. In addition, some relevant data were collected from secondary sources. The secondary sources were different journals, books, websites, reports, newspapers, etc.

6.2 Sampling Method

A simple random sampling has been used in this study. There were 8340 Students at JKKNIU. A total of 137 students were selected randomly. A 10% of the total population was selected using the sample calculator provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (Confidence Level = 95%, Population Size = 1356, Proportion = 0.1, Confidence Interval = 0.05, Upper = 0.15000 and Lower = 0.05000, Standard Error = 0.02551, Relative Standard Error (RSE) = 25.51, Sample Size = 137). This study analyzed and presented data using statistical techniques, including classification, tabulation, frequency distribution, correlation, and percentage. The data acquired for this study were interpreted and presented using SPSS 26.0.

6.3 Data Analysis

Ordinal logistic regression was used in this study to determine the impact of online reviews on consumers' purchasing intention. The data was primarily collected with a questionnaire in qualitative form and then transformed into a nominal scale to analyze the data. To measure the impact, online purchasing intention has been taken as the dependent variable, and review credibility, review valence, review contemplation, and review endorsements have been taken as independent variables. The goodness of fit measures whether the model fits the data. Pseudo R-square is used to find out the level of impact online reviews have on consumers' purchasing intention. Parameter estimation was done to determine the individual significance of every independent variable.

Ordinal logistic regression

The general form of the ordinal logistic regression model can be expressed as follows:

$$\log \left(\frac{P(Y \leq j)}{P(Y > j)} \right) = \alpha_j + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4$$

Where:

- j represents the different thresholds of the ordinal dependent variable Y (e.g., 1, 2, 3, ..., depending on the number of levels in Y).
- α_j represents the intercepts for each cumulative logit (threshold).
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ are the coefficients for the independent variables X_1, X_2, X_3 , and X_4 , respectively.

In the context of the study, the model can be specified as:

$$\log \left(\frac{P(Y \leq j)}{P(Y > j)} \right) = \alpha_j + \beta_1(\text{Review Valence}) + \beta_2(\text{Review Credibility}) + \beta_3(\text{Review Endorsement}) + \beta_4(\text{Review Contemplation})$$

This model explains the log odds of a university student in Bangladesh having a purchasing intention at or below a certain level j based on the given independent variables.

Each α_j represents a different threshold parameter corresponding to the cumulative probabilities of the ordinal outcome categories. The coefficients $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$, and β_4 quantify the association between each independent variable and the log odds of the purchasing intention being at or below a certain level, holding other variables constant.

7. Results

Table 1: Demographic analysis of respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	88	64.2
	Female	49	35.8
	Total	137	100.0
Age	18-25	128	93.4
	26-30	9	6.6
	31-35	0	0.0
	Total	137	100.0
Educational Background	Bachelor's Degree	117	85.4
	Master's Degree	20	14.6
	Total	137	100.0

Table 1 contains the demographic analysis of 137 respondents. The table shows that the majority of the respondents are male (64.2%) and the rest are female (35.8%). In addition, most of them lie in the age group of 18-25 (93.4%), and 6.6% lie between 26-30 age group. And there are no respondents above the age 30. The majority of the respondents are

Bachelor's Degree or undergraduate students, which is 85.4%, and the rest are graduate or Master's Degree students (14.6%). The study area of this study is Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University. That's why all of them are either undergraduate or graduate students, and most their age is below 25.

Table 2: Online shopping behavior of respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
How frequently do you shop online?	Daily	1	0.7
	Weekly	26	19.0
	Monthly	72	52.6
	Occasionally	34	24.8
	Rarely	4	2.9
	Total	137	100.0
Which online shopping platform do you prefer in Bangladesh	Daraz	56	40.8
	Evaly	5	3.7
	AjkerDeal	7	5.1
	Chaldal	3	2.2
	Pickaboo	5	3.7
	Rokomari	38	27.8
	Bagdooom	1	0.7
	Others	10	7.3
	More than One	12	8.7
	Total	137	100.0
On average, how much time do you spend researching products before making an online purchase decision?	Less than 15 minutes	25	18.2
	15-30 minutes	35	25.5
	30 minutes to 1 hour	32	23.4
	1-2 hours	24	17.5
	More than 2 hours	21	15.3
	Total	137	100.0

Table 2 shows the online shopping behavior of 137 respondents. More than half of the respondents shop online monthly (52.6%), 24.8% shop occasionally, and 19.0% shop weekly. The majority of the respondents prefer Daraz (40.8%), and Rokomari (27.8%) for online shopping. 8.7% of respondents prefer more than one website for shopping online. Among the 137 respondents, 25.5% spent time researching the product 15-30 minutes, 23.4% spent 30 minutes to 1 hour, 17.5% spent 1-2 hours, and only 15.3% spent more than 2 hours. From Table 2, we can see that all the respondents shop online at least once in their lives. Most of them spend at least 15 minutes researching the product before purchasing it.

Table 3: Goodness-of-fit

	Chi-square	d.f.	Sig.
Pearson	20.586	99	1.000
Deviance	17.287	99	1.000

From the Goodness-of-fit table, it has been found that the model fits the data at the Pearson $P=1.000$. This p-value of Pearson and Deviance suggests that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The chi-square value is 20.586, which suggests that the difference between observed and expected frequencies is not very high. So, from the above table, it can be concluded that the model fits the data perfectly.

Table 4: Pseudo R-square

McFadden	.846
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The model is considered to have a good match for the data when the Pseudo r-square value is higher. The present instance demonstrates that the McFadden r-squared value is 0.846. This finding suggests that the influence of online evaluations on consumers' intentions to make purchases online is substantial. Online evaluations influence the intentions of consumers to make purchases on the Internet by 84.6%.

Table 5: Parameter estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Dependent Variable	Consumers' purchasing intention	23.877	6.886	12.025	1	.001	10.382	37.373
Independent Variable	Review credibility	2.887	1.018	8.037	1	.005	.891	4.883
	Review Valence	2.820	.887	10.113	1	.001	1.082	4.558
	Review contemplation	.048	.024	4.029	1	.045	.001	.094
	Review endorsements	1.803	.582	9.587	1	.002	.662	2.944

Table 5 estimates all the parameters. The p-values of all the independent variables are less than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), which indicates that all the variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable. Among all the independent variables, "review contemplation" has a less significant impact on consumers' purchasing intentions because its p-value is 0.045. However, "review credibility, review sentiment, review endorsements" significantly affect the dependent variable.

8. Discussion

8.1 The Impact of Review Credibility on Consumers' Online Purchase Intentions

Hypothesis H1 proposed that *review credibility is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions*. The results confirm this hypothesis ($\beta = 2.887$, $p = 0.005$), indicating a strong and statistically significant impact.

Prior studies also underline the role of perceived credibility in shaping interactions in online settings. Documents by Dwilestari and Erdiansyah (2023) and Ge et al. (2023) claim that reliable reviews help reduce the level of perceived risk and raise trust levels which causes consumers to be interested in buying. Because university students in Bangladesh often lack opportunities to physically examine their products, getting honest and real feedback becomes very important. The findings confirm the Information Adoption Model (IAM) which suggests that users are more likely to trust and use information from reliable sources and are therefore more influenced by it (Cheng et al., 2023; Stefanny et al., 2022).

8.2 The Impact of Review Valence on Consumers' Online Purchase Intentions

Hypothesis H2 stated that *review valence is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions*. This was supported by the results ($\beta = 2.820$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that more positively valenced reviews enhance students' purchasing intentions.

This supports the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), demonstrating that positive attitudes caused by online reviews increase the likelihood of people taking action (Vionasafira & Sjabadhyni, 2018; Ananda et al., 2023). Both Tjhin and Permatasari (2019) and Zhang et al. (2020) have demonstrated that review valence which distinguishes positive from negative reviews, strongly influences opinions about product quality and the risk of making a purchase. Bangladeshi students showed a strong preference for online shopping after reading positive, emotionally charged comments.

8.3 The Impact of Review Contemplation on Consumers' Online Purchase Intentions

Hypothesis H3 stated that *review contemplation is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions*. The findings indicate a marginal yet statistically significant relationship ($\beta = 0.048$, $p = 0.045$).

While the coefficient is not as high as other variables, it suggests that how well consumers look at review content affects their choices. This fits with what elaboration likelihood theory says which is that cognitive effort results in more reliable pattern of attitudes (Ahn & Lee, 2024; Bae & Lee, 2010). This may be because Bangladeshi students have to evaluate and think about products due to money issues or because they consider knowledge from their peers to be important.

8.4 The Impact of Review Endorsements on Consumers' Online Purchase Intentions

Hypothesis H4 stated that *review endorsements are positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions*. This hypothesis is strongly supported ($\beta = 1.803$, $p = 0.002$), indicating that social endorsement metrics (likes, shares, usefulness ratings) are influential.

It suggests that social proof plays a big role in digital platforms. Campos and Campos (2024) note that review endorsements have a peripheral effect, adding to the credibility and reliability of a product. For those students who decide information quality by counting the number of endorsements, these effects are significant. The results agree with previous findings that when reviews are liked and recommended often, customers tend to buy more (Chen et al., 2022; Kwamboka & Owino, 2024).

9. Conclusion

More and more young people, especially those in universities, are buying goods online in Bangladesh. Many advantages to online shopping such as convenience, a wide choice and information that is easy to find, are well known. However, there are also some difficulties. Main problems include poor assurance of product quality, late shipping and little belief in online sellers. By studying the behavior of users, the report found that online reviews help in controlling these difficulties by shaping people's online shopping choices.

This study proves using ordinal logistic regression that review trustworthiness, how positive or negative the reviews are, the amount of time spent considering and social endorsements are all related to higher purchase intention. The most important factors turned out to be the review credibility and valence, suggesting that people care strongly about how reliable and positive feedback appears. Thinking about and supporting their choices meanwhile can help make their evaluation more detailed and reassures them of their decision with the input of others.

Still, not everything works perfectly and there are some major challenges in the online retail sector of Bangladesh. Because no reliable process for review verification exists, it is easy for phony or biased reviews to appear on the site. Furthermore, reviews lacking a way for customers to comment ("was this review useful to you?") do not show many helpful opinions to others.

Policy and practical implications:

1. Platforms for e-commerce should make use of real purchase badges and artificial intelligence to spot and stop fake reviews from appearing.
2. Sellers and vendors should reach out to customers and ask for a review after their purchase to improve both the number and range of types of reviews.
3. Agencies working for consumer protection should make sure that review systems are transparent and that misleading or phony endorsements are penalized.
4. Marketers need to manage online reviews by answering both positive and negative feedback promptly and appropriately.
5. Campaigns should be set up to help people learn how to tell if a review is trustworthy and avoid being tricked.

Dealing with these issues can increase consumer trust and confidence which are key for online retail in Bangladesh to grow sustainably. This research supplies important information for making improvements, especially by studying the recent behavior of university students, who will be important for e-commerce in the future.

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