

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF INFORMATION SEARCH AND ALTERNATIVE
EVALUATION, PURCHASE AND POST PURCHASE AFFECTING CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION AND E-COMMERCE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN
MYANMAR



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An Empirical Study of Information Search and Alternative Evaluation, Purchase and Post Purchase Affecting Customer Satisfaction and E-commerce Business Development in Myanmar (75 pp.)

Advisor: Nittana Tarnittanakorn, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors of information search and alternative evaluation, purchase, and post purchase affecting online shopping customer satisfaction in Myanmar. The close-ended survey questionnaires were applied for gathering the data from 340 respondents who had experience in buying things online in Myanmar. The findings were found that the majority of respondents used Facebook to shop online product/service (66.8 %), showed that Myanmar online shoppers used Facebook as a platform to explore the product/service offered while 27.9 percentage of respondents were likely to shop on Shop.com.mm website. The result revealed that two independent variables, namely merchandise attributes and customer service had positive relationship with customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar with standardized coefficient beta values of 0.370 and 0.686 respectively. On the other hand, information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality and website design, purchase in the context of transaction capability, security privacy and payment did not affect customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

Keywords: Information search and alternative evaluation, Purchase, Post Purchase

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The empirical study of information search and alternative evaluation, purchase and post purchase affecting customer satisfaction and e-commerce business development in Myanmar will not be successful without the benevolent guidance and unwavering support of my advisor, Dr. Nittana Tarnittanakorn. I wish to convey my profound appreciation to her for the abundance of patience, invaluable suggestions, meticulous reviews, and the significant amount of time she dedicated to my academic pursuits. Gratitude is also extended to the respondents who generously participated in my survey questionnaires, contributing significantly to the completion of this study. Furthermore, I wish to extend special thanks to my singular family member, my sister, and my circle of friends whose steadfast support and encouraging words have been a source of strength throughout this journey. In conclusion, I anticipate that this research will not only contribute to further academic exploration but will also serve as a valuable resource for the e-commerce businesses development in Myanmar.

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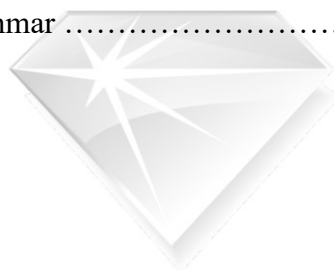
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background and rationales for the study of information search and alternative evaluation, purchase and post purchase affecting customer satisfaction towards online shopping and ecommerce development in Myanmar. The purpose and significance of the study will be described accordingly.

1.1 Rational and Problem Statement

Modern business enterprises have come to recognize the paramount importance of customer satisfaction. A renowned marketing expert, Philip Kotler, consistently emphasized, the primary objective of marketing was not only to attract customers but also to ensure their satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, 2021). Customer satisfaction is, in fact, essential for business especially in today's world of advanced technology. Information and communication technology (ICT) makes people more connected than ever so that customer have knowledge to compare before deciding. Moreover, customers can spread their satisfaction level freely because of ICT. Consequently, satisfied customers will make repeated purchases and then are likely to be loyal customers (Macik, 2016). Hence, businesses are putting customer satisfaction first as their priority.

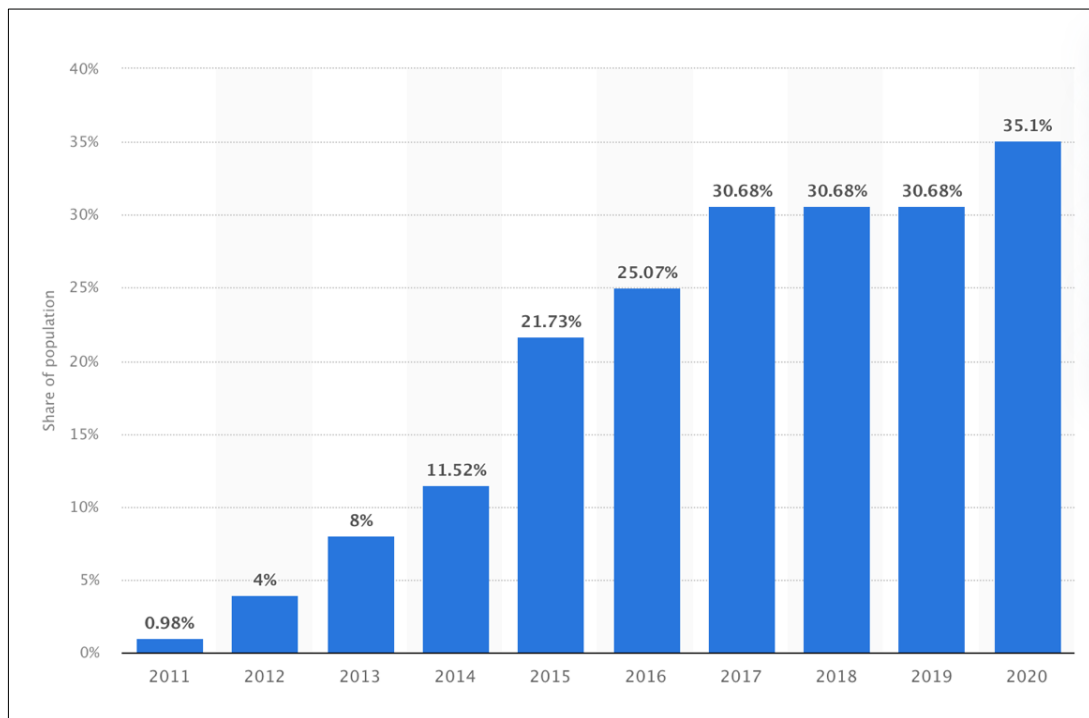
Nowadays, with the rise of ICT, new ways of doing businesses are also emerging. Electronic commerce (e-commerce) is an innovative approach for performing business activities together with the involvement of internet services and technology. Myanmar's e-commerce business was becoming attractive after foreign

telecom operators entered the country in 2014 according to Ecommerce IQ, Exploring Myanmar's E-commerce (2017). The entrance of two foreign telecom corporations; Telenor from Norway and Qatar-based Ooredoo ended the monopoly of the state-owned company, Myanmar Post and Telecommunications (MPT) and brought down the price of SIM cards. Therefore, Myanmar people were able to purchase a SIM card for as little as USD 1.50 whereas it costed USD 2,000 five years ago (Pat, 2017).

The outpour of cheap smartphones on the market and coincidentally, the rise of technology, Myanmar mobile users had leapfrogged the basic phones in favor of smartphones causing the country's internet penetration to skyrocket. Myanmar Business Today (2020) mentioned in Myanmar E-commerce Current Scenario that the convenience and allure of shopping online was experiencing a rise in popularity as the internet usage in Myanmar expanded.

It was also found that approximately 35.1 percent of the population in Myanmar had access to the internet. This was a dramatic increase from 2011, in which less than one percent of the population in Myanmar were using the internet as per below figure. Together with this trend, people are getting used to doing things virtually, including shopping online. Searching information, making comparisons, making purchase decision, and then assessing the experience for next purchase have been done to e-commerce activities.

Figure 1.1: Internet penetration rate in Myanmar from 2011 to 2020



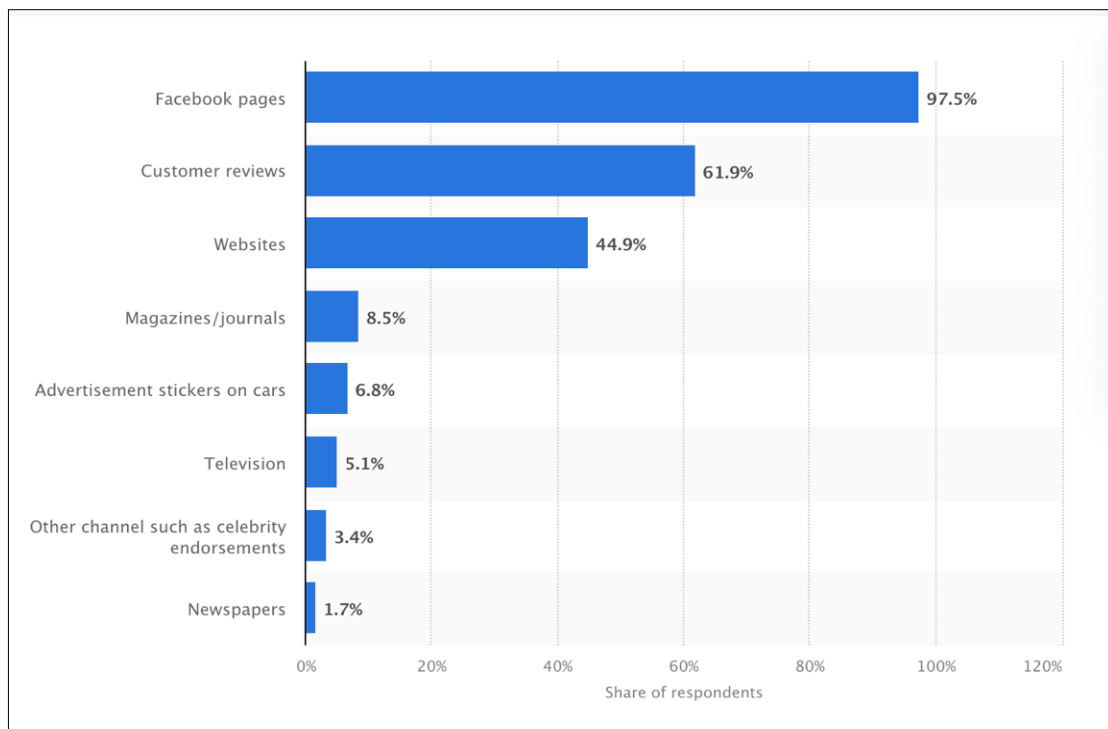
Source: Leander, K. (2023). *Internet penetration rate in Myanmar from 2011 to 2020*.

Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/766034/internet-penetration-rate-myanmar/>

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Moreover, after social media has become a part of daily life of Myanmar people, all the internet users in Myanmar use social media for consuming news, communication or even searching for information. In 2019, many Myanmar retail sellers were using Facebook, the most popular social media in Myanmar, as a new way to reach clients in Myanmar online market (Phisitthanadun, 2020). This kind of social commerce is also a very popular ecommerce trend in Myanmar right now. According to a survey conducted by Statista from December 2018 to February 2019, the majority of Myanmar respondents stated that they received information on online shopping through Facebook pages as shown in the following figure.

Figure 1.2: Preferred channels to receive information on online shopping among respondents in Myanmar in 2019



Source: Ganbold, S. (2021). *Main channels to receive information on online shopping Myanmar 2019*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1060466/myanmar-preferred-channels-to-receive-information-on-online-shopping/>

According to Myanmar Business Today (2020), there were several challenges that need to be addressed to speed up the Myanmar e-commerce sector. The report also stated that underdeveloped payment processing systems and undeveloped logistics networks across Myanmar was hampering the growth of e-commerce in Myanmar (Myanmar Business Today, 2020). A recent report by Datareportal of Digital 2021 Myanmar stated that only 3.6% of the population aged 15+ made online purchases and/or paid bills online while 18.7% of Thailand population aged 15+ made

online purchases and/or paid bills online (Datareportal, 2021). Moreover, Statista (2021) stated that according to a survey of most common problems of online shopping in Myanmar 2019, conducted from December 2018 to February 2019, about 54.2% of the respondents stated that they received goods with dissimilar patterns, colors and sizes than the goods that they wanted. According to the report, it was clear that trust was one of the factors affecting customers' purchasing decisions in Myanmar.

Liu, He, Gao and Xie (2008) stated that inadequate infrastructure, lack of trust, and privacy and security concerns often led to lost sales (Liu, He, Gao, & Xie, 2008). In addition, Bianchi and Andrews (2012) found that trust increased consumers' comfort levels in sharing personal information and making purchases. Myanmar people did not want to take risk in online transactions as uncertainty avoidance was common in Myanmar (Bhati, Thu, Woon, Phuong, & Lynn, 2017).

Moreover, in the context of post-purchase satisfaction, Dholakia and Zhao (2010) discovered that order fulfillment variables, especially on-time delivery, had a predominant impact on overall customer evaluations and satisfaction. It was also investigated that e-service quality and logistics service quality were strongly linked to customer satisfaction (Lin, Luo, Cai, Ma, & Rong, 2016).

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Myanmar's e-commerce firms had been a spike in sales during lockdown to contain Covid-19, with consumers stocking up on hand sanitizers, dry foods, canned goods and other essential item (UNCTAD, 2020). Myanmar government considered it was a good time for the development of e-commerce in the country and published the draft e-commerce rules and regulations under the

guidelines of voluntary registration system, which allowed online shops to register easily (Zun, 2020).


Bhati et al. (2017) found that in Myanmar, user intention was primarily influenced by the convenience of using e-commerce. Wang and Le (2015) said that because a website was an important part of the effective connection between a company and customers, managers made efforts to offer and guarantee the quality of the company's website to satisfy customers. Moreover, Wu, Lee, Fu and Wang (2013) also stated in their research findings that store layout design had significant impacts on emotional arousal and attitude towards the website, and thus had a positive influence on purchase intention. Therefore, a fundamental understanding of the factors affecting Myanmar online shopping customers' degree of satisfaction is of great importance to e-commerce development in Myanmar.

The foregoing studies provided a broad basis for gaining insight into customer satisfaction with online shopping in Myanmar; it was investigated that the website quality, electronic word of mouth and service quality are the most important factors that influence Myanmar consumers' purchasing decisions when buying products/services online in Taunggyi city, Myanmar (Hla, 2018). Min and Tangjitprom (2023) stated that the retail industry in Myanmar was in the infancy stage and it was difficult to identify the previous academic research for reference, and they investigated that Myanmar customers prioritized product and service quality more than product innovation. According to them, few empirical studies had been conducted to uncover the underlying constructs of customer satisfaction with online shopping in Myanmar, from the perspective of the total retail experience and

following the purchase process. Moreover, the impact of payment was seldom touched on in previous studies.



There are numbers of well-established ecommerce platforms operating in Myanmar. Among the players, Shop.com.mm received the highest daily site visitors estimating 296,315 numbers of daily unique visitors while Thailand's one of the largest online retailers, Lazada.co.th, received 3,014,000 numbers of daily unique visitors (Myanmar Business Today, 2020). Phisitthanadun (2020) mentioned in Myanmar Ecommerce Trends 2020 that Myanmar e-commerce was pretty much spread out in 2019-2020 and the websites were improving to application platforms which were more popular amongst buyers nowadays. It was also mentioned that Shop.com.mm is now available in an application called Shop Online Shopping App and until now there are over 1 million installs from Google Play Store.

Table 1.1: Popular ecommerce sites in Myanmar 2020

Website	Description
Shop.com.mm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shop.com.mm was from Alibaba and entered the Myanmar market in 2018. - The top of popular online shopping websites in Myanmar. - Shop.com.mm is now available in an application called “Shop Online Shopping App”.

(Continued)

Table 1.1 (Continued): Popular ecommerce sites in Myanmar 2020

Website	Description
<p data-bbox="384 439 507 472">OneKyat</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 439 1326 618">- OneKyat is a buy and sell C2C marketplace for Myanmar. It now turns to focus mainly on an application called “OneKyat”. <li data-bbox="667 663 1326 842">- On OneKyat app, there are a lot of used or new items such as motorbikes, mobile phones, or fashion items selling there. <li data-bbox="667 887 1326 976">- OneKyat is also open for users to contact via Facebook page and Instagram.
<p data-bbox="368 1032 523 1066">Rgo47.com</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="667 1032 1358 1211">- Rgo47 sells products in many categories such as clothes, children, groceries, mobile phone gadgets and many others. <li data-bbox="667 1256 1326 1346">- Buyers can order goods directly on the website, hotline call and also via Facebook page too. <li data-bbox="667 1391 1382 1570">- Rgo47 launched its application called “rgo47 – Online Shopping & Marketplace in Myanmar” with about over 100,000 installs.

Source: Phisitthanadun, C. (2020). *Myanmar Ecommerce Trends 2020 - What are the popular ecommerce sites in 2020?* Retrieved from <https://blog.happioteam.com/myanmar-e-commerce-trends-2020>

Therefore, in order to investigate factors affecting online shopping customer satisfaction in Myanmar, the researcher would like to divide the study process into three phases which are information search and alternative evaluation phase, purchasing phase and post purchase phase. In this research paper, in the information search and alternative evaluation phase, information quality, website design and merchandise attributes from the perspective of total retail experience of online shoppers will be studied. In addition, in the purchasing phase, the satisfaction degree regarding transaction capability and security privacy will also be studied. Finally, delivery and payment will be examined in the study as unique features in the context of Myanmar online shopping.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to explore and comprehend the factors of information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality, website design and merchandise attributes, purchasing in the context of transaction capability, security privacy and payment, post purchase in the context of delivery and customer service affecting online customer satisfaction in Myanmar.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the field of e-commerce in the context of Myanmar. Online business owners in both small and large scales will have more understanding upon the factors; information search and alternative evaluation, purchase and post purchase that affect online customer satisfaction in Myanmar. The research findings will contribute to business owners with new insightful knowledge for further

developments and adjustments in their e-commerce businesses. By understanding the customers better, business owners can present products or services more effectively and continuously improve them in order to strengthen their competitive advantage.



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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The related issues including the theories and previous research were reviewed to describe the characteristics of the research variables and investigate the relationship among variables. Regarding these concerns, the conceptual framework, the research hypothesis, and the questionnaire were generated from this review.

2.1 Related Theories and Previous Studies

The research conceptual framework is developed based on three important factors, which affect online shopping customer satisfaction as follows:

- 1) information search and alternative evaluation which includes information quality of the website or online store, website design and merchandise attributes, and
- 2) purchase factor that includes transaction capability, security privacy and payment,
- 3) post-purchase factor which mainly includes customer service.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that these three aspects were important to influence customer satisfaction. Liu et al. (2008) said that there had been several attempts to build an evaluation framework or identify dominant factors concerning customer satisfaction with online shopping from the perspective of website quality (Ranganathan & Ganapathy, 2002), purchasing behavior (Koivumaki, 2001; Park & Kim, 2003), consumer attitude (Elliott & Speck, 2005), customer value (Shun & Yunjie, 2006) and service quality (Zhilin, Peterson & Cai, 2003). The

foregoing studies provided a broad basis for gaining insight into customer satisfaction with online shopping. Chen and Chang (2003) presented a groundbreaking model encompassing the entire internet shopping process and delineated three fundamental components of online shopping: interactivity, transaction, and fulfillment. However, it was noteworthy that their study lacked a robust theoretical foundation (Liu et al., 2008).

There had been several other attempts to study user satisfaction in the context e-services or online services (Zhang, Prybutok & Huang, 2006; Ha, 2006; Yang & Fang, 2004). For instance, Zhang et al. (2006) examined several factors (user computer proficiency, perceived convenience, site characteristics, perceived security, user satisfaction) which affected user satisfaction with e-services and found that perceived convenience, users' skills and experiences, and perceived security had impact on user satisfaction with e-services. In the upcoming section, the examination of website quality previously explored in research will be restructured, considering it within the broader framework of the overall retail experience for online shoppers. Furthermore, this study uniquely investigates the aspects of customer service within the specific context of online shopping in Myanmar.

2.1.1 Customer Satisfaction

Franklin (2023) stated that customer satisfaction (CSAT) was a measure of how well a company's products, services, and overall customer experience meet customer expectations. A key aspect in customer satisfaction was the way a customer could attain satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a company's product or service (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001).

The large majority of studies carried out in the field of customer satisfaction could be considered as part of a common structure constituted by the so-called disconfirmation paradigm which, apart from some exceptions (for instance, Folkes, 1984; Tsiros, Mittal & Ross, 2004), analyzed the causal antecedents of satisfaction (Guido, 2015). In this discrepancy model, consumers evaluated their prior experience and formulated satisfaction judgments by comparing the perceived performance of a product/service with a standard of comparison in their minds. According to this paradigm, customer satisfaction was conceptualized as a post-purchase psychological state that encapsulates the evaluation of the usage experience of a product or service (Guido, 2015).

Jayawardhena, Wright and Dennis (2007) investigated the purchasing orientation of potential buyers and its impact on purchase behavior, concluded that individual orientation was distinct from purchasing decisions. This finding aligned with the perspectives of Liu et al. (2008) and Sorce, Perotti and Widrick (2005), who asserted that each stage of the purchasing decision-making cycle could influence a potential buyer's decision to engage in online shopping. Demangeot and Broderick (2007) added to this discourse by highlighting that information search experiences significantly shaped attitudes toward websites and their associated brands. Building on these insights, Koo, Kim and Lee (2008) conducted a study in Korea, revealed that a considerable percentage of online customers used the internet for purposes ranging from news and information to communication and entertainment, with online shopping accounting for a notable portion.

Moreover, Karim (2013) said that corroborating the findings of Gay, Charlesworth and Esen (2007), Yun and Good (2007), Lee and Lin (2005), Rajamma,

Paswan and Ganesh (2007), Kim and Kim (2004), Ramus and Nielsen (2005), Ladson and Fraunholz (2005), Kramarae and Kramer (1995), Welch (1995), Rathmell, Overill, Valeri and Gearson (1998), Johnstone (1999), Singh (2004) and Canavan, Henchion and O'Reilly (2007), it became evident that consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions in online shopping hinged on multifaceted considerations. These encompassed the e-store image, delivery and customer services, service quality and its impact on purchase behavior, personalization, motivations for online purchases, trust, reliability, privacy, transaction and cost factors, incentive programs, website design, online interactivity, merchandise motivation, assurance, convenience, pragmatic motivation, responsiveness, and consumer risk assessment, among others (Karim, 2013). This comprehensive perspective underscored the diverse and interconnected factors that collectively influence the online consumer experience (Karim, 2013).

Gupta and Chopra (2020) found that customer satisfaction was influenced by information search and alternative evaluation especially on social media and this influence was amplified towards the final purchasing decision. According to Vinitha and Shanmugam (2017), variables such as quality, trust, perceived ease of use and security in e-payments influenced customer's commitment towards e-payment systems of online shopping through digital platforms. Moreover, there are several papers researching the relationship between customer service and customer satisfaction. Among them, Vu (2021) studied service quality and found that assurance, tangibles, responsiveness, reliability, and empathy could serve to form five dimensions of service quality that impacted customer satisfaction. Therefore, it can be said that customer satisfaction is evaluated through the process of before, during and after the products or services are purchased. Referring to this information, this

paper will examine information search and alternative evaluation, purchase and post-purchase activities and their impact on customer satisfaction.

2.1.2 Information Search and Alternative Evaluation

Information search and alternative evaluation were sometimes regarded as the second and third stages of the consumer decision process (Perner, 2018). Along with the consumer purchase journey, the very first step was information search and people tended to search related information about the products, especially if desired products were durable and luxury ones (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Although personal sources might have greater influence on purchase intention; other sources had wider range of reach (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Alternative evaluation simultaneously occurred after information search. Alternative evaluation literally means that the situation when consumers weigh advantages and disadvantages and then ultimately choose the most suited products. The selection process could include a set of criteria such as price, convenience, availability, quality, and many others (Ha, Janda, & Muthaly, 2010). In this research, the following factors are considered under information search and alternative evaluation.

2.1.2.1 Information Quality

Information quality included the depiction, availability and accuracy of information along with its consistency across the site and comparability to other websites (Rahman, Carlson, Gudergan, Wetzels, & Grewal, 2022). In news production, the transference of quality information was vital (Diakopoulos & Essa, 2008). Howard, Lubbe and Klopper (2011) described that data quality and

information quality were often used interchangeably. However, there was tendency to use data quality to refer to technical issues and information quality to refer to non-technical issues (Madnick, Wang, Lee, & Zhu, 2009). Russom (2013), Watts, Shankaranarayanan and Even (2009) investigated that although technologies were creating efficiencies to cohesively structure the velocity, variety and volume of information into a single location, organizations were still grappling with the influx of imperfect information.

Information was said to consist of facts and data, which were organized for a particular purpose; information quality was a major criterion for measuring the success of an information system, and decision quality was a function of information quality (Jung, 2004). There was a strong relationship between data quality and decision quality. In 2004, Jung mentioned that data must be relevant, timely, complete, interpretable, easy to understand, represented concisely and consistently, appropriate, and accessible but secure. According to Tang, Strzalkowski and Kantor (2003) the four semantic categories of information quality were intrinsic accuracy (objectivity, credibility, and reputability); contextual relevance (valuableness, timeliness, completeness, and information richness); representational (interpretable, understandable, conciseness, and consistence); and accessibility (easily and securely obtained).

Information quality attributes could also be regarded to include both the objective and subjective elements of accuracy, reliability, validity, comprehensiveness, currency, credibility, expertise, trust, thoroughness, transparency, and an awareness of bias. Lechner (2015) stated that 87% of consumers said they would be unlikely to consider buying again if they were provided with incorrect

information for a purchased product. Therefore, product information quality was very important in achieving consumer satisfaction.

Gallant and Arcand (2017) stated that considering the complexity of the consumer information search process, several authors had focused on developing typologies of the various information sources consulted by consumers prior to making a purchase. Several studies conducted during the early years of e-commerce reported a strong positive correlation between internet experience and the propensity to use the internet to shop (McGoldrick & Collins, 2007).

2.1.2.2 Website Design

Website design referred to all elements of the customer experience related to the website, including information quality, website aesthetics, purchase process, website convenience, product selection, price offerings, website personalization, and system availability (Rita, Oliveira, & Farisa, 2019). An efficient website should contain three main content categories: information-oriented, transaction-oriented, and customer-oriented (Cox & Koelzer, 2004). One report mentioned that while the concept of store image had been widely discussed in the marketing literature, its importance as a distinct dimension for website success had recently been acknowledged (Beomjin, Chan, & Beomjoon, 2014). Another research identified “constant image” as a distinct dimension for website quality after examining the dimensional hierarchy of the WebQuery scale developed by Loiacono (Kim et al., 2004). Again, it was suggested that internet vendor-specific quality as an important e-business success factor, which included the awareness of internet vendors and their reputation among others. They showed that vendor awareness and reputation were critical website qualities that determined the success of e-commerce websites (Lee &

Kozar, 2006). Charoenphakinrattana and Tarnittanakorn (2023) also found that motivation, e-store design and trusting beliefs in shopping services affected online consumers' decision to buy smartphones via online platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic in Thailand. More recently, Lowry, Paul, Vance, Anthony, Moody, Gregory, Beckman, Bryan, Read and Aaron (2008) examined the impact of website quality and branding alliances on initial consumer trust of e-commerce websites. They showed that branding and website quality were important constructs for enhancing initial trust in e-commerce.

Beomjin et al. (2014) also mentioned that e-commerce websites provided a wide variety of services. They defined “service quality” as the extent that users perceive that an information system met their demands and expectations during and after using the website. The first communication step for most businesses, with ever-increasing internet users’ number, had become the website and its attractiveness to users’ attention. Therefore, Ahmadi, Karimialavije, Malekifar and Mohammadi (2015) said that presenting services by website was one of the most important subjects for various institutes including cosmetic websites and they also mentioned that website attractiveness had an important role in keeping the visitors inside the website for longer period and motivating them for searching the pages. This implied that if the customer found a website attractive, the higher their satisfaction, the longer they would spend time and the higher chance that they will make a purchase.

On the other hand, the quality of the website design was a necessary condition for its survival. The users would leave the website if it was difficult to be used, illegible, did not answer the users’ questions or generally lacked enough attraction (Haghighinasab & Tabeien, 2012). The paper also mentioned that the main attention

in design was on constructing powerful websites who create real value for the customers and bring them a positive experience. A website was called customer-oriented if the customers continuously and consecutively evaluate it as excellent in case of content, usability, performance, trustworthiness. If the website design could capture the aforementioned quality, customers will likely bond with it and hence, will create higher satisfaction. Therefore, satisfied customers could be attained by using a good website design (Haghighinasab & Tabeien, 2012).

2.1.2.3 Merchandise Attribute

The dimensions attributed to the aspects of an e-retailer's merchandise included product information, the brands, the breadth and depth of the assortment and price (Peral-Peral, Rodríguez-Bobada, & Villarejo-Ramos, 2012). It was found that the variety of the offering on the internet had an important influence on its adoption as a purchasing method because it enabled consumers to compare, contrast and choose between the alternatives available for meeting their needs while reducing the search costs (Goldsmith, Bridges, & Freiden, 2001). The findings of Liu et al. (2008) also confirmed that in the alternatives evaluation stage, merchandise attribute including merchandise variety and price were important for decision making. Similarly, Szymanski and Hise (2000) indicated that wider assortment of products might be attractive to customers and e-satisfaction would be more positive when online stores offer superior product assortments.

Convenience, regarding time and space, was often the main reason for the increase in online purchases. Lohse and Spiller (1998) stated that an e-retailer's convenience attributes included the number of links onto the site, the variety of payment options, the provision of quick jump buttons and images, the inclusion of

pricing information in the product list and the product list type. Liu et al. (2008) mentioned that although some scholars thought price sensitivity might actually be lower online than offline, one most commonly cited reason for online shopping is price. Many early online marketers used price as bait to lure consumers to their sites (Chen & Chang, 2003). If the customer remembered the pleasant experience upon visiting the website, they are likely to come back again or recommend it to others (Raghubir, 2004). These are the behaviors of satisfied customers and hence, good merchandise attributes is one of many factors affecting customer satisfaction.

2.1.3 Purchase

Purchase stage was the second to last phase of the consumer purchase decision process journey (Perner, 2018). At the purchase stage, privacy/security, payment mechanisms, transaction capabilities and speed of operation might affect satisfaction (Liu et al., 2008). The process of making a purchase also included several steps such as making a transaction, selection of payment platform and securely making a payment (Ward & Lee, 1999). The Chartered Institute of Marketing, CIM, (2022) stated that other notable factors which could increase cart abandonment included requiring an account for purchase and the checkout process being too complex and hence optimizing checkout experience for customers could often meant simplifying it. Recognizing the significance of privacy/ security, payment mechanisms, transaction capabilities, this study seeks to delve into the nuanced dynamics that shape consumer choices in the Myanmar market.

2.1.3.1 Transaction Capability

According to Teixeira, Puffal and Ferrazza (2020) transactional capability could be understood as a set of routines, resources, governance designs and abilities that allow the firm to conduct intermediation activities between its partners and clients, in order to obtain relational rents. Transaction and payment capability was an important factor when customers considered online purchases (Rasli, Khairi, Ayathuray, & Syafiq, 2018). Furthermore, Dellaert and Kahn (1999) mentioned that online shoppers were known for low tolerance, and it was estimated that, on average, online shoppers only waited for eight seconds for system feedback before bailing out. A web page designer was supposed to consider not only appearance and functionality, but also loading time (Weinberg, 2000). Therefore, Rasli et al. (2018) said that website speed is of major importance for a successful website.

2.1.3.2 Security Privacy

Godwin (1991) stated that the notion of privacy could be defined as the capability of customers to control the existence of others near the transaction process, and the transaction process happened without the need to present themselves. Security referred to customer perception that internet vendors would meet security requirements such as authentication, integrity, encryption, and non-repudiation (Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2009). Flavia'n and Guinaly'u (2006) said that while doing transactions online, online sellers collected the name, email, telephone number, and address of the buyer, which created a possibility that, some of the sellers would give those confidential information to spammers, telemarketers and mailers. This illegal action could endanger the customers in many ways. For example, spamming the counterfeit claim of credit card or any kind of customer identity stealing. Because of

this reason, information protection and security becomes a serious concern among many online buyers.

Even though privacy enhancing technologies (PETs) attempted to balance the surveillance or tracking technologies through personal firewalls, cookie managers and digital cash, Culnan and Armstrong (1998) stated that privacy concerns were a critical reason why people did not go online and provided false information online. Kim et al. (2009) stated that when clients encountered security measures such as security policies, disclaimers, and guarantees on a seller's website, they could infer that the seller is committed to safeguarding their information in online transactions. As a result, customers develop a heightened trust in the vendor, and their perceived risks associated with making online transactions decrease.

2.1.3.3 Payment

There are many types of online payments, such as credit card, payment by cash and telegraphic transfer, provided by most of the online retailers. However, when choosing the type of payment, customers sometimes considered the convenience of payment together with the issues of payment security (Guo, Ling, & Liu, 2012). Hove and Farhod (2011) identified six groups of payment methods by combining the time dimension (i.e., pay-before, pay-now, and pay-later) and the medium of payment (i.e., paper, or electronic). They also stated that pay-before required buyers to deposit funds into an account prior to the actual purchase and this method of payment included stored-value cards, prepaid cards, and gift cards. Pay-now referred to payments settled (almost) immediately, using methods such as cash on delivery and debit cards. And they continuously stated, pay-later allowed the buyers to consume the products or services first and then settle the account later,

using such methods as credit cards and charge cards. Based on these, online payment methods could be grouped into two categories: payment-before-delivery (e.g., online bank transfers, pre-cards, credit cards, and debit cards) and payment-after-delivery (e.g., cash on delivery). The separation between payment and delivery highlighted the problem of payment security. In essence, payment-after-delivery provides a higher degree of security than payment-before-delivery from the perspective of the buyer. In other words, a good payment system could influence the satisfaction of customers.

2.1.4 Post-purchase

Post-purchase was a series of steps in which consumers compared their expectations to perceived reality, experience consequent satisfaction/dis-satisfaction, and then act in a way influenced by that satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Gilly, 1979). A study done on the relationship between post-purchase shipping and customer service experiences in online shopping and their impact on customer satisfaction concluded that post-purchase shipping and tracking had an impact on customer satisfaction in both China and Taiwan (Cao, Ajjan, Hong, & Paul, 2018). Goswami, Baruah and Borah (2013) stated that online customers were satisfied only when online marketers gave more importance on price and after sale service factors. The research findings of Cao et al. (2018) stated that post purchase customer service is the most significant factor that impacted on customer satisfaction of online shoppers in China, while post purchase return service was more important for shoppers in Taiwan. Finally, customer satisfaction played a stronger positive role for online shoppers in Taiwan as compared to their counterparts in China (Cao et al., 2018).

2.1.4.1 Customer Service

Yarimoglu (2011) stated that customer service is tangible or intangible value increasing activities that related with products or services directly or indirectly to meet customer expectations and so provide customer satisfaction and loyalty. In the competitive era, Rupali (2018) stated that online marketers should have focused on customer satisfaction to retain the existing customers and attract new customers by offering them day to day new schemes for online purchases and moreover offering many after-sales service plans to consumers led to higher profitability. Very few studies had focused on the relationships between the post-purchase activities such as return services and customers' behavioral and attitudinal aspects. Therefore, it was unclear how important post-purchase customer services such as shipment and return were in comparison with customer service to e-commerce and its growth. It was known that the margin from after-sales service was much larger than that from the product and the after- sales service was considered a key revenue generator in certain categories.

2.2 Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses in this study were developed to analyze the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. These hypotheses were derived from the related theories and previous studies. They were proposed as follows:

H1: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H2: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of website design affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H3: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of merchandise attributes affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H4: Purchase in the context of transaction capability affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H5: Purchase in the context of security privacy affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H6: Purchase in the context of payment affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

H7: Post purchase in the context of customer service affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review of information and alternative evaluation, purchase, post-purchase affecting customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar, the conceptual framework of the study was illustrated in Figure 2.1. The independent variables were information search and alternative evaluation in terms of information quality, website design and merchandise attributes, and purchase in terms of transaction capability, security privacy and payment, post-purchase in terms of customer service while the dependent variable was customer satisfaction.

Figure 2.1: The conceptual framework of information search and alternative evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase affecting customer satisfaction in Myanmar

Information Search and Alternative Evaluation

Information Quality (IQ)

Website Design (WD)

Merchandise Attributes (MA)

Purchase

Transaction Capability (TC)

Security Privacy (SP)

Payment (P)

Post-purchase

Customer Service (CS)

Customer Satisfaction (SAT)

H1

H2

H3

H4

H5

H6

H7

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This quantitatively designed research was using survey questionnaire as convenient sampling to collect primary data from Myanmar nationality internet users by distributing the hyper link of the questionnaire via social media websites such as Facebook, emails and mobile messenger applications such as Viber and Line. The details of the research methodology procedure were described as follows.

3.1 Research Design

This research study had constructed the approach to study the relationship of independent variables – information search and alternative evaluation (information quality, website design and merchandise attribute), purchase (transaction capability, security privacy and payment) and post-purchase (customer service) and dependent variable of customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. The primary source of data and information in this study was attained from a constructed survey questionnaire which was self-administered and approved by advisor, field experts, and other reliable secondary sources such as relevant academic journals, articles, and online database.

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

The population of the study was Myanmar citizen and were residing in Myanmar who had an experience on online shopping. Since, the studied variable was about customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar, respondents needed

to have experiences regarding online shopping. Therefore, screening questions were included in the questionnaire to filter out the required targeted population. The sample size was calculated based on 40 sets of pilot test questionnaires. G*Power version 3.1 was applied with the Power ($1-\beta$) of 0.95, Alpha (α) of 0.05, number of test predictor of 7 and effective size of 0.06695147. A total sample size of 334 was gained for the field survey. For more stable results, 340 sets of questionnaires had been collected in August and September 2019. Convenient sampling of non-probability sampling was implemented since the data collection platform was fixed to be online such as Facebook, emails, Viber, and Line. This was because people active on social media and mobile-friendly were likely to have experiences with online shopping. Moreover, the data collection period could be shortened by distributing the questionnaire link to the groups or posted on the media.

3.3 Research Instrument

To examine all independent variables and dependent variables, a close-ended questionnaire was utilized as research instrument consisting of a series of questions for gathering information from respondents. In the study questions were self-administered and approved by professor and verified by three experts in the field of e-commerce as shown in Appendix A and B. This research questionnaire consisted of four sections as follows:

Section 1 included screening questions to filter out the suitable respondents. Section 2 focused on demographic information of the respondents such as gender, age, occupation, monthly income, and education background. Section 3 contained questions of independent variables by using five-point Likert scale. Section 4

consisted of questions related with customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. They were also asked by using a five-point Likert scale.

3.4 Reliability and Content Validity

3.4.1 Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized for reliability analysis and consistency testing. The value of Cronbach's alpha was between $0 \leq \alpha \leq 1$ (Nunnally, 1978), the score that closest to 1 was the most reliable as shown in Table 3.1.

According to Cronbach's alpha coefficient value, the reliability for the question items of each variable should be rating between $0.65 < \alpha < 1$ (Nunnally, 1978). Consequently, 40 sets of the questionnaires were applied for pilot test. The results of reliability test revealed that Cronbach's alpha value of 0.760-0.925 was acceptable. In addition, the results from 340 sets of field survey were ranging between 0.679-0.914 as shown in Table 3.1. Therefore, all questions were usable. Thus, the data from the questionnaires could be used for further analysis.

Table 3.1: Reliability analysis of coefficient Cronbach's alpha

Variables	N=40		N=340	
	Items	Alpha	Items	Alpha
Information Quality (IQ)	4	0.925	4	0.889
Website Design (WD)	4	0.848	4	0.847
Merchandise Attributes (MA)	4	0.760	4	0.797
Transaction Capability (TC)	4	0.707	4	0.679
Security Privacy (SP)	4	0.810	4	0.806
Payment (P)	4	0.816	4	0.733
Customer Service (CS)	4	0.862	4	0.860
Customer Satisfaction (SAT)	5	0.868	5	0.914

3.4.2 Content Validity

The questions in the questionnaire were derived from the previous studies and academic articles. Then, they were passed the verification of content validity by three experts:

- Ms. Theingi Htoo, Assistant General Manager at Seinn Lae Thwin Co., Ltd.,

- Ms. Nang Aye Mi Mi Thaw, Sales Account Manager at Huawei Technologies (Yangon) Co., Ltd., and

- Ms. Nang Khin Swe Kyaw, Business owner at Gandawin Daewi Silk & Textile Shop.

3.5 Statistics for Data Analysis

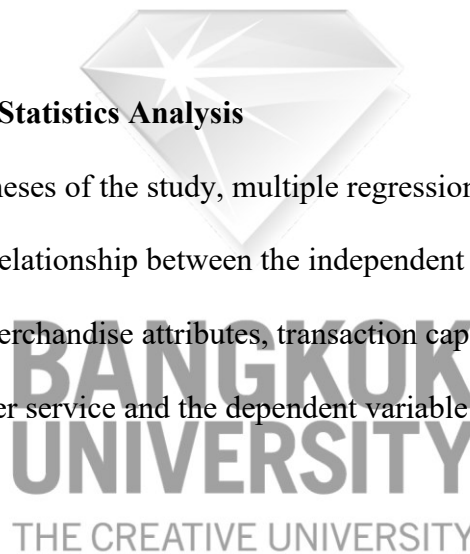
The data analysis was conducted applying Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 23 and the statistical techniques used for data analysis and interpretation included descriptive and inferential statistics as follows.

3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics Analysis

For section 2; respondents' information such as gender, age, occupation, monthly income, and educational background by using frequency and percentage. For Section 3 and section 4; information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, transaction capability, security privacy, payment, customer service and customer satisfaction in Likert scale questions were analyzed by using mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (S.D.).

3.5.2 Inferential Statistics Analysis

To test the hypotheses of the study, multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze the relationship between the independent variables: information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, transaction capability, security privacy, payment, customer service and the dependent variable of customer satisfaction.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

The research findings which derived from data analysis of 340 questionnaire sets are presented in this chapter.

4.1 Summary of Demographic Data

From the study of 340 samples, all respondents' personal information in terms of gender, age, occupation, monthly income, and educational level were presented in frequencies and percentage in table 4.1 as follows.

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 340)

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	93	27.4
Female	243	72.6

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(Continued)

Table 4.1 (Continued): Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 340)

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentage
Age:		
Under 21 years old	8	2.4
21-30 years old	267	78.5
31-40 years old	65	19.1
41-50 years old	0	0
51-60 years old	0	0
Occupation:		
Student	44	12.9
Employed in a company	206	60.6
Own business	52	15.3
Freelancer	29	8.5
Other	9	2.6
Educational Background:		
Undergraduate/ Vocational school	204	60
Master and above	136	40
Monthly Income: (in MMK)		
Less than 100,000	23	6.8
100,000-300,000	8	2.4
300,001-600,000	44	12.9
600,001-900,000	159	46.8
Above 900,000	106	31.2
Total	340	100

The personal profile of the respondents was illustrated in Table 4.1. Most of the respondents were female (72.6%) out of 340 respondents while the rest of respondent were male (27.4%). The results described that female had more desirable in shopping online than that of male. Moreover, most of respondents were 21-30 years

old, showed that new generation were interested to shop online more than other groups. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents were company employees (206 people with 60.6%) and most of the respondents earned monthly income 60,001-90,000 MMK (46.8%). Most of them completed a bachelor's degree (204 people with 60 %).

4.2 Summary of Respondents' Online Shopping Behavior Data

From the study of 340 samples, all respondents' online shopping behavior information were presented in frequencies and percentage in Table 4.2 as follows.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Behavior on Online Shopping (n = 340)

Respondents' behavior on online shopping	Frequency	Percentage
Willingness to purchase product/service online:		
Very rarely	21	6.2
Rarely	84	24.7
Sometimes	157	46.2
Often	34	10
Very often	44	12.9
How to spend time on internet:		
Use social networks (e.g. Facebook, WeChat, etc.)	179	52.6
Play online games	56	16.5
Read news online	51	15
Watch movies/ listen to the music	39	11.5

(Continued)

Table 4.2: (Continued): Respondents' Behavior on Online Shopping (n = 340)

Respondents' behavior on online shopping	Frequency	Percentage
Other	15	4.4
Most visited website to shop online:		
Facebook	227	66.8
Shop.com.mm	95	27.9
BaganMart.com	13	3.8
Oway	5	1.5
Recent purchased product/service via online:		
Software, online music, movie	6	1.8
Books/magazine	12	3.5
Clothing/accessories/shoes/bags	269	79.1
Makeup/perfume/dressing accessories	13	3.8
Household electronic devices	11	3.2
Electronic gadgets	29	8.5
Payment type:		
Cash on delivery	145	42.6
Bank transfer	102	30.0
Online payment	57	16.8
Visa card/Master card/ Debit card	36	10.6
Reasons to choose shopping online:		
Very convenient	85	25
Time saving	137	40.3
Low price	10	2.9
Product variety	58	17.1
Rare product availability	50	14.7

The respondents' behavior on online shopping was illustrated in Table 4.2. In terms of willingness to purchase product/service via online, 46.2 percentage of the respondents were willing to purchase product/service via online sometimes while 12.9 percentage

of respondents were willing to purchase product/service via online very often. The results described that 52.6 percentage, and 16.5 percentage of respondents spent their time on social networks and played games respectively while they were online. Moreover, most of respondents used Facebook to shop online product/service (66.8 %), showed that Myanmar online shoppers used Facebook as a platform to explore the product/service offered while 27.9 percentage of respondents were likely to shop on Shop.com.mm website. Furthermore, 79.1 percentage of the respondents recently purchased clothing/ accessories/ shoes and bags via online compared household electronic devices purchasers were only 3.2 percentage. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were willing to purchase apparel products.

Regarding the payment type, as shown in Table 4.2, many of the respondents used “cash on delivery (COD)” payment type (42.6%) and as little 10.6 percentage as respondents used card payment type. Therefore, the results could be concluded that respondents were fond of the COD payment type due to buyers’ safety. According to the respondents’ data on the reasons to shop online, more than two-fifths of the respondents shopped online because they assumed shopping online as time saving while nearly 15 percentage of respondents were attracted to shop online because of rare product availability.

4.3 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The research findings in this part presented relationship of information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, transaction capability, security privacy, payment and customer service toward customer satisfaction of online shopping in

Myanmar. The multiple regression analysis (MRA) was used for the hypothesis testing. The findings were presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Results from Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	Unstandardize		Standardize	t	Sig.	Toleran	VIF
	d Coefficients	Std.	d				
	B	Error	Beta			ce	
(Constant)	0.978	0.274		3.574	0.000		
Information search and alternative evaluation							
- Information quality	-0.101	0.043	-0.102	-2.336	0.020	0.478	2.093
- Website design	-0.073	0.055	-0.051	-1.325	0.186	0.621	1.612
- Merchandise attributes	0.461	0.064	0.370	7.218	0.000*	0.343	2.912
Purchase capability							
- Transaction	-0.200	0.074	-0.091	-2.685	0.008	0.784	1.275
- Security privacy	0.116	0.064	0.082	1.823	0.069	0.443	2.258
- Payment	-0.268	0.086	-0.184	-3.124	0.002	0.261	3.825
Post-purchase							
- Customer service	0.698	0.057	0.686	12.333	0.000*	0.292	3.427

Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction

$R^2 = .700$, $AR^2 = .694$, $p < .001$

The analysis was done at 0.001 confidence level. With the result of R-square being 0.700 and adjusted R-square being 0.694; it could be said that 69% of customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar was influenced by the factors such as information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, purchase in the context of transaction capability, security privacy, payment and post-purchase in the context of customer service. This meant that the remaining 31% of customer satisfaction is caused by other variables outside of this study.

According to Table 4.3, two independent variables, namely merchandise attributes and customer service were statistically significant. Therefore, the remaining studied variables could not be made statistical assumption. The standardized coefficient beta values for merchandise attributes and customer service was 0.370 and 0.686 respectively. This meant that both merchandise attributes and customer service had positive relationship with customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. The higher beta value indicated the stronger impacts and hence, customer service in the context of post purchase had the most significant impact on the customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. However, information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality and purchase in the context of transaction capability and payment had negative impact on customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance were used for detecting the multicollinearity problem. Multicollinearity was the method for determining multiple correlations among independent variables and uncorrelated assumption of independent variables. It occurred when independent variables in a regression model

are correlated. Tolerance value must be greater than .2 while VIF value must less than 5. VIF is greater than 5 represent critical levels of multicollinearity where the coefficients are poorly estimated, and the p-values are questionable. VIF values of this study were 1.275-3.825 which were less than 5 and the Tolerance values ranged between .261- .784. Hence, there was no multicollinearity problem in this research.

4.4 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Based on the resulted outputs shown in Table 4.3 and referring to the subsequent interpretation, the developed hypotheses can be determined whether they support the statement or not. The following table summarizes the result.

Table 4.4: Results of the Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Result
H1: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Not supported
H2: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of website design affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Not supported
H3: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of merchandise attributes affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Supported

(Continued)

Table 4.4: (Continued): Result of the Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Result
H4: Purchase in the context of transaction capability affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Not supported
H5: Purchase in the context of security privacy affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Not supported
H6: Purchase in the context of payment affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Not supported
H7: Post purchase in the context of customer service affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.	Supported



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This research was quantitative research which aimed in studying the factors such as information search and alternative in the context of information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, purchase in the context of transaction capability, security privacy, payment, and post-purchase in the context of customer service toward customer satisfaction of online shopping in Myanmar. The questionnaires were used for collecting data from 340 respondents in Myanmar. The data were analyzed by implementing SPSS Statistics. Finally, the research results were summarized, discussed, and proposed recommendations and further research.

5.1 Research Findings and Conclusion

Based on the personal data of 340 respondents, the survey found that the majority of respondents were female (72.6%) and were between 21-30 years old (78.5%). There were no respondents between the age of 41 to 60 implying that people of that age were rarely found on the internet, or they were reluctant to take part in the survey due to the technology barrier. 60.6% of them were employed while the second largest was 15% who owned personal business. They were also educated because they were either undergraduate or vocational students or master or higher. They also had higher than average monthly income accounting to 79.1% of the respondents earning more than 6 lakhs.

Most respondents used cash on delivery payment for online shopping (42.6%), purchased clothing/accessories/bags/shoes via online shopping (79.1%) and visited

Facebook to shop online (66.8%). This aligned with the results of the time spent on social media with Facebook scoring almost half (52.6%). Therefore, it could be said that people spent time mostly on Facebook and then chose shops at Facebook with cash on delivery method for major reason of time saving.

For the case of regression analysis, it was resulted that information search and alternative evaluation in the context of merchandise attributes and post-purchase in the context of customer service affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. Overall, all studied independent variables of information quality, website design, merchandise attributes, transaction capability, security privacy, payment and customer service had contributed to 69.6 % of customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar.

5.2. Discussion

Hypothesis 1: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of information quality affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. The research results showed that the information quality did not affect customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. This might be because the online shoppers in Myanmar believed that online vendors did not provide accurate or reliable information to customers. Additionally, they thought that the information provided at the website was unclear and incomplete for their purchase decisions. The major reason could be the behavior of respondents depending on the types of products they were searching for. The demographic section provided the information that 79.1% of recent purchases were on clothing, accessories, shoes and bags which people were more focused on the brand rather than information provided. Therefore,

the information quality had no impact on customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. This finding contradicted with previously mentioned papers of Liu et al. (2008), Kim and Stoel (2004), Kim and Lim (2001) and McKinney et al. (2002) which indicated that information quality had significant impact on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of website design affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. The research results showed that website design ($p=.186$, $\beta =-.051$) did not affect customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar. One possible explanation for the lack of a significant impact of website design on customer satisfaction could be the overwhelming preference for Facebook as the online shopping platform as the majority of respondents (66.8%) used Facebook as their primary platform for online shopping, while only 27.9% preferred the Shop.com.mm website. This suggested a clear inclination among respondents toward social media platforms, particularly Facebook, for exploring and purchasing products and services. Since the majority of respondents favored Facebook over dedicated websites, it was likely that the overall user experience on social media played a more crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction than the specific design of individual websites.

Another explanation for this unexpected outcome lies in the demographic composition of the respondents, primarily concentrated within the 21 to 30 age group. This cohort, characterized as predominantly laid-back and technologically savvy, might not have considered website design elements as crucial factors influencing their online shopping experience. Their proficiency in computer literacy and familiarity with technology may have rendered various website features inconspicuous or

inconsequential in their assessment of online platforms. The study's outcomes stand in contrast to the assertions of Ahmadi et al. (2015), who emphasized the paramount importance of website presentation in diverse institutions, including cosmetic websites. While existing literature uniformly posits a positive correlation, this research brings forth a nuanced understanding, suggesting that certain demographic characteristics and lifestyle factors can alter the perceived significance of website design in the eyes of consumers. The findings underscore the necessity for a context-specific examination of online shopping behavior and serve as a foundation for further exploration into the dynamic and multifaceted realm of e-commerce in Myanmar.

Hypothesis 3: Information search and alternative evaluation in the context of merchandise attributes affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. The research results showed that merchandise attributes ($p=.000$, $\beta = .37$) significantly affected customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar. The findings of the research resonated with prior studies, which highlighted the importance of merchandise attributes in the decision-making process. Notably, the variety of offerings on the internet emerged as a pivotal factor influencing the adoption of online shopping, enabling consumers to compare and choose between alternatives while reducing search costs (Goldsmith et al., 2001). This aligns with the confirmation from Liu et al. (2008) and Pearl et al. (2012) emphasizing the significance of merchandise attributes, including variety and price, during the alternative evaluation stage. The outcomes of the study contribute valuable insights to the understanding of consumer behavior in the Myanmar online shopping landscape, emphasizing the enduring impact of merchandise-related factors in shaping customer satisfaction.

In conclusion, this research not only reaffirms the established significance of merchandise attributes but also provides a nuanced understanding of their role in the specific context of online shopping in Myanmar. The alignment of the research findings with prior studies enhances the credibility of the results and underscores the enduring importance of considering merchandise-related factors when aiming to enhance customer satisfaction in the dynamic and evolving landscape of online retail.

Hypotheses 4, 5, 6: Purchase variables. In combination, purchase in the context of transaction capability, security privacy and payment affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. They were all resulted no positive relationship with customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. This finding contradicted with the perspectives of Rasli et al. (2018) who asserted the importance of transaction and payment capability as crucial factors influencing customers' online purchase decisions, Dellaert and Kahn (1999) who highlighted the low tolerance of online shoppers, Weinberg (2000) who emphasized on significance of website speed in achieving a successful online shopping experience.

Contrary to these established perspectives, the research findings of this study indicated that the hypothesized relationships between transaction capability, security privacy, payment, and customer satisfaction were not supported. In other words, the study did not find a significant association between these purchase variables and customer satisfaction in the online shopping landscape of Myanmar. One potential explanation for this contradiction could be the prevalent use of the "cash on delivery (COD)" payment method by the majority of respondents. This buyer-friendly payment method, known for its safety features, might have minimized the perceived importance of transaction capability, security privacy, and payment methods in

shaping customer satisfaction. It was also possible that people had trust issue with privacy, and they did not believe anyone, so the effect was diluted. Moreover, banking issues, hacking and corrupted policies were commonly found in Myanmar. Therefore, people were used to these issues and paid little attention. These findings were all against with the findings stated in literature review chapter because all papers agree with the positive relationship between purchase variables and customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: Post purchase in the context of customer service affected customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. This hypothesis was supported because the research results showed that customer service ($p=.002$, $\beta =.686$) significantly affected customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar. The results confirmed that customer service have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar. Customers found it important that companies catered to their needs and wants in the form of customer service. Quick response, immediate problem solving, responsible actions, prompt answers, helpful staff and good after-sale service made customers highly satisfied to the point that they become loyal customers. This was because people valued relationships and customer service were a form of direct relationship between customers and product or service providers. This finding is consistent with the study of Phyu and Piriapada (2018), Liu et al. (2008), Cao et al. (2018) and Goswami et al. (2013).

5.3 Recommendations for Managerial Implications

According to the results of study, customer service is the factor that had strongest weight of relative contribution on customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. Customer service has a direct impact in customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar, therefore, the businesses are suggested to provide more insightful pre-sale, sale and post-sale customer service depending on the product type and requirement and build the intimacy between merchandisers and purchasers. This can be done by having customer relationship staffs standby at any time by rotating working hours since people like to have quick responses. They should also be educated in the importance of customer service and building long-term relationships. They should be well-trained so that precise information can be given in a short time. If possible, bot and human could be used alternatively. AI technology such as messenger bot was the best solution of night shift availability.

The second significant factor affecting customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar is merchandise attributes. This is another driver that business owners should not neglect. Nowadays, great social media marketing strategies significantly enhance the merchandise attributes on product physical as well as sensible. Numbers of customers followed reputable online bloggers corresponding to product categories. Merchandise attributes not only raised the desire to purchase product/service but also it enhanced customer satisfaction on pre-post purchasing an item. Nice display of products, and customer reviews had great impact on it. Online shop owners should work with various products to be available at their site or page in an attempt to attract customers. Having as many products as possible on the site is also one of the best suited solutions. Business owners should be concerned about

online activities and promotions to motivate and give more frequency in purchasing in this business platform.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This research study was conducted in Myanmar only, and the outcome lied in the demographic composition of the respondents, primarily concentrated within the 21 to 30 age group. This study can be regarded as the study particularly in the context of the online shopping behavior of a young and tech-savvy demographic. Therefore, the researcher would like to recommend additional interesting issues for future research in order to enhance the knowledge which is important to the academic concerns as follows.

It is recommended to conduct research that spans a broader demographic spectrum within Myanmar, encompassing different age groups, income levels, and technological literacy. Understanding how online shopping behaviors vary across diverse demographic segments can provide a more comprehensive picture of consumer preferences and challenges. Moreover, given the prevalence of Facebook usage among the respondents, future researchers should conduct a detailed examination of the impact of different social media platforms on online shopping behavior. Explore how user interactions, advertising, and features on platforms like Instagram, Tik Tok, or local social networks influence consumer choices and satisfaction.

Furthermore, given the prevalence of the "cash on delivery (COD)" payment method in this study, further research could delve into the reasons behind the preference for specific payment methods. Understanding the factors influencing payment method

choices can inform businesses and policymakers about the most effective strategies to accommodate consumer preferences.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the challenges the universality of established correlations by highlighting the nuanced perspectives of a specific demographic subset. The findings underscore the necessity for a context-specific examination of online shopping behavior and serve as a foundation for further exploration into the dynamic and multifaceted realm of e-commerce in Myanmar. Moreover, the researchers might add other relevant independent factors for future study such as quality of the products, value for money, online shop reputation and so on. The new findings could be useful for customer satisfaction on online shopping in Myanmar to develop the strategies for maintaining and attracting their customers in the future.



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APPENDIX A:
Survey Questionnaire



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QUESTIONNAIRE:

**An Empirical Study of Information Search and Alternative Evaluation,
Purchase and Post Purchase Affecting Customer Satisfaction toward Online
Shopping in Myanmar**

This survey research was aimed to comprehend the factors affecting customer satisfaction toward online shopping in Myanmar. This study is a part of BA715: Independent Study, Graduate School, Bangkok University. I would be appreciated if you could contribute any fact and useful information truthfully by filling out the questionnaire. The information provided will be treated highly confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of academic resources.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

MBA Student, Bangkok University

Screening Questions:

1. Have you ever purchased any goods from online?
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No
2. Do you still buy things from online currently or plan to buy in the near future?
 - 1) Yes
 - 2) No
3. If you do not purchase things online, why?
 - 1) I do not trust online shopping.
 - 2) Internet fees are expensive.
 - 3) I often heard bad things about online shopping.
 - 4) I do not find what I look for.
 - 5) No internet availability.
 - 6) I do not know about online shopping.
 - 7) Others (please specify.....)

**If your answer is "No" for question 1 and 2, the survey kindly ends here. **

Part 1: Personal Details

Explanation: Please mark into that matches your information the most.

1. Gender

- 1) Male 2) Female

2. Age

- 1) Under 21 years old 2) 21 – 30 years old
 3) 31 – 40 years old 4) 41 – 50 years old
 5) 51 – 60 years old

3. Top educational certificate

- 1) High school and below 2) Undergraduate /vocational school
 3) Master and above

4. What is your current occupation?

- 1) Student 2) Employed in a company
 3) Own business 4) Freelancer
 5) Others (please specify)

5. What is your current monthly income?

- 1) Less than 100,000 MMK 2) 100,000 – 300,000 MMK
 3) 300,001 – 600,000 MMK 4) 600,001 – 900,000 MMK
 5) 900,000 MMK above

6. On average, how often do you buy product or service online?

- 1) Very often 2) Often
 3) Sometimes 4) Rarely
 5) Very rarely

7. What do you mostly do on internet?

- 1) Use social networks (e.g. Facebook, We Chat, Viber, etc.)
 2) Play online games
 3) Read news online
 4) Watch movies/ listen to the music
 5) Others (please specify)

8. Your most recently purchased products from online shopping were:

- 1) Software/ online music/ movie
- 2) Books/ magazines
- 3) Clothing/ accessories/ shoes /bags
- 4) Fancy jewelry/ glasses/ watches
- 5) Make-up/ perfume/ dressing accessories
- 6) Household electronic devices
- 7) Electronic gadgets
- 8) Others (please specify

9. Please choose the online website or online channel which you usually do online shopping. (Select only one choice)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Facebook | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Shop.com.mm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) BaganMart.com | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) OneKyat.com |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) ZawGyiMart | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) AwelDaw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7) Ads.com.mm | <input type="checkbox"/> 8) Yangon Bay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9) Oway | <input type="checkbox"/> 10) Barlolo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11) DailyMart | <input type="checkbox"/> 12) WeChat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13) Others (please specify | |

10. How do you pay when you buy online?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Cash on delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Bank transfer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Online payment | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Visa card/ Master card / Debit card |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Others (please specify | |

11. Why do you choose to shop online? (Select only one choice)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Very convenience | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Time saving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Low Price | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Products variety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Rare product Availability | <input type="checkbox"/> 6) Others (please specify |

12. Do you trust online trade?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Kind of, but I keep being careful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3) I am confident enough | <input type="checkbox"/> 4) I am fully confident |

13. If you have any additional opinions about the factors which influence your satisfaction toward online shopping, please write down.

.....

Part 2: Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction toward Online Shopping in Myanmar

Explanation: Suppose the following sentences describe your shopping experience.

What is your degree of agreement? Please mark (✓) the choices that correspond to your opinions. Indication of your opinion: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree

Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction toward Online Shopping in Myanmar	Level of Opinions				
	Strongly Agree	← →			Strongly Disagree
1. Information Search and Alternative Evaluation					
1.1 Information Quality: IQ					
1.1.1 I believe that website provides accurate information to potential customers like me.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.1.2 The information provided at the website is reliable.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.1.3 The information provided at the website is clear to me.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.1.4 The information on the web site is complete for my purchase decisions.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.2 Website Design: WD					
1.2.1 I like the layout of the website.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.2.2 The start page tells me immediately where I can find the information I am looking for.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.2.3 I found it was easy to navigate around the web site.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)

Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction toward Online Shopping in Myanmar	Level of Opinions				
	Strongly Agree	←————→			Strongly Disagree
1.2.4 I like the color combination of this website.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.3 Merchandise Attributes: MA					
1.3.1 The general pricing of the web site's goods is relatively fair. (Good price plus good delivery price)	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.3.2 The product range of this web site is complete.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.3.3 Most of the goods I need can be found at this site	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
1.3.4 There are more choices for goods of a particular type at this site.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2. Purchase					
2.1 Transaction Capability: TC					
2.1.1 The website loads quickly.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.1.2 When I use the website there is very little waiting time between my actions and the website's response.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.1.3 All my online shopping process can be completed via the website.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.1.4 I rarely experienced system crashed (logged off) before completion.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.2 Security/ Privacy: SP					
2.2.1 I feel secure giving out credit card information at this site.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.2.2 I feel safe in my transactions with this website.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.2.3 I feel I can trust this website.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.3.4 I trust this website will keep my personal information safe after I bought things from them.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.3 Payment: PM					

Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction toward Online Shopping in Myanmar	Level of Opinions				
	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
2.3.1 This web site has complete payment options; referring to post office remittance, online payment, bank transfer, cash on delivery, etc.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.3.2 I accept the payment options provided by the web site.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.3.3 I am satisfied with their payment systems.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.3.4 It is safe to pay money and perform a financial transaction with this online retailer.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
3. Post Purchase					
3.1 Customer Service: CS					
3.1.1 The company is ready and willing to respond to customer needs.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
3.1.2 Inquiries are answered promptly.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
3.1.3 Customer service personnel are always willing to help me.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
3.1.4 The after sales service made me enjoy with the online shopping.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)

Part 3: Consumer Satisfaction of Online Shopping in Myanmar

Explanation: Please mark ✓ the choices that correspond to your opinions. Indication of your opinion: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree

Consumer Satisfaction: CS	Level of Opinions				
	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
1. So far, I am generally satisfied with the service quality among these online shops.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2. So far, I am satisfied with the speed of delivery provided by online shops in Myanmar.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
3. So far, I am generally satisfied with the price among these online shops.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
4. I am overall satisfied with my experience of shopping online.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
5. I am truly enjoyed purchasing products or service from online shops.	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)

**** Thank you for your kind cooperation****

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Ms. Theingi Htoo
Assistant General Manager
Seinn Lae Thwin Co., Ltd.

December 14, 2023

Subject: Acceptance as an expert in reviewing questionnaires for a research project as part of an M.B.A student's Independent Study at Bangkok University.

Dear Ms. Theingi Htoo,

I, Nang Phyo Wint Kyi, a Master of Business Administration (English Program) student at Bangkok University, Student Code 7600201060, am conducting a study titled An Empirical Study of Information Search and Alternative Evaluation, Purchase, and Post Purchase Affecting Customer Satisfaction and E-commerce business Development in Myanmar. As your proven track record in your industry, I would appreciate it if you could review and validate relevant contents. The knowledge gained will be used for academic purposes, and I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Nang Phyo Wint Kyi
Researcher



Ms. Theingi Htoo
Assistant General Manager
Seinn Lae Thwin Co., Ltd.

Ms. Nang Aye Mi Mi Thaw
Sales Account Manager
Huawei Technologies (Yangon) Co., Ltd.

December 14, 2023

Subject: Acceptance as an expert in reviewing questionnaires for a research project as part of an M.B.A student's Independent Study at Bangkok University.

Dear Ms. Nang Aye Mi Mi Thaw,

I, Nang Phyto Wint Kyi, a Master of Business Administration (English Program) student at Bangkok University, Student Code 7600201060, am conducting a study titled *An Empirical Study of Information Search and Alternative Evaluation, Purchase, and Post Purchase Affecting Customer Satisfaction and E-commerce business Development in Myanmar*. As your proven track record in your industry, I would appreciate it if you could review and validate relevant contents. The knowledge gained will be used for academic purposes, and I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Nang Phyto Wint Kyi

Researcher



Ms. Nang Aye Mi Mi Thaw

Sales Account Manager

Huawei Technologies (Yangon) Co., Ltd.

Ms. Nang Khin Swe Kyaw
Business Owner
Gandawin Daewi Silk & Textile

December 14, 2023

Subject: Acceptance as an expert in reviewing questionnaires for a research project as part of an M.B.A student's Independent Study at Bangkok University.

Dear Ms. Nang Khin Swe Kyaw,

I, Nang Phyo Wint Kyi, a Master of Business Administration (English Program) student at Bangkok University, Student Code 7600201060, am conducting a study titled An Empirical Study of Information Search and Alternative Evaluation, Purchase, and Post Purchase Affecting Customer Satisfaction and E-commerce business Development in Myanmar. As your proven track record in your industry, I would appreciate it if you could review and validate relevant contents. The knowledge gained will be used for academic purposes, and I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Nang Phyo Wint Kyi
Researcher



Ms. Nang Khin Swe Kyaw
Business Owner
Gandawin Daewi Silk & Textile

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2022 - 2023 Administrative Supervisor
Cha Cha Food (Thailand) Co., Ltd

2018 - 2020 Account Executive
Truemoney Transfer Co., Ltd.

2014 - 2016 Administrative Specialist
Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd.

2010 – 2013 Primary School Teacher
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Business Centre (ILBC)