

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigated how Hofstede's five cultural dimensions, Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long-Term Orientation, affect user satisfaction in online shopping, comparing the experiences of consumers in Madagascar and Indonesia. The findings indicate that overall levels of satisfaction among online shoppers in the two countries are broadly similar, despite differences in cultural orientations and the maturity of e-commerce infrastructure. Malagasy consumers reported slightly higher satisfaction on average, but this difference was not substantial, suggesting that common underlying factors such as platform reliability, trust, and service quality are crucial determinants of satisfaction across both contexts. Power Distance emerged as a key predictor of satisfaction in both Madagascar and Indonesia. In both countries, users tended to respond positively to platforms and sellers that displayed credibility, authority, and structured processes. This aligns with the cultural preference for clear hierarchical relationships, indicating that consumers feel more confident and reassured when authority is visible and established, which in turn enhances their overall experience. The influence of Individualism versus Collectivism, however, was context-dependent. In Madagascar, collectivist tendencies played an important role,

as social influence through recommendations from friends, family, or online communities strongly shaped user satisfaction. This reflects the centrality of community endorsement and informal trust networks in Malagasy online shopping, where social proof is crucial for building confidence. In contrast, Indonesian consumers did not show a strong reliance on collectivist validation for satisfaction. Their satisfaction appeared to be guided more by platform reliability, technological infrastructure, and regulatory compliance, suggesting that institutional trust can mitigate the impact of social influence in more developed e-commerce environments. Masculinity versus Femininity was not a significant factor in either country. This suggests that considerations related to competitiveness, price orientation, or relational values are less critical to consumers' evaluations of their shopping experiences. Instead, users prioritize practical concerns such as trust, security, and service reliability over gender-role-related cultural expectations when assessing satisfaction. Uncertainty Avoidance was consistently important in both Madagascar and Indonesia, highlighting the significance of minimizing risk and ambiguity in online transactions. Consumers preferred platforms that provided clear policies, reliable delivery, secure payment options, and transparent procedures. This emphasizes that reducing uncertainty is a central aspect of creating a positive online shopping experience in contexts where concerns about fraud, delayed delivery, or unclear processes may undermine trust. Long-Term Orientation contributed positively to user satisfaction in both countries. Consumers who value planning, consistency, loyalty programs, and long-term engagement with platforms reported higher satisfaction.

This finding underscores the importance of forward-looking strategies by e-commerce platforms, such as offering consistent service quality, rewards for repeat engagement, and assurances of ongoing improvements, which foster user loyalty and enhance the overall shopping experience. While Madagascar and Indonesia differ in some cultural orientations, user satisfaction in online shopping is most strongly shaped by factors associated with Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Long-Term Orientation. The roles of Individualism versus Collectivism and Masculinity versus Femininity are more context-specific, reflecting local social norms and the maturity of digital marketplaces. These findings provide a nuanced understanding of how cultural dimensions interact with practical platform features to influence consumer experiences in diverse emerging economies.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed for both practice and future research:

5.2.1 Practical Recommendations

For e-commerce platforms, it is essential to design strategies that reflect the cultural characteristics and consumer expectations of each target market. In both Madagascar and Indonesia, emphasizing authority signals can enhance user satisfaction, as consumers in high Power Distance cultures tend to trust platforms that demonstrate credibility and clear structures. Practical approaches include featuring verified sellers, maintaining official brand stores, and providing secure payment

gateways, which collectively reinforce users' confidence in the platform's reliability and professionalism. In addition, addressing Uncertainty Avoidance is critical to building trust and reducing consumer anxiety. Platforms should implement transparent risk-reduction features, such as clearly articulated refund and return policies, real-time order tracking, and robust fraud prevention systems, which reassure users that their transactions are safe and predictable. Moreover, the development of loyalty and reward programs that offer tangible long-term benefits can significantly enhance engagement and satisfaction, as users value consistency, reliability, and recognition of their continued patronage.

For policymakers and regulators, tailored interventions can complement these platform-level strategies. In Madagascar, where informal social commerce is prevalent and users rely heavily on community trust, policies should focus on improving digital literacy and formalizing trust networks to mitigate risks associated with fraud and delivery challenges. Programs that educate users on secure online practices and empower communities to participate safely in digital marketplaces can strengthen overall satisfaction. In Indonesia, regulatory support should prioritize consumer protection frameworks, clear dispute resolution mechanisms, and enforcement of platform accountability. Given the country's more developed e-commerce infrastructure, ensuring that platforms adhere to regulatory standards and maintain high operational reliability can directly reduce dissatisfaction and build consumer confidence.

For marketers, cultural adaptation is equally important in shaping promotional

strategies. In Madagascar, where collectivist values remain influential, campaigns should leverage group dynamics, social proof, and peer influence to boost engagement. Highlighting community reviews, endorsements from trusted networks, and interactive platforms for customer sharing can enhance perceived credibility and encourage repeat purchases. Conversely, in Indonesia, where collective validation has less influence on post-purchase satisfaction, marketing efforts should focus on individualized approaches. Personalized recommendations, targeted advertisements, and tailored promotions that reflect users' unique preferences and behavior patterns are likely to resonate more effectively with consumers. By carefully aligning platform features, regulatory measures, and marketing strategies with the cultural expectations and behavioral tendencies of each country, e-commerce businesses can optimize user satisfaction, foster long-term loyalty, and strengthen their competitive positioning in diverse markets.

5.2.2 Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, expanding the geographical scope is essential to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cultural influences on online shopping satisfaction. Including additional countries from Africa, Southeast Asia, and other regions with diverse cultural and economic contexts would allow for broader comparative analyses and enhance the generalizability of findings. Researchers should also consider employing larger and more diverse samples, incorporating respondents from various demographics such as rural and urban areas, different

income levels, and varying degrees of digital literacy. This would improve the representativeness of the data and capture more nuanced variations in online shopping behaviors across populations.

In addition, future studies should explore the inclusion of additional variables beyond Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Variables such as trust in technology, perceived ease of use, perceived risk, platform design and usability, economic conditions, and social influence may also significantly affect user satisfaction in online shopping. Investigating how these variables interact with cultural dimensions could provide a more holistic understanding of the factors shaping consumer experiences. Moreover, examining mediating or moderating effects, for example, whether trust in institutions or platform credibility moderates the relationship between culture and satisfaction, could refine theoretical models and improve explanatory power.

Finally, adopting longitudinal research designs would enable scholars to track changes in consumer behavior and satisfaction over time, particularly as e-commerce ecosystems evolve, digital literacy increases, and platforms mature. Such an approach would reveal whether the influence of cultural dimensions on user satisfaction remains stable or shifts in response to technological, regulatory, or societal changes. Overall, future research that expands geographic coverage, incorporates additional behavioral and contextual variables, and applies longitudinal methods would provide deeper and more actionable insights for both academics and e-commerce practitioners.