



Consumer rights and product safety: A closer examination of Bangladeshi Regulations

M d Emran Hossain

Associate Professor, Department of Law, City University, Bangladesh

Abstract

Consumer protection and product safety are key to public health, free trade, and the social-economic well-being. Recent consumer power, fast digitalization, and global trade of Bangladesh have exacerbated problems of product quality, false branding, and food adulteration. This article reviews the regulatory regime for consumer protection and product safety in Bangladesh, comparing it with international systems to identify best practice as well as areas which require improvement. With a qualitative and analytical method based on socio-legal research techniques, the article focuses on the adequacy of laws, control institutions and capacity building. The results show continued challenges in enforcement, low levels of consumer knowledge and insufficient response to digital and technological risks. Suggestions are developed for a series of measures, such as refining law enforcement system, legislating special laws on ecommerce, raising consumer awareness level, introducing united risk-based governance mechanism in new technologies area, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and create consistency between the above-stated six national legislation pattern with the international. The article highlights the importance of a flexible, transparent legal structure to protect consumers and regulate markets in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Consumer protection, product safety, regulatory regime, Bangladesh, e-commerce regulations

Introduction

The rights of the consumer to safety and protection are important cornerstones that ensure public health, market confidence and socio-economic stability. In the case of Bangladesh – a country experiencing rapid digitalization, burgeoning consumer markets and complicated global supply-chains – these concerns have become even more pressing. Recent enhancement on consumer affordability and product diversification has even witnessed growing challenges including food adulteration, misleading marketing, substandard products which are a threat to consumer trust and fair market operation (Arefin *et al.*, 2020). Besides, the rapid growth in e-commerce and the wide spread of digitization bring new risks like counterfeit products, violation of data protection and inefficient regulation that make it difficult for classical consumer protection instruments (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025)^[26].

Yet at the same time, the proliferation of cutting-edge technologies — including AI and IoMT (Internet of Medical Things), digitized devices — integrated with consumer products requires a robust and modern regulatory framework. And a system governing it must establish an equilibrium between the need to encourage innovation and necessity of limiting possible consumer harm, especially in sectors that are crucial to public health such as pharmaceuticals or medical devices (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024)^[24]. Though legislative steps have been taken in this regard, such as the Consumer Rights Protection Act and the Food Safety Act, enforcement, institutional capacity and consumer awareness continue to pose substantial barriers to effective implementation of these protections (Arefin *et al.*, 2020)^[2].

In this backdrop, this study socio-legal analysis of the regulatory system of consumer rights and product safety in Bangladesh. Drawing on qualitative and analytical research methods, it measures the sufficiency of current laws and institutional structures and enforcement policies but locates these within dominant global regulatory trends. By

pinpointing the gaps and challenges that are specific to the Bangladeshi setting, including enforcement issues, risks and vulnerabilities in a digital economy context, and the necessity of harmonization with global best practices, this research presents evidence-based suggestions on how to bolster consumer protection. The paper suggests the need for a dynamic, transparent and risk-based regulatory framework that encourages corporate social responsibility (CSR), client education while also addresses new technical risks in order to make the marketplace safer and more reliable for Bangladesh.

Objectives of the Study

The focus in investigating consumer rights and systems for product safety in Bangladesh is how well the present rules and regulations protect consumers. This requires a demarcation of the particularly relevant legal references and their contents as well as application. An essential goal is to determine the particular challenges of Bangladeshi consumers, especially in terms of product safety across industries, and to uncover constraints inclusive within extant regulations (Arefin *et al.*, 2020). In addition to these constructs the study also intend to uncover mediating variables (product attributes, brand image and price) which influences consumer behavior and purchase intention with respect of contribution from developing country like Bangladesh (Golam *et al.* Ultimately the recommendations would be evidence-based ones to develop consumer protection and product safety policies in Bangladesh with inputs from local experiences and global harmonization trends (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025)^[26] (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21].

Methodology

Studies on consumer rights and product safety very often use a mixed methodical approach within their qualitative study design. For example, research carried out into the purchase intention for smartphones in a sample of Bangladeshi students at university has attempted to measure

direct and indirect effects of variables like brand image, price, or product features on purchase intention through questionnaire surveys and SEM (Golam *et al.*, 2024). Likewise, in terms of environmental behavior in a private-sphere scenario, the combination of constructs from TPB and Value Belief Norm (VBN) theory as well as habits and self-identity have been studied via questionnaire survey and SEM (Gkargkavouzi *et al.*, 2019)^[8].

Methods commonly used in the analysis of legal frameworks comprise qualitative and analytical techniques that challenge national legislation, international treaties and policy papers (Hossain & Fazi, 2024)^[10] (Bortsevych & Kopytova, 2025)^[4]. This includes examining statutory requirements, regulations and enforcement (Kafwubulula & Mwange, 2025)^[12] Klaschka *et al* 2008 page 3 of Google). An example of such a systems approach to mapping regulatory landscapes would be a mapping study on the regulatory context for AI in health across the EU that included combining 141 binding instruments to AI and healthcare laws – showing how complex regulatory environments can be captured systemically (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024)^[24]. Comparative socio-legal studies are also popular and offer valuable information on how other jurisdictions deal with issues such as stealth marketing, or consumer liability in the context of product recall, which may be used for regulatory reform (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21]; Majid & Bapuji, 2024)^[18].

For instance, on certain topical issues such as food adulteration and consumer awareness surveys are necessary to collect data directly from the consumers (Arefin *et al.*, 2020). This facilitates the comprehension of awareness levels, issue prevalence and impact on trust. Furthermore, systematic reviews can be used for the synthesis of available literature (e.g., examining the role of breakfast in hotel choice), and reference to specific product attributes with regard to their impact on consumer choices and safety perception evaluation may also be considered (Leite-Pereira *et al.* Risk evaluation is a fundamental premise of product safety, and law interpretation combined with problem analysis and creating implementation plans are often used for assessing risk (Im & Park, 2020)(Liu *et al.*, 2011)^[16]. This may include considerations of risk management phases including contained use, market placement and surveillance; (illustrated in the case of synthetic biology regulation) (Macfarlane *et al.*, 2022)^[17].

The approach can also be extended to measure the effectiveness of legislations on stealth marketing in developed and developing world economies by applying socio-legal and comparative legal perspective (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21]. The process of enhancing regulatory systems, notably in technical aspects such as product safety can be visualized by reference to holistic diagrams that depict the stakeholder participations, legal recognition and community empowerment steps (Thiha *et al.*, 2023)^[27].

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations on a critical analysis of consumer rights and product safety in a developing country setting. A key limitation is the availability and quality of empirical data. Studies typically use self-reported data from questionnaires, which could be influenced by social desirability bias or memory errors (Golam *et al.*, 2024). Also, many of the studies might be applicable to a specific geographic area or population group (e.g., only university

students in one part of the Bangladesh), and may not apply more widely (Golam *et al.*, 2024).

These market globalization and technological revolution phenomena (e.g., e-commerce technologies and AI) cause regulators' schemes to go stale or even not fully developed yet, hindering static analyses (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025)^[26]; Schmidt *et al.*, 2024)^[24]. Enforcement of laws on the books can also be a major impediment, because legal structures, even if made with the best intentions, can encounter challenges in enforcement due to lack of resources, corruption or ignorance (Hossain & Fazi 2014)^[10] (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21]. For instance, even when there are the laws in place concerning workers' rights, loopholes of enforcement may still be existent (Hossain & Fazi, 2024)^[10].

In addition, the interdisciplinarity of CCRI (including legal, economic, social and environmental dimensions), also means that a single study could not cover all of the relevant dimensions in full breadth (Gkargkavouzi *et al.*, 2019) (Geng *et al.*, 2020)^[7]. The lack of centralized and universal set of regulations both at national and international levels can lead to complexity as well as loopholes that could not be comprehensively assessed within one framework (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21] (Malila *et al.*, 2024)^[19]. Analytic depth may be similarly constrained by the lack of clear measurement for some regulatory effects or for the amount of consumer loss. Furthermore, some comparison laws might not be appropriately strong enough to critically consider enforcement gaps and suggest global collaboration for solution (Rasool *et al.*, 2025)^[21].

Literature Review

The existing literature emphasize the complexity of consumer rights and product safety. Internationally, a growing consensus can be observed in the need for strong legal infrastructure to safeguard consumers in various areas. Thus, the rapid growth of e-commerce has opened opportunities but also considerable risks, namely access to counterfeit drugs and improper use of personal health-related data (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025)^[26]. As the Internet of Medical Things (IoMT) devices provide advantages, they are also surrounded by issues on user safety requiring strict control from the regulatory lead (Biczysko-Pudełko, 2024)^[5].

With respect to product safety, regulations vary across countries with regard to manufacturer responsibility in recalls (Majid & Bapuji, 2024)^[18]. The responsibility only manufacturer countries may impose sanctions to consumers using recalled product (Majid & Bapuji, 2024)^[18]. Such a wide divergence across the world makes the case for harmonized standards. Safety of certain product categories, such as toys and low-cost jewelry, is a continued concern due to products containing heavy metals with potential bioavailability especially for children (Guney & Zagury, 2012)^[9].

In Bangladesh, though the research focus centered on food adulteration and consumers' consciousness. According to a research in Dhaka, food adulteration is still a challenging issue where consumers face threats from misleading advertisements and adulterated products, despite the emergence of more diversified items (Arefin *et al.*, 2020)^[2]. The research also emphasized that consumer is the "top economic society" of any country and the most important issue to protect (Arefin *et al.*, 2020)^[2]. Another huge

contributor to the Bangladesh economy is the garment industry which has also come under question with regard to employee rights, indirectly connected to questions of ethical and social considerations related to product safety and corporate social responsibility (Hossain & Fazi, 2024) [10] (Park & Lennon, 2006);

The literature also extends to the more general theoretical foundations of behavior. Literature has examined the mediating role of brand image, price and product features on Bangladeshi university students for smartphone purchase intention (Golam *et al.*, 2024). It suggests that price is not the only driver of consumer choice but also perceived quality and reputation of a brand, often associated with safety and reliability levels.

Some researches on the binding space of new hot spot and new edge emerging technologies have been also developed. For example, the EU's AI Act establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework for artificial intelligence in healthcare, addressing social, health and human rights standards (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24]. These efforts have implications for other regions, including Bangladesh, that are struggling with the regulatory challenges associated with advanced technologies. The focus on ethical, safe and effective use of AI in healthcare represents a from-risk approach (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24].

Legal Regime

The legal environment under which consumer rights and product safety is regulated in Bangladesh is a changing one that remains subject to considerable implementation and fullness of scope. Consumer protection is frequently based on legislation such as the Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009 aimed at misleading practices, product adulteration, environmental hygiene and health hazards. Food adulteration is a serious problem in Bangladesh, which calls for reinforcement of legal and enforcement aspects (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2].

At the international level, the Russian Federation is facing an evolution in complexity of legal measures in consumer protection due to globalization, the digitalization of the economy and development of consumer problems (Bortsevych & Kopytova, 2025) [4]. National regulations are influenced by international treaties and regional initiatives (such as those in the European Union). The EU AI Act exemplifies a world view on how the use of AI in healthcare can be regulated going forward (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24].

Protecting consumer rights is more than a matter of product quality, but also financial literacy protection against fraudulent activities (Zheng *et al.*, 2024) [29], fair trade in e-commerce (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025) [26] (Warraich *et al.*, 2024) [28] and the environmental effect of goods by requirements on sustainable design (Geng *et al.*, 2020) [7]. Certain sectors including pharmaceuticals and medical equipment can face severe regulation on product safety and efficacy through various stages of research, market introduction, and post-market surveillance (Kaliaev & Malikova, 2019).

The regulatory framework typically consists of defining performance criteria, testing environments, and product risk classification (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24]. Regulating of data processing, particularly sensitive health data and interoperability between various systems is also addressed (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24]. From various viewpoints, legal safety requirements are an essential part of frame condition

special risk forces-that is circumstances-ensuring that products do not cause harm to users or systems (Röser, 2024) [22] (Im & Park, 2020). This includes rules on single emissions, disposal duties and property rights (Röser, 2024) [22].

Although there are laws, it is implementation and enforcement that's a problem. For instance, laws on workers' rights in the garment industry in Bangladesh will be examined for impact and effective protection issues (Hossain & Fazi, 2024) [10]. The pesticide regulation, on the other hand, essential as far food is concern. However, it may need an integrative management of that brings together environmental, occupational health and food safety dimension (Shammi *et al.*, 2017) [25]. Currently, the role of legal support for protection of consumer rights is gaining considerable importance and there is a need in effective regulation and control (Bortsevych & Kopytova, 2025) [4] (Kosenkov *et al.*, 2024) [14].

Analysis

The examination of consumer rights and product safety in Bangladesh uncovers a dynamic state of foil nexus – between potent advances in law-making ideology and stubborn constraints upon actualizing the ideal. Due to the expansion of the digital market and entry of various consumer products, a sound regulatory system i.e., new risk needs to be covered with that (Golam *et al.*, 2024) (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2] (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025) [26].

A second major site of analysis is that between the law on the books and how it is implemented. Although Bangladesh has food adulteration control laws in place, persistence of the issue is an indication law enforcement measures are not strong or resources allowed may be insufficient (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2]. This dovetails with more general reflections that enforcement and monitoring may still be resource demanding despite having a legal architecture in place especially (in fast-growing) constellations (Barbhuiya *et al.*, 2024) [3]. Therefore the exploit of consumers rights needs more, than only laws themselves – it is necessary for these to have sufficient institutions and finance as well transparent monitoring and redress procedures (Bortsevych & Kopytova, 2025) [4] (Kosenkov *et al.*, 2024) [14].

Summing up the impact of product feature, brand image and price towards consumer intention in purchasing behavior held in Bangladesh portray the economic side of consumer protection (Golam *et al.*, 2024). Consumers, especially university students take in to consideration of these factors to make purchases for products such as smartphones (Golam *et al.*, 2024). This suggests that consumer awareness and education are important for people to have the power to choose, which can ultimately result in market demand for safer and better products (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2]. For example, by being financially literate individuals are empowered to protect their financial rights as consumers and avoid fraud in order to reduce downsides of perceived scam (Zheng *et al.*, 2024) [29].

The incorporation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) into business methods is an additional issue. The potential impact on consumer safety and rights, however, requires further exploration in consideration that CSR activities contribute to enhancing environmental performance and addressing social concerns (Dang *et al.*, 2024) [6] (Kim *et al.*, 2020) [13]. The participation of multiple stakeholders such as software developers, legal professionals, and end-users may

be necessary for compliance with the regulatory requirements in complex software intensive products and services (Kosenkov *et al.*, 2024) [14].

International trends and international standards also influence the regulatory environment. For example, through their regulatory models for AI in health, the EU is paving the way toward governing emerging technologies to ensure they are used ethically, securely, and effectively (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24]. Likewise, mapping compliance requirements in software systems points to the necessity to manage this kind of risk already during engineering (Kosenkov *et al.*, 2024) [14]. Differences between countries in regulatory demands, also reflected by product recalls (As responsible officer) and differences across country borders indicate that the international harmonization is difficult to obtain with one-size-fits-all policies at national level (Majid & Bapuji, 2024) [18] (Barbhuiya *et al.*, 2024) [3].

Findings

From the reviewed literature a few general observations about consumer rights and product safety in Bangladesh are obtained:

Ongoing Challenges of Food Adulteration: In spite of several attempts made to control food adulteration, this continues to be a major issue in Bangladesh pointing out the inadequacy in enforcement, as well as consumer awareness (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2].

Impact of Product Attributes on Consumer Purchase Decision: The smartphone functional attributes, brand image and price have a significant effect on the purchase intention of Bangladeshi university students that implies cost is not sole driving criterion rather quality and trustworthiness (Golam *et al.*, 2024).

Risks of Digital World: The further extension of e-commerce entails new risks, in particular counterfeit drugs and personal data protection risks, which would require more legal support to protect online consumers (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025) [26]. For instance, Pakistan's own experience with its evolving e-commerce sector, shares comparable issues in consumer protection (Warraich *et al.*, 2024) [28].

Complexity of Regulatory Settings: Modern regulatory settings, and in particular for innovative technologies like AI in healthcare, are complex and include risk stratification, data protection or market placement requirements (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024) [24]. This complexity means that traditional, simpler regulatory methods may not be adequate for the health challenges in the future in Bangladesh.

Significance of Stakeholder Involvement and Awareness: Achieving sustainable consumer protection critically depends on legal regulations and mutual cooperation among consumers, business firms, as well as public authorities (Kosenkov *et al.*, 2024) [14] (Thiha *et al.*, 2023) [27]. Consumers' knowledge about their rights and financial education are fundamental to being self-protected against frauds, minor frauds, and abuses (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2] (Zheng *et al.*, 2014) [29].

Differences of International Regulatory Stance: Variation in international regulatory positioning for recall of products and regulatory monitoring variations across products indicates lack of homogeneous global standards that posing challenges to a country like Bangladesh, where it is part of the global supply chain (Majid & Bapuji, 2024) [18] (Barbhuiya *et al.*, 2024) [3].

Socio-Legal Shortfalls of Labor-Related Consumer Aspects: In sectors of the economy, for example garments sector, where securing labor rights (that is prerequisite to the social responsibility of production) continue to need scrutiny in perspective of legal and actual framework (Hossain & Fazi, 2024) [10]. This links to broader concepts of social sustainability in supply-chain transportation (Ruggeri *et al.*, 2024) [23].

Recommendation

To improve consumer rights and product safety in Bangladesh, an integrated approach involving legislation, law enforcement, and awareness should be undertaken:

Enhance Law Enforcement Instruments: Vigorous enforcement of the existing laws pertaining to food adulteration and other misleading activities is key. This calls for more resources to regulatory agencies, better monitoring systems and tougher penalties against non-compliance (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2]. It may be helpful to learn from systematic reviews of governance in other fields such as occupational health and safety (Abdelrahim *et al.*, 2023) [1].

Establish Regulatory Rules and Regulations for Digital Economy: With the rise in e-commerce, tailor-made set of laws are required which can safeguard consumers from fraudulent activities online, fake products having infringed trademarks as well as data privacy intrusion in medicinal products along with other sectors (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2025) [26] (Warraich *et al.*, 2024) [28]. That includes rules to facilitate online transactions, to resolve disputes and for cross-border regulatory cooperation.

Improve Consumer Education and Financial Literacy: The public awareness campaigns, educational programs should be established to educate consumers about rights, good identifications unsafe product and financial risk of complex products (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) [2], (Zheng *et al.*, 2024) [29]. Knowledge is empowering the consumer and knowledge can discourage bad behavior.

Develop and Implement Risk-Based Regulation: For certain complex innovative technologies, such as AI or IoMT devices, Bangladesh may consider a risk-based regulatory approach found in the EU to ensure minimal harm and maximum innovation (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024)(Biczysko-Pudełko, 2024) [5]. This includes risk stratification, clear market positioning, and testing (Schmidt *et al.*, 2024).

Increasing corporate social responsibility (CSR): Business should be encouraged to adopt CSR principles, especially those which focus on product safety environmental impact and the use of slavery labor in supply chain (Hossain & Fazi, 2024) [10] (Dang *et al.*, 2024) [6] (Park & Lennon, 2006). This might include incentives for

companies that can document high levels of safety and ethical compliance.

Harmonization with International Standards: Where appropriate, Bangladesh should aim to harmonize its product safety requirements with international standards and best practices in order to support trade and achieve coherence of consumer protection across markets globally (Rasool *et al.*, 2025) ^[21] (Barbhuiya *et al.*, 2024) ^[3]. This includes contributing to international discussions about harmonization.

Enhancing Transparency and Accountability Creating transparent reporting systems and fostering accountability between manufacturers and regulatory agencies can generate consumer confidence in safety guidelines leading to increased compliance. Long-term observation and reporting as found in nuclear waste management is a part of an open process (Barbhuiya *et al.*, 2024) ^[3].

Take into Account the Life of Products: Look at future harm from products, not just immediate safety. sustainable design policy and circular economy principle can be beneficial to environmental protection as well as consumer welfare (Geng *et al.*, 2020) ^[7].

Conclusion

Consumer rights and product safety jeopardy in Bangladesh is an area that deserves constant vigilance, and policy development. Some progress has been achieved in legislation, but major areas are missing (i.e., enforcement, responsiveness to digital evolution, entire consumer awareness). The results reveal the existence of widespread problem in food adulteration requires an effective regulatory measure (Arefin *et al.*, 2020) ^[2]. The rising complexity in products and the growth of digital markets calls for a dynamic, learning-oriented and pre-emptive regulatory regime that learns from international experiences with regards to managing risks related with new technologies and global value chains (Teremetskiy *et al.*, 2025) ^[26]; Schmidt *et al.* Through enhanced enforcement, specific legislation for the digital economy, greater consumer education, risk-based systems and platforms to highlight CSR claims and processes as well as international harmonization of standards Bangladesh can significantly strengthen its overall consumer protection environment enabling a safer and trustworthy market for consumers.

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