Report On

Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty at DBH Finance PLC: A strategy for market leadership in a competitive housing sector

By

Nishat Tasneem
Student ID: 21304002

An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor Of Business Administration

BRAC Business School
Brac University
April, 2026

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Nishat Tasneem
Student ID :21304002

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Fairuza Mehreen
Lecturer, BRAC Business School
BRAC University

Letter of Transmittal

Fairuza Mehreen

Lecturer,

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Kha 224, Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Ave, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of Internship Report titled “Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty at DBH Finance PLC: A Strategy for Market Leadership in a Competitive Housing Finance Sector”

Dear Madam,

Hope you’re doing well by the grace of Almighty. Here I’m presenting my internship report as a partial fulfillment of the degree requirement of the Bachelor of Business Administration program in BRAC Business School, BRAC University.

This report gives a detailed description of enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty at DBH Finance PLC in a Competitive Housing Finance Sector. As I worked there at the operations department, I was able to study the clients who used for taking loans, I went through all those documents and was able to go through a proper interview. I hope this report will fulfill all the desires regarding customer satisfaction.

Sincerely yours,

Nishat Tasneem

Student ID: 21304002

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

April 19, 2026

Non-Disclosure Agreement

I, Nishat Tasneem earnestly state that the internship report, entitled “Enhancing Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty at DBH Finance PLC: A Strategy for Market Leadership in a Competitive Housing Finance Sector” has been prepared and updated by me after 3 months internship program at DBH Finance PLC. I testify that this report is authorized by me and it has not been submitted to any other condition other than to meet my BBA program requirement at BRAC University.

Acknowledgement

By the support of my Supervisor, Fairuza Mehreen ma'am, my office supervisor Md. Ariful Bari Rumi, Meezanur Rahman and other supportive colleagues I have completed writing my Internship report.

Where I focused on customer satisfaction on their product that is Home Loan. Working at DBH Finance PLC assisted me a lot with corporate work. I learned a lot about how to deal with the client recruitment process as I worked on HR MIS as well for some few days.

It was a great experience for academics and my career.

Executive Summary

This qualitative internship report discusses the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in DBH Finance PLC which is the pioneer and market leader in the specialized housing finance market in Bangladesh. The research is based on the interpretivist research philosophy and qualitative research approach to comprehend the lived experience of customers throughout the housing loan journey. Customer experience has become a game changer when it comes to long-term sustainability of a market where competition among commercial banks and other technologically advanced financial institutions is rising.

The semi-structured, in-depth interviews with the clients of DBH Finance PLC who purchase home loans were used to collect primary data. A thematic analysis was used to determine the common patterns concerning service quality, communication with staff, loan processing processes, communication habits, and expectations of digital services. The results indicate that there is a high degree of trust and institutional credibility of DBH Finance PLC with professional staff behavior and personalized service to the clients as the key driving force.

Nonetheless, the customers also mentioned that they were rather unsatisfied with the length of the approval procedures, unnecessary documentation, repetitive signing, insufficient transparency, and poor digital services infrastructure.

It is concluded that the human-centred service culture is the biggest competitive advantage of DBH Finance PLC. However, to maintain customer satisfaction and solidify loyalty amid the changing housing finance environment, the organization needs to modernize the operations, enhance the level of open communication, and invest into the digital transformation. The report offers used strategic and qualitative information aimed at customer-focused decision-making and long-term market leadership.

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Overview of Internship

1.1. Introduction to myself:

I, Nishat Tasneem, a student of Bachelor of Business Administration, bearing student ID.21304002 from BRAC Business School (BBS) is enthusiastic about the academic field of Marketing at BRAC University. The curriculum of BRAC University combines theory with practice by having an internship feature in the final semester. The aim of this internship program is to narrow down the distance between the theoretical and practical practices, especially in the field of focus of students. To meet the necessity of this program, I had to gain an internship experience in one of the most successful NBFI of the country named DBH Finance PLC. This report summarizes the facts about an internship as such, the tasks given, the lessons learned, and the reflections of internship experience.

1.2. Internship Information:

The internship was completed over a period of three months at DBH Finance PLC, the pioneer housing finance institution in Bangladesh. The internship was conducted at the Operations and Customer Service Department of the Head Office located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1.2.1 Internship Supervisor Information:

During my internship period of 3 months I managed to work under the supervision of MD. Ariful Bari Rumi who is the Vice President at DBH Finance PLC and also Head of Customer Service Relationship. I also had the chance to work under Tanvir Ahmed who is Head Of Human Resources Management also Deputy Managing Director of DBH Finance PLC. It was a great journey with both. Learning from such highly professional individuals helped me navigate my internship journey. I was able to learn more practically how the corporate field works.

1.2.2. Job Scope and Responsibilities:

During the internship period, the interns were primarily assigned to the Operations and Customer Service Department of DBH Finance PLC. The core responsibility involved supporting activities related to housing loan processing and gaining practical exposure to the operational framework of a specialized financial institution.

One of the major responsibilities was assisting in loan documentation verification. This included reviewing customer-submitted documents such as income statements, bank statements, property documents, and identification records to ensure completeness and compliance with organizational and regulatory requirements. The intern also observed how discrepancies were identified and resolved before forwarding files to the credit and legal departments for further evaluation.

Additionally, the intern supported file processing activities by organizing customer records, updating tracking sheets, and maintaining documentation flow within the department. These tasks contributed to operational efficiency and ensured that files were processed within expected timelines.

Customer interaction was another significant area of responsibility. The intern assisted in responding to customer queries regarding documentation requirements, application status, and procedural guidelines. Through these interactions, the intern developed professional communication skills and learned how transparency and responsiveness influence customer satisfaction.

The operations department at DBH Finance PLC follows a highly compliance-driven structure. Therefore, the internship allowed the intern to understand the importance of regulatory adherence, risk mitigation, and internal control systems. Observing compliance procedures provided insight into how financial institutions balance customer service with regulatory obligations.

In addition to the operations role, the intern was assigned to the Human Resources Department for a period of two weeks. During this rotation, the intern gained practical exposure to the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS). The HRMIS is used for managing employee data, attendance records, leave management, payroll processing, and recruitment tracking. The intern observed how employee information is securely stored and systematically updated within the system.

The HR department demonstrated how structured human resource management contributes to operational stability and long-term organizational success.

Overall, the internship provided holistic exposure to both operational and administrative functions within DBH Finance PLC. The combined experience in operations and human resources significantly broadened the intern's understanding of financial institution management and internal organizational processes.

1.3. Internship Outcomes:

1.3.1. My contribution to the company:

I assisted the operations team by supporting document verification, maintaining file accuracy, and facilitating communication between departments. This contribution helped reduce minor operational delays and improved workflow efficiency.

During the internship period, the intern contributed primarily to the Customer Service Department, while also supporting the Human Resources Department for a shorter duration.

In the Customer Service Department, the intern was responsible for systematically maintaining and updating operational data using Microsoft Excel. This included recording detailed information on housing loan clients, tracking prepayment histories, documenting property-related asset data, and classifying borrowers under Islamic and conventional loan schemes. The structured organization of this information improved internal data accessibility and supported faster retrieval of client records when required.

Team members frequently relied on the intern to provide updated client information. In response to internal queries, the intern either retrieved accurate data from maintained records or coordinated with colleagues to verify details. This required a high level of accuracy, discretion, and responsibility, particularly when handling confidential financial information. By ensuring timely and reliable information support, the intern contributed to smoother departmental workflow and improved responsiveness to customer inquiries.

The intern consistently demonstrated reliability, initiative, and a collaborative mindset. By proactively offering assistance and maintaining dependable performance in routine tasks, the intern helped reduce minor operational bottlenecks and supported overall team efficiency.

During the two-week rotation in the Human Resources Department, the intern was granted supervised access to HR-related systems, including exposure to the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS). This provided insight into employee data management, attendance monitoring, and administrative processes. Although the primary contribution remained within Customer Service, the HR experience enhanced understanding of internal organizational functions and cross-departmental coordination.

Overall, the intern made meaningful contributions by strengthening record management practices, supporting query resolution, maintaining data accuracy, and demonstrating professionalism across departments. The experience reinforced both technical competence and workplace reliability within a structured financial institution.

1.3.2. My Benefits:

The internship enhanced practical understanding of housing finance operations, compliance requirements, and customer service dynamics. It also improved professional communication, time management, and analytical thinking, helping me to learn more details about excel.

Regular interaction with customers strengthened communication skills such as active listening, respectful language, clarity of explanation, and professional body language. Over time, the intern developed greater confidence in managing customer queries independently and coordinating with colleagues when necessary. This confidence is expected to be highly beneficial in a full-time role, particularly in marketing and customer-facing industries where relationship management is critical.

Moreover, the internship deepened the intern's understanding of organizational dynamics and cross-departmental collaboration. Exposure to both the Customer Service and Human Resources Departments broadened career perspective and increased interest in working within the financial services sector.

Overall, the internship contributed to the development of professional maturity, improved interpersonal effectiveness, and prepared the intern for transition into full-time employment with greater confidence and clarity of career direction.

1.3.3. Difficulties and problems I faced:

At the beginning of the internship, adjusting to the structured and compliance-focused environment of a financial institution was challenging. During the first two weeks, understanding the workflow of the Loan Operations and Customer Service Departments required significant effort. The processes were detailed, multi-layered, and required coordination among several departments, which initially felt overwhelming.

While learning documentation procedures and system operations, the intern occasionally repeated similar mistakes. Receiving corrective feedback from supervisors was a learning experience that emphasized the importance of accuracy and attention to detail in financial services. Over time, this feedback helped improve performance and reduce errors.

Another difficulty was becoming familiar with the organization's centralized system. DBH Finance PLC operates through an integrated platform where different departments log in and perform their respective tasks. Understanding how internal and external activities are processed through this central system, how to input data correctly, and how to retrieve necessary information was complex at first due to the number of departments involved.

Technical challenges also affected performance. Occasional system slowdowns and computer issues disrupted workflow and created delays. Access to IT support was sometimes limited for interns, which made resolving technical problems more difficult and increased time pressure.

In addition, meeting deadlines consistently was initially challenging. After completing assigned tasks, the intern often waited to assist customers directly but struggled with time management in the early stage. With guidance and support from the supervisor, the intern gradually improved efficiency, learned to prioritize tasks, and became more confident in handling responsibilities independently.

Overall, these challenges contributed significantly to professional growth by strengthening resilience, adaptability, technical understanding, and time management skills.

1.3.4. Recommendation for DBH Finance PLC

Firstly, the introduction of a structured orientation program at the beginning of the internship period would be highly beneficial. Currently, interns are directly assigned responsibilities without a formal overview of the organization, departmental workflow, or performance expectations. A comprehensive orientation session could outline the company’s structure, operational processes, internship objectives, and potential challenges over the three-month period. This would allow interns to mentally prepare and align their expectations with organizational requirements.

The orientation program may also include interaction with former interns who can share practical insights regarding work responsibilities, presentation preparation, customer interaction strategies, and common challenges. Such peer guidance could reduce initial confusion and accelerate the learning curve.

Secondly, implementing a rotational internship structure across departments would provide broader organizational exposure. While practical workload is essential for learning, a balanced approach combining operational responsibilities with structured learning opportunities would improve overall internship outcomes.

Another important recommendation is the development of a customer-facing digital platform. In the current environment, customers increasingly prefer remote service options rather than physically visiting offices. Introducing online tracking systems, digital documentation submission, and virtual customer support could reduce pressure on both employees and customers while enhancing service efficiency.

Furthermore, consistent mentorship and constructive feedback mechanisms should be introduced. Regular performance feedback sessions would help interns identify areas of improvement and strengthen their professional development. Clear communication regarding expectations and progress would contribute to better performance and confidence.

Lastly, fostering a more inclusive approach toward interns across all departments would improve engagement and motivation. While some departments demonstrated supportive and welcoming attitudes, ensuring consistent professional treatment of interns as valued temporary team members across the organization would create a more positive learning environment.

Overall, by implementing structured orientation, rotational exposure, digital enhancement, and formal feedback systems, DBH Finance PLC can significantly strengthen its internship program and maximize mutual benefits for both the organization and future interns.

2. Organization Part

2.1. Introduction:

DBH Finance PLC is Bangladesh's pioneer and largest private-sector specialist in housing finance. Incorporated in 1996, DBH has been at the forefront of enabling home ownership by extending approval-backed home loans for apartment purchases, plot purchases, construction, renovation, and related financing products

DBH Finance PLC formerly Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd., is Bangladesh's premier private-sector financial institution specializing in housing finance since 1996. Renowned for its stability, it is the only financial institution in the country to receive the highest "AAA" credit rating for 20 consecutive years. DBH provides comprehensive home loans, deposit products, and, more recently, car and personal loans to customers.

Their core business involves mortgage loans for apartment/plot purchases, construction, and renovation. As a pioneer in the sector, DBH has enabled home ownership for over 60,000 families with a cumulative disbursement exceeding Tk 57,000 crore. Headquartered in Dhaka, it is a publicly listed company on the Dhaka and Chittagong Stock Exchanges.With the lowest non-performing loans (NPL) in the industry, DBH remains a leader in housing finance in Bangladesh.

2.1.1. Objectives

The objectives of DBH Finance PLC (formerly Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.) in Bangladesh revolve around strengthening the housing sector, providing specialized financial services, and maintaining high corporate governance standards.

Here are the key objectives of DBH:

- Expand Home Ownership: To strengthen the country's society by continually expanding home ownership, particularly by focusing on the affordable and green housing segments.
- Specialized Housing Finance: To operate as a specialist in the housing finance institution in the private sector, offering a wide range of loan products for apartment purchases, construction, renovation, and plot purchases.
- Customer Service Excellence: To provide outstanding, fast, and reliable service to customers, aiming to be the leading financial institution with the highest customer satisfaction.

- Financial Safety and Stability: To maintain a high level of security for depositors and investors, evidenced by holding the highest 'AAA' credit rating for consecutive years.
- Risk Management: To ensure balanced, steady growth with a disciplined approach to managing risks and costs, including maintaining the lowest Non-Performing Loans (NPL) in the industry.
- Corporate Responsibility and Ethics: To operate as a responsible corporate citizen, adhering to ethical standards, promoting wealth creation, and supporting the underprivileged.
- Anti-Money Laundering (AML) & Compliance: To prevent the institution from being used for money laundering or terrorist financing by implementing a strict customer acceptance policy (KYC) in compliance with Bangladesh Bank guidelines.
- Employee Development: To focus on developing human resource talents and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, integrity, and respect.

Additionally, the company aims to generate value for its shareholders through consistent growth.

2.1.2. Objectives of chapter 2

To analyze DBH's organizational structure and practices,to evaluate financial and operational performance and to assess industry competitiveness.

2.1.3. Scope of study

The study covers DBH Finance PLC's internal operations and external industry environment using secondary data and internship observations.

2.1.4. Methodology

Both qualitative analysis (observations, document review) and quantitative ratio analysis (financial performance) are used.

2.1.5. Significance of the study

The analysis provides insight into DBH’s strategic positioning and operational effectiveness. About the organization asset, liability ROE, ROA, recommendation, implication all about the organization.

2.1.6. Limitation

Limited access to internal data and reliance on publicly available reports were key constraints.

2.2. Overview of DBH Finance PLC

Formerly Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd) is Bangladesh's premier, largest, and longest-standing specialized private-sector housing finance institution, founded in 1996. It provides specialized home loans (apartment, construction, renovation) and deposit products. It is notably the only financial institution in Bangladesh with a 'AAA' credit rating for over 19 consecutive years, indicating high safety and low risk.

Specializes in housing finance, including home loans for purchase, construction, and renovation, along with a variety of deposit schemes (e.g., fixed deposits, deposit pension schemes).

As of 2024, it has disbursed over Tk 57,000 crore to more than 60,000 families, holding a leading position in the housing finance sector

Consistently rated 'AAA' (Triple A) by Emerging Credit Rating Limited for over 20 consecutive years, reflecting strong financial security, sound asset quality, and low non-performing loans (NPL). A public limited company listed on both the Dhaka Stock Exchange and Chittagong Stock Exchange, with headquarters in Dhaka. Recognized as one of the highest taxpayers in the non-banking financial institution category by the National Board of Revenue (NBR). Formerly known as Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd, it was rebranded to DBH Finance PLC in 2022 to better reflect its broader financial services.

2.3. Management Practices

2.3.1. Leadership Style

DBH Finance PLC follows a predominantly **democratic leadership style**, where decision-making involves consultation among senior management, departmental heads, and relevant stakeholders before final implementation. Although the organization operates within a highly regulated financial framework, management encourages structured discussion, professional input, and collaborative problem-solving.

This leadership approach ensures regulatory compliance, risk control, and accountability while maintaining transparency in decision-making. In a financial institution where risk exposure must be carefully managed, a democratic yet structured leadership style contributes to organizational stability and long-term sustainability. It promotes disciplined governance while allowing operational departments to share insights regarding customer service, credit risk, and operational improvements.

The leadership culture at DBH prioritizes stability over aggressive expansion, which aligns with its conservative financial model and reputation for reliability.

2.3.2. Human Resource Planning

DBH Finance PLC follows a systematic human resource planning process aligned with its long-term strategic objectives. Recruitment and selection emphasize professional qualifications, relevant experience, and technical competence, particularly in finance, risk management, and compliance-related roles. The organization prioritizes candidates who demonstrate analytical capability and ethical responsibility.

The compensation structure is competitive within the non-banking financial institution (NBFI) sector and designed to retain skilled employees. In addition to fixed salaries, performance-based considerations and structured evaluation mechanisms contribute to employee motivation.

Training and development programs focus primarily on regulatory compliance, risk assessment procedures, customer service excellence, and internal control systems. Continuous professional development ensures employees remain updated with regulatory changes and industry best practices.

Performance appraisal is conducted through formal evaluation systems where employee performance is assessed against predefined criteria. This structured approach enhances accountability, identifies skill gaps, and supports career progression within the organization.

Overall, DBH's HR planning reflects a compliance-driven, performance-oriented organizational culture that supports operational consistency and risk mitigation.

2.4. Marketing Practices

2.4.1. Marketing Strategy

DBH Finance PLC adopts a **relationship-based marketing strategy** rather than aggressive promotional tactics. The organization focuses on building long-term trust with clients through reliability, transparency, and personalized service. Given that housing finance involves long-term financial commitments, customer trust and institutional credibility are prioritized over short-term market share expansion.

This conservative marketing approach strengthens brand reputation but may limit rapid growth in highly competitive environments where competitors adopt more dynamic digital marketing strategies.

2.4.2. Target Market and Positioning

DBH primarily targets middle- and upper-middle-income individuals seeking long-term housing finance solutions. The typical customer segment includes salaried professionals, business owners, expatriates, and property investors.

The company positions itself as a **specialized, stable, and trustworthy housing finance institution** rather than a mass-market lender. This positioning emphasizes expertise, structured processing, and risk-managed lending practices. The brand identity is built around reliability, financial discipline, and ethical service delivery.

2.4.3. Marketing Channels

DBH delivers its services primarily through physical branches and Relationship Managers who maintain direct contact with customers. Relationship Managers play a critical role in customer acquisition, relationship management, and after-loan service.

While the organization maintains some digital presence, customer-facing digital platforms remain limited compared to commercial banks. Most service interactions still require physical documentation and in-person coordination. This traditional channel structure ensures control and compliance but may reduce convenience for technologically inclined customers.

2.4.4. Branding and Promotion

DBH's branding strategy emphasizes institutional trust, financial stability, and ethical lending practices. Promotional activities are conservative and focus more on reputation than aggressive advertising.

However, limited digital marketing engagement and slower adaptation to evolving customer expectations present challenges. In an environment where competitors actively use social media, online loan tracking systems, and digital campaigns, DBH's restrained digital presence may affect its competitive positioning among younger customer segments.

To sustain long-term competitiveness, strategic enhancement of digital branding and customer engagement platforms would be beneficial.

2.5.1. Key Financial Ratios Analysis of DBH Finance PLC

Ratio Category	**Ratio name**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**Interpretation**
Liquidity	Current Ratio			1.30	Indicates that DBH maintains sufficient current assets reflecting sound liquidity management
Solvency	Debt-to-equity ratio			1.27	Showed a balanced capital structure

					with moderate reliance on borrowed fund
Profitability	Return on Equity(ROE)			10.66%	Reflects the company’s ability to generate reasonable returns for shareholder
Profitability	Return on Asset (ROA)			1.39%	Efficient utilization of asset in generating net income
Efficiency	Asset turnover ratio			0.03	Low asset turnover is expected in housing finance due to the long term nature of loans
Market Value	Price- Earnings (P/E) Ratio		11.46	7.67	It suggests relatively conservative market valuation and stable earnings

					expectations as its decreasing.
Shareholder Return	Earnings Per Share (EPS)		4.95	5.07	Gradual improvement in earning per share indicates steady profitability growth.
Asset Quality	Non-Performing Loan(NPL) Ratio		0.90	0.98	Low NPL ratio demonstrates strong credit risk management and high loan quality

Interpretation of Financial Performance

The ratio analysis indicates that DBH Finance PLC maintains a stable and conservative financial position. The current ratio above one suggests that the organization has adequate liquidity to meet short-term commitments. The debt-to-equity ratio reflects prudent financial leverage, which is essential for sustaining long-term housing finance operations.

Profitability indicators such as ROE and ROA show moderate but consistent returns, aligning with DBH’s risk-averse business model. The low asset turnover ratio is typical for financial institutions engaged in long-term lending rather than high-frequency transactions. The declining P/E ratio over time may indicate cautious investor sentiment or undervaluation, while consistent EPS growth reflects stable earnings performance. Additionally, the low NPL ratio highlights DBH’s strong credit assessment and monitoring practices.

Overall, the financial performance of DBH Finance PLC reflects stability, controlled risk exposure, and sustainable growth rather than aggressive expansion.

2.5.2 Accounting Practices of DBH Finance PLC

DBH Finance PLC follows generally accepted accounting principles and prepares its financial statements on an **“Accrual Basis of Accounting”** ,which ensures that revenues and expenses are recognized in the period in which they occur. The organization follows a structured accounting cycle, including journal entries, ledger posting, trial balance preparation, and final financial statement reporting.

The company applies standard depreciation methods appropriate to different asset classes, and adequate disclosures are provided in the notes to the financial statements. Accounting disclosures related to loans, provisions, interest income, and risk management are clearly presented, ensuring transparency and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Based on the reviewed annual reports, DBH Finance PLC demonstrates consistency and reliability in its accounting practices, which supports stakeholder confidence and regulatory compliance.

2.6. Operations Management and Information System Practices

DBH currently relies on internal information systems to manage critical processes such as loan processing, documentation, and compliance reporting. Operations are structured to ensure **quality control, risk mitigation, and seamless coordination** among the credit, legal, and operations teams. These practices maintain operational integrity and regulatory compliance.

However, DBH's **customer-facing digital systems remain limited**, which can lead to time-consuming manual processes, delays in communication, and overall friction in the customer journey. In contrast, many competitors and other Non-Banking Financial Institutions (NBFIs) have implemented digital platforms that allow customers to apply for loans online, submit required documents digitally, track application status in real time, and receive automated updates.

To align with industry best practices and improve customer experience, DBH should **invest in a comprehensive digital platform** that integrates front-end and back-end operations.

2.7. Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1. Porters Five Forces Analysis

Five Forces	High/Moderate	Analysis
Threat of New Entrant	Moderate	High capital requirements and regulatory barriers limit new entrants. However,

		commercial banks entering housing finance increase competitive pressure.
Bargaining Power of Buyers	High	Customers can compare interest rates, processing time, and digital convenience across institutions, increasing their bargaining power.
Bargaining Power Of Suppliers	Low to Moderate	Suppliers mainly include fund providers and regulators. DBH’s strong financial standing reduces supplier pressure.
Threat of Substitute	High	Commercial banks, fintech solutions, and alternative financing options act as strong substitutes.
Competitive Rivalry	High	The housing finance market is highly competitive, with banks offering faster processing and digital services.

2.7.2. Swot Analysis of DBH Finance PLC

A SWOT analysis has been conducted to identify the internal strengths and weaknesses of DBH Finance PLC, as well as the external opportunities and threats influencing its competitive position in the housing finance industry of Bangladesh. This analysis helps in understanding how DBH leverages its internal capabilities while responding to external market challenges.

Strengths

DBH Finance PLC possesses several strong internal capabilities that contribute to its long-standing reputation and market leadership in the housing finance sector.

Firstly, DBH Finance PLC enjoys a strong institutional reputation and brand credibility. As the first specialized housing finance institution in Bangladesh, DBH has built long-term trust among customers, regulators, and investors. This trust is particularly important in housing finance, where customers commit to long-term financial obligations.

Secondly, the organization maintains high asset quality and low non-performing loan (NPL) ratios, reflecting strong credit appraisal, risk assessment, and monitoring systems. Conservative lending policies ensure financial stability and reduce default risk.

Thirdly, DBH Finance PLC demonstrates professional and customer-focused human resources, especially through its Relationship Managers. Personalized service, professional communication, and ethical conduct significantly enhance customer satisfaction.

Additionally, DBH benefits from a stable and prudent financial structure, with balanced use of debt and equity. This financial discipline supports long-term sustainability rather than short-term profit maximization.

Weaknesses

Despite its strengths, DBH Finance PLC faces several internal limitations that affect operational efficiency and customer experience.

One major weakness is the lengthy and documentation-intensive loan processing system. Customers are required to submit extensive paperwork and provide repeated manual signatures, which often results in delays and frustration. This process is perceived as outdated compared to more digitalized competitors.

Another weakness is the limited use of digital platforms. The absence of an integrated online loan application and tracking system reduces transparency and convenience for customers, particularly younger and tech-savvy clients.

Furthermore, DBH Finance PLC's operational processes are relatively rigid, primarily due to strict compliance and regulatory requirements. While this ensures risk control, it also reduces flexibility and responsiveness.

Lastly, processing fees and associated costs are perceived by some customers as higher compared to commercial banks, which may discourage price-sensitive clients.

Opportunities

The external environment presents several growth and improvement opportunities for DBH Finance PLC.

One significant opportunity lies in digital transformation. By investing in end-to-end digital loan management systems, DBH can improve efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction while maintaining compliance standards.

Another opportunity is the growing demand for housing finance driven by rapid urbanization, rising middle-income households, and increased real estate development in Bangladesh. This expanding market provides scope for portfolio growth.

DBH can also leverage its reputation to introduce innovative housing finance products, such as flexible repayment options, green housing loans, or tailored products for specific customer segments.

Additionally, strategic partnerships with real estate developers and fintech platforms can enhance customer acquisition and service delivery.

Threats

DBH Finance PLC operates in a highly competitive and evolving financial environment.

One of the major threats is intense competition from commercial banks, many of which offer lower interest rates, faster loan processing, and advanced digital services. These competitors pose a risk to DBH's market share.

Another threat is regulatory pressure, as changes in financial regulations, capital requirements, or compliance standards may increase operational costs and reduce flexibility.

Macroeconomic factors such as interest rate volatility, inflation, and economic slowdowns also pose risks, as they can affect borrowers' repayment capacity and overall loan demand.

Finally, customer expectations are rapidly changing, with increasing demand for speed, transparency, and digital convenience. Failure to adapt to these expectations could weaken customer loyalty over time.

The SWOT analysis indicates that DBH Finance PLC's competitive advantage lies primarily in its trustworthiness, asset quality, and professional service culture. However, to sustain this advantage in a dynamic and competitive market, the organization must address internal weaknesses related to operational efficiency and digitalization while proactively responding to external threats.

2.8. Summary and Conclusion

DBH Finance PLC maintains a strong competitive position due to trust, asset quality, and professional service. However, operational rigidity and limited digitalization pose challenges in a rapidly evolving market. DBH is important in forestry because it provides a consistent and reliable measure of tree size, which is essential for estimating tree volume, growth rates, and overall forest biomass. It helps foresters make informed decisions about forest management, timber harvesting, and conservation practices.

As a whole, DBH Finance PLC stands out as a highly resilient and reliable financial institution in Bangladesh. The long-standing 'AAA' credit rating highlights its robust corporate governance and risk management capabilities, making it a trusted partner for depositors and investors. By focusing on the niche but growing market of real estate financing, the company has created sustainable growth and contributed significantly to society by facilitating homeownership. Despite broader industry challenges such as rising NPLs within the financial sector as of mid-2024, DBH's position as a specialized, conservative lender provides it with a competitive edge. Its continued focus on sound credit appraisals and prudent management ensures long-term stability and value creation for stakeholders. DBH is the only financial institution in Bangladesh to hold the highest credit rating of 'AAA' for over 16 consecutive years, indicating superior financial safety, security, and strength.

In short, DBH is recognized as a leader in the housing finance sector, synonymous with security, professionalism, and high-quality service in Bangladesh.

2.9. Recommendation and Implication

Recommendation

1. Diversify Product Portfolio Beyond Traditional Residential Mortgages

DBH Finance PLC should gradually expand beyond traditional residential mortgage lending into areas such as commercial property financing, SME-related property loans, or selected consumer loan products. Currently, heavy dependence on residential housing finance increases sectoral concentration risk. By diversifying its product offerings, the organization can reduce over-reliance on a single segment and improve revenue stability during fluctuations in the residential real estate market. Product diversification would also allow DBH to capture emerging growth opportunities within the broader financial services sector

2. Strengthen Digital Capabilities and Automation

Enhancing digital infrastructure is critical for improving operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. DBH should implement end-to-end digital loan processing systems, including online application submission, document uploading, real-time application tracking, and automated status notifications. Improved digital interaction channels would reduce physical dependency on branches, speed up service delivery, and align the organization with modern customer expectations. Automation can also minimize manual errors and reduce operational bottlenecks.

3. Maintain Adequate Capital and Diversify Funding Sources

To ensure long-term financial stability, DBH should continue maintaining strong capital adequacy levels and a diversified funding base. In addition to traditional funding sources, the organization may consider tapping into long-term bond markets or structured financing instruments, as indicated in corporate disclosures. A diversified funding structure reduces liquidity risk and ensures that long-term lending activities are supported by stable, long-term liabilities.

4. Uphold Strict Ethical Standards and Regulatory Compliance

As a financial institution operating in a regulated environment, DBH must continue adhering to high ethical standards and strict compliance with regulatory frameworks. Maintaining transparency, responsible lending practices, and proper disclosure policies is essential to preserve stakeholder trust. Non-compliance can lead to financial penalties, reputational damage, and operational restrictions. Therefore, reinforcing governance mechanisms and internal audit systems remains a strategic priority.

5. Intensify Monitoring and Management of Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)

Recent financial indicators suggest an increase in non-performing loans in 2024, with reported net NPL ratios rising significantly in mid-2024. This trend highlights the need for stricter credit monitoring and proactive risk management. DBH should enhance post-disbursement monitoring mechanisms, conduct periodic borrower reviews, and identify early warning signals of repayment distress. Strengthening recovery procedures and restructuring frameworks will help contain asset quality deterioration.

6. Implement Stricter Credit Assessment Frameworks

In light of rising NPL trends, DBH should reinforce its credit appraisal standards. This may include more rigorous income verification, enhanced property valuation assessments, and stronger stress-testing of borrower repayment capacity under adverse economic scenarios. A more conservative underwriting approach, especially during periods of macroeconomic uncertainty, can protect asset quality and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Implication

Firstly, balancing operational control with customer convenience is essential. While compliance and risk mitigation must remain strict, workflow optimization and digital support systems can improve efficiency without compromising regulatory integrity.

Secondly, Relationship Managers should remain empowered as strategic customer touchpoints. The research findings demonstrate that customer satisfaction is strongly influenced by frontline employee interactions. Providing additional training, performance incentives, and digital support tools will enhance their effectiveness.

Thirdly, investment in technology is no longer optional. Customers increasingly expect transparency, speed, and remote accessibility. Failure to modernize may weaken competitive positioning, particularly among younger and urban segments.

Fourthly, stricter credit monitoring and proactive NPL management are necessary to preserve profitability and maintain high credit ratings. Higher provisioning requirements may reduce short-term earnings; therefore, preventive risk mitigation strategies are critical.

Finally, diversification and capital strength will enhance the organization’s capacity to sustain high-volume lending in a growing urban housing market while minimizing exposure to cyclical risks.

Chapter 3

3.1 Background of the Study

The financial services industry is a major factor in economic growth as it is used to form capital, invest and generate long term assets. In this industry, housing finance is of specific interest, as it is the direct effect of urban development, social stability, and the accumulation of household wealth. In Bangladesh the high rate of urbanization, population explosion, and rising middle class have strongly fueled the housing finance solution demand.

The previous dominance of DBH Finance PLC in this industry has been caused by its sole dedication to housing finance, its conservative approach to the management of risks and its reputable ethical reputation. The competitive environment has however changed significantly. Housing loan products have faster processing time, lower charges, and improved digital platforms and are now offered by commercial banks and other non-bank financial institutions. Consequently, the customers are developing a tendency of judging the financial institutions not just on the financial basis, but on services and convenience, transparency, and overall experience.

This evolving situation is an indication of the necessity to conduct a deep analysis of the customer satisfaction and loyalty in the eyes of the customers themselves, and this is the core of this work.

3.1.1. Overview of the Housing Finance Sector in Bangladesh

Housing finance industry in Bangladesh is very essential in terms of assisting urban growth, house ownership and in the long run of the economy. The high rate of urbanization, the influx of people in cities, and the increment in salaries of the middle and upper-middle classes have also brought much pressure to housing demands. With the current growth in the prices of property, structured housing finance has become a necessity to the majority of households with intentions of owning a home.

The industry is supplied with a mixture of commercial banks, non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) that are specialized, and government-supported organizations. Whereas commercial banks provide housing loans as a diversified line of product provision, specialized institutions like DBH Finance PLC, provide long-term housing finance only. Specialization allows gaining more insight into the valuation of property, its legal verification, and risk management.

The competition in the housing finance sector in recent years has been heightened. The commercial banks are becoming more competitive in terms of their interest rates, options of payments, and services with ease of use that is digitally enabled. This has thus made the customer expectations extend beyond the interest rates to processing speed, transparency, convenience and the quality of service. These developments have put the orthodox finance providers of housing in a situation where they are forced to modernize their operations without compromising on regulatory issues and financial security.

3.1.2. Profile of DBH Finance PLC

DBH Finance PLC is the first and the most successful special housing finance institution in Bangladesh. Formed with a mission of filling the housing finance gap in the country, DBH has earned a good reputation of professionalism, ethical practice and risk management. DBH Finance PLC unlike the commercial banks focuses mainly on housing loans and thus is able to build a deep-seated expertise in this area.

The organization provides an assortment of housing finance products which include home purchase loans, home construction loans, home extension loans, and professional loans which are secured against residential property. The operational philosophy of DBH lies in long term relationships with customers, conservative credit evaluation, and total adherence to regulatory and legal standards.

DBH Finance PLC has over the years gained the confidence of clients, developers and other regulators of its reputable performance and openness in its business operations. Its brand name is closely related to stability and reliability and this is why it is the preferred choice of customers who want to have stable and secure long-term housing financing.

3.1.4.Problem Statement

Although DBH Finance PLC has a good status in the market and leads in the market, it is faced with a growing competitive environment with customer expectations rapidly changing. Though the organization is reputedly known to be very reliable and provide professional services, customers regularly complain about the long time it takes to process loans, long documents to fill and little transparency to their loans.

Besides, the increased uptake of digital banking services by commercial banks has transformed the expectations of customers in terms of convenience and communication. Lack of modern digital solutions to monitor the applications and interact with the customers might influence customer satisfaction and long-term loyalty, especially among younger and technologically conscious clients.

It is in this situation that the qualitative approach to investigate customer satisfaction and loyalty in DBH Finance PLC along the lines of customer lived experiences, perceptions, and emotion during the housing loan process becomes essential.

3.1.5. Research Questions

The qualitative research questions that will be used in the study are as follows:

- How is customer satisfaction constructed and experienced within the housing loan service process at DBH Finance PLC?
- What organizational and service-related factors shape customers' perceptions of trust and institutional credibility?
- How do communication practices during loan processing influence customer confidence and emotional response? How do customers interpret the absence or presence of digital service facilities in evaluating service quality?

- How do operational procedures and compliance requirements affect the overall customer experience ?

- What are our customers' biggest frustrations with DBH Finance Loan, and how do they impact brand loyalty?

3.1.6. Research Objectives

The main aim of this research is to address the topic of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in DBH Finance PLC though qualitative research method. The specific objectives are:

- To know the experiences of customers during the process of obtaining a housing loan at DBH Finance PLC.
- To determine major aspects that lead to customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
- To investigate the influence of the behavior and relationship management of the staff on the perception of customers.
- To investigate customer expectations in the communication and digital services.
- To give a practical solution on how to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

3.1.7. Significance of the Study

This research is of importance to various stakeholders. Academically, it adds to the scarcity of the qualitative literature on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of special housing finance institutions in Bangladesh. The results provide context-based information that goes beyond the survey-based studies.

On the managerial level, the study can give useful recommendations to DBH Finance PLC as it identifies customer views, areas of service failures, and areas of improvement. Knowing the customer experiences can guide the management in developing customer-based strategies and enhance the efficiency of operations.

To the industry practitioners, the research provides a wider understanding of the changing customer expectations in the housing finance industry on the need to create a balance between trust, quality of services, and technological innovation.

3.1.8. Scope and Limitations

The research focuses on investigation of the customer satisfaction and loyalty at DBH Finance PLC. The study targets customers who have direct experience with the services of DBH in terms of housing loans. Qualitative interviews were used to collect the data and this presented an opportunity to delve deeper into customer perceptions.

The geographical scope of the study is confined to urban customers since the demand of housing finance is mainly experienced within the urban regions. The results are also specific to the context and may not be entirely applicable to other financial institutions or the rural client base.

3.2. Literature Review

3.2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to put a solid theoretical base of the research by conducting a review of the available academic literature on the subject of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, service quality, and customer experience in the context of the financial services industry. Because the research is based on a qualitative methodology, the literature is applied in the form of conceptualization and direction of interpretation and explanation of the reasons why it is important to investigate customer experiences with a deep approach instead of quantifying them.

This chapter establishes the theoretical foundation of the study by reviewing relevant academic literature on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, service quality, and customer experience within the financial services industry. In qualitative research, literature serves as a conceptual framework rather than a hypothesis-testing tool. It guides interpretation, contextualizes findings, and supports deeper exploration of customer perceptions instead of relying solely on quantitative measurement. Moreover, chapter begins with the concept of service quality in financial services, followed by an analysis of customer satisfaction and loyalty from both behavioral and attitudinal perspectives. It then examines the role of human interaction and relationship management, which are particularly significant in long-term financial commitments such as housing finance. Finally, the chapter discusses digital transformation in financial services and identifies the research gap that this study seeks to address.

3.2.2 Concept of Service Quality in Financial Services

Service quality is commonly defined as the customer's overall assessment of service excellence based on the comparison between expectations and perceived performance. In financial services, service quality extends beyond transactional efficiency and includes reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. (Ghimire, S. R., Upadhyaya, Y. M., & Agarwal, N. 2025).

Recent studies further conceptualize service quality in banking as a multidimensional construct influencing customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty (Islam et al., 2023; Nguyen &

Pham, 2022). In digital-era financial services, service quality also incorporates technological responsiveness, transparency, and real-time accessibility (Kaur & Ali, 2024).

For this study, service quality is conceptualized as:

The perceived effectiveness, reliability, responsiveness, transparency, and interpersonal behavior experienced by customers throughout the housing loan process at DBH Finance PLC.

3.2.3 Customer Satisfaction: Conceptual Perspectives

Customer satisfaction is usually interpreted as a mental condition that is achieved when a customer evaluates his overall experience in the service. Akhtar, T. & Ahamed, S (2024) explained that satisfaction refers to a feeling that emerges when the service performance is at or better than the expectations. Trust, perceived fairness, transparency, and emotional reassurance are some of the factors that determine satisfaction in the financial services. A study in the *Journal of Finance and Accounting* (2024) found that employee behavior and service quality significantly influence customer satisfaction in the banking sector, highlighting the importance of frontline relational practices alongside complaints handling and service quality.

Qualitatively, satisfaction cannot be best represented by the use of numerical scales only. It is possible that customers can be satisfied with some points in a service, like the professionalism of staff, and be not satisfied with others, like delays or lack of communication. Thus, satisfaction cannot be learned without understanding the stories and emotional reactions of the customers during the service experience.

3.2.4 Customer Loyalty in Financial Institutions

Customer loyalty means the readiness of a customer to remain in a relationship with a service provider and refer others to the organization. Researchers make the difference between behavioral loyalty as manifested in repeat-use and attitudinal loyalty as manifested in emotional attachment and advocacy (Shah, S. A., Bilal, H., & Sanober, I. 2024). Research on digital and e-service quality shows that e-services and digital service quality significantly affect customer satisfaction in banking environments, indicating that digital channel effectiveness is now part of service and marketing practices. (Business Perspective,2023).

The issue of loyalty in housing finance is one that is especially complicated since customers in housing finance do not make frequent interactions. Consequently, loyalty is usually manifested in the form of word-of-mouth recommendation and plans to visit in future with regard to financial needs. Qualitative research particularly is helpful in revealing the motivation behind retention of customers who have been suffering frustrations in the services.

3.2.5 Role of Human Interaction and Relationship Management

Human interaction remains a central component in shaping customers' experiences with financial services, particularly in contexts where long-term engagement and complex product knowledge are involved. Service marketing theory identifies employees as the primary interface between an organization and its customers, acting as boundary spanners who influence perceptions of service quality and trust through direct interaction.

Empirical evidence in banking and financial services shows that customer-oriented behaviors by frontline staff—such as empathy, responsiveness, and effective communication—positively influence customer confidence, satisfaction, and overall service evaluation. For instance, recent research in the Bangladesh banking sector highlights that employee behavior and service delivery quality significantly affect customer satisfaction outcomes, with handling customer interactions being a key determinant of perceived service success.

Relationship Managers often serve as trusted advisors who guide customers through the complex stages of housing finance, from documentation requirements to regulatory procedures. By providing clear explanations and emotional reassurance, they can offset procedural inefficiencies and reduce psychological uncertainty associated with long-term financial commitments. This aligns with findings that relationship management—in combination with service quality—is strongly associated with improved customer satisfaction and loyalty outcomes in financial institutions.

Because Relationship Managers engage customers directly and frequently, their professionalism and interpersonal skills significantly shape customer perceptions and decisions. Consequently, the performance and communication skills of Relationship Managers are strategic assets for financial institutions seeking to differentiate service quality and foster long-lasting customer relationships.

3.2.6 Digital Transformation and Customer Experience

Digital transformation has rapidly become a defining feature of contemporary financial services, fundamentally reshaping how institutions interact with customers. Customers increasingly expect online services that offer **greater transparency, convenience, time**

savings, and real-time access to information—features that traditional face-to-face processes cannot easily provide.(Eman Researcher) Research indicates that digital channels such as mobile and online banking significantly influence customer satisfaction by improving accessibility, efficiency, and service delivery quality, especially in emerging markets like Bangladesh where digital adoption is accelerating among younger and urban populations.

Studies examining banking sectors in South Asia find that digital platforms reduce transaction time and operational costs while enhancing convenience, which in turn has a positive effect on customer satisfaction outcomes. In the context of Bangladesh specifically, digital banking services have been shown to positively impact customer experience through improved service speed, accessibility, and automation, although challenges such as infrastructure limitations and digital literacy gaps remain. (KC, B. 2024)

Without sufficient digital services, financial institutions risk being perceived as outdated or less competitive, even if their traditional service quality is strong. The lack of digital channels can limit transparency in processes like loan status updates, document submission, and inquiry responses—factors that increasingly drive customer preference in a market where digital convenience is no longer optional but expected. (SAR Publication)

This evolution in expectations highlights the strategic importance of digital transformation for financial institutions seeking to maintain relevance and foster long-term customer loyalty in a digitally driven marketplace.

3.2.7 Research Gap

Despite the available body of literature that has been conducted on the subject of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the banking sector, there is a lack of qualitative research done with regard to the targeted banking institutions of the specialized housing finance in Bangladesh. Available researches tend to use quantitative surveys and cannot present lived experiences, emotional reactions, and contextual issues of customers.

This research fills this gap by offering a deep qualitative investigation into customer satisfaction and loyalty in DBH Finance PLC that will offer understanding that goes beyond the market

3.3: Research Methodology

3.3.1 Introduction

This chapter justifies the research methodology that will be used to determine customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in DBH Finance PLC. Since the research will seek to get an insight into what the customers have and have not encountered, in their lives, perceptions, and interpretations, a qualitative approach to the research methodology was deemed as the best fit. It has described the research philosophy, research approach, research design, sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis procedure, and ethical considerations that informed the study in this chapter.

3.3.2 Research Philosophy

The research will be based on the interpretivist research philosophy, where the main focus is on social reality and interpretation by the subjective experiences and meanings created by the individual. Customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are phenomena as defined by perceptions which are emotional and influenced by individual interactions, expectations and experiences. Consequently, an interpretivist philosophy will be appropriate in investigating the perception of the customers towards the services of DBH Finance PLC as opposed to trying to quantify satisfaction.

It is through this philosophy that the study will strive to decipher highly contextualized data on the customer experiences, and to provide an interpretation of the effects of these experiences on satisfaction and loyalty.

3.3.3 Research Approach

This research has embraced qualitative method of research. Qualitative research should be utilized in cases where the researcher wants to understand the attitudes, opinions as well as experiences in a more in-depth manner as opposed to developing hypothesis or quantifying associations. This method has enabled the researcher to delve into the detailed accounts of customers and to be able to observe finer details that would not be identified by the structured questionnaires.

The qualitative method was also flexible, as it gave freedom to the participants to freely share their thoughts, and the researcher to dig deeper into themes of emerging issues in the interviews.

3.3.4 Research Design

The research design is descriptive qualitative research design that aims at describing and interpreting phenomena as observed by the participants. The design would be appropriate to study the experiences of the customers in a natural organizational setting without controlling the variables or using predetermined categories.

By the descriptive qualitative design, the proposed study intends to determine patterns and themes in regard to service quality, staff interaction, loan processing processes, communication practices, and digital service expectations at DBH Finance PLC.

3.3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The purposive sampling technique was used to choose the respondents who had been directly exposed to the services that DBH Finance PLC offers on housing loans. Qualitative studies that utilize purposive sampling include selecting the participants according to their pertinence to the research objectives.

The number of customers that were interviewed was 12. This was the largest sample size that was needed to reach data saturation where there were no more new themes or insights to be obtained through the extra interviews. The participants were chosen such that there was a diversity in terms of professional background, age and experience level with the loan process.

3.3.6 Data Collection Method

Primary data for this study were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with selected participants. The interview guide was an open-ended interview guide that ensured consistency within the interviews and flexibility by probing and follow-up questions.

The interviews were carried out through the phone due to the convenience of the participants and took about 45 minutes to 60 minutes. Before every interview, the participants were also made aware of the study purpose and the verbal consent was taken. The anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.

3.3.7 Data Analysis Technique

The thematic analysis was employed in the collection of the interview data, which were analyzed in accordance with the framework suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis included becoming acquainted with the data, first coding, identifying themes, revising and interpreting the themes.

The justification of the method is that it allowed the researcher to systematize the qualitative data and to reveal the patterns of recurrence concerning customer satisfaction and loyalty. The thematic analysis was selected because of its flexibility and appropriateness with regard to interpretive qualitative research.

3.3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity was maintained throughout the entire research process to ensure credibility, transparency, and respect for participants. Prior to conducting the interviews, all respondents were clearly informed about the purpose and objectives of the study. The nature of their participation was explained, including how the collected information would be used solely for academic purposes. Participants were also assured that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they retained the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences.

In order to protect privacy and confidentiality, no personal identifiers such as names, contact information, or specific financial details were recorded. Responses were documented anonymously and used strictly for analytical purposes. All information collected during the interviews was treated as confidential and was not shared with any unauthorized parties. This approach helped create a safe environment where participants felt comfortable expressing their genuine opinions and experiences.

Additionally, the research was conducted in a responsible and unbiased manner. The data collection process avoided leading questions or manipulative phrasing that could influence responses. During analysis, care was taken to present findings objectively without distorting or exaggerating participant statements. Themes were derived directly from the responses rather than being imposed by the researcher's personal assumptions.

The study adhered to accepted academic research standards, including honesty in reporting, proper acknowledgment of sources, and accurate representation of findings. No data fabrication, alteration, or selective omission was practiced. By following these ethical principles, the research aimed to ensure reliability, validity, and academic integrity.

Overall, maintaining ethical standards not only protected participant rights but also strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

3.4: Data Analysis and Findings

3.4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the results of the qualitative analysis based on the in-depth interviews held with the customers of DBH Finance PLC. This chapter is aimed at giving the customers a voice in a systematic interpretation of their lived experiences, perceptions and emotions during the process of acquisition of housing loans. Instead of quantitative measures of satisfaction, this chapter considers satisfaction and loyalty to be built in terms of interactions, processes, and institutional practices.

The results have been categorized into major themes and sub themes as they occurred during the thematic analysis of the interview data. These subjects indicate the reasons why customers choose DBH Finance PLC and how they experience throughout the loan application and approval process, how they interact with employees, their attitudes towards digital services, and their intentions concerning loyalty.

3.4.2 Profile of Interview Participants

The respondents in this research were people who possessed actual experience with the services of DBH Finance PLC in regard to housing loan services. Each respondent had already passed through at least one major stage of loan process, such as submitting an application to the loan disbursement. The majority of the participants were middle- to upper-middle-income professionals living in urban settings and had consistent working experiences. Some of the respondents were already exposed to other commercial banks or other financial institutions so they could make comparative analysis of the services of DBH Finance PLC.

The participants were of different ages, the professional background, and familiarity with technologies. It was due to this diversity that the study managed to capture a wide spectrum of views, especially in the perception of what was expected of service efficiency, communication, and digitalization. Participants will be addressed by pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality and no personal information of the participants has been revealed.

3.4.3 : Trust and Institutional Reputation as Primary Choice

A prominent theme that emerged from the interviews was the central role of trust and institutional reputation in influencing customers' decisions to choose DBH Finance PLC. Participants consistently described DBH as a specialized, reliable, and ethically grounded institution, particularly well-suited for long-term housing finance. The perception of stability and professionalism significantly shaped customer preference during the selection process.

Many respondents indicated that their decision to approach DBH was influenced by referrals from family members, colleagues, or professional networks. Given that housing loans involve substantial financial commitment and emotional investment, such recommendations carried considerable weight. Customers expressed greater confidence in selecting an institution perceived as conservative and financially stable, even if alternative providers offered slightly lower interest rates.

This strong foundation of trust created an initial sense of reassurance among borrowers. As a result, several participants reported that they were willing to tolerate minor procedural inconveniences during the loan process. The established reputation of DBH reduced perceived financial risk and provided psychological comfort throughout the borrowing journey. Overall, institutional credibility functioned as a key determinant of customer confidence and long-term satisfaction

3.4.4 : Role of Relationship Managers in Shaping Customer Experience

Relationship Managers emerged as one of the most influential factors affecting customer satisfaction. Many respondents described their assigned Relationship Manager as a central figure in the loan process, often referring to them as a guide or primary point of support. Rather than being perceived merely as service providers, Relationship Managers were viewed as trusted advisors who assisted customers in navigating complex documentation requirements and regulatory procedures.

Participants highlighted the professionalism, patience, and technical knowledge demonstrated by Relationship Managers. Clear explanations regarding loan eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, and procedural steps significantly reduced confusion and eased customer concerns. Effective communication at each stage of the process helped build confidence and minimized uncertainty.

Several respondents further emphasized that they felt respected and personally valued by their Relationship Manager. This personalized attention contributed to the development of a positive emotional connection with the organization. The ability of frontline employees to provide reassurance and individualized support played a crucial role in shaping overall customer experience.

Importantly, many customers indicated that their level of satisfaction with DBH Finance PLC was closely tied to their interaction with a specific employee rather than their perception of the institution as a whole. This finding underscores the critical role of frontline staff in shaping service quality perceptions and highlights the strategic importance of empowering Relationship Managers within the organization.

3.4.5: Loan Application and Approval Process as a Source of Frustration

Participants complained about the general dissatisfaction toward the process of loan application and approval although the trust and appreciation of staff behavior were high. According to the customers, the process was tiresome, documentation-intensive and emotionally demanding. The necessity of giving many documents and signing and thumb impressions on each page was mentioned many times as a tiresome and tedious process.The participants also recognised that compliance and risk management in housing finance are needed, but they also doubted the effectiveness of the established repetitive documentation practices. There was a perception among many that the process was of antiquated, paper-based system that was not in line with the modern customer expectations.

The entire period of the approval process was considered to be too long especially in comparison to commercial banks. This would cause stress particularly when property developers or sellers were waiting to be assured of financing.

3.4.6 : Lack of Transparency and Communication Gaps

Another significant theme that emerged from the study was the perceived lack of transparency during the loan processing period. Many respondents described the approval procedure as opaque, indicating that they had limited visibility into the status of their applications. Customers frequently reported uncertainty regarding whether their applications had progressed, been approved, or were pending at specific stages of evaluation. As a result, they often had to initiate follow-up communication themselves to obtain updates.

The absence of proactive communication contributed to feelings of anxiety and uncertainty among customers. Several respondents expressed a desire for clearer timelines, regular status updates, and structured communication regarding the different stages of the approval process, including credit assessment, legal verification, and property valuation. Greater transparency at each phase was viewed as essential to improving overall service experience.

Although Relationship Managers were generally responsive when contacted, customers perceived a lack of consistent, proactive engagement. In some cases, respondents felt that the responsibility of seeking updates was shifted onto them rather than being managed systematically by the institution. This communication gap was seen as an area requiring improvement to enhance customer confidence and reduce procedural stress.

3.4.7: Perceptions of Digital Services and Technological Limitations

The respondents were always dissatisfied with the digital service provision of DBH Finance PLC. Although the organization has a functional site, customers claimed that it is simple and minimalistic in nature. Majority of the respondents were visiting the site to obtain loan statements and some of them mentioned that they did not have an integrated online customer portal.

Customers, especially the more technologically savvy ones, complained about the absence of such functionalities as online tracking application, digital document upload, and secure messaging. Benchmarking against other banks demonstrated the relative lack of digitalization at DBH which adversely affected the image of the efficiency of services.

Physical absence of digitization also increased headache in the process of loan approval, bringing under perceptions of uncertainty and time-wasting.

3.4.8: Loyalty Intentions and Conditional Recommendation

Nevertheless, even amid procedural difficulties, the majority of the participants stated that they were ready to refer to DBH Finance PLC. The loyalty was largely based on trust, institutional stability and confidence on ethical practices. Nonetheless, there were frequent warnings that were given along with the recommendations about slow processing times and copious paperwork.

Participants reported that their loyalty in the future would be determined by the capacity of DBH to modernize its operations and use digital solutions. As mentioned by several customers, they would transfer to another institution in case one of their competitors could provide the same credibility with a faster, technology-based service provision.

3.4.9.Summary of Findings

The results of this chapter provide a very complex and multifaceted image of customer satisfaction and loyalty at DBH Finance PLC. Even though trust, reputation, and individual staffing interaction highly contribute to customer satisfaction, operational inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and poor digital services negatively affect the entire customer experience.

The findings highlight the significance of strike balance between human-oriented service and process effectiveness and technology development. The second chapter presents the findings with respect to the extant literature and suggests some strategic recommendations that can be used to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty at DBH Finance PLC.

3.5: Discussion, Strategic Recommendations, and Conclusion

3.5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the qualitative results in terms of the current literature and presents strategic recommendations that can be applied to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in DBH Finance PLC. The suggestions have direct roots in the experience and perception as voiced by the customers and are based on the operational realities that are seen throughout internship period. The last part of the chapter is a summary of the contribution of the study as a whole.

3.5.2 Discussion of Findings

The results show that trust, institutional reputation and quality of human interaction is the major cause of customer satisfaction in DBH Finance PLC. These results are in line with previous researches on the significance of perceived reliability and relationship management in financial services. The high emotional dependence of customers on the ethical image of DBH supports the importance of the trust as the prerequisite of the long-term customer relationships.

Yet, the research also draws a significant conflict between a conservative model of operations of DBH and changing customer demands. The long approval processes, high levels of paperwork, and lack of transparency have detrimental effects on the customer experiences despite high trust levels. This is in line with the literature indicating that service quality is considered as a holistic concept, the operational efficiency and communication have the same level of influence as the staff behavior.

The results also show that the limitations of digital services only serve to elevate customer frustration since customers have less access to information and have a higher reliance on manual communication. In a more technologically-oriented financial sector, the lack of online customer points could undermine the loyalty of clients, especially younger and more professional ones.

3.5.3 Strategic Recommendations

This is proposed based on the qualitative findings in order to improve customer satisfaction, and enhance customer loyalty in DBH Finance PLC. Such recommendations are classified as short-term, medium, and long-term initiatives to make sure that there is a practical implementation.

3.5.3.1 Short-Term Recommendations

DBH Finance PLC ought to institute uniformity in the communication procedures in which customers are updated on the status of their loans periodically. The anxiety of customers during the critical points can be minimized with even a basic email or SMS notification.

Streamline Documentation Guidance: It is possible to streamline documentation by ensuring that the checklists are clearer and pre-submission guidelines are provided without having to breach the rules and regulations but still save a lot of repeat visits and customer frustration.

Partially Digitalisation of Loan Processes: DBH must turn to the implementation of digital systems of documents submission and internal tracking gradually to minimise the amount of paperwork and time spent on processing loans. This would increase efficiency without compromising the risk control.

Centralized Application Tracking: An in-house database that is available to Relationship Managers would allow more precise and timely updates on the customers.

Process Review and Optimization: Periodic reviews of operational processes should be done to determine the redundancies especially in documentation and approval processes.

3.5.3. Long-Term Recommendations

End-to-End Digital Customer Platform Development: DBH Finance PLC ought to invest in a fully digital platform where customers can also apply, upload documents, real-time monitoring of their application, and interact safely with Relationship Managers.

Customer Experience-Based Strategy: Customer experience measurements and qualitative feedback should be officially incorporated in the strategic decisions of the organization.

Change Management and Cultural Alignment: Transformation of the digital environment will need change management efforts to make employees fit into new systems and customer-oriented goals.

3.5.4 Managerial Implications

The findings of this research have important implications for the management of DBH Finance PLC. The study reveals that while the organization maintains strong institutional credibility and operational discipline, improvements in customer convenience and process efficiency are necessary to sustain long-term competitiveness.

One of the primary managerial implications is the need to balance strict operational control with enhanced service responsiveness. As a housing finance institution, DBH operates within a highly regulated framework that requires careful documentation, compliance checks, and risk management procedures. These controls are essential to protect institutional integrity and financial stability. However, excessive procedural rigidity may negatively influence customer experience. Therefore, management should focus on optimizing internal workflows without compromising compliance standards.

The research findings also emphasize the strategic importance of Relationship Managers as key customer touchpoints. Relationship Managers significantly influence customer satisfaction through personalized guidance, reassurance, and consistent communication throughout the loan lifecycle. Management should continue to empower these front-line employees through structured training, performance evaluation systems, and decision-support tools. Preserving this human-centered service approach is essential for maintaining customer loyalty.

At the same time, operational teams require technological support to improve efficiency. Introducing digital process automation—such as online document submission, application tracking systems, and centralized data management—would reduce manual workload and minimize delays. Automation can assist operational teams in maintaining accuracy while improving turnaround time. This integration of human relationship management with technological efficiency would create a more balanced and sustainable service model.

Another important implication concerns digital transformation. Customers increasingly expect transparency, speed, and remote accessibility. By enhancing digital platforms, management can reduce branch congestion, improve communication, and strengthen overall service perception without weakening institutional controls.

Overall, the study suggests that DBH Finance PLC should not alter its conservative and compliance-driven operational philosophy. Instead, it should strategically modernize its systems and service delivery mechanisms. By aligning operational efficiency with customer-centric innovation, management can improve service quality while safeguarding long-term financial stability.

3.5.5 Limitations of the Study

There are limitations on this study. The results are a qualitative sample and can not be extended to the entire customer segments. Also, the research is customer oriented and fails to include managerial opinions. The amount of data collected was also limited by time during the internship period.

3.5.6 Avenues for Future Research

The following studies can be conducted with a mixed approach to provide qualitative data with an extensive background of data concerning customers. Comparative analysis with the specialized housing finance institution and the commercial bank may also be of great help in learning about the changing expectations of the customers.

3.5.7 Conclusion

This qualitative research gives a detailed insight into the satisfaction and loyalty of customers in DBH Finance PLC. As strong reputation and human-oriented service culture are the major company strengths, the weaknesses are the inefficiencies of its operations and a lack of digitization. Through the suggested recommendations, DBH Finance PLC will be able to improve customer experience, loyalty, and remain the leader in the competitive housing finance industry.

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3.6: Internship Learning and Reflection

3.6.1 Introduction

The chapter is a reflection of the learning experience during the internship term in DBH Finance PLC, mostly in the Operation and Customer Service departments. This chapter aims at critically examining the way theoretical knowledge learned in the BBA program of BRAC Business School was utilized in a real organization. This chapter brings to light professional skills, operational and personal growth that has been attained in the course of the internship through structured reflection.

Internships have significant role in helping to close the gap between theoretical learning and working in the field. The internship experience with the DBH Finance PLC exposed me to a lot of realistic issues in the service delivery process in the housing finance industry through direct interaction with operational processes and customer interactions.

3.6.2 Overview of Internship Responsibilities

Throughout the internship, the intern mostly worked in the Operations and Customer Service areas of DBH Finance PLC. These departments play a central role in ensuring that loans are processed smoothly, regulation adhered to and that customers are regularly communicated with. The responsibilities that involved the intern were to help in verifying documentation, answering customer requests, communicating with the various departments in the company and monitoring the work processes involved in processing housing loans.

Activities at the Operations unit included checking the completeness of documents and reviewing customer files, knowledge of the compliance requirements, and watching coordination among credit, legal and valuation teams. Responsibilities in Customer Service were to take customer queries, give information on loan procedure, guide clients on documentation requirements, and monitor complaint-handling process.

These duties enabled the intern to have first-hand experience on the end-to-end housing loan process and appreciate how efficiency in operations and quality of service has a direct impact on customer satisfaction.

3.6.3 Application of Academic Knowledge to Practical Work

The internship experience has allowed the practice of a number of academic concepts acquired within the BBA program. Those courses that were related to Principles of Management, Operations Management, Marketing, and Organizational Behavior were especially relevant. The principles of process flow, service quality, customer orientation and communication effectiveness were seen on practice.

In the view of operations management, the intern noted that the standardized procedures are crucial in risk mitigation in housing finance. Nevertheless, the trade-off between control and efficiency was also pointed out in the experience. Although compliance was ensured by stringent documentation and verification procedures that also helped in increasing the processing time, the perception of customers was also affected.

Marketing and customer relationship perspective The issue of trust, reputation and relationship management came into prominence. The internship confirmed that customer satisfaction in the financial services industry would be determined not only by the price, but also by other elements such as emotional reassurance and transparency.

3.6.4 Learning from Customer Interaction and Service Delivery

The close collaboration with the Customer Service department helped in gaining a lot of understanding about customer expectations and behavior. Customers who require housing loans, usually feel stressed because of the financial and emotional importance of the process. The intern noted that the customers appreciated effective communication, prompt responses and understanding attitudes rather than procedural explanations.

The internship demonstrated the importance of frontline employees in creating a perception about customers. Customer frustration was mitigated by professional behavior and supportive communication of customer service officers even in cases when organizational processes proved to be slow. This experience supported the theoretical ideas concerning service recovery, empathy, and emotional intelligence in delivering services.

3.6.5 Understanding Operational Challenges and Process Limitations

Among the most valuable learning outcomes was the knowledge of the operational issues concerned DBH Finance PLC. The intern noted that the workload in operations and the increase in the time spent in processing was due to large documentation requirements, repetitive signing, and manual record-keeping. Such difficulties usually led to the lack of communication between the organization and customers.

The internship gave me room to critically consider the nature of an inflexible and unresponsive system of operation caused by legacy and conservative structures. This discovery reinforced the comprehension of the intern regarding the necessity of a process innovation and digital transformation to a financial institution of the present day.

3.6.6 Professional Skill Development

The internship was useful in developing professional skills. Communication skills were also developed as a result of regular communication with the customers and internal stakeholders. The intern was taught to communicate effectively, handle customer expectations, as well as being able to respond to questions and concerns on a professional level.

Organizational skills and time management were also learned because in most cases tasks needed to be coordinated between various departments. Being exposed to an official corporate setting enabled the intern to have an insight into workplace etiquette, responsibility, and the values of following organizational policies.

3.6.7 Ethical Awareness and Professional Conduct

My experience in the housing finance industry has highlighted the issue of ethical behavior and secrecy. The intern was made aware of the importance of being responsible when dealing with sensitive information of customers and following compliance provisions. The value of integrity in financial services was reinforced by observing the way that DBH Finance PLC practices ethics.

The experience reinforced the corporate responsibility and ethics decision-making skills of the intern who is an important aspect of sustainable business practices.

3.6.8 Personal Growth and Career Insight

The internship has helped in the personal growth in addition to technical and professional learning. Problem-solving capacity and flexibility were improved by exposure to real-life organizational problems. The experience also offered insight on career interests and in particular in operations management and customer experience positions in the financial services sector.

The internship also assisted the intern in gaining confidence, professional maturity, and realistic expectations of the work place. Such results will be a powerful base in future academic and professional activities.

3.6.9 Reflection Summary

All in all, the internship experience at DBH Finance PLC was a learning experience that added to the academic knowledge through the hands-on experience. The possibility to work in the departments of Operations and Customer Service helped the intern to see the intricacies of the work of housing finance operations and the role of customer experience as the central point of service organizations.

The lessons acquired during this internship have helped in attaining professional competence as well as self development. The experience corroborated the need to balance operational management and customer-focused service delivery, which will be applicable in the future career of the intern.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide (Semi-Structured)

In-depth, semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions were conducted using the following interview guide in working with the customers of DBH Finance PLC. These questions were drafted in a way that would make the participants volunteer their own experiences, perception, and emotions concerning the housing loan process. Where necessary, probing questions were applied to obtain a deeper insight.

How did you initially get to know about DBH Finance PLC and what made you decide on them as your housing loan?

What are the factors that were most significant to you when choosing a financial institution to take a home loan?

Please tell me about your experience in the first encounter with DBH Finance PLC and what your first impression was like as a client?

Please tell me about your experience during the loan application and approval.

What has been the most challenging or frustrating part of the loan process to you?

Did you have any aspects of the process that you found positive or reassuring?

What was your experience with DBH employees particularly Relationship Managers or customer service officers?

Do you remember an incident when the DBH personnel assisted in solving a problem or issue?

To what extent are you satisfied with the communication practice of DBH in the process of taking the loan?

Have you had a positive experience with the online services or online platform of DBH?

What are your perceptions about these digital services compared to other financial institutions that you have used?

Will you refer other people to DBH Finance PLC? Why or why not?

What are your recommendations to increase customer experience at DBH Finance PLC?

Appendix B: Selected Paraphrased Interview Narratives

This appendix displays some of the paraphrased narratives based on the data of the interview. These stories are added to exemplify some of the main themes that were observed during the qualitative analysis without revealing the people.

Trust as the Original Motivator:

Some of the participants identified DBH Finance PLC as the first institution that would be mentioned when the housing loan is being considered. This perception was usually determined by recommendations of family members or the colleagues who considered DBH to be a sound and professional housing finance entity. Perceived risk was considerably reduced by trust and institutional reputation.

Reassurance through the Interaction of the staff:

The participants would stress on the reassuring and calming effect of Relationship Managers. Their explanations, interacting with patients, and the attitude of support contributed to customers going through the complicated paperwork and to become less anxious in the face of long waiting lines.

Discontent with Paperwork and Time and Money:

Most customers complained of the huge paperwork and signing process. Although the participants admitted that compliance was necessary, they believed that the process was too manual and time-consuming, which added to emotional stress.

The yearning towards Digital Transparency:

The customers were always willing to use digital tools that could enable them to monitor the status of their loan application. Lack of real-time updates and online communication channels only fanned the perception of inefficiency and uncertainty.

Appendix C: Internship Learning Summary

This is a brief list of learning outcomes attained in the internship at DBH Finance PLC, that are presented in the appendix.

- Obtained practical knowledge on housing loan operations and compliance.
- Acquired skills of customer communication and service-handling.
- Monitored the connection between customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.
- Improved ethical responsibility and financial service confidentiality awareness.
- Learned professional exposure to business culture and professional discipline.

Appendix D: Internship Reflection Highlights

The internship experience provided the significance of the balance between control of operations and service delivery with the aim of customers. The visits to Operations and Customer Service departments were very helpful in understanding how the efficiency of procedures, the transparency of communication, and the behavior of the staff in general form the customer experience. The knowledge acquired in this internship will be applicable in future academic activities and career choice.

Appendix E: Financial Ratio Details & Data Sources

Sources of DBH Finance PLC Financial Data

Data used were obtained from the following publicly available sources:

- Current, Debt-to-Equity, ROE, ROA, Asset Turnover:

Data retrieved from stockanalysis.com DBH Finance PLC ratio dataset. [StockAnalysis]

- Earnings Per Share & Dividend:

FY2024 EPS and dividend details were reported by multiple news outlets analyzing DBH's financial statements. [The Daily Star]

- NPL Ratio:

Risk and asset quality indicators were referenced from industry press reporting on DBH's performance. [Dhaka Tribune]

- Price-Earnings (P/E) Ratio:

Market valuation ratios for FY2024 and FY2023 were sourced from stockanalysis.com. [StockAnalysis]