RESEARCH ARTICLE

Online Shopping: A Study of the Factors Influencing Consumer's Buying Behavior in the 4th District of Nueva Ecija

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Abstract
The fast-growing technology brought a lot of impacts on the business industry. Online shopping is one of the aftermaths of technology. The e-commerce and online retailers in the 4th District of Nueva Ecija lack awareness of the buying behavior of their consumers that affects their businesses. The primary objective of this research was to investigate and identify the factors influencing online shoppers' buying behavior in the 4th district of NE, what things encourage them to buy online and what factors as well could halt them. The study used descriptive-evaluative design to assess the level of influence of factors on consumers' buying behavior in online shopping. This design used statistical treatment such as frequencies, percentages, weighted mean, and thematic analysis treated with percentage to interpret and determine the influence of factors. The study used the purposive sampling technique, the researchers rely on their judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their surveys. As to the results, most of the respondents strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the delivery process of online shopping. Based on the experience of respondents, online shopping is less effort and avoids consuming (physical) energy. Most of them prefer online shopping if it has special offers or discounts and they were preferring with a well-organized website. The recommendations that have been generated in the study are the fundamental basis of the ideas that would serve as a guide for the enhancement of online shopping and the e-commerce industry.

Introduction

Technology has a huge contribution to business marketing such as in selling/buying the products online, especially in these days of covid19 pandemic. According to Fernandes (2016), leading online retailers utilize technology since it enables them to save time and effort while increasing conversion rates for their e-commerce firm. Consideration of technology may raise concerns about the cost and inconvenience of integrating it into daily corporate processes. However, technology is now affordable for every e-commerce owner, encouraging an increasing number of sellers to go online and increase revenue for their firm.

People can now shop online as a result of the rise and influence of technology. Online shopping is a type of electronic commerce that enables consumers to purchase goods or services directly from a seller via the internet or a mobile application. Consumers locate products of interest by visiting the retailer's website directly or by utilizing a shopping search engine to compare the availability and pricing of similar products across multiple e-retailers. Customers can shop online from a variety of computers and devices, including desktop computers, laptop computers, tablet computers, and smartphones. A standard online store enables customers to browse the company's product and service offerings, as well as examine photos or images of the products, as well information about their characteristics, features, and prices. Online purchasing adds convenience to people's life. It cannot be denied that shopping online provides numerous benefits to us, such as purchasing products without hassle, being reliable for those with busy schedules at work or home, and making it easier to search for and purchase products. These are all factors that influence consumers to purchase online. However, some disadvantages of shopping online can also influence a consumer's decision to buy online, such as delayed delivery, receiving counterfeit or defective products, the possibility of encountering scammers, a lack of confidence in the products purchased because they could not see them

in person, and other circumstances that cause customers to avoid purchasing online.

In the 4th District of Nueva Ecija, the number of online retailers and e-commerce have grown particularly with the advent of this pandemic to extend their goods and services to consumers. According to Global Data (2021), the pandemic boosted e-commerce activity in the Philippines, as fearful consumers stayed at home to avoid exposure to disease vectors, and the Philippines' DTI stated that the number of online vendors jumped from 1,700 in March 2020 to 93,318 in January 2021. The online shoppers from the city of Gapan and different municipalities which are Cabiao, Gen. Tinio, Jaen, Peñaranda, San Antonio, San Isidro, and San Leonardo have dissimilar experiences and perspectives on online shopping. Some shoppers have problems with the sale of products: expensive charges for shipping, receiving wrong and damaged items, sluggish arrival of products, and many factors that affect them to earn negative perceptions. And some were saying that it brings easiness to their lives that they were able to purchase products even they were on their house or works. They also said it saves their time. According to My Advo (2018), the power of online shopping has altered the way people purchase, but consumers face a slew of issues when purchasing online, including false products, hidden fees, and so on. While online buying is convenient, users confront several challenges. However, businesses and marketers in Nueva Ecija continue to lack awareness regarding their consumers' online purchasing behavior, specifically how their purchase decisions are affected and influenced by certain events that generate varying opinions of online shopping as a result of experience. According to Clootrack (2016), understanding consumer behavior is critical for a company's present and future product releases to be successful. Each consumer approaches a purchase with a unique thought process and mindset. If a business does not comprehend how a consumer would react to a product, there is a good risk that the product will fail. Consumer behavior also evolves as fashion, technology, trends, living styles, disposable income, and similar other elements change. A marketer must understand the factors that are changing to align marketing efforts appropriately. The objective of this research is to investigate and identify the factors influencing online shopper's buying behavior, what things drive them to buy online and what reasons as well could refrain them, which would help online sellers or retailers for earning awareness about consumer's online shopping behavior for enhancing online goods and services and share positive effect to consumer's perceptions by the ideal service manner.This study was based on the research study that was entitled "Factors Affecting Consumer's Online Shopping Buying Behavior" by Pandey and Parmar (2019) in Gujarat.

At the end of this research, the researchers aim to determine the factors influencing online shoppers' buying behavior.

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How may the factors influencing online consumer's buying behavior be assessed in terms of:
1.1 Customer Satisfaction;
1.2 Availability of Products;
1.3 Perceived Usefulness;
1.4 Economic;
1.5 Website Quality; and
1.6 Perceived Risk?
2. What are the factors that affect the online shoppers to purchase online in terms of:
2.1 Encouragement; and
2.2 Refrainment?

Materials and Methods

Methods

This study used is under the quantitative research design. Qualitative and descriptive research methods have been very common procedures for conducting research in many disciplines, including education, psychology, and social sciences (Nassaji, 2015). Specifically, the researchers adopt the method of survey, which is defined as the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions (Pondo, 2015). It is a fact-finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation of the findings. This study used the percentage and frequency distribution tool and weighted mean for the interpretation of data.

Research Locale

The research was conducted in the 4th district of Nueva Ecija, Philippines where the respondents were identified. The respondents of this study came from the different municipalities and barangays that are found in district 4 Nueva Ecija.

Respondents of the Study

The target respondents of the study had at least a one-time online shopping experience that ages from 15-64 years old.

Sample and sampling procedure

The total sample size of the respondents of the study has a frequency of 384 of the total population of 534, 988. This study uses the Raosoft application to determine the sample size with a 95% confidence level and 5 % error of margin. This study used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their judgment when

choosing members of the population to participate in their surveys (Alchemer,2021).

Research Instrument

The findings of this study were conducted through an online survey form, with a database that can collect and store data, it also provides statistical software analysis of the findings. Survey research is the most fundamental tool for all quantitative outcome research methodologies and studies.

Survey questionnaires are a set of questions to accomplish the objectives of the study, participants encourage to complete them over the internet via a google form. The online survey questionnaires constructed in the Google form consisted of three parts.

Part I consists of the questions that assess the factors influencing online shoppers' buying behavior in online shopping with the variables such as customer satisfaction, availability of products, perceived usefulness, economic, website quality, and perceived risk. It is formulated in the modified 4-point Likert scale (4)Strongly Agree; (3) Agree; (2) Disagree; (1) Strongly Disagree. Participants were instructed to rate the statements and answer the question. It was patterned and modified from the questionnaire of Pandey et.al. (2019) entitled "Factors Affecting Consumer's Online Shopping Buying Behavior".

Part II consists of an open-ended question about the factors that could refrain and encourage the shoppers to purchase online. The respondents were asked to state their honest opinions regarding the questions being asked.

The research instrument was validated; corrections and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft; interviews were done with the other consumers to check the reliability and validity of the instrument.

Data Gathering Procedure

After the approval of the research topic entitled "Online Shopping: A Study of the Factors Influencing Consumer's Buying Behavior in the 4th District of Nueva Ecija". The researchers begin by collecting related data and information from the Internet. The questionnaire was guided by the related studies and undergoes confirmation by the competent individuals for validation of the suggested opinions were included. The researchers conduct a dry run to check the reliability and validity of the formulated questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was tested and measured to check the internal consistency. The validity of the research instrument was established by presenting the developed research instrument for the comments of the experts who rate the instrument. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was tested and measured with a score of .989 which means that the instrument has a good internal consistency. The validity of the research instrument was established by presenting the

developed research instrument for the comments of the experts who rated the instrument with 4.56 as it is weighted mean having a verbal interpretation of "very good". Before the distribution of the questionnaires, the researchers obtain approvals from their subject teacher and adviser, since the survey questionnaires were sent online with some social media platforms like messenger, telegram, and email, and lastly the researchers are free to conduct a survey. After the dry run of the questionnaire, it will be tallied, and further revisions of the questionnaire will be done. After the distribution, the information that will be gathered from the answered questionnaire will be tallied for further interpretation.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from the locale were encoded, tallied, and analyzed. Statistical tools such as Percentage, Frequency Distribution, Weighted Mean, and Thematic Analysis were used in analyzing the data gathered. The scale below was employed to interpret the results.

Table 1. Scales for Interpretation

Scale	Mean Range	Interpretation	Description
4	4.00-3.00	Strongly Agree	Highly In favor
3	2.99-2.00	Agree	In favor
2	1.99-1.00	Disagree	Not in favor
1	1.00-0.99	Strongly Disagree	Highly not in favor

Table 1 present the scales applied by the researchers in the interpretation and description of data under the Factors influencing online shopping buying behavior of the respondents to assess the level of impact of those factors on online shopper buying behavior. To determine the favorable using a 4-point Likert scale. The purpose of the researchers is to identify the perspective of the respondents which among the online shopping beliefs are being in highly in favor, in favor, not in favor, and highly not in favor.

Aside from the said scale, the researcher used the following statistical tools to classify, tabulate, and analyze the data following the objectives of the research study:

1. To assess and analyze the factors influencing online consumers' buying behavior in online shopping, the researchers employed weighted mean and ranking.

2. In describing and analyzing the factors that encourage and refrain the shoppers to purchase online, thematic analysis was applied and treated with frequency, percentage, and ranking.

Results And Discussion

1. Assess the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Customer Satisfaction, Availability of Products, Perceived Usefulness, Economic, Website Quality, and Perceived Risk.

1.1 Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Customer Satisfaction.

Table 2. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction	WM	VI	Rank	VB
I am satisfied......				
1.......... with the information of products and services provided on the internet.	3.03	Strongly Agree	3.5	Highly in favor
2......... with the customer services provided by online shopping.	3.03	Strongly Agree	3.5	Highly in favor
3......... with the arrival time of products.	3.02	Strongly Agree	5	Highly in favor
4......... with provided guarantee and warranty.	3.02	Strongly Agree	5	Highly in favor
5......... with the quality of products that are offered on online shopping.	2.97	Agree	7	In favor
6......... by the product tracking process provided by online shopping.	3.12	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor
7......... with its delivery process.	3.18	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**3.05**			**Highly in favor**

Table 3. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Availability of Products

Availability of Products	WM	VI	Rank	VB
1. Online shopping is more expensive than selling in a physical retail store.	2.59	Agree	4	In favor
2. The product I need/want is always available online shopping.	3.07	Strongly Agree	3	Highly in favor
3. Online shopping provides a variety of products for purchase.	3.15	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor
Continuation of Table 11.				
4. The online products can be ordered at any time and any day in online shopping.	3.29	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**3.03**			**Highly in favor**

Table 2 shows the overall total satisfaction of the respondents in online shopping, it has a weighted mean of **3.05**. The factor for satisfaction of respondents in terms of the delivery process got the highest weighted mean of **3.18** as the verbal interpretation of **"Strongly agree"**. However, the satisfaction that got the lowest weighted mean of **2.97** is the "quality of products that are offered on online shopping" and interpreted as **"Agree".**

1.2. Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Availability of

Products.

Table 3 shows that the result of the factors under the availability of products has a weighted mean of **3.03**. The perceptions of shoppers about the products online can be ordered any time and any day got the highest weighted mean of **3.29** which is interpreted as "**Strongly Agree**", and the perception that got the lowest weighted mean of **2.59** is that online shopping is more expensive than sold in a retail physical store and it is interpreted as "**Agree**".

1.3. **Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Perceived Usefulness.**

Table 4. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Perceived Usefulness.

Perceived Usefulness	WM	VI	Rank	VB
1. Online shopping is reliable for surprise gifts.	2.70	Agree	3	In favor
2. Buying online can save time.	3.24	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor
3. Online shopping can save money	2.57	Agree	4	In favor
4. Online shopping is less effort and avoids consuming energy (physical).	3.29	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**2.95**			**In favor**

Table 4 shows that the composite result of the factor Perceived Usefulness got **2.95** as its overall weighted mean. According to the perception and experience of respondents, online shopping is less effort and avoids consuming energy (physical) got the highest weighted mean of **3.29,** and has the interpretation of "**Strongly Agree**" and the perception about online shopping can save money getting the lowest result of **2.57** as the interpretation of "**Agree**".

1.4. **Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Economic.**

Table 5. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Economic

Economic	WM	VI	Rank	VB
1. Easy refund and return policy.	2.57	Agree	4	In favor
2. Online shopping if online prices are lower than the actual price.	3.14	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor
3. Online shopping if it has a free shipping voucher	2.64	Agree	3	In favor
4. Online shopping if it has special offers/discounts for the purchase.	3.32	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**2.92**			**In favor**

As shown in Table 5, the computed weighted mean of the economic factor is **2.92.** According to the respondents, most of them prefer online shopping if it has special offers/discounts for purchase so it has the highest weighted mean of **3.32** with the interpretation of "**Strongly agree**". And being preferred with easy refund and return policy got the lowest weighted mean of **2.57** has the interpretation of "**Agree**".

1.5. **Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Website Quality.**

Table 6. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Website Quality

Website Quality	WM	VI	Rank	VB
1. Prefer online shopping with more requirements needed for personal information while entering a website.	2.87	Agree	4	In favor
2. Prefer online shopping if it has a more secured website.	3.23	Strongly Agree	3	Highly in favor
3. Prefer online shopping if the website is professionally designed and well presented.	3.26	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor

4. Prefer online shopping if the information on the site is well organized.	3.29	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**3.41**			**Highly in favor**

Table 6 indicates the result of the website quality factor got a weighted mean of **3.41**. The respondents prefer online shopping if the information on the site is well organized and has the highest weighted mean of **3.29** with the interpretation of "**Strongly agree**". On the other hand, the preferred online shopping with more requirements needed for personal information while entering the website got the lowest weighted mean which is **2.87** interpreted as "**Agree**".

2.6. Assessing the Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Perceived Risk

Table 7. Factors Influencing Online Consumer's Buying Behavior in terms of Perceived Risk

Perceived Risk	WM	VI	Rank	VB
1. Hesitate to give my credit card.	2.98	Agree	5	In favor
2. Hesitate for advance payment.	2.99	Agree	4	In favor
3. Worried to receive a false product.	3.32	Strongly Agree	2	Highly in favor
4. Concerned whether a product will be good as well as it is advertised.	3.27	Strongly Agree	3	Highly in favor
5. Worried about scamming.	3.48	Strongly Agree	1	Highly in favor
Average Weighted Mean	**3.21**			**Highly in favor**

Table 7 shows that the weighted mean of perceived risk factors was estimated as **3.21**. Most of the respondents were worried about scamming with a weighted mean of **3.48** interpreted as "**Strongly agree**" while some of them hesitate to give their credit card that has a weighted mean of **2.98** has the interpretation of "**Agree**".

2. Analyze the Factors that Encourage and Refrain the Shoppers to Purchase Online.

2.1. Analyzing the Factors that Encourage the Shoppers to Purchase Online.

Table 8. Factors that Encourage the Shoppers to Purchase Online

Factors Encourage to Purchase Online	Frequency	Percentage
1. Less hassle and provide convenience for searching and purchasing products.	150	39%
2. Discounts/Special offers/Cheaper prices of products with free shipping or lower cost of shipping.	104	27%
3. Time-saving.	50	13%
4. Provide variety and trendy products.	29	8%
6. Prevent being infected /avoid Covid 19 virus.	21	6%
7. Relatives/Peer Groups	17	4%
8. Advertisement	13	3%
Total:	**384**	**100%**

Table 8 shows that **39%** or **150** of the frequency of the respondents have been encouraged to purchase the products online by the factor of it less hassle and provides convenience for searching and purchasing products. And **104** or **27%** of the respondents were encouraged by the discounts/special offers/cheaper prices of products with free shipping or lower cost of shipping. While the advertisement and peer groups/family have at least influence to encourage respondents to buy online. The advertisement has **3%** or **13** respondents and peer groups/family has **17** respondents or **4%** in its percentage.

3.2. Analyzing the Factors that Refrain the Shoppers to Purchase Online.

Table 9. Factors that Refrain the Shoppers to Purchase online

Factors Refrain to Purchase Online.	Frequency	Percentage
1. Lack of assurance in quality and authenticity appearance of products.	100	26%
2. Worried about scamming.	96	25%
3. Costly shipping service	58	15%
4. Low ratings/negative feedback	38	10%
5. Possible to receive false items	27	7%
6. Possible to receive damaged items	27	7%
7. Advance payment	19	5%
8. Delivery timeframe	12	3%
9. Difficulty in refund/returning product	7	2%
Total:	**384**	**100%**

Table 9 indicates that **100** of the frequency of the respondents or 2**6%** could be refrained to purchase online by the factor that online shoppers lack assurance in the quality and authenticity of the appearance of products in online shopping. And **96** or **25%** of the respondents have refrained from their worries about scams. **2%** or **7** of the frequency of the respondents were affected by difficulty in refund/returning products and **12** or **3%** of the respondents were refrained by the delivery timeframe.

Discussion

1. The assessment of the factors influencing online shoppers' buying behavior in terms of Customer Satisfaction, Product Availability, Perceived Usefulness, Economic, Website Quality, and Perceived Risk.

In terms of Customer Satisfaction, it can be seen that the result demonstrates that online shoppers are extremely content with the existence of online purchasing. This means that online retailers will continue to focus on their primary objective of ensuring consumer pleasure, particularly during the product delivery process. In this time of the pandemic, online shopping is providing the best service possible for their products.

Regards to Availability of Products, the 24/7 availability of products via internet shopping enables buyers to budget their time to acquire products regardless of where they are, even if they are the busiest person on the planet. Because online buyers are not required to travel but may order things from the comfort of their seats.

With the Perceived Usefulness of online shopping, this research demonstrates that, based on respondents' experiences, online buying makes life easier. Being a person entails a plethora of responsibilities that contribute to fatigue daily. Online customers accept online buying as a means of allocating their time and energy to more vital tasks.

In terms of economics, Discounts and unique offers might help you attract new customers who will purchase your products. It promotes the brand and increases the company's sales.

When it comes to Website Quality, the result indicates that respondents strongly favor a well-organized website's information. Presenting a well-organized website can assist relieve customer doubt.

And lastly, in terms of Perceived Risk Researchers believe that scammers are continually expanding in number as a result of the various tactics they employ to defraud people. The growth in their numbers correlates with the growth in the number of persons deceived by them, which causes online customers to be concerned about encountering a deceiver online.

2. The Analysis of the factors could refrain and encourage the shoppers to purchase online.

With regards to factors that encourage the shoppers to purchase online, people are constantly on the lookout for convenience. Marketers and businesses should seize this chance to provide services that align with people's tastes to ensure their business's success. Additionally, the discounts offered on products can assist advertise your brand by attracting practical consumers who raise your company's sales.

In terms of the factors that could refrain the shoppers to purchase online, it demonstrates that respondents are most concerned with the product's quality and presentation. They are hesitant to purchase things online since they cannot inspect them before purchasing. They are particularly hesitant to purchase online if the goods are expensive; therefore, they want to ensure that their money is well spent, which is why they wanted to ensure the product's quality and attractiveness. Scammers may also influence consumers to avoid purchasing online to ensure that the money they earned does not go to waste.

In line with the above discussions, the following are the researchers' recommendations:

Shopping industry should pay attention that most teens are engaged in buying online, it should be taken as an advantage by online retailers to drop their advertisements about their e-commerce with the online platforms that are popular with teens such as Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Instagram, especially in these days that teens have more access on smartphones.

Online shopping is recommended to pursue their well delivery process for still attaining the trust of consumers, making them satisfied will lead to achieving customer loyalty. Sellers should be rational in shipping charges because sometimes the eagerness of shoppers to purchase could be halted by the shipping cost provided by e-commerce, even the products are lower prices these could be more expensive than those sold in a physical retail store because of the costly charges on shipping fee, so they should be considered particularly when the locations of shoppers are not too far from the site of online retailers. They should provide a sign of distinction as its legitimacy that alleviates apprehensions from online shoppers to transact online. The constant enhancement of goods and services from the overall aspects of online shopping will maintain the retention of consumers.

Online shopping should continue to its purpose of providing convenience in people's lives while shopping online to still satisfy customers. In terms of their products selling, online shopping should make sure that every product or all items they are going to post on the website and sell have good quality and appearance to ensure that even without the actual sight with customers on products while purchasing it, they have assurance with it that's because online retailers should have already assured that the product that customers would purchase is good quality and reasonable to be paid and bought by consumers.

For the future researchers, it is recommended to use this research as basis of future possible study that is related with this topic.

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