

The Consumer Behavior of Senior High School Students in Purchasing Products at Shopee

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Abstract

Consumer behavior studies were relevant during COVID-19. However, studies have yet to be made on the population of senior high schools. This study investigates the purchasing behavior of senior high school students on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023. The researchers hypothesized that monthly expenses and purchase level do not affect their purchasing intention from Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used a quantitative descriptive research design and utilized numerical data to give accurate descriptions. The sample was comprised of 138 senior high school students who were selected through simple random sampling. The respondents were surveyed via Google Forms, and 38 questions were asked concerning their consumer behavior. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient were utilized in data analysis and treated the tested variables for their correlation. Findings indicate high satisfaction levels, varied monthly expenses, and purchase frequency across product categories. These insights inform decision-making for online platforms and consumers, enhancing the online shopping experience. Recommendations include improving product satisfaction and exploring factors influencing purchase behavior.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, consumer behavior, Shopee, purchase frequency, monthly expenses, purchasing intention



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INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic, individuals still need and desire to purchase products to fulfill their necessities and wants. However, to prevent the spread of the virus, individuals were encouraged to reduce buying products in physical stores. Moreover, due to practices that encourage social distancing and nationwide lockdowns, the pandemic has led to a rise in the utilization of digital technologies and devices (De et al., 2020). In line with this, during the pandemic, it is generally known that customers resorted to online shopping as physical store visits were restricted, leading to increased online purchases (Gu et al., 2021). Online shopping, the process of buying products directly from a seller without the need of an intermediary, is often known as the action of purchasing and selling products through the Internet (Daroch et al., 2020). And one of the popular online shopping platforms in the country is Shopee.

With 96.5 million visitors in the third quarter of 2020, Shopee is the leading e-commerce platform in the third quarter of 2020 (Nofitriandi

& Sfenrianto, 2022). During the first month of 2022, Shopee has approximately 343 million visitors (Mulia, 2022). During this pandemic, the usage of Shopee has grown quickly and is a common cultural phenomenon in the daily lifestyle of consumers in Malaysia (Yusof et al., 2021). Furthermore, consumers were forced to change their spending habits and spend more on necessities, such as health and hygiene products which are high in demand during the pandemic (Das et al., 2022). This signaled a change in their consumer behavior. As for Shopee, they created events and strategies such as celebrity endorsers and social media influencers, advertising appeal, creative sales promotion/s, and timing for them to influence people to purchase products from them (Bacay et al., 2022). They are known for their monthly mega-sales that helped their companies gain more attention from other people (Castano et al., 2020). With their mega-sales, they gain attraction from others for them to be influenced in using their application.

Consumer behavior is referred to as the study of consumers and the methods they employ to select, utilize, consume, and discard goods and

services, as well as their emotional, mental, and behavioral responses (Radu, 2019). As the pandemic and its related restrictions continue to be present, there has been an expanding concern and growing interest in consumer behavior during the pandemic. It has been extensively studied recently as it has become a significant issue. Many recent studies from different parts of the world, like the works of Sheth (2020), Platon (2021), and Maryati (2020), have focused on consumer behavior during the pandemic. The pandemic has indeed changed consumers' behavioral dynamics and redefined the social spheres and individual orientation (Mehta et al., 2020). One study reported that compulsive behaviors have increased due to the constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic (Nori et al., 2022). Interestingly, another study showed that the rate of buying clothes online has also increased to 32.5% (Elsafy & Elshahed, 2021). During the COVID-19 pandemic, people spent much more time shopping online, purchasing online, and spending money online than before the global pandemic. The current trends in consumer behavior during the pandemic are due to the need to adapt to ensure that consumers' needs are still met despite the changes in environmental protocols. With these in mind, the knowledge of consumer behavior during the pandemic is of foremost importance because consumers' decisions are affected by the present crisis as they need to adjust to the present situation. In contrast, one study reported that greater fears for health during the pandemic led to greater changes in consumer behavior (Eger et al., 2021). Fears for health during the pandemic made consumers extremely cautious in purchasing. Interestingly, another study reported that lockdowns made consumers become fearful, which led to a decrease in traditional shopping frequency (Belbağ, 2022). The buying behaviors of the consumers did indeed change due to the measures the government had imposed because of the pandemic (Bytyçi et al., 2021). The pandemic restrictions have therefore caused changes to the ways consumers purchase goods and services.

The knowledge of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumer behavior is of great importance because the different occurrences and events during the pandemic changed the practices of consumers. Previous studies have centered on analyzing consumer behavior during the pandemic in broader populations. However, earlier studies are inconclusive due to a population gap. A population gap is a kind of research gap that focuses on a population that is either underrepresented or insufficiently studied in previous studies (Somasundaram, 2022). In relation to this, in the earlier studies, the consumer behavior of senior high school students during the pandemic has yet to be robustly researched. Also, there is scant literature on young adults, particularly in the local context – the Philippines. The previous studies are inconclusive because the researchers did not consider narrowing the population to only senior high school students. Moreover, studies have not addressed whether purchase frequency and monthly expenses affect purchasing intention. In line with this, this current study addresses the gap mentioned above. With the above analysis, the purpose of this present research is to determine the consumer behavior of students in the Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM) strand in purchasing products on Shopee during the pandemic from 2020 to 2023, who will represent the young adult population in purchasing products on Shopee.

With the above analysis, the purpose of this research is to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the satisfaction level of SHS students in purchasing products on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023?
2. How much is the monthly expense of SHS students when purchasing products on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023?
3. How frequently do SHS students purchase products on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023?

4. What is SHS students' intention to purchase products on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023?
5. Do the monthly Shopee expenses of SHS students during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023 affect their purchasing intention?
6. Does the purchasing frequency of SHS students during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023 affect their purchasing intention?

LITERATURES

Below is a collection of literature that will provide information on the topic under study. The review will cover the study's variables, including consumer behavior, COVID-19, online shopping, and students.

Consumer Behavior. Consumers are individuals that are in search of the disposal of products and services that can satisfy their needs (Crosta et al., 2021). Consumer behavior should not be left out in the decision-making process when disposing of products and services (Mehta & Purohit, 2020). Consumer behavior is factored by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors, which marketers do not control, but marketers should consider these factors to be able to target the right consumers (Castano et al., 2020). Consumer behavior is also dynamic and tends to be adaptive (Pandiangan et al., 2021). For example, due to the economic impact caused by COVID-19 (Lemes et al., 2021). In the retail industry, consumers were forced to adapt to the sudden changes and switch from traditional to online shopping. Some consumers already had experience based on their past purchasing behaviors (Lewandowska, 2021).

Consumer Satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction depends on the quality of products and services the consumer receives. Online shopping buyers are most likely to receive positive feedback rather than negative one if they are satisfied with the quality or service

(Prebreza & Shala, 2021). This not only applies to quality or service but also to an idea, information, people, and organization (Elsafty, 2021). Delivery system and ease of transaction also contribute to consumer satisfaction (Bulacan et al., 2022). Marketers can gain the satisfaction they want from consumers if they reach the standards that satisfy their needs, wants, or desires. A marketer can determine if the consumer is satisfied by seeing and feeling it directly (Sayyida et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted traditional shopping into online shopping due to preventive measures.

Technology has played a significant role in consumer satisfaction. Advances in technology have opened many possibilities, such as the ease of shopping, the ability to receive products at home, and increased free time. But eventually, consumers needed to adapt to the advancement of technology, which is why increasing their satisfaction was a challenge (Lemes et al., 2021). For example, some aged consumers tried online shopping for the first time. Some did not like the idea of online shopping, but as they adapted to the changes, they eventually enjoyed receiving deliveries without the need of stepping out of their houses (Belbag, 2022). It needed time for the consumers to adapt.

Purchase Frequency. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the purchase frequency of consumers in buying products. Their frequency of online purchasing was boosted when there were increasing numbers of products being launched online at a low price (Afridi, 2021). Consumers were motivated to purchase from time to time due to low prices. Moreover, consumers stopped their expenditures on travel and increased their purchase frequency in buying necessities during the pandemic (Belbag, 2022). Examples of these necessities are groceries, non-food child products, and snacks. One study also found that the rate of online shopping and purchase frequency of consumers increased as the global cases of the pandemic continued to rise (Ali, 2020). Furthermore, many factors affected the purchase frequency of consumers. Bytyçi (2021) stated that the presence of several

online stores, the thought of reducing health risks, and the thought of saving time are some factors that affect consumers' purchase frequency. These factors have a direct impact on purchase frequency.

Purchase Intention. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted consumers' purchasing intentions when buying products. The pandemic affected consumers in different sectors and caused the intention of consumers in buying necessities to increase (Das, 2022). Examples of these necessities are hygiene products and food. In addition, several consumers are shifting to the intention of using online platforms when shopping after they have known the advantages of cashless payments and home deliveries (Eger, 2022). This means that their purchasing intention was switched to online purchasing. Many factors affect purchasing intention, as stated by different studies. The satisfaction of consumers has a direct impact on their purchasing intention. As their satisfaction increases, their purchasing intention also increases. Moreover, consumers' income also directly impacts their purchasing intention (Balli, 2021). As their income increases, their purchase intention also increases.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling. The population of the study are Senior High School – Accountancy, Business, and Management (SHS-ABM) Batch 2024 students. There were 213 eighteen years old or older ABM students. Through Raosoft, a calculator used to determine the recommended sample size, the researchers were able to decide on the sample size of 138 respondents, as suggested by the calculator, determined by the margin of error (5%) and confidence level (95%) the sample size was calculated. In total, 155 buyers participated in the study, providing a significant sample size for statistical analysis. This sample size allows for the detection of smaller effect sizes and increases the generalizability of the study findings to the larger population of buyers. The random selection was done through the use of an online randomizer. The mentioned sampling method was chosen because it helps to reduce bias and

increase the reliability of the data to be collected. It reduces the likelihood of errors due to chance or other factors.

Instrumentation. A self-made questionnaire based on the research questions was used to yield the data for the effectiveness and management variables. Google Forms was the platform used to create the survey questionnaire. Google Form is a web-based app used to create data collection forms (Love, 2014). The researchers decided to create their research instrument so that the questions will be targeted specifically at students who use Shopee as an online shopping platform and will be focused during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey has one (1) screener section and four (4) sections of each variable studied and has 37 questions. The first section of the survey is composed of 10 Likert-scale questions which aim to assess the customer satisfaction of SHS students in purchasing products on Shopee from 2020 to 2023. Moreover, the validation process proceeded smoothly under the guidance of the selected choice of validator, whom the researchers' advisor recommended for their expertise in the field. Afterward, a pilot study was lent out to selected individuals who qualified as the researchers' respondents, SHS students, as they counted as respondents for the actual survey to be conducted. The pilot study was employed to test further the instrument's reliability and understandability from the respondents' perspective. This comprehensive approach ensured that the research instrument met data collection and analysis standards. The pilot study occurred after the validation and before disseminating the survey for data collection.

Data Analysis. Descriptive statistics was implemented to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics aid in describing and presenting the characteristics of a particular data set by providing succinct summaries of the sample and data measurements (Hayes, 2022). In this study, the types of descriptive statistics utilized are frequency, tendency measures, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Specifically, the researchers used medians and means to measure the tendency to analyze data. According to Manikandan (2011, as cited in Pacana & Siwec, 2022), the mean, denoted as

" $\bar{x}$," is a crucial measure of central tendency that signifies the average within a dataset. Moreover, the median is the middle value of a given set of data (Tenny & Hoffman, 2022). To compute the mean, you sum up all the values in the dataset and divide the total by the number of observations. The formula for calculating the mean for each question is as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \sum x / n$$

Here, x represents the response value, while n represents the number of observations. Additionally, providing a more comprehensive description of the planned analysis for Likert Scale data is essential. In the context of Likert Scale responses, we intend to calculate means and verbally interpret the results. This involves assigning verbal descriptors to the numerical scores to provide a more intuitive understanding of the data. In the context of the present study, the verbal interpretation table is based on the study of Pimentel (2019), wherein the interval of each point in the Likert scale is more consistent, which leads to the avoidance of bias and improvement in describing the data gathered. The table below was used in interpreting the level of satisfaction of the respondents:

Table 1
Interpretation Table for the Level of Satisfaction

Likert Scale	Interval	Difference	Description
1	1.00-1.79	0.79	Very Dissatisfied
2	1.80-2.59	0.79	Dissatisfied
3	2.60-3.39	0.79	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
4	3.40-4.19	0.79	Satisfied
5	4.20-5.00	0.79	Very Satisfied

Table 2
Interpretation Table for Purchasing Intention

Likert Scale	Interval	Difference	Description
1	1.00-1.79	0.79	Very Unwilling
2	1.80-2.59	0.79	Unwilling
3	2.60-3.39	0.79	Neither Willing nor Unwilling
4	3.40-4.19	0.79	Willing
5	4.20-5.00	0.79	Very Willing

The researchers explored other statistical measures, such as percentages, to understand the distribution of responses.

Moreover, the current study used Pearson's correlation coefficient and treated the tested variables for their correlation. The variables assessed for correlation were monthly expenses, purchase intention, and purchase frequency and intention.

RESULTS

Data Presentation of the Level of Satisfaction.

The table presents the level of satisfaction of Senior High School students in purchasing products on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 – 2023. Median and Interquartile ranges were used as the data was proven skewed. The results revealed that the respondents were very satisfied with the ease of payment methods when purchasing products on Shopee, which obtained a median of 4.5 (IQR = 1). Meanwhile, the respondents showed the same level of homogeneous satisfaction with the time of arrival, packaging of the purchased products, physical appearance of the purchased products, usefulness, price of the products, and the search and filter options on Shopee when purchasing products as all of these got a median of 4 (IQR = 1).

Overall, the respondents were satisfied with purchasing products on Shopee, with an overall median of 4 (IQR = .50).

Table 3
Median Distribution of Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Median	Interquartile Range	Verbal Interpretation
Q1 (time of arrival)	4	1	Satisfied
Q2 (packaging)	4	1	Satisfied
Q3 (physical appearance)	4	1	Satisfied
Q4 (usefulness)	4	1	Satisfied
Q5 (durability)	4	2	Satisfied
Q6 (ease of payment methods)	4.5	1	Very Satisfied
Q7 (prices)	4	1	Satisfied
Q8 (customer support)	4	2	Satisfied
Q9 (product descriptions)	4	2	Satisfied
Q10 (search & filter options)	4	1	Satisfied
Overall Median	4	.50	Satisfied

Purchase Frequency. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic shifted people's purchasing behaviors, which was marked by an unexpected transition from traditional to online shopping, driven by concerns surrounding potential health hazards. Among the SHS-ABM respondents' purchases in Shopee from 2020 to 2023, health and personal care products emerged as the most frequently purchased items. This trend likely reflects a heightened fear of contracting the virus among consumers. The pandemic prompted a collective shift towards prioritizing health and safety, as highlighted by Handoko et al. (2020), with individuals placing greater importance on their well-being and others during the pandemic. Additionally, as Balarbar (2020) claimed, Filipinos were compelled to purchase essential items, including health and personal care products, amidst the pandemic. This phenomenon was not confined solely to urban centers but was widespread nationwide, as Villanueva (2021) noted. Further support for this observation can be found in the works of Ho-Torres (2020) and Dagooc (2020); as referenced by Balarbar (2020), one of the goods that Filipinos prioritized during the pandemic was medicines and personal care products. Also, personal house items, such as loungewear, slippers, and houseware, were a priority, as CNN Philippines (2020) reported.

Purchase Intention. Results revealed that the respondents were very willing to buy products on Shopee, such as food, home appliances, clothing, electronics, home furnishings, personal care, school supplies, pet care, and accessories, all of which gained a median of 4.5 (IQR =1).

The unexpected shift from traditional to online routines posed a challenge to the general public following the imposed restrictions for COVID-19. Daily activities such as communication, work responsibilities, and commerce underwent closures or digital transformations. Because of its potential health hazards, consumers turned to online options to reduce exposure risks. Eger et al. (2021) observed that fear-driven factors, encompassing health and economic anxieties, influenced Filipinos to embrace digital platforms, thereby transforming traditional

landscapes. This shift forced the public to adopt online platforms to survive. Transitioning from supermalls to online platforms like Lazada and Shopee became the norm. Furthermore, Acuña et al. (2022) research findings indicated that consumers still prioritize product quality, quantity, and price despite relying on online shopping applications. The findings suggest that online purchases are often more economical than traditional methods, potentially contributing to consumers' willingness to purchase products from Shopee.

Purchasing Frequency to Purchasing Intention. Results revealed a direct low relationship between the two variables ($r=.288$). However, it showed no statistically significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis ($p>.05$), which implied that there is no significant relationship between the monthly expenses and purchasing frequency of food products on Shopee during the pandemic and their purchasing intention which therefore implied that monthly expenses and purchasing frequency on purchasing food products on Shopee during the pandemic does not significantly influences their purchasing intention.

DISCUSSION

The study's findings were summarized according to the problem statement, which tackles the satisfaction level, monthly expense, and purchasing intention of Senior High School students. Students are generally satisfied with purchasing products in each product category on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023. Each product category differs in the number of students' monthly expenses. The monthly expenses of students in purchasing products on Shopee during the COVID-19 Pandemic from 2020 to 2023 generally range from 500 Philippine Pesos for selected product categories to 10,000 Philippine Pesos for Electronic Devices. Additionally, each product category exhibits different frequencies of student purchasing on Shopee during the COVID-19 Pandemic from 2020 to 2023. In terms of appliances, Electronic Devices and Home Furnishings significantly show a frequency of once per month, while selected categories exhibit a frequency of thrice per

month. All Product Categories showed a level of willingness for the students' purchasing intention to purchase products on Shopee during the COVID-19 Pandemic from 2020 to 2023. Only the category of clothing showed that monthly expenses affect their purchasing intention. However, for other product categories, monthly expenses are not significant in the purchasing intention of students during the COVID-19 Pandemic from 2020 to 2023. Lastly, only the clothing category showed that purchase frequency affects their purchasing intention. Nevertheless, for other product categories, purchase frequencies are not significant in the purchasing intention of students during the COVID-19 Pandemic from 2020 to 2023.

Overall, these findings provide the satisfaction levels, monthly expense, purchase frequency, and purchase intentions of SHS students, the study's representative for young adolescents, on Shopee during the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing valuable insights for understanding consumer behavior in an online shopping context.

With the conclusion drawn from the results of purchasing intention, it is essential to consider conducting a study regarding the relationship between price and purchase intention, as this paper does not factor in price. For purchase intention, the area of the current study should be further researched. The current study yielded results that show respondents are very willing to purchase their selected product categories. Further research can be conducted by assessing students' overall purchase intention regardless of product category to expand their knowledge of their purchase intention.

Future researchers should consider other factors that can potentially influence purchase intention, such as price and other product categories.

For online shopping platforms and sellers, the study can be used in decision-making to improve the overall buyer experience online. For students or consumers, consider using the results yielded from the current study as a guide in monitoring your expenses online and

your overall behavior in online shopping.

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