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Exploring the Characteristics of Millennials in Online Buying Behavior

Mecmack A. Nartea[1], Janela Jamice M. Santos[2], & Angelina G. Goyenechea[3]
College of Business Administration, Polytechnic University of the Philippines[123]
manartea@pup.edu.ph/ mackharvester@gmail.com[1], janelasantos09@gmail.com[2], ruf-ger29@yahoo.com/ aggoyenechea[3]

Abstract – *Online Shopping has become an important medium for sales and marketing transaction. In fact, many people are switching from the traditional form of trading goods and now joining the Online Shopping craze. Businesses are taking advantage of this opportunity to introduce their products to the market and to expand their reach. Philippines is the third highest in the Asia Pacific countries which was seen patronizing the platform of buying products online. However, it was also perceived that there is a high percentage of Filipino buyers who are not a fan of Online Shopping. This research studied and explored the factors that affect the buying behavior of the consumers and aimed to investigate the relationship of the factors of online shopping and the consumer purchase decision process. The researcher settled to use the descriptive research approach using random sampling to see the current situation of "what it is" today. The results revealed that consumers consider the factors such as Sales promotion, Advertisement, Social environment, Feedback, Logistics, and Payment process and that they undergo process of Consumer Purchase decision making. Using Pearson Correlation Coefficient or Pearson's R the researchers found out that there is a significant relationship on the factors in online shopping and Consumer Purchase Decision Process. Thus, online business must take into consideration these factors in designing and implementing their online shops to experience sales growth.*

Keywords: *Buying Behavior, Consumer Purchase Decision Process, Logistics, Online Shopping, Promotional Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

In the digitalized era of marketing, both the product offering and the buyers are changing [1]. Consequently, the marketing tools also changed where new technology is used to enable customers gain fashion inspiration online [2]. Using digital marketing, there is potential growth and value at millennials. Most companies offering online products targeted millennials because they are the impulsive online buyers and trend seekers. Millennials also are the top users of mobile phones and technology which is their commonplace tools[3]. Furthermore, they are the ones who are very active in using online media. Millennials are common bloggers in various sites including Youtube of which common contents are reviews of products from various online [4].

Commercial advertisements popping on various sites trigger the curiosity of the viewers to watch them. Basically they create reviews and comments on the content.

Online Shopping is a growing area of digital marketing. On a survey conducted [5] that Philippines is the third highest among seven Asia Pacific countries surveyed which accumulated a P92.5 billion of online spend for the year 2017. Yet, many Filipinos engaged in the survey cited that some of the reasons why they choose not to take part in the Online shopping craze is because of the shipping costs and the difficulty of returning goods. Thus, the survey that there are still portion of the Filipino buyers that are hesitant to make a purchase online.

The emergence of e-commerce as a platform for buying and selling is what makes Online Shopping a thing today. According to study [6], the Philippines has 57,607,242 internet users as of December 2016 and that is 55.5% penetration of the total population and that number is steadily increasing. Social media and online shopping accounts for the top online activities, taking a share of 47% and 29% respectively. This phenomenon invites more sellers to put up their online stores and

make part on the paradigm shift of doing businesses from traditional to online shopping. Online Shopping has grown and evolve in many ways. While there is a huge number of buy and sell merchants on social media. Online shopping graduated from being a casual buy and sell format and is now played by big, well established retailers like Lazada and Zalora [7]. Despite being active on social networking sites [8] posted an article in Manila Times cited that only 17 percent of the 1000 Filipino respondents polled changed their shopping habits even with the growing numbers of online stores for the last two years. Thus, Filipinos retained their traditional shopping habits.

This research is intended to study and explore the characteristics of millennials in online buying behaviour. This study will be beneficial for online business owners to understand the buying behaviors of their potential consumers. The findings will provide ideas on how to attract and maintain their existing customers. This will help them to better understand the buying behaviour of online shopping which is the key ingredient to business success. The result of this research will be of great help to marketers, advertisers, as well as to online shoppers themselves.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The intention of this research is to study and explore the factors that affect the buying behaviour of the consumers. The research aims to determine if there is a significant relationship between the factors in online shopping and consumer purchase decision process on the buying behavior of the MBA/MBM students in selected state universities and colleges within NCR.

METHODS

Since the research was concerned with identifying the relationship of the factors of online shopping and consumer purchase decision process on the buying behavior of Master's in Business Administration/Management students in Selected State Universities and Colleges-NCR, to see the current situation of "what it is" today, the researcher settled to use the descriptive research approach. Probability sampling, specifically random sampling was employed in the study because the researcher included only those universities who have met the criteria. The researchers only selected 5 out of 7 universities from the population because they are the ones who has Master in Business Administration program since it is the focus of the study. Random sampling is a technique in which each

sample has an equal probability to be chosen as part of the sampling process.

As a survey study, a research questionnaire was employed to gather data from the focused respondents. A self-made questionnaire was generated to assess the respondents which was reviewed by selected academic experts and business practitioner to validate its appropriateness in relation to its objectives to make sure it is simple and unbiased. Then, a reliability test was performed to make sure that the instrument will produce a stable and consistent results. The questionnaire was distributed physically to the respondents.

The researchers used Pearson correlation coefficient or Pearson's R to determine if there are any significant relationship between the factors in online shopping and consumer purchase decision process. They also used frequency and percentage distribution, ranking, and weighted mean.

Table 1. Total Number of Population Per Schools

State University and Colleges	Total Number of Students
University of the Philippines	119
Rizal Technological University	209
Technological University of the Phils.	64
Polytechnic University of the Philippines	704
EARIST	42
Total	**1138**

The population size is 1,138 MBA/MBM students. The researchers had a sample of two hundred eighty-seven (287) students taken from SUCs in NCR calculated based on Cochran's formula and using random sampling technique. Gender: 163 or 56.79% were male and 124 or 43.21% were female. Marital Status: 260 or 90.59% were married and the remaining 27 or 9.41% were single.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Sales Promotion

Sales Promotions	WM	VI
Discounts	3.05	Agree
Contests	2.93	Agree
Giveaways	3.19	Agree
Premiums	2.87	Agree
Free Shipping	3.32	Agree
General Weighted Mean	3.07	Agree

Among the factors of online promotions (Table 2), free shipping has the highest weighted mean of 3.32, discounts fall in between the factors under sales promotion with weighted mean of 3.05, and Premiums has the lowest weighted mean of 2.87.

According to study [3], millennial favored of e-coupons or promotions that offer benefits in exchange for any comment survey or interaction. Thus they are into competitive prices, good shipping rates and personalization of the site. Consumers are strongly price sensitive which affects their buying behaviour [9]. Online retailers offer marketing cues such as free deliveries, special discounts and free returns in order to attracts unplanned [10]. Consumers more often visit sites with as that display discount coupons and similar offers [11].

Table 3. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Advertisement

Advertisement	WM	VI
Television advertising	2.74	Agree
Print Publication Advertising	2.71	Agree
Internet Advertising	2.76	Agree
Out-of-Home-Media	2.78	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**2.75**	**Agree**

Among the forms of advertisements (as shown in Table 3). Out-of-home-media advertising got the highest weighted mean of 2.78 which implies that this form of advertisement is more effective. However, Print Publication Advertising (2.71) is less effective and used due to the existence of technology. The results may imply that people most of the time are out of their homes so outdoor advertising is the most effective type of advertisement to incorporate marketing communication.

Offline advertising media such as banners and billboards remain attractive to millennial]. Traditional visual merchandising are still effectively used as tool in strengthening positive emotions where products and/or brand are positioned to increase sales [2]. Online or internet advertising (2.76) is another effective advertising technique that most companies are using at present. Internet users found online advertising as informative but less entertaining and do not encourage consumers to purchase the product [12]. Research [13] suggest that e-marketers shall position ads that appear to be interesting and attractive to consumers' curiosity and draw their attention. Noted that millennial are experienced and knowledgeable in using and browsing the internet, hence, they prefer sites that are innovative

and interactive and provide information about new products [11].

Table 4. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Social Environment

Social Environment	WM	VI
Family	2.60	Agree
Peers	2.83	Agree
Community	2.79	Agree
Media and technology	3.09	Agree
Political and Legal	3.04	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**2.87**	**Agree**

It can be gleaned from Table 4 that the respondents agreed on the factors under Social environment such as Media and technology, Political and Legal, Peers, Community, and Family. It constituted a general weighted mean of 2.87, Media and technology having the highest of 3.09, Peers having 2.83 weighted mean, and Family having the lowest weighted mean of 2.60.

Technology influenced the behaviour of the millennial. The generation opted to use and prefer technology where speed of communication is important, thus, when bored, they possibly go for impulsive buying or shopping [14]. It also noted that millennial more often download applications related to online shopping and does likes and follows in social medias (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) [15].

Table 5. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Feedback

Feedback	WM	VI
1.When shopping on the internet, the store's reputation concerns me.	3.47	Agree
2. I usually shop from online store with highly positive online reviews.	3.40	Agree
3.I rely on customer's testimony about the online shop's service.	3.23	Agree
4.I am not influenced by reviews posted online because it may be fake.	2.47	Disagree
5. I don't rely on product's testimony because sometimes they are paid testimonies.	2.49	Disagree
General Weighted Mean	**3.01**	**Agree**

Customer feedback is a critical aspect in the online business because it creates and demand trust from the purchase/ selection to delivery/ reception of the product. Store's reputation is a primary concern of the respondents in online buying *(3.47)* as shown in Table 5. Respondents rely on product testimonies even paid

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testimonies *(2.49)* and are influenced by reviews posted online *(2.47)*. However, there are respondents who still shop online considering the positive online reviews *(3.40)*. With the general weighted mean of 3.01, the results may imply that reputation of the online store is important for online shoppers.

The reliability and reputation of the online stores is important to maintain customer loyalty. With the technological ability of the millennial, they can advertise favourable and unfavourable products or brands that they consider reliable and they can able to manage effective communication link [16]. In this sense, they have the strong and powerful feedback that every online shopper needs to consider. It explained that the people who read online reviews about the products before they make purchases, will also recommend the same, twice as often, as compared to the people, who do not read online reviews [17].

Table 6. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Logistics

Logistics	WM	VI
1. I am more likely to shop online if faster delivery is insured.	3.37	Agree
2. I love to purchase products from online shop with tracking application	3.41	Agree
3. I am more likely to shop online if products returns were easier.	3.28	Agree
4. I don't mind if the delivery is late or not, as long as it is in good condition.	2.19	Disagree
5. I would be more likely to shop online if they have different options for payment.	3.38	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.13**	**Agree**

As presented in Table 6, the respondents agreed on having a delivery tracking application (3.41). Respondents also shops online to shops who have different options of payment (3.38). Moreover, they agreed that they online purchase to shops who has insurance on fast delivery (3.37) and returns of the product is easier (3.28). However, respondents don't mind the delivery whether fast or late provided that their ordered products are in good condition on arrival. With the general weighted mean of 3.13, the result shows that consumer are particular when it comes to the delivery system of online store that's why they prefer to shop from stores who have tracking application. The study found out that customers of online shops have inhibitions in online shopping due to

delaying delivery and delivery costs. Another inhibition is regarding the product mixing up at delivery time. Thus the need for tracking of product orders and customer services is very important [18]. Study stresses that product quality and delivery service are the offline characteristics of online shopping. It is one of the critical aspects that online shopping is concerned due to complaints particularly on product specifications. Both shall satisfy the customer to maintain the loyalty and reduce the risk of cost due to replacements of good [19].

Table 7. Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior in terms of Payment Process

Payment Process	WM	VI
1. I prefer cash-on-delivery when shopping online.	3.36	Agree
2. I don't trust payment-first because I am afraid of bogus seller.	3.25	Agree
3. I like to pay using credit card for faster transaction.	2.46	Disagree
4. I am not into online payment because I am concerned about fraud and hacking.	2.92	Agree
5. I am more likely to shop on the internet if my credit card is secured.	2.98	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**2.99**	**Agree**

Table 7 displays the respondents' assessment on the factors affecting the online shopping behavior in terms of payment process. As presented in Table 10, the respondents preferred cash-on-delivery when online shopping *(3.36)* and not to "payment first" system due to bogus or frauds *(3.25)*. Respondents also purchase online to shops with secured credit a card payment system *(2.98)* and they're not into online payment because they are concerned about fraud and hacking *(2.92)*. However, respondents disagreed in using credit card for faster transactions *(2.46)*. With the general weighted mean of 2.99, the results show that the consumer opted to purchase with cash on delivery than any other mode of payment which is relative to the results of the study conducted [20]. Online shoppers do not prefer to use credit or debit cards while shopping from online stores. The electronic payment system had emerged various problems including security, reliability, scalability, anonymity, privacy, efficiency and convenience [21]-[26]. Credit card payments are mostly the most issues- associated mode particularly on security and privacy [21],[22],[27].

Table 8. Consumer Purchase Decision Process in terms of Pre - Purchase Stage

Pre-Purchase Stage	WM	VI
1. I prefer to buy product with sufficient and credible information in their advertisements.	3.62	Strongly Agree
2. I check my social media first if there is a promotion.	3.08	Agree
3. I seek advice and recommendation from someone else (friends, family, etc.) when buying a product.	3.23	Agree
4. I am more likely to shop online if faster delivery was insured.	3.50	Agree
5. I usually do background check to know the reputation of the online shop before making any transaction.	3.43	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.37**	**Agree**

As presented in Table 8, the respondents preferred to buy product with sufficient and credible information in their advertisements (3.62) and more likely to shop online if faster delivery was insured (3.50). Respondents usually do background check to know the reputation of the online shop before making any transaction (3.43), seek advice and recommendation from someone else (friends, family, etc.) when buying a product (3.23) and check their social media first if there is a promotion (3.08). The result shows that advertisement is an important source of information for the consumer. They are not into false, deceptive and misleading advertisement and seek advertisement with sufficient and credible information. Most of the millennial preferred to shop from online sellers who are operating in social media including Facebook and Instagram, which give them more confidence in online shopping. The reputation also of the online marketers has a positive relationship and impact on the willingness of the consumers to adopt in online buying [28].

As shown in table in Table 9, the respondents strongly agreed that they purchased products that favor their needs and wants (3.57). Also, they buy products with complete information after researching online (3.48) and acquire products that have free delivery system (3.42).

Table 9. Consumer Purchase Decision Process in terms of Purchasing Stage

Purchasing Stage	WM	VI
1. I order products online because it is easy and convenient.	3.36	Agree
2. I purchase products with sales promotion.	3.29	Agree
3. I buy products with complete information after researching online.	3.48	Agree
4. I purchase products that favor my needs and wants.	3.57	Strongly Agree
5. I acquire products that have free delivery system.	3.42	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.43**	**Agree**

They also ordered products online because it is easy and convenient (3.36) and purchased products with sales promotion (3.29). With the general weighted mean of 3.43, the result may imply that, at the end of the day, needs and wants of consumer is still their priority rather than the influence of sales promotion.

Table 10. Consumer Purchase Decision Process in terms of Post- Purchase Stage

Post- Purchase Stage	WM	VI
1. I testify to friends and relatives about the incentives.	3.22	Agree
2. I do repeat purchase whenever I'm satisfied with their product and service.	3.51	Strongly Agree
3. Anytime I am dissatisfied, I urge friends not to purchase the services.	3.27	Agree
4. I share comments/ reviews/blog/ posts related articles peers or friends via social media after purchase, etc.	2.96	Agree
5. I recommend the online shops to my friends whenever I am satisfied on their performance.	3.46	Agree
General Weighted Mean	**3.28**	**Agree**

In terms of post- purchasing in online shopping as shown in Table 10, repeat purchase whenever they are satisfied with their product and service (3.51) and will recommend the shops to their friends when satisfied to the performance (3.46). However, respondents will not recommend the store if dissatisfied with the service (3.27). Online shoppers also will

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testify to friends and relatives about the incentives (3.22) and will share comments/ reviews/blog/ posts related articles peers or friends via social media after purchase (2.96). The result show that after purchase, consumer is most likely to repeat purchase if they are satisfied with their prior transaction. Customers will reasonably be satisfied as long as perceived performance falls within or above the adequate service level [29].

Table 11. Significant Relationship in the Respondents' Assessment on the Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior by Pre-Purchase Stage

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Verbal Interpretation	p-value
Sales Promotion	0.662*	Strong Positive Correlation	.000
Advertisement	0.409*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000
Social Environment	0.526*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Logistics	0.433*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Feedback	0.512*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Payment Process	0.33*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000

* Significant at p-value<0.01

Researchers also aims to determine significant relationships between the factors of online shopping behavior and the online buying stages. Hence, correlations are obtained using Pearson- r.

Table 11 shows weak to strong positive correlations ranging from r=0.330 to r=0.662. There is a significant relationship between the factors of online shopping and the pre-purchase stage of consumer purchase decision process. Pre-purchase stage is significantly correlated to Promotion (r=.662, p=.000), Advertisement (r=.409, p=.000), Social Environment (r=.526,p=.000), Logistics (r=.433,p=.000), Feedback (r=.512,p=.000) and Payment Process (r=330,p=.000). Results imply that customers do consider these factors in choosing an online store before purchasing in the internet. Sales promotion is the first thing that the consumers are seeing first which influences their buying behaviour [30].

Sales promotion (r=.668,p=.000) is still the primary factor consumers is considering on purchasing stage as shown in Table 12. The purchasing behaviour of the respondents is also significantly affected by Advertisements, Social Environment, Logistics, Feedback and Payment Process. These imply that

online shoppers still considered these factors during purchasing stage.

Table 12. Significant Relationship in the Respondents' Assessment on the Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior by Purchasing Stage

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Verbal Interpretation	p-value
Sales Promotion	0.668*	Strong Positive Correlation	.000
Advertisement	0.347*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000
Social Environment	0.524*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Logistics	0.422*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Feedback	0.553*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Payment Process	0.247*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000

* Significant at p-value<0.01

Customers, during the purchasing stage, have high expectations of the product posted as should be similar to the actual product to be delivered. This behaviour defines the Generation Y or millennial as they are more aware of their purchasing power and would likely and undoubtedly spend cash for the product [31] and considering the fact that millennial have a distinct pattern that will guide purchasing behaviour [32].

Table 13. Significant Relationship in the Respondents' Assessment on the Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior by Post- Purchase Stage

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Verbal Interpretation	p-value
Sales Promotion	0.571*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Advertisement	0.361*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000
Social Environment	0.48*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Logistics	0.366*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000
Feedback	0.456*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Payment Process	0.262*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000

* Significant at p-value<0.01

Significant correlation exists between the factors of online shopping behaviour and post-purchase stage as shown in Table 13. Results revealed positive correlations in all factors studied. Sales promotion still has the highest correlation value of r=.571, p=.000. Advertisement (r=.361,p=.000), Social Environment (r=.480,p=.000), Logistics (r=.366,p=.000), Feedback (r=.456,p=.000) and Payment Process (r=.262,p=.000)

affect the customers even after the purchase. Post-purchase stage is where the perceived satisfaction occurs. At this stage, customers more likely to evaluate the product that they received as well as the performance of delivery.

Table 14. Significant Relationship in the Respondents' Assessment on the Factors Affecting the Online Shopping Behavior and Consumer Purchase Decision Process

Factors	Pearson Correlation	Verbal Interpretation	p-value
Sales Promotion	0.694*	Strong Positive Correlation	.000
Advertisement	0.408*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000
Social Environment	0.527*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Logistics	0.576*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Feedback	0.446*	Moderate Positive Correlation	.000
Payment Process	0.307*	Weak Positive Correlation	.000

* Significant at p-value<0.01

In Table 14, results revealed no difference with the previous ones. Sales Promotion is positively correlated with the purchase decision process. This means that respondents still looked after the value of the promotions from the pre-purchase stage until the end of the purchasing process. Results also revealed positive correlations between the factors and Advertisement, Social Environment, Logistics, Feedback and Payment Process. The buying decision of the consumers depends on the consumers' experience with buying the product. They also tend to evaluate products and the site or store itself through comments and reviews before the purchase process, thus, considered the factors. This is the reason why time delay between the buying decision and the actual purchase occurred [33].

Costumers spend a little time or effort to do external search or alternative evaluation of the product and the seller [34]. Online shoppers usually give feedbacks both for product and the seller or store with regards to the service performance. This measures the satisfaction of the customers on the service and performance provided by the online sellers. As general rule, customers' satisfaction shall meet its expectations [35].

When satisfaction is met, loyalty will follow. Higher customer satisfaction leads to greater customer loyalty [36] and higher future revenues for the business [37]. Due to the characteristic of the millennial being more oriented in using consumption or buying as means of status to show wealth and purchasing, they often become more impulsive in buying online. Their loyalty, however, changes very fast due to trends, fashion and popularity of brands [38]. They focus on quality rather than price [28].

CONCLUSIONS

Online shoppers take Sales Promotion as a primary factor in buying products in the internet. Advertisements, logistics, social environment, feedbacks and payment process are also vital factors to consider in online shopping as it affects their buying behavior.

Customers of online stores looked for reputable stores through reviewing online reviews and feedbacks before customer proceeds to purchasing a product. Often they look for information about the product and the online stores.

Online shoppers value the delivery of service more than the money they spent on the product. They prefer stores that could deliver their orders at the right time and the right quality.

Payment process is another thing that customers look after. They prefer stores that has good payment process and options valuing the security and reliability of the accounts to avoid from frauds and hacks.

Outdoor billboards or advertisements are still and effective promotional technique since most customers are out of their home.

Since online sellers or stores introduce their products in virtual form, thus, expectations are high. The satisfaction of the customer is measure when the product is delivered in quality and the service performance is best or beyond their expectation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since customer often seeks for a product with promotion, the researchers recommend online shops to use sales promotion as a tool to entice customer to purchase their products. Focus on free shipping, giveaways, and discounts as this were more appealing to the consumers. Consumer's favors online shops that do not impose shipping fee, offers price reduction and once in a while gives consumer something of value for free.

The researchers suggest that online stores should maintain the credibility and reliability through posting the real images of products and delivering the exact and

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similar products as ordered by the customers to gain positive reviews and feedbacks.

Online stores shall make advertisement that contains necessary details because this will inform customer about your product. An appealing and creative advertisement is one that customer don't easily forget. Putting the advertisements on high traffic sites than express ways where many are driving past at high speed is important.

The researchers recommend that online shops should have an efficient and organized delivery system since logistics is one of the factors customers are looking at online shops. Researchers urge online stores to have tracking application. Tracking application helps the consumer monitor as to where and when will the products they've purchased will be delivered.

Online shall use a reliable, safe and efficient payment system that would protect their customers. Choosing the reliable and best linkages for financial aspect is important.

Customers purchase product that favor their needs and wants. The only way to build a good image is to have a good quality product and efficient service. This will make people to recommend your online shops to others.

Consumers order products online because it is easy and convenient. Insured fast delivery is what makes consumer to purchase from online shops. The researchers suggest online shops to monitor their logistic system and make sure that they're meeting the demands of delivering on time. Situate tracking application on your websites because this is the concern of the consumer when shopping online whether the online shop will keep them updated about the products they purchased. Online stores through their customer service may prompt or notify their customers on the status of their order. This way, it helps and create a bond and communication with the customers. The feeling of personalized service is important to customers feel their importance.

Since there is the possibility of repurchasing, customer service of the online stores shall update their customers on latest updates and promotions. This helps their customers stay updated and valued.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study does not include the marketing aspects of online shopping and online stores. Thus, the researchers recommend to study other perspective of online shopping and marketing. Also, there is a need to consider future study on the relationship of the demographics of the respondents and the factors of online buying. Since the focus of this study is on millennials, a further or separate study on older generations would also be important to understand their behaviour in online buying as they are not exactly a technology savvy people yet orders online.

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