

## E-Grocery Shopping Intentions of Young Professionals

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**Abstract:** *E-commerce becomes more acceptable and prevalent because of the lockdowns implemented to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Establishments find ways to continue business by offering different mode distributions and marketing of goods and services to clients. One of the most appealing offers developed during the pandemic is e-grocery shopping though the use of mobile applications and online platforms. This study is a descriptive study that focused on the young professionals working in the City of Tarlac and their experiences relating to e-grocery shopping. Major objectives covered by the study include the perceived uses and benefits of e-commerce, acceptability, and willingness to purchase grocery needs online and acceptable payment schemes and delivery modes. Reasons why professionals do not avail e-grocery shopping platforms were also covered in the study.*

**Keywords:** Ecommerce, E-Grocery Shopping, Online Shopping, Young Professionals

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### Introduction

Today, one of the most popular pastimes on the internet is shopping. It has a great deal of potential because you can purchase at your leisure, at any time, from the comfort of your own home. Anyone can have their pages shown on the internet with the precise items and services they are selling or offering, not only businesses.

Ecommerce has many advantages over traditional "brick and mortar" retailers and catalogs. Consumers may search a big database of products and services with ease. They can view actual prices, place an order over several days, and email it as a "wish list" in the hopes that someone will pay for their chosen items. Customers can compare costs with a single click of the mouse and purchase the best-priced product. ([www.ecommerce-land.com](http://www.ecommerce-land.com))

Everything is as simple as one click away, from paying phone bills to booking appointments online. Today's world is one in which technology is seamlessly integrated into our daily lives. Acting heads of homes can now avoid long supermarket lineups and, more importantly, the tasks of weekly grocery shopping. In the Philippines, specifically in the City of Tarlac, Panda Mart by Food Panda and Grab Shopping are two of the most popular online grocery applications or platforms available today to meet the needs of consumers.

Several barriers slowing down online grocery growth includes choice, infrastructure and ease of payment. Choice for there is also very limited differentiated choice for consumers in the packaged grocery food category. Infrastructures for there are few online sellers can consistently promise a same-day delivery. Ease of payment, for only small portion of Filipinos has credit cards, which is addressed via cash on delivery. (Go, 2017)

A study conducted by Gumasing, et al. (2022) examines the behavioral intentions of Filipinos to use online grocery applications during the novel COVID-19 pandemic. The results revealed that performance expectancy, perceived benefits, perceived severity, and cues to action significantly influenced the behavioral intentions and usage of online grocery apps during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Statement of Objectives

This study aimed to describe the perspective of the young professionals in the City of Tarlac for electronic grocery shopping or e-grocery shopping. The following problems are addressed by the study:

1. How are the profile of the young professionals be described in terms of
  - 1.1 sex
  - 1.2 generation
  - 1.3 device typically used in e-grocery shopping?

2. What is the perception of the young professionals on the use and benefits of e-commerce platforms?
3. What is the level of acceptability and willingness of the young professionals for electronic grocery shopping?
4. What are the problems encountered by the young professionals in their e-grocery shopping?

### Review of Related Literature and Studies

According to Investopedia, E-commerce is defined as the process of buying, selling or exchanging products, services and information through the internet. Electronic commerce operates in four major market segments namely: business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and business-to-government (B2G).

E-commerce allows you to easily conduct any business transaction via the internet. Many new techniques have emerged in recent years, and this trend is projected to continue. E-commerce allows for the speedier interchange of information linked to the purchase and sale of items, as well as the essential information for the transportation of goods. Companies can communicate with one other without constraint, and their relationships can be established more easily and quickly. (Shahriariand Shahriari, 2015)

A research conducted by Vashishtha and Kumarin 2016 focused on e-commerce and online shopping that cited some determinants of India's e-commerce growth. Increase in the usage of internet; rising educational level in computer; Indian's busy lifestyle; the middle class' rising disposable income; awareness of products and easier access to product reviews are among the reasons of online shopping adoption. There are various difficulties that the Indian markets face. These are the reasons why many Indian customers return things they buy online; cash on delivery is the preferred method of payment; payment gateways fail frequently; postal addresses are not standardized; and inventory management is an issue in hundreds of Indian towns. Among the recommendation in the study are websites security; user friendly websites; effective and cost-efficient internet marketing; the business should also choose the most dependable hosting provider; prompt delivery and high-quality services must be provided; and business credibility should be enhanced through online branding.

Lim (2014) conducted research on e-commerce adoption. The study looked at many characteristics that influence customer acceptability of e-commerce in Manila, Philippines, and found that ease of understanding, personalization, and reliability were good predictors of consumer approval. As a result, recognizing these aspects may enable producers to enhance their resources and plans to encourage internet users to switch to e-commerce and grow their market share in the future. To attract new e-commerce consumers, these producers must adapt to rapidly evolving technologies. The adoption of the most advanced data encryption technique as well as other authenticity verification procedures ensures e-commerce consumers' privacy and security.

Similarly, in the Philippines, Nava-Macali (2016) conducted a study focused on knowledge on the use and benefits of e-commerce. It considers 49 respondents who use the internet in their separate business operations, indicating that they have a high degree of ecommerce expertise because they use it for a variety of purposes, including as a promotional tactic. The respondents are also aware that with e-commerce, payment can be made by credit card, PayPal, or up-front. The benefits of e-commerce also persuade this study's participants to have a good view toward it. Among the benefits mentioned include speed and convenience, as well as a reduction in transaction costs.

According to VISA Consumer Payment Attitudes Study 2021, less than half of consumers in Southeast Asia (45%) consider cash to be their favorite payment option. Myanmar (91%) and Cambodia (89%) and Philippines (53%) have the highest cash preference, while Singapore (15%), Malaysia (23%), and Indonesia have the lowest (28%). Cashless payments are becoming more popular, with 10% of consumers claiming to never use cash. At the moment, Indonesia (20%), Singapore (18%), and Cambodia (14%) are at the forefront of the trend on cashless transactions.

Consumers in Southeast Asia have sought to become cashless in over two-thirds of cases (64%), particularly in Vietnam (84%), Thailand (82%), and the Philippines (79%). Consumers who attempted to become cashless did so for an average of more than a week (10 days), with Filipino consumers approaching two weeks (12 days). Consumers in Vietnam and Malaysia (both 10.3 days) were likewise mostly successful in

their cashless endeavors. With this, the move to a cashless society in Southeast Asia is gaining momentum. (VISA 2021)

E-commerce becomes more acceptable and prevalent because of the lockdowns implemented to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Establishments find ways to continue business by offering different mode distributions and marketing of goods and services to clients. One of the most appealing offers developed during the pandemic is e-grocery shopping though the use of mobile applications and online platforms.

### Methods and Materials

The study used the descriptive type of research design. One hundred online grocery shoppers were surveyed, all of them are young professionals working in the City of Tarlac or working from nearby municipalities and provinces but under work from home arrangements. The objectives of the study were answered through a survey questionnaire forwarded to the respondents. The objective of the study that measured the perceived uses and benefits of e-commerce was answered using a questionnaire adopted from the study of Nava-Macali in 2016. The objective covering information relating to the acceptability and willingness of the young professionals to e-grocery shopping were answered through the same questionnaire floated of which questions were introduced by the researcher. The objective that answers the issues of consumers in e-grocery shopping or online purchasing was answered using the questions adopted from Statista.com (The Statistics Portal). These indicators were first used to Chinese consumers in 2011 that enumerates the reasons why consumers do not engage in online purchasing. The questionnaire was validated by experts on marketing management, e-commerce, and consumer behavior professionals. The questionnaire was distributed using MS Forms for easy distribution and consolidation of responses.

### Results and Discussion

#### Profile of the Young Professionals

Forty-seven percent of the respondents were male while 53% were female. Majority of the young professionals belongs to Generation Y or the Millennials (72%) while the remainders (28%) are from Generation Z or the Zoomers. Out of these young professionals, mobile phone and tablets are usually mostly used in e-grocery shopping (65%) while the remaining 35% prefers the use of computers or laptops.

#### Level of Knowledge of the Young Professionals on the Use and Benefits of E-commerce

Table 1: Use of E-commerce

Indicators	Mean	Equivalent
1. E-commerce maximizes buying experience of the consumers.	4.22	Agree
2. E-commerce involves both buying and selling of goods and services.	4.52	Strongly Agree
3. On line business transaction also serves as a promotional strategy to sellers.	4.21	Agree
4. Payment may be made via debit card, credit card or cash on delivery.	4.74	Strongly Agree
5. Delivery may be in forms of meet ups, pick-up, door-to-door and the like.	4.62	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.46</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The young professionals in the City of Tarlac were knowledgeable and agreeable on the listed uses of e-commerce in general. Among the uses that garnered the highest agreement relates to available payment modes and delivery arrangements.

Table 2: Benefits of E-commerce

Indicators	Mean	Equivalent
1. Faster transaction	4.28	Agree
2. Reduces transaction costs	4.05	Agree
3. More access to global market	4.25	Agree
4. Convenience of shopping	4.23	Agree
5. Provides wide selection of products	4.35	Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Responses gathered indicated that the young professionals in the City of Tarlac were aware and agreeable on the benefits of e-commerce. Among those benefits garnered the highest agreement relates to wide selection of products and faster transactions.

### Acceptability and Willingness of Young Professionals for E-Grocery Shopping

The acceptability and willingness of the young professional to e-grocery shopping is divided into two aspects: Payment Scheme and Delivery Scheme.

**Table 3: Payment Scheme**

Indicators	Mean	Equivalent
1. I'm willing to shop my groceries online if it is cash on delivery	4.38	Agree
2. I'm willing to shop my groceries online if it is payable by virtual money wallet/debit/credit card.	3.72	Agree

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As to payment scheme, the findings suggest that young professionals will likely buy groceries online if the payment scheme is cash on delivery. Young professionals also welcome e-grocery shopping if the payment scheme will be through the use of virtual money wallet like debit or credit card but the agreement on these indicators significantly declined. These means that "cash on delivery" is still the best payment scheme that e-grocery shopping platforms and businesses must offer to customers.

**Table 4: Delivery Scheme**

Indicators	Mean	Equivalent
1. I'm willing to shop my groceries online if it is free delivery.	4.52	Strongly Agree
2. I'm willing to shop my groceries online even if it has delivery charge added to total amount payable.	4.02	Agree
3. I'm willing to shop my groceries online if the delivery will be made on the same day.	4.25	Agree

As to delivery scheme, it is very evident that free delivery of groceries attracts the young professionals, as it may convince them to purchase groceries online if this will be the case. On the other hand, young professionals are still willing to purchase their grocery needs online even if there is delivery charge added to the total amount payable although the agreement declines substantially. It is also important to note that groceries shopped online must be delivered the same day, if possible, for there is a high agreement in the said indicator.

### Deliberate overall intention

Considering the level of knowledge on the use and benefits of e-commerce, it seems like the young professionals in the City of Tarlac welcomes the offerings of various business platforms to avail e-grocery shopping. The responses as to the intention of buying online were summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5: Overall Intention to Buy Groceries Online**

Indicators	Mean	Equivalent
1. Even if online grocery stores are available, I still intend to purchase my groceries in a physical store like supermarkets.	4.25	Agree
2. If online grocery stores are available, I intend to purchase my groceries online regularly.	3.72	Agree
3. If online grocery stores are available, I intend to purchase my groceries online occasionally or in emergency cases only.	4.02	Agree

### Problem Encountered in Online Shopping

There are various factors that describe the reason why shoppers are sometimes doubtful on shopping online. Out of 14 statements included in the questionnaire, the top seven problems usually encountered are summarized in table 6 as follows:

**Table 6: Typical Reasons of Shoppers on Not Buying Online**

Rank	Description	Mean
1	I'm afraid of fake/ poor quality products	4.42
2	I'm afraid of damage goods during delivery	4.33
3	I have a fear that product might be changed to fakes during delivery	4.21
4	I can't touch the product	4.09

5	I'm concern about the safety of online payment	4.05
6	I want to get the product right away	4.01
7	I enjoy going out to do my shopping	3.98

Major issues focused on risk of possible fake or counterfeit products in which the young professional shopper has no way to inspect the goods and see before buying it. The possibility of delivering damaged goods was also among the reservations of the grocery shoppers online. Security issues on possible online payments are also noted as major reasons of not buying online. This is justified on the previous discussion of this paper for shoppers prefer cash on delivery than paying using virtual money wallets, credit, or debit cards. Grocery shoppers also prefer buying their goods personally on physical stores for them to touch it and enjoy going out for shopping.

## Conclusions

1. Majority of the young professionals in the City of Tarlac were female. Majority belongs to the Millennial generation and prefers mobile phone and tablets in e-grocery shopping.
2. The young professionals in the City of Tarlac are knowledgeable on the uses and benefits of e-commerce.
3. Majority of the young professionals still prefers cash on delivery on paying their grocery purchased online although cashless payment like mobile wallet, debit or credit card use is also acceptable to them.
4. The young professionals prefer e-grocery shopping platforms offering free delivery services although they are still willing to purchase online even if delivery fees will be charged to them.
5. The leading reason why some young professionals have their reservations in e-grocery shopping is focused on the risk of possible fake or counterfeit products in which the young professional shopper has no way to inspect the goods and see before buying it.

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