



Impact of Pandemic to the Buying Behavior among the Filipino Youth

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Abstract

The *COVID-19* has had a significant impact on people's lives and *business operations* around the world. Additionally, it has an effect on the *purchasing habits* of the Filipino youth. The researchers employed a *qualitative research technique* in this study to determine changes in the purchasing behavior of Filipino youth, specifically young adults aged 18-25 in Metro Manila. Our findings indicate that young Filipinos have become significantly interested in *digital commerce* in the country, a trend that has been growing consistently since the pandemic started. Since the pandemic began, they have valued the efficiency and convenience of making purchases thru online platforms. As a result, many individuals chose to support local businesses by downloading apps or visiting websites that enable them to purchase online. According to the findings of the study, many of the respondents said that they prioritized buying necessities over wants. Because money was tight due to the lockdowns, which caused the majority of Filipinos to lose their jobs or stop working, Filipinos were careful with their expenditures throughout the pandemic. We the researchers concluded based on the responses we got thru our online interviews, that the pandemic indeed impacted the buying behavior of the Filipino youth.

Keywords: *business operations, COVID-19, digital commerce, purchasing habits, qualitative research technique*



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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 has substantially impacted people's lives and business operations globally. It has caused considerable losses to the world economy in general and international trade in particular, and these losses continue to escalate. Several causes contribute to the uncertainty in which enterprises and end consumers have found themselves. Income decrease, cross-border travel limitations, fluctuating consumer demand, and the changing behavior of market actors are just a few factors influencing the economy. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is considerably more than a health disaster, since it has had a significant impact on society and economy. More than any other interruption in this decade, the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically impacted how we work, communicate, and shop. Gu et al. (2021) noted that as a result of this, the business landscape underwent significant changes throughout the quarantine period. In the end, the corona crisis aided the growth of digital commerce by speeding up its development. Worldwide, there is a new generation of digitally immersed consumers who are more selective and demanding and experiencing economic difficulties (Gu et al., 2021).

The Philippine government took action for the said pandemic - implementing Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) and lockdowns for areas with many people infected by the virus. People went panic-buying to supermarkets and pharmacies; hence, products were already out of stock. In addition, the government provides emergency subsidy programs for the people and businesses brought by the pandemic. Thus, this would have caused economic losses to the country.

According to Shammi, Bodrud-Doza, Islam, et al. (2020), there is a strong correlation between the loss of one's livelihood and the unemployment rate, which will rise due to the closure of businesses. The poor and vulnerable communities in urban and rural areas will most likely be affected due to this condition. Although, many businesses augmented their products by entering the e-commerce industry. E-commerce or Electronic



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Commerce is a web-based platform for purchasing goods that only gives photos and videos describing the product. Amazon, eBay, Shopee, Lazada, and Zalora are examples of online shops where many people can buy their needs hassle-free and safely during this pandemic. Eger et al. (2021) found that fear appeal (health and economic fears) affects traditional and online shopping for COVID-19, where generational differences in consumer behavior are evident. Thus, the pandemic impacts the buying behavior among today's Filipino youth.

The COVID-19 virus has altered many people's lifestyles and desires, causing their shopping habits to shift. The current study aims to evaluate these changes. To achieve this aim, the study analyzed the influence of the pandemic on e-commerce across industries to discover online shoppers' preferences. Based on a multi-stage study of Gu et al. (2021), it also determined the most crucial aspects impacting online customers' purchase behavior as the epidemic expanded. The presence of links between the researched elements and the complex indicator of activation of online consumer behavior was determined using correlation analysis, and the pattern of their changes against the context of the pandemic was analyzed. According to Cua & De Ocampo (2022), many customers were financially affected during the start of the pandemic, resulting in two separate consumer groups: the shielded against the limited. With the extended effect and lengthier recovery, a new segment dubbed newly restricted shoppers has been introduced to the current constrained shoppers. Brand loyalty for the limited is constantly put to the test. Customers will not automatically switch to a less expensive competing brand. The decision tree for consumers is more complicated and will be influenced by their relationship with the category. Food, for example, has become a significant representation of family care, and moving ingredient brands or testing new items, if untested, will take time to guarantee that the dishes continue to taste fantastic.

The researchers aim to know the Impact of the Pandemic to the Buying Behavior Among the Filipino Youth, specifically to young adults from 18-25 years old around Metro Manila by gathering data to determine and measure the study that is specifically relevant to



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answer to the following: (1) the preferences of the Filipino young adults who are working when buying during the pandemic; (2) the impact of the pandemic to the buying behavior among the Filipino youth, and; (3) how buying behavior of Filipino youth impact today's pandemic.

2. Research Method

In this study, methods such as qualitative research design, sampling technique, participants, and data collection will be conducted to be able to determine the Impact of the Pandemic to the Buying Behavior Among the Filipino Youth. These methods will be acknowledging the preferences and the buying behavior of the participants who are employed and unemployed in the case study.

The study will be done through case study design as the researchers retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as individual life cycles, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries, among other things (Yin, 2009). This qualitative research will support thorough description of complex interactions, monitoring distinctive or unprecedented occurrences, highlighting the perspective and assessment of the situation by participants of the case study with widely varying placings and positions, giving attention to those whose perspectives are seldom seen, conducting detailed research to develop theories, produce and interpret results, and advancing toward interpretations (Sofaer, 1999).

The researchers will employ the technique of purposive sampling as they select individuals who are able to provide in-depth and comprehensive data about the subject under study. When doing non-probability sampling, researchers use their own judgment to pick people of the public to participate in their surveys, which is known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling (Alchemer, 2021). It is very subjective, and it is chosen



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by the qualitative researchers who develop the qualification requirements that each participant must meet in order to be accepted for participation in the research.

The participants of this case study will be focused on aged 18-25 years old, who are young adults from Metro Manila in which they will be sharing their experience and their buying behavior during the pandemic. Young adulthood is a unique developmental stage that allows the young adult to participate in self-exploration and identity construction (Higley, 2019). Hervé & Mullet (2009) claimed in their study on *age and factors influencing consumer behavior* that the price was given more importance by the young participants (aged 18–25) than the other characteristics, which included durability and sustainability of the products.

In data collecting, the researchers will be conducting a focus group discussion using an online meeting application such as Zoom and Facebook Messenger. People utilize online meeting tools to communicate with voice, video, and chat in order to stay connected. According to Naserly (2020), Zoom is an excellent tool for learners with less than 20 participants. If there are more than that, the Zoom session must be split into two or three sessions to keep the online learning successful. Including the study of Brahma (2020), it was indicated that using Zoom and Facebook Messenger makes it simpler to obtain qualitative data because it is cost effective and secure.

3. Results and Discussion

This paper presents and discusses the data analysis and findings of this investigation in detail. These findings are categorized into the following primary categories that answers the research problem: preferences when buying products and its impact for today's pandemic.



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Table 1. Presentation of data analysis for research questions number 1 using codes and corresponding descriptive themes.

Research Question 1	Codes	Themes
During the pandemic, what are your preferences when buying?	Specific acts, behaviors Strategies States Activities Conditions or constraints Meanings Participation	Necessities over wants Health risk

Based on the answers of the respondents, the preferences of the Filipino Youth for today's pandemic usually are what is being needed and prioritized. Since the world is being uncertain due to the health crisis, consumers tend to buy their necessities such as food and health kits for them to survive. When buying products, respondents also consider the quality, quantity, and its price of the product even though they tend to buy in an online shopping application such as Lazada and Shopee. Participants have utilized the courier service at least once since the beginning of the pandemic, with food being the most popular item sent by the courier service. Given that restaurants will not be able to open for business, the new normal will respond to client demand and deliver the necessities to them. The pandemic had an influence on the purchasing habits of Filipinos as well as their purchasing decisions.

Before the pandemic, most Filipino consumers are into makeups, brand clothes, and eating on an expensive restaurant. Unlike during pandemic, consumers have changed their buying behavior to prioritizing healthcare products such as disinfectants and so on. A lot of respondents buy healthcare products as following the protocols of the government for the safety of the people. Hence, the demand for the health products increases and the supply decreases. According to Dela Peña (2022), the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) said that the shortfall in paracetamol brands, which it maintained was temporary. This is caused by an increased vigilance against Omicron and



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an increase in the number of individuals falling ill for a variety of reasons. Biogesic, Neozepr, Rexidol, Decolgen, Bioflu, Alaxan, and Tuseran are among the paracetamol and analgesic brands currently out of supply. Moreover, at least \$165 million or Php 8,645,257,500 is generated annually by the Philippines' Medical Supplies industry from the sale of Isopropyl Alcohol, which is a household or office requirement. As demand for disinfectants, such as rubbing alcohol, hand sanitizers, and cleaning solutions soared, so did the production of alcoholic drinks, personal care goods, and food manufacturing (Department of Trade and Industry, n.d.).

Table 2. Presentation of data analysis for research questions number 2 using codes and corresponding descriptive themes.

Research Question 2	Codes	Themes
What do you think is the impact of the pandemic when you are buying products?	Participation Conditions or constraints Activities Strategies Meanings Specific acts or behaviors	Digital e-commerce Online Services

The impact of pandemic to the buying behavior of Filipino youth based on the respondent's answer are the following: Filipino youth prioritizes their necessities such as food and health (hygiene care kits), the improvement of digital transformation that increases in the country, the closure of the establishments that lead to economic downturn, opens a lot of small business through the utilization of social media and online shopping applications.

Table 3. Presentation of data analysis for research questions number 3 using codes and corresponding descriptive themes.

Research Question 3	Codes	Themes
How buying behavior of Filipino youth impact	Meanings States	Local businesses Health protocols



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today's pandemic?	Reflexive Participation Events Specific acts or behaviors	
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In response, numerous people stated that social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok had a significant role in influencing the purchasing behavior of young people during the pandemic. Nowadays, young people are more likely to purchase items they have seen online, even if it is not necessary. The latest trends have an impact on the purchasing decisions of most young people. One of our responders (Publico, 2021) stated that online shopping during the pandemic helped him stay sane throughout the lockdowns, when going outside was restricted by the government. Additionally, online shopping is beneficial to one's mental health since it keeps you busy and occupied during difficult times. It is an effective option to kill time, but excessive browsing through online shopping websites might result in impulsive purchases of unnecessary items.

4. Conclusion

In response to the epidemic, Filipino youth have altered their way of life and shopping habits, influencing their purchasing decisions. People are increasingly involved in digital commerce in the country, developing steadily since the outbreak began. Consumers valued the convenience of using a web-based platform in their purchases. Thus, many individuals choose to support local companies by using applications on their phones or visiting websites that allow them to shop online.

According to the findings, consumers spend more money on necessities than wants. Participants' safety must have their products or orders delivered to their residence via courier services. As a result, people have developed a practice of thoroughly disinfecting their orders prior to utilizing them.



The researchers claimed that pandemic has an impact to the buying behavior of the Filipino Youth based on the collected data. Therefore, this study may serve as a reference to the future researchers of the academe.

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