



***FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS' PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR
TOWARDS E-GROCERY SHOPPING***

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**FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS' PURCHASING
BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS E-GROCERY SHOPPING**

By

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ENDORSEMENT OF A FINAL YEAR PROJECT PAPER

This project report entitled Factors Influencing Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour towards E-grocery Shopping is prepared by Lee Kah Lai and submitted to Faculty of Agriculture in fulfilment the requirement of project paper (PPT4999A) and PPT4999B) for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science (Agribusiness) is based on my own original works.

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ABSTRACT

E-grocery shopping is consumers buying groceries on retailer's website. It exists in Malaysia since the year 1998. However, e-grocery shopping become a trend recently with the growth of internet usage. One of the categories that most likely purchase by the consumer in 2017 is including groceries product. As the increasing of internet users, it shifted the grocery shopping into online. However, total sales of grocery purchase online still low in Malaysia. There are many factors contribute to the low usage of e-grocery. The objective of this study is to investigate the consumers' purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery shopping in Malaysia. The variables that will be examined in this study are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived risk, social influence, attitude towards using e-grocery, behavioural intention to use e-grocery and actual usage of e-grocery. The quantitative survey has been carried out with 400 respondents who tried e-grocery shopping before. It can be concluded that perceived ease of use and social influence plays a prominent role that influences the consumers' purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery shopping. Hence, the e-grocery system needs to be designed user-friendly in order to ease the shopping experience. Besides, the grocers should do extensive promotion and advertising since social influence plays a role.

ABSTRAK

Beli-belah barangan runcit secara atas talian wujud di Malaysia sejak tahun 1998 tetapi ia tidak digunakan secara komersil oleh pengguna. Salah satu kategori yang dibeli oleh pengguna pada tahun 2017 termasuk barangan runcit. Memandangkan peningkatan pengguna internet telah beralih membeli-belah runcit ke dalam talian. Walau bagaimanapun, jumlah jualan pembelian dalam talian runcit masih rendah di Malaysia. Terdapat banyak faktor yang menyumbang kepada penggunaan beli-belah barangan runcit secara atas talian yang rendah. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji tingkah laku pembelian pengguna terhadap membeli-belah runcit di Malaysia. Pembolehubah yang akan diperiksa dalam kajian ini adalah kegunaan yang dirasakan, dilihat penggunaan mudah, risiko yang dirasakan, pengaruh sosial, sikap terhadap penggunaan e-runcit, niat tingkah laku untuk menggunakan e-runcit dan penggunaan sebenar e-runcit. Survei kuantitatif telah dilakukan dengan 400 responden yang mencuba membeli-belah runcit sebelum ini. Kajian ini dapat disimpulkan bahawa kemudahan penggunaan dan pengaruh sosial memainkan peranan penting dalam mempengaruhi tingkah laku pembelian pengguna terhadap membeli-belah runcit atas talian.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of E-commerce

The Internet is a very strong and pivotal alternative to communication media to unite the people all around the world. In June 2017, the Internet served 3,885 million consumers around the world, which is an estimate of 51.7% of the global population (Internet Growth Statistics, 2017). The increase of internet users every day has not only change the way of people communicating and also it has shifted the business into online (Econsultancy.com Ltd, 2014).

According to Oxford dictionary, e-commerce is commercial transaction conducted electronically on the internet (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). This online transaction with the aid of new technologies, for instance, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). This kind of technologies had given a chance for internet users to exchange their information and online transaction.

The capacity to utilize these technologies showed up in the late 1970s and permitted business organizations and associations to send business documentation electronically. In spite of the fact that the Internet started to progress in fast pace among the overall population in 1994, it took around four years to build up the security protocols (for instance, HTTP) and DSL which permitted quick access and a great connection to the Internet. In 2000, a huge number of business organizations in the United States and Western Europe spoke to their administrations in the World Wide Web. Then, the

world population began to define the term of e-commerce into the process of purchasing of available goods and services over the Internet using secure connections and electronic payment services. By the end of 2001, e-commerce has business transactions happen either business-to-business, business-to-consumer, consumer-to-consumer or consumer-to-business.

The advantages of e-commerce are all day and all night accessibility, the high speed and wide of accessibility of goods and services for the customer. However, there are some cases the restricted customer benefit. For example, the customers cannot able to see or touch goods before they buy, and also they need to be patient and sit tight when waiting for their goods transporting to the destination. Besides, there are a few challenges to begin an online business in the market. One of the challenges is consumers' prefer to shop in physical shops which have a conducive environment. Moreover, the availability of others stores or restaurants as well as the chances to interact with friends and family also challenges to begin online stores.

However, the number of internet users soar every day leading the businesses to transform into online business in order to adapt the new environment (Econsultancy.com Ltd, 2014).

1.2 E-commerce in Malaysia

The Malaysian e-commerce field has developed relentlessly after its blast in the mid-2000s and is currently a business that worth RM24.6bil (Inn, 2017). This scenario has led to changing Malaysian consumer lifestyle and aid in urbanization. E-commerce or online shopping becomes a current trend for last few years (PwC Total Retail, 2016).

These few years, the online stores have been booming in Malaysia. Lazada ranked as the top e-commerce company in Malaysia, followed by Zalora and 11 Street, based on their online traffic, staff numbers and followers on social media applications such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Lazada's website received an average of 29 million visitors on a monthly basis while 11 Street received nine million visitors monthly. Besides that, Lelong.com took the best spot in the list of Malaysian-based e-commerce companies, with its website recording an average traffic of 6.33 billion during the second quarter of 2017 (Inn, 2017). Lelong.com is one of the oldest e-commerce company in Malaysia and it still maintains the most famous business to business platform among Malaysians. These local e-commerce company mainly market their website and product through social media pages such as Instagram and Facebook. This is because the company can easily feature their products via images and partnerships with popular local celebrities and brands.

These e-commerce companies existence leading to Malaysians willing to try to purchase a different variety of goods online. Moreover, online customers have likewise expanded their spending to the more extensive scope of goods categories and not simply focus on particular goods classifications. There is study stated that the top three goods most purchased in the year 2013 is flight ticket, hotel booking and apparel (Consumer Barometer, 2016). These items can be categorized as travelling and personal items. However, in the year 2016, the top three most purchased item by the online customers are more to lifestyle items such as fashion and beauty items, electronics items as well as sport and hobbies items. However, in 2017 the top three categories customers are more likely to explore on online is home decoration and furniture items, households and

groceries items and also the health and supplement items (Inn, 2017). As compare with the items which most purchased from online in the year 2013 and 2016, the items that most likely to purchase in the year 2017 are more towards daily essential, personal and home & living items. Hence, the online shopping trend has been gradually towards the essential items. From this comparison, consumers are becoming more familiar with the online shopping. They increase their trust to purchase goods online. As the trust towards purchasing goods online increase, the consumers want to get essential items delivered to their doorstep. In addition, consumers busy lifestyle nowadays also one of the reasons that causing online shopping becomes the current trend. This phenomenon has challenged the traditional supermarket or hypermarket by the wave of online shopping trend.

1.3 Global E-grocery Industry

Grocery product is the edible and drinkable products that are purchased in grocery stores all the time. Groceries have been customarily purchased in stores, where consumers have a chance to touch and examine products before buying and control the transportation fragile products (Klein, 1998).

As compared with grocery shopping, e-grocery shopping usage is lower than traditional grocery shopping. This is because of the lack of availability to touch, smell and feel the grocery products in e-grocery store and the unpredictability of the delivery of goods. E-grocery stores nowadays are not just selling perishable products online, they also selling durable edible products such as canned food and non-food products such as household products (Schuster & Sporn, 1998).

United States (US) launched e-grocery in the late 1980s. It has then been adopted in other regions such as Europe, Australia and Asia (Kurnia & Chien, 2003). According to the second-year findings of the “Digitally Engaged Food Shopper” study by the Food Marketing Institute and Nielsen, five to seven years later, 70 per cent of consumers will be grocery shopping online. The latest findings show that the estimated \$100 billion spent, which is equivalent to every U.S. household spending \$850 online for food and beverage annually, will occur by 2022 or 2024. Hence, e-grocery is becoming a trend in future that everyone prefers the grocery reach their doorstep when consumers need it. This is because by purchasing grocery online, consumer able to gain so many benefits such as time-saving and convenience for shopping. E-grocery shopping becoming a new trend since the growing usage of laptops, smartphone and tablets that can connect to the internet.

There is a recent study in Europe by Galante et al. (2013) shows that consumers happy about purchase grocery online to save their time. Our neighbour country, Indonesia also is one of the countries that support e-grocery shopping. HappyFresh which is an Indonesia-based grocery delivery mobile application has earned US\$12 million to boost e-grocery in Asia with goals to expand their company to other Asia countries (Cosseboom, 2015). Even now HappyFresh spread their company to Malaysia.

1.4 Malaysia E-grocery Industry

E-grocery exists in 1998 for the website agrobazaar.com.my but it was not commercially used by consumers. E-grocery started to grow in Malaysia since mid-2000 with the website such as PasarBorong.com, SubangGrocer.com,

CGdeMart.com and Citraspicemart.com (Sulastri, 2017). However, at that moment the online grocery fail to grow as expected because website existence is not yet well known (Muhammad et al., 2016). E-grocery nowadays finally became a trend in the 21st century due to the ICT knowledge well spread among Malaysian internet users. The changing of consumers' lifestyle also one of the reasons that e-grocery sector is growing nowadays. E-grocery websites recently are offering better goods and services. There are a few e-grocers leading the e-grocery industry, for instance, Tesco, HappyFresh, Redtick and JOCOM.

Malaysia has encounter Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) which improved life quality in Malaysia. The Wholesale and Retail National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) has 13 Entry Point Projects (EPPs). EPP number 7 is developing a virtual mall. A virtual mall will allow the local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and others size retailers to distribute their products and services online (ETP Annual Report, 2011). Besides that, in budget 2017 Malaysia government had allocated RM162 million to implement programs such as E-commerce ecosystem and Digital Maker Movement. In budget 2018, Digital free trade zone (DFTZ) which collaborated with Jack Ma in China is on their construction at first phase in KLIA. From all these effort government had made, the government could see the trend of e-grocery in future.

1.5 Consumer Perception towards E-grocery

There is positive and negative consumer perception about using e-grocery shopping. The consumers who like to use e-grocery think that ordering groceries online procedures are easy to understand (Hansen, 2005). Some of the websites provided the teaching guideline of how to use their website for searching desired

products clearly. Hence, the e-grocer that provide a proper tutorial for their websites had left a good reputation of e-grocery shopping.

Besides that, some consumers that like e-grocery shopping think that e-grocery shopping able to save time and it is convenience for them to use it (Galante et al., 2013). E-grocery enables the consumers to buy grocery online efficiently. Consumers do not need to queue up for payment and suffer from a traffic jam on the way to grocery stores. Hence, e-grocery shopping not only can save time and also it can reduce cost.

Moreover, consumers able to compare price between two or more goods and compare price between grocers easily (Ernst & Hooker, 2006). In physical grocery purchasing, consumers have to go to the physical stores one by one in order to compare the prices of the goods. Even though some companies try to distribute the flyers to consumers, not all consumers received and utilized the flyers properly. Therefore, by using e-grocery shopping it will reduce the paper to produce flyers and it is suitable for the go green trend right now. Consumers also can compare the price among goods easily.

One of the benefits of buying groceries online are consumers able to access the comments and reviews to the products and the websites (Jiang, Yang, & Jun, 2013). In this 21st century, consumers' right is a very important issue to discuss. E-grocery shopping able to show all the comments and reviews of the products from the previous buyers. Consumers able to know and rate the services provided and also able to read all the reviews of the products before purchasing the items.

However, there are some consumers have negative perspective towards e-grocery shopping. Although ICT knowledge is spread to the public and everyone is using internet on their smartphone, some consumers still prefer physical grocery shopping. This is because consumer prefers to see, touch and feel the products on their hands (Underhill, 2009). Groceries such as fruit and vegetable need to examine the freshness by the consumers before buying. Some consumers feel that the online delivery fruit and vegetables could not give them the fresh products.

In addition, consumers still feel that online grocery is not safe to use. This is due to they need to bear the risk that their privacy and payment security expose online and the delivery fee charged by retailers (Huang & Oppewal, 2006). This is a very serious issue that involving personal privacy and monetary. Consumers afraid the website overcharge the goods and also their personal information will be revealed online everywhere. Hence, consumers need to be careful when using e-grocery shopping.

Consumers also need to be ready that products might not reach on right time, right place, right quantity and right goods (Huang & Oppewal, 2006). The shopping carried out online might appear some technical issue that it will cause a delay in the goods. Besides, the goods might distribute by the wrong place by the post office. The time of goods reaches the doorstep also hard to predict by consumers after purchasing the groceries.

The consumer also feels unsafe to use e-grocery because the quality of goods might not as good as expected (Huang & Oppewal, 2006). Consumers buying the groceries online by trusting the picture that shows on online. The pictures

are not necessarily same as the real product that will deliver to the consumer. Most of the pictures just for illustration only and normally the real goods are not as good as the picture.

Consumer point of views has two sides. Hence, it is important for us to know what are the issues and problems exist nowadays that reduce the sales of e-grocery. Besides, it is also essential for us to know the factors that influence consumer purchasing behaviour of e-grocery shopping.

1.6 Problem Statement

Malaysia government took initiatives to upgrade the internet speed by setting up 1Malaysia Internet Centre, mini community broadband Centre, 1Malaysia Community Broadband Library and 1Malaysia Wireless Village and promoting e-commerce in EPP number 7 to develop a virtual mall. However, there is still lack of e-grocery store venture into Malaysia market even though e-grocery exist in the market since 1998 but only start growing slowly lately. This is because the less successful online business example in Malaysia leading entrepreneur have doubt and afraid to take the risk to venture online grocery market. There are less than 30 famous e-grocery stores in Malaysia, such as Tesco Online, JayaGrocer, Redtick, You Beli and Grocer Express.

Besides, the sales of e-grocery in Malaysia still very low. According to the past president of the Malaysian Association for Shopping and High-Rise Complex Management Richard Chan, a mere 2% of total grocery sales currently is transacted online (Inn, 2017). This has indicated that consumers still reluctant to adopt e-grocery shopping compared to other products and services online

shopping. Hence, the study is conducted to investigate the factors that influence consumers' purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery shopping.

1.7 Objectives

1.7.1 General Objective

The general objective of this research is to investigate the consumers' purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery shopping in Malaysia.

1.7.2 Specific Objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the study derived from the general objectives stated above:

- i. To examine the relationship between consumers' demographic characteristics and purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery shopping.
- ii. To study the factors that influence consumers' purchasing behaviour of e-grocery shopping in Malaysia.
- iii. To determine the relationship between factors that influence the consumers' purchasing behaviour using e-grocery shopping.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The research on e-grocery is less in Malaysia because there are a few e-grocers in our country. However, there research which had done in other countries – The Acceptance of Online Grocery Shopping by Kurnia and Chien (2003) in Australia, The role of Trustworthiness by Conroy, Nanda and Narula (2013) in US, The future of online grocery in Europe by Galante, Lopez and Monroe (2013) in Europe.

Since the data is collected from the e-grocery users, this study will show the actual intention and actual consumer attitude towards e-grocery shopping. The result of this study able to help the retailer to understand Malaysian consumer purchasing behaviour towards e-grocery. Then, the e-grocery retailer could use this information to further improve their online services. This information provides a useful insight for the grocers exist in Malaysia in order to venture into e-grocery. The existing e-grocery retailer also could use this information to further improve their online services to gain the confidence of the customers in order to use e-grocery websites.

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