Stimulants of Online Shopping Behaviour among Chinese Millenials in China

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Abstract

To survive and prosper in the China, online companies must design their operational platforms to organically adjust to changes in consumer shopping behavior. The study investigated the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence the online purchasing behavior of Chinese millennials. A cohort of university students from selected parts of the Jiangsu province provided the sample of study. Consistent with the extant literature, the research confirms that millenials are influenced by several external factors, demographic factors, personal characteristics, and vendor/service/product characteristics and websites qualities when buying online. The economic, socio-cultural, technological, and legal considerations where the main external factors that influences online shopping behavior of Chinese millenials, internet knowledge, concern for security, need specificity and disposition to trust were the main personal characteristics identified. The study also found significant association between vendor services such as real existence of the store, store reputation, store size, reliability, assurance (seals, warranties, news clips) and use of testimonials/reference have association with millennials' purchasing intention. Similar characteristics were identified for product characteristics, service quality factors and website quality and each of these is statistically significant. Gender was determined to moderate the effect of all the factors on online shopping behavior

Keywords: Online; Millennial; Shopping; Behavior; Jiangsu Province

Introduction

Consumer behavior is a complex field of study because the behavior of a human being cannot be easily predicted with certainty (Huynh and Foxall, 2015). Several of the pillars that supported the traditional notion of a rational consumer has succumbed to contemporary forces that inspire irrational choices among consumers (Hamerman and Johar, 2013). The main social theories used to explain consumer behavior in the extant literature include the theory of planned behavior, the rational choice model Goode (1997), theory of consumption Sheth et al. (1991), theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979) and the social cognitive theory (Bandura,

2001). The others include the uses and gratification theory Blumler (1979) and the utilitarian theory as cited by (Chiu et al., 2014). Till date, there is no known theory or group of theories that precisely explain the likely behavior of a person given specific circumstances of consumption choice. Even though these theories view the customer from different angles, common in their findings is that customers make choices based on a number of extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Sheth et al. (1991) consumption value theory argue that consumers' choices are influenced singly or a combination of conditional values, epistemic values, social values, emotional values and functional values of a product while the utilitarian theory suggest that economic values are the most significant factor (Chen and Huang, 2013). On the other hand, the social cognitive theory posits that consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the social or environmental factors, the personality factors and the behavior itself (Cano Murillo et al., 2016) . However there is an emerging group of thesis and hypothesis that suggest that a combination of some of the above factors affect consumer decision making (Chung, 2014). As Chung (2014) points out, it remains relatively uncertain whether these same factors are enough to interpret the shopping behavior of online consumers. Due to the growing importance of competition in online market, it is important for business organization to know the customer better and to be able to design their operations to meet these needs (Tanis, 2008). With limited knowledge about consumer purchasing behavior in the Chinese market, this research seeks to investigate the purchasing behavior of Chinese millennials also known as Generation Y. Millennials were the first to grow up with computers in their homes. In a 1999 speech at the New York Institute of Technology, Microsoft Chairman and CEO Bill Gates encouraged American teachers to use technology to serve the needs of the first generation kids to grow up with the Internet. Many Millennials enjoy a 250+-channel home cable TV universe. One of the more popular forms of media used by Millienials is social networking (Lenhart et al., 2010).

Prensky (2009) identifies Millennials as "digital natives" which conducted a survey titled Millennials in Adulthood. This is because Millennials use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to create a different sense of belonging, find information on people and events, make acquaintances, and to remain connected with friends and more importantly for shopping purposes. According to Bentley (2015) Chinese millenials are a special generation because of their wealth, they represent the generation of economic revolution, one child policy and others hence have significant amount of resources at their disposal. They have thus taken local and foreign online shopping platforms such as Alibaba, Taobao, Tmall, Amazon China, JD.Com etc by storm accounting for nearly 67% of all online sales in China in 2014 and 2015. Thus being able to identify the factors that influences the behavior of Chinese online consumers especially the millennial group is very important in designing effective marketing strategy to capture this huge market (Parment, 2013). The information in this research will serve that useful purpose of helping organization currently operating online business and those who intend to operate same to be able to repackage their marketing strategy to meet the customer needs better.

Related Works

In the extant literature, the process of online consumer decision making is explained by different authors. Lee and Lee (2009) use the theory of reasoned action by Ajzen (2011), which

conceptualizes the basis for a person's attitude, intention and decision making process and how that can be applied to beliefs, attitudes, intention and actual behavior in an online platform. Other researchers, such as Dennis et al. (2009) have equally attempted to explain the influential factors in consumer behavior online by drawing on common antecedents based on observations and experimentations. In this research the framework for online consumer behavior is developed from an orchestration of several antecedents developed in the extant literature as follows
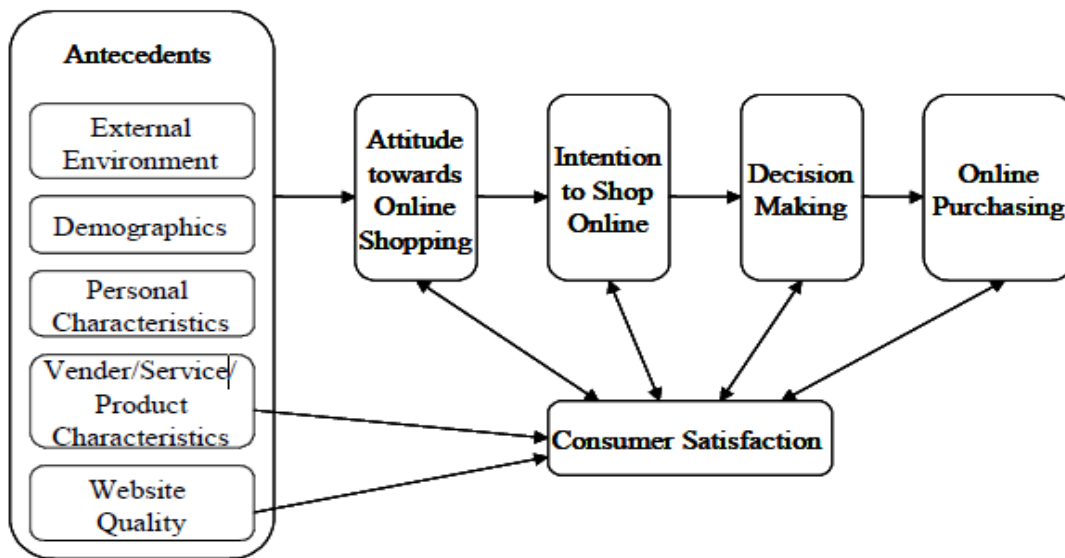

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

In this framework, it is argued that consumers attitude and intention towards online shopping behavior is influenced by external environmental factors, demographic factors, personal characteristics, and vendor/service/product characteristics and websites qualities. The attitudes that are formed based on the above characteristics stimulate an intention (either positive or negative) which then translates into a process of decision making and eventually an online buying behavior.

External Environment

The role of the external factors in consumer decision making has been in the literature on consumer behavior for a long time. Specifically in the work of Bandura as cited in Del Bosque and Crespo (2008) he explains that there are a number of factors within the external environment or outside of the individual consumer that significantly influences the extent to which the consumer will patronize or otherwise. Case et al. (2001) specifically speak about the political and legal factors, the economic factors, the socio-cultural factors, technological factors etc that influences the alacrity of consumers to patronize products and services. This same issue or factors have been found as useful in explaining consumer attitude online. Of the existing literature as many as 35 studies have discussed and explained significant external influence that shape consumer online purchasing decision and intention. For example in the study of Wang et al. (2006) they found out that political and legal factors play a very important role in consumer attitude and intention to buy online products. They also revealed that

consumers were more particular about the existence of laws and regulation which govern online transaction such especially those legal framework which protects customers from being taken advantage off because of the distant nature of online transaction (Wang et al., 2006). According to (Komiak and Benbasat, 2004, Niranjanamurthy and Chahar, 2013), before the emergence of laws such as Electronic Signature Act, customers were less confident in online shopping but these laws have strengthened the resolve of customers and they are now more comfortable in patronizing online platforms. Similarly, Gupta et al. (2004) have also found out that external factor such as external certification of websites, products and services offered online by a recognized external certifying body is an important factor for customers in their purchasing decisions (Gupta et al., 2004). They are motivated by the kind of organization under whose authority and recognition an online shop is operating and that gives them the confidence to buy or not to buy from them. Blake et al. (2005), have noted that the number of competitors within the external environment has a significant impact on customer's intention and eventual decision to purchase a particular product. Specifically they found out that if the competing vendors in the market are few, they become opportunistic and price their product such high that it reduces the desire to revisit the shops due to higher prices. This notion is equally supported in the argument of Kim and Stoel (2004) who explained that economic factors play a significant role in the consumer intention and desire to buy from online shops. Expounding on the views of Samuelsson as cited by Norton et al. (2010), they contend that customers are utilitarian and seek to maximize their lots in any transaction. The reason is that consumers have insatiable need yet with limited resources try to apportion their resources based on cost in order to afford more products and services. Online customers therefore are likely to patronize online services when they find out that they are less expensive than offline shops in as much as they offer them the same level of quality and satisfaction (Keisidou et al., 2011, Lian and Lin, 2008).

Another external factor which is explained by Lian and Lin (2008) is the concept of socio-cultural differences. It is argued that in an environment of high uncertainty avoidance as it pertains in most Asian cultures, people are careful with transacting business with people and platforms they are not so much sure or familiar with. They tend to prefer offline places where they can directly encounter the marketer and establish a relationship with the person. In addition where a person lives in an environment where the prevalence of online market is very high it has a greater influence on the individual to also desire to use online market.

Vendor/Service/Product Characteristics

In the existing literature, the influence of vendor, services or product characteristics on the customer intention and actual decision to patronize a particular online service or product has been found to be of significant importance. These vendor or service or product features is explained by Huang et al. (2010) as referring to the characteristics of the internet store, the quality of products or services they sell and the quality of services accompanying the sale of the products and services. In the extant literature, some studies have evaluated the exact issues about the vendor, service and product characteristics which inform the choice of consumer decision making process. For example in the study of Clemes et al. (2014) they empirically

validated the fact that customers want to transact business with online shops with real physical presence and whose physical location can be traced. However, in the work of Ou et al. (2006) they found out that customers want to shop in online stores with good business reputation. Furthermore, Hunneman et al. (2015) in their separate studies identified the size of the store as important to the customers before they shop. The reliability in service delivery which is explained as the shops ability to provide the designated services and products accurately and dependably was identified as an influential factor in the decision to shop online in a study by (Gupta et al., 2004). Further in this regard, Kim et al. (2007) and Nikitkov (2006) also noted that the internet stores assurance-building mechanisms (e.g., warranties, seals, news clips) are important just as Muthitacharoen et al. (2006) also found out that when internet shops uses testimonials, they tend to be more appreciated by customers. In the study of Crespo and Rodríguez (2008) and Ha and Stoel (2009) they confirmed the fact that online customers look at product features when they are shopping online shopping and the most important product features which influences their purchasing behavior include product variety, quality, durability, functional superiority or performance price, reliable supply, customization, brand quality and value of the product, social value of the product and many other features. An evaluation of the work of Walsh et al. (2010) and Chiu et al. (2009) suggests that online customers are conscious about quality of services which accompany the products that are sold online. For example a review of the work of Puccinelli et al. (2009) and Gabriel and Nyshadham (2008) shows that customers want to see a reliable purchasing process through elimination of process uncertainty while Boyer and Hult (2006) reveals that customers want to know the degree of response to customer needs, level of interaction or communication with customers and accessibility of sales personnel online. On the other hand, Kollmann et al. (2012) also found out that order waiting times or timeliness of orders service personalization and the ease of return and refunds were equally important factors which influenced customer decision making process. Finally studies from Aghekyan-Simonian et al. (2012) and Chattaraman et al. (2012) also confirmed the fact that customers are conscious about record of fraud, speed of delivery (speed, tracking and tracing), transaction/peripheral costs, and marketing promotion are all factors influencing consumer decision to purchase or not online

Website Factors
The next factors which has been determined to influence customer decision making as far online shopping is concerned is about website factors. According to Raman and Annamalai (2011) the issue of website quality or features can be evaluated on the basis of hygiene and motivator factors. This is to say that there are some features about a company website which contributes to satisfaction when they are available while others also contribute to dissatisfaction when they are not available. The hygiene factors of website quality are explained to include those factors which make the website function and serviceable and its absence causes the customers to be dissatisfied with the website Ryu et al. (2009). Some of these hygiene factors identified by Kim et al. (2010a) include good security and privacy features, technical support, ease of navigation, and usefulness of the content of information. On the other hand, motivational factors or qualities of the websites which Park et al. (2009) found to

influence customer decision making includes the perceived enjoyments of using the website, the user empowerment, credibility of the quality, visual and aesthetic quality, organization of the information, cognitive outcome (He and Mykytyn, 2008). Overall, the measures employed to value website quality by the researchers include the website's information content, information presentation, interaction between customers and venders, navigation, searching mechanism, security, site technical feature, media richness, and so forth (Hsu, 2008).

Materials and Methods

The population of the research was made up of millennial respondents selected from Jiangsu province. They were predominantly made up of male and female Chinese students who were born after 1989. This group was selected because they are noted to be the most predominant patrons of online shopping platforms such as Taobao, T-Mall, JD.Com, Amazon China etc. In their work, Mastrodicasa and Metellus (2013) expanded on the work of Howe and Strauss (2009) to include research-based information about the personality profiles of Millennials, especially as it relates to higher education. They conducted a large-sample (7,705) research study of college students. They found that millennials, were frequently in touch with their parents and they used technology at higher rates than people from other generations. In their survey, they found that 97% of these students owned a computer, 94% owned a mobile phone, and 56% owned an MP3 player (Fenich et al., 2011). They also found that students spoke with their parents an average of 1.5 times a day about a wide range of topics. Other findings in the Junco and Mastrodicasa survey revealed 76% of students used instant messaging, 92% of those reported multitasking while instant messaging, 40% of them used television to get most of their news, and 34% of students surveyed used the Internet as their primary news source .

In all a total of 200 questionnaire were sent out but 155 responses were received finally. The respondents were selected by random sampling. This means that every person within the population of internet users in Zhenjiang city had the same opportunity to be selected. A questionnaire was designed to collect the data. This was necessary because the research was designed as a quantitative research. Using a questionnaire is necessary because this research consist of the fact that it is able to reach as many people as possible and effective in helping to collect data that can be quantified and measured statistically. The questionnaire was designed as closed ended using the likert scale to design the responses (Berg & Lune, 2004). This means that respondents could answer whether they agree strongly or not. A set of questions were deduced from current empirical attempts to explains the factors influencing customer intention and purchase behavior of online market and these were administered to the selected respondents. When the questionnaire was completed, it was pre-tested on five pre-test samples after which corrections were made on the questionnaire (Bryman, 2006). Hard copies of questionnaires were sent to the respondents who were located in the Zhenjiang city. It took approximately 3 weeks for the data to be collected. In all 155 responses out of the desired 120 questionnaire sent out were returned. To analyze the data, a one sample t-test of the form:

$$(1+x)^n = \sqrt{P}\,\frac{Z}{s} = \sqrt{P}\,\frac{(\varkappa - \mu)/(\frac{\sigma}{\sqrt{n}})}{s}$$

where $\bar{x}$ is the sample mean from a sample $X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_n$, of size n, s is the ratio of sample standard deviation over population standard deviation, σ is the population standard deviation of the data, and μ is the population mean. The assumptions underlying a *t*-test are that

- X follows a normal distribution with mean μ and variance $σ^2$
- s^2 follows a $χ^2$ distribution with p degrees of freedom under the null hypothesis, where p is a positive constant
- Z and s are independent.

Data Analysis

Impact of External Environment

Table 1 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Legal support	55	2.51	1.079	.145
Economic situation	55	3.11	1.242	.168
Socio cultural factors	55	2.71	1.181	.159
Technological factors	55	2.57	1.086	.146

Table 2 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Legal support	14.750	54	.000	2.145	1.85	2.44
Economic situation	18.560	54	.000	3.109	2.77	3.44
Socio cultural factors	17.009	54	.000	2.709	2.39	3.03
Technological factors	16.883	54	.000	2.473	2.18	2.77

Tables 1 and 2 are the analysis of the responses that provides an overview of customer's consideration of the extrinsic factors in their decision to patronize internet platforms or vice versa. In the literature review it was explained that a number of environmental factors within the customer's decision making ambience influences the decisions which are eventually made. It was specifically indicated that extrinsic factors such as the legal support, the economic

situation, socio-cultural factors and technological considerations affect the decision to patronize internet market. When the analysis was conducted, customer indicated that indeed they are affected by these factors. Specifically, the mean value of responses in respect of the effect of legal support on patronage of online market was found to be 2.50 out of the maximum 5 while the effect of economic situation was found to be 3.11 out of the maximum 5. On the other hand the effect of socio-cultural factors on the decision to buy products online was determined to be 2.71 out of the maximum 5 while the mean value of the effect of technological factors accounted for 2.57. The significance of these values are tested in table 2 which shows that the significant value of all of the four extrinsic items identified in table 1 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence interval. This means that indeed intrinsic or environmental factors have an impact on millenials decision to buy online.

Influence of Personal Characteristics

Table 3 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Internet knowledge	55	3.04	.962	.130
Need specificity	55	3.33	.982	.132
Concern for security	55	2.71	1.048	.141
Disposition to Trust	55	2.89	1.031	.139

Table 4 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Internet knowledge	23.419	54	.000	3.036	2.78	3.30
Need specificity	25.119	54	.000	3.327	3.06	3.59
Concern for security	19.165	54	.000	2.709	2.43	2.99
Disposition to Trust	20.805	54	.000	2.891	2.61	3.17

In tables 3 and 4, the focus of the analysis is about the extent to which personality factors induce decision to buy a product online or not. As indicated in the literature review, personality factors which was first explained by Alfred Bandura the renowned social psychologist indicated that individual traits and interest plays a central role in determining what an individual customer may want or not. Each individual is different and always make choices that satisfies the emotional personality within. From the analysis that has been conducted, it is evident that personality factors influences customer decision even though at different rates. Specifically, the mean value of responses in respect of the effect of individual appreciation or knowledge about the internet on patronage of online market was found to be 3.04 out of the maximum 5 while the effect of individual specific need was found to be 3.33 out of the maximum 5. On the other hand the effect of individual concern for their security on the decision to buy products online was determined to be 2.71 out of the maximum 5 while the mean value of the effect of individual's disposition to trust accounted for 2.89. The significance of these values are tested in table 2 which shows that the significant value of all of the four personality items identified in table 1 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence interval. This means that indeed personality factors impact on the decision to buy online or not by a customer

Influence of Vendor Services

Table 5 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Real Existence of the Store	55	2.98	.933	.126
Store reputation	55	3.38	1.178	.159
Store size	55	2.98	.972	.131
Reliability	55	2.91	.948	.128
Assurance (seals, warranties, news clips),	55	2.98	1.097	.148
Use of testimonials/Reference	55	2.87	1.001	.135

Table 6 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0				
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

					Lower	Upper
Real Existence of the Store	23.708	54	.000	2.982	2.73	3.23
Store reputation	21.284	54	.000	3.382	3.06	3.70
Store size	22.759	54	.000	2.982	2.72	3.24
Reliability	22.754	54	.000	2.909	2.65	3.17
Assurance (seals, warranties, news clips),	20.159	54	.000	2.982	2.69	3.28
Use of testimonials/Reference	21.283	54	.000	2.873	2.60	3.14

The information in table 5 and 6 shows the extent to which customers are influenced by the vendor services attributes in making transactions online. Vendor service attributes entails the factors which are connected to the person or platform that sells the products and services. It was explained in the literature review that Clemes et al. (2014) empirically validated the fact that customers want to transact business with online shops with real physical existence or store and whose physical location can be traced by them or others while in the work of (Ou et al., 2006) they found out that customers want to shop in online stores with good business reputation. While (Hunneman et al., 2015) and (Huynh and Foxall, 2015) in their separate studies identified the size of the store as important to the customers before they shop. Based on this and many other identified vendor service features in the literature review, the above analysis was conducted. When the analysis was conducted, customers indicated that indeed they are affected by these factors. Specifically, the mean value of responses in respect of the effect of physical existence of online shop on patronage of online market was found to be 2.98 out of the maximum 5 while the effect of store reputation was found to be 3.38 out of the maximum 5. On the other hand the effect of store size on the decision to buy products online was determined to be 2.98 out of the maximum 5 while the mean value of the effect of reliability of the vendor accounted for 2.91. Other elements which were tested include the effect of assurance packages and reference and testimonials. Again the significance of these values are tested in table 2 which shows that the significant value of all of the six vendor services factors identified in table 1 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence interval. This means that indeed vendor service factors impact on the decision to buy online or not by a customer

Influence of Product Characteristics

Table 7 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Variety of goods	55	2.69	.920	.124

Quality/Performance	55	2.75	1.040	.140
Product uncertainty	55	2.76	1.036	.140
Product availability	55	3.15	.891	.120
Price,	55	2.73	.952	.128
Social Presence Requirement	55	2.35	.927	.125
Dependability of Product	54	2.94	.960	.131
Possibility of Customized Products	55	3.07	.940	.127
Brand Value	55	2.85	1.008	.136

Table 8 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Variety of goods	21.682	54	.000	2.691	2.44	2.94
Quality/Performance	19.573	54	.000	2.745	2.46	3.03
Product uncertainty	19.789	54	.000	2.764	2.48	3.04
Product availability	26.191	54	.000	3.145	2.90	3.39
Price,	21.253	54	.000	2.727	2.47	2.98
Social Presence Requirement	18.758	54	.000	2.345	2.09	2.60
Dependability of Product	22.541	53	.000	2.944	2.68	3.21
Possibility of Customized Products	24.244	54	.000	3.073	2.82	3.33
Brand Value	21.008	54	.000	2.855	2.58	3.13

An essential issue in this research is the extent to which product feature influences the customer's decisions to patronize online platform. In the study of Li et al. (2013), they confirmed the fact that online customers look at product features when they are shopping online and the most important product features which influences their purchasing behavior include product variety, quality, durability, functional superiority or performance price, reliable supply, customization, brand quality and value of the product, social value of the product and many other features. When the analysis was conducted, customer indicated that indeed they are affected by these factors. Specifically, the mean value of responses in respect of the effect of variety of products on patronage of online market was found to be 2.69 out of the maximum 5 while the effect of quality of product was found to be 2.75 out of the maximum 5. On the other hand, the effect of product uncertainty factors on the decision to buy products online was determined to be 2.76 out of the maximum 5 while the mean value of the effect of product

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availability accounted for 3.15. Other factors that were tested include the effect of price, social presence, requirement, dependability of product, possibility of customized, products and brand value. The significance of these values are tested in table 7 which shows that the significant value of all of the online product related items identified in table 8 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence interval. This means that indeed online product factors impact on the decision to buy online or not by a customer.

Influence of Service Quality

Table 9 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Customer communication channels	55	2.67	1.001	.135
Ease of vendor contact,	55	3.09	.967	.130
Response to customer needs,	55	2.96	1.088	.147
Accessibility of sales people,	55	2.95	1.079	.145
Reliability of the purchasing process	55	2.64	.950	.128
Timeliness of orders	55	3.36	1.176	.159
Availability of personalized services,	55	3.09	.986	.133
Ease of return and refunds	55	3.22	.854	.115
Security	55	2.38	.952	.128
Delivery (speed, tracking and tracing)	55	3.35	.886	.120
Transaction costs,	55	3.22	.658	.089
Peripheral costs	55	2.64	.754	.102
Promotion	54	3.17	.863	.117

Table 10 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper

Customer communication channels	19.801	54	.000	2.673	2.40	2.94
Ease of vendor contact,	23.693	54	.000	3.091	2.83	3.35
Response to customer needs,	20.200	54	.000	2.964	2.67	3.26
Accessibility of sales people,	20.250	54	.000	2.945	2.65	3.24
Reliability of the purchasing process	20.582	54	.000	2.636	2.38	2.89
Timeliness of orders	21.205	54	.000	3.364	3.05	3.68
Availability of personalized services,	23.238	54	.000	3.091	2.82	3.36
Ease of return and refunds	27.947	54	.000	3.218	2.99	3.45
Security	18.547	54	.000	2.382	2.12	2.64
Delivery (speed, tracking and tracing)	27.988	54	.000	3.345	3.11	3.59
Transaction costs,	36.270	54	.000	3.218	3.04	3.40
Peripheral costs	25.919	54	.000	2.636	2.43	2.84
Promotion	26.955	53	.000	3.167	2.93	3.40

In tables 9 and 10, the research output seeks to test the validity of the effect of service quality on the customer intention to purchase online. An evaluation of the work of Lu, et al (2007) suggests that online customers are conscious about quality of services which accompany the products that are sold online. For example a review of the work of Kim et al (2001) and Jahng et al (2001) shows that customers want to see a reliable purchasing process through elimination of process uncertainty while Cho et al (2001) found out that customers want to find out about the degree of response to customer needs, level of interaction or communication with customers and accessibility of sales personnel online. When the analysis was conducted, customer indicated that indeed they are affected by these factors. Specifically, the mean value of responses in respect of the effect of Customer communication channels on patronage of online market was found to be 2.67 out of the maximum 5 while the effect of Ease of vendor contact was found to be 3.09 out of the maximum 5. On the other hand the effect of Response to customer needs on the decision to buy products online was determined to be 2.96 out of the maximum 5 while the mean value of the effect of Timeliness of orders accounted for 2.95. Other factors that are tested include availability of personalized services, ease of return and refunds, security, delivery (speed, tracking and tracing), transaction costs, peripheral costs and promotion. The significance of these values are tested in table 10 which shows that the significant value of all of the service quality factors items identified in table 9 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence

interval. This means that indeed service quality factors impact on the decision to buy online or not by a customer

Influence of Website Quality

Table 11 One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perceived ease of use	55	2.89	.854	.115
Perceived usefulness	55	2.76	.860	.116
Privacy and Security,	55	3.40	.935	.126
Ease of Navigation,	55	3.04	.981	.132
Relevance of Information Content	55	3.29	.975	.131
Enjoyment,	55	3.27	.870	.117
User Empowerment	55	3.44	.977	.132
Credibility	55	2.82	.863	.116
Visual Appearance	55	3.16	1.151	.155
Organization of Information Content	55	3.22	.917	.124

Table 12 One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Perceived ease of use	25.117	54	.000	2.891	2.66	3.12
Perceived usefulness	23.836	54	.000	2.764	2.53	3.00
Privacy and Security,	26.970	54	.000	3.400	3.15	3.65
Ease of Navigation,	22.963	54	.000	3.036	2.77	3.30
Relevance of Information Content	25.029	54	.000	3.291	3.03	3.55
Enjoyment,	27.885	54	.000	3.273	3.04	3.51
User Empowerment	26.089	54	.000	3.436	3.17	3.70
Credibility	24.229	54	.000	2.818	2.58	3.05
Visual Appearance	20.386	54	.000	3.164	2.85	3.47
Organization of Information Content	26.034	54	.000	3.218	2.97	3.47

The final area of analysis which was considered in this research is the extent to which website factors influences customer intention to buy online and actual buying behavior. According to Hou (2007) the issue of website quality or features can be evaluated on the basis of hygiene

and motivator factors. Some of these hygiene factors identified by He and Mykytyn (2008) include good security and privacy features, technical support, ease of navigation, and usefulness of the content of information. On the other hand the motivational factors or qualities of the websites which Kim et al. (2010b) found to influence customer decision making includes the perceived enjoyments of using the website, the user empowerment, credibility of the quality, visual and aesthetic quality, organization of the information, cognitive outcome. When the analysis was conducted, customer indicated that indeed they are affected by these factors. The significance of these values are tested in table 12 which shows that the significant value of all of the website related items identified in table 10 as influencing customer decision to buy online are less than 0.05 (0.00 in all cases) at a 95% confidence interval.

Conclusion

In this research, we investigated the purchasing behavior of Millennial Chinese online buyer. The objectives of the research were to review the current literature on antecedents for online purchasing decisions, explore the extrinsic and intrinsic determinants of Chinese customer decision to shop online, explore the platform specific determinants of Chinese millennial decision to shop online and evaluate their perception about risk factors in online shopping and the risk moderating factors. Having examined the responses from the respondents, it is evident that a number of factors influence online millennials buying intention and behavior. Specifically, the research confirms that millennials are influenced by external environmental factors, demographic factors, personal characteristics, and vendor/service/product characteristics and websites qualities. In terms of external environment, it was determined that millennials are influenced by factors such as Legal support, Economic situation, Socio cultural factors and Technological factors while personal characteristics such as internet knowledge, concern for security, need specificity and disposition to trust were found to be very significant. The study also found significant association between vendor services such as real existence of the store, store reputation, store size, reliability, assurance (seals, warranties, news clips) and use of testimonials/reference have association with millennials purchasing intention. Similar characteristic were identified for factors considered as product characteristics, service quality and website quality and each of these is statistically significant. It is also significant to note that no statistical differences was found between the effect of these factors and income status and gender but young people were more prone to the use of online shops than elderly people. This study was limited by the fact that only 155 respondents participated in the research hence generalizations will be limited. Further, respondents could have been economical with the truth in their responses. Future work should look at comparing Zhenjiang Millennials with other millennials in different countries especially in Europe as they share differences in cultural values. This will help to further investigate the extent to which cultural factors influences millennials decision making in patronizing online platforms.

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