

## Does the Pandemic Have an Impact on Consumer Behavior in Malaysia?

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#### ABSTRACT

Due to travel restrictions and social distancing, people migrate to online platforms. The Covid-19 pandemic has prompted Malaysians to shop online instead of going to the store daily. This study investigates how Covid-19 affects customer behavior in Malaysia, where some indicators reveal a shift to online shopping during the pandemic. This study employed a survey research design. The researchers tested hypotheses using SPSS. A total of 200 respondents participated in this survey. The data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that price, convenience, and service quality could directly affect customer behavioral intention. The researchers also found that online trustworthiness and perceived trust can impact customer satisfaction. Consequently, it is recommended that the retail sector in Malaysia places greater emphasis on enhancing the convenience and service quality in online shopping, continuously elevating service standards to ensure customer satisfaction. Despite the findings showing that price and perceived trust have no significant impact on behavioral intentions in this study, they still have a favorable effect. Therefore, it is advisable for the Malaysian retail industry to enhance its pricing strategies and online security measures.

**Keywords:** Consumer Behavior, Covid-19 Pandemic, Malaysia, Online Shopping, Retail Industry

## **INTRODUCTION**

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced the Covid-19 pandemic on March 12, 2020 (Ciotti et al., 2020). The pandemic has tremendously impacted individual lifestyles, economic activity, culture, social interactions, and government policies (Hu & Kee, 2022a; Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). In addition to disruption in the socio-economy, the pandemic has brought countless challenges to global higher education, affecting students' and educators' social and emotional needs (Hu & Kee, 2022b). Covid-19 has significantly changed the worldwide population's and consumers' behavior (Laato, Islam, Farooq, & Dhir, 2020). The pandemic has unexpectedly impacted how individuals work, shop, and communicate these years (Anwar, Kee, Salman, & Jabeen, 2022; Despin, 2020). The pandemic is a double-edged sword (Kee et al., 2021). Consumers have increased their purchases on online markets because of the global lockdown, social distancing, and other measures enacted to restrain the spread of the pandemic (Aryani et al., 2021; Alessa, Alotaibie, Elmoez, & Alhamad, 2021). Hence, the companies' technological capacity to develop e-commerce has become an effective strategy (Salleh et al., 2020).

E-commerce has become one of the most important parts of the Internet era (Villa & Monzón, 2021). With the number that continues to grow, e-commerce is extremely popular in several developed and developing countries, including Malaysia (Novita & Budiarti, 2022). Clothing, medical care, beauty, electronics, foods and beverages, and other items have been categorized as part of the global e-commerce economy (Afridi, Jan, Ayaz, & Irfan, 2021). Furthermore, as the pandemic has spread worldwide, consumer behavior has shifted towards online shopping, making it easier for businesses to acquire loyal consumers in the online marketplace (Aryani et al., 2021). In Malaysia, it can be seen with the 9.3 percent rise in e-commerce value commencing in April 2020 (Naseri, Ahmad, Shariff, Hussin, & Nordin, 2021).

Furthermore, about 79,274 SMEs benefited from increasing e-commerce sales during the first two quarters of 2020 (Raman, 2020). One of the most prominent e-commerce platforms, Shopee has an opportunity to extend its services and boost online business due to the expansion of e-commerce during the Covid-19 epidemic (Yo et al., 2021; Crisanto, 2020). Shopee has been crowned the most popular e-commerce platform among Malaysians. From H1 2020 to H1 2021, Shopee had a massive 54 percent rise in visitors, averaging over 18 million in 1 year (Lim, 2021). In addition, the ringgit-to-ringgit Penjana Shop Malaysia Online campaign was launched by Shopee in partnership with the Ministry of Finance and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation to motivate customers to purchase critical commodities during Movement Control Order (MCO). As a consequence of the Penjana Shop Malaysia Online campaign, a survey indicated that businesspeople could earn approximately RM 3,950 monthly.

In 2020, Lazada Malaysia was one platform with millions of purchases made, resulting in an average rise of 80% over pre-pandemic levels. In addition, Tesco is another retailer that has reaped the benefits of adjusting to the pandemic customer demand for online shopping. It improved its food delivery and the 'Click and Collect' pickup operations, making them one of the largest supermarket chains. Tesco raised its online delivery slots to 1.5 million per week, and online sales surged over 70% by August 2020. In addition, the corporation plans to hire 16,000 additional people to assist with e-commerce purchases (Herzberg, 2021). The researchers aim to understand how the pandemic has influenced consumer behavior and, hence, affected the retail industry's business model in Malaysia. Our objectives were as follows: (1) to identify the effect of e-commerce on consumer behavior intention; (2) to determine consumer satisfaction with e-commerce; (3) to examine the influence of the online price level on consumers' buying behavior and

satisfaction; (4) to identify the convenience of online shopping on consumers' purchasing behavior and satisfaction; (5) to examine the service quality of online shopping on consumers' purchasing behavior and satisfaction; and (6) to determine the perceived trust of online shopping in consumers' purchasing behavior and satisfaction.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Price**

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2020), the price can be defined as money spent to get the product or service. It also refers to the sum of value that customers use to exchange for the benefits of using or consuming the product and services. Price also acts as the main element used in the marketing mix by all retail businesses. Subject to Zaman and Ikhwan (2021), the price of the product or service significantly positively impacts the buyer's satisfaction and purchase behavior. Pandey et al. (2021) supported a statement that customers are willing to pay a higher price if the product can give a higher value in return. However, a lower return of value may result in dissatisfaction. Besides, a better price can attract consumers to buy the product from a specific platform. E-commerce has multiplied in the retail industry in Malaysia. One of the factors resulting in higher demand for online shopping is consumers can buy the product at a comparative lowest price. As mentioned by Malc, Mumel, and Pisnik (2016), price fairness is the key denominator for the retail industry as it can affect consumer purchasing decisions and satisfaction. Three factors directly influence consumer perception of price sensitivity. It included discounts and promotions, the value of money, and e-commerce transparency, such as free shipping. To give better promotion, Tesco Malaysia, the first retailer collaborating with the e-commerce platform of Shopee, had offered 2,000 vouchers for the customers during the Super Brand Day Campaign held by Shopee.

Price is the key denominator in the consumer's behavioral intention, and a better price will increase consumer satisfaction. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Price is positively related to consumer behavioral intention.

H6: Price is positively related to consumer satisfaction.

### **Convenience**

The convenience factor of online shopping refers to consumers who can easily browse their product catalog with a click compared to traditional shopping to search manually and physically at the retail storefront, which results in time-consuming (Amin, Hurriyati, & Sultan, 2020). According to the study by Smart Insights (2020), it is due to convenience that most consumers prefer to reduce their risk of exposure to the virus. In this study, convenience is investigated using these three components: time-saving, flexibility, and delivery services. The easy-to-use and flexibility of online shopping are led by convenience. They are both related to how customers feel when they perceive comfort in online shopping makes their lives easier (Prabowo & Nugroho, 2019).

Yo et al. (2021) reported that perceived convenience is positively related to online customer satisfaction, while Kee et al. (2022) found that convenience influence positively consumer intention to use e-Wallets. According to Duarte, e Silva, and Ferreira (2018), convenience was also defined as consumers' avoidance of time and energy and manifested as a multi-dimensional structure encompassing a comprehensive service process. The convenience-oriented consumer always considers time, space, and effort, especially during COVID-19. Delivery services that send their product purchased online to their doorstep then fulfill the objective of convenience while resulting in lower costs without leaving their residence, such as their fuel and car maintenance expenses can be

eased. Tesco Malaysia announced its partnership with the e-wallet, which is ShopeePay. They considered the growing reliance on e-wallets and zeroed contact during the pandemic. Hence, they promoted cashless payment to ease the consumer purchase process and focus on the convenience factor to boost consumer satisfaction. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Convenience is positively related to consumer behavioral intention.

H7: Convenience is positively related to consumer satisfaction.

### **Service Quality**

The quality of a company's service is determined by how well it satisfies the needs of its customers. To meet a specific need, customers buy products and services. As a result, they've developed a set of standards and expectations for how a company's services meet their needs. A company with excellent customer service provides services that meet or exceed the needs of its customers. The global pandemic has significantly impacted healthcare and economics worldwide (Ahani & Nilashi, 2020). To maintain a competitive advantage and gain market share, a company must always focus on the needs and desires of the target customer and understand how the products or services offered would satisfy them (Wen et al., 2020). According to Parasuraman, Ball, Aksoy, Keiningham, and Zaki (2021), the questionnaire has been the most used instrument to measure customer satisfaction. Due to its direct impact on customer retention and spending, customer satisfaction is critical (Suchanek & Kralova, 2020). Customers are more likely to be satisfied when services meet or exceed their expectations. As a result of not having to leave their homes to get essentials and groceries, customers were more satisfied with the quality of service provided by retailers, such as delivery services. Tesco introduced order and collect in 2020 to make shopping more convenient for all customers. Maisarah et al. (2020) found a positive link between customer satisfaction and service quality. Therefore, the researchers propose a positive link between service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intention.

H3: Service quality is positively related to consumer behavioral intention.

H8: Service quality is positively related to consumer satisfaction.

### **Perceived Trust**

There must be total trust in online shopping because of Covid-19, which requires more contactless interaction. The Mayor defined trust as “the willingness of one party to be vulnerable to the actions of another, based on an expectation that the other will perform a specific action important to the trustor, regardless of the ability of the trustor to monitor or control that other party” (Tomlinson, Schnackenberg, Dawley, & Ash, 2020). In order to sustain e-commerce's growth, the researchers extensively study the factor of trust (Cheng & Shen, 2020). Online transactions are fraught with peril and difficulty because of the public's misperception of the complexities, vulnerabilities, and risks. As a result, trust is viewed as a prerequisite and a predictor of success in the business arena (Zhao et al., 2021). In e-commerce, trust is essential because there is no face-to-face interaction or communication. Trustworthiness of the web vendors is the key factor to be adopted by e-commerce which consider the privacy of online transaction according to Aboobucker (2019). Whether or not customers believe that the e-commerce website can keep their personal information secure during their interactions with online merchants. Due to the recent pandemic, most Malaysian retail stores are now looking to provide customers with convenient and efficient online shopping options. Consumers' attitudes toward online shopping have improved due to this efficiency. The Mayor defined vulnerability as a party's readiness to be vulnerable to the acts of another based on the expectation that the other will perform a specific action vital to the trustor, regardless of that party's ability to monitor or control that other party.

H4: Perceived trust is positively related to consumer behavioral intention.

H9: Perceived trust is positively related to consumer satisfaction.

### **Consumer Satisfaction**

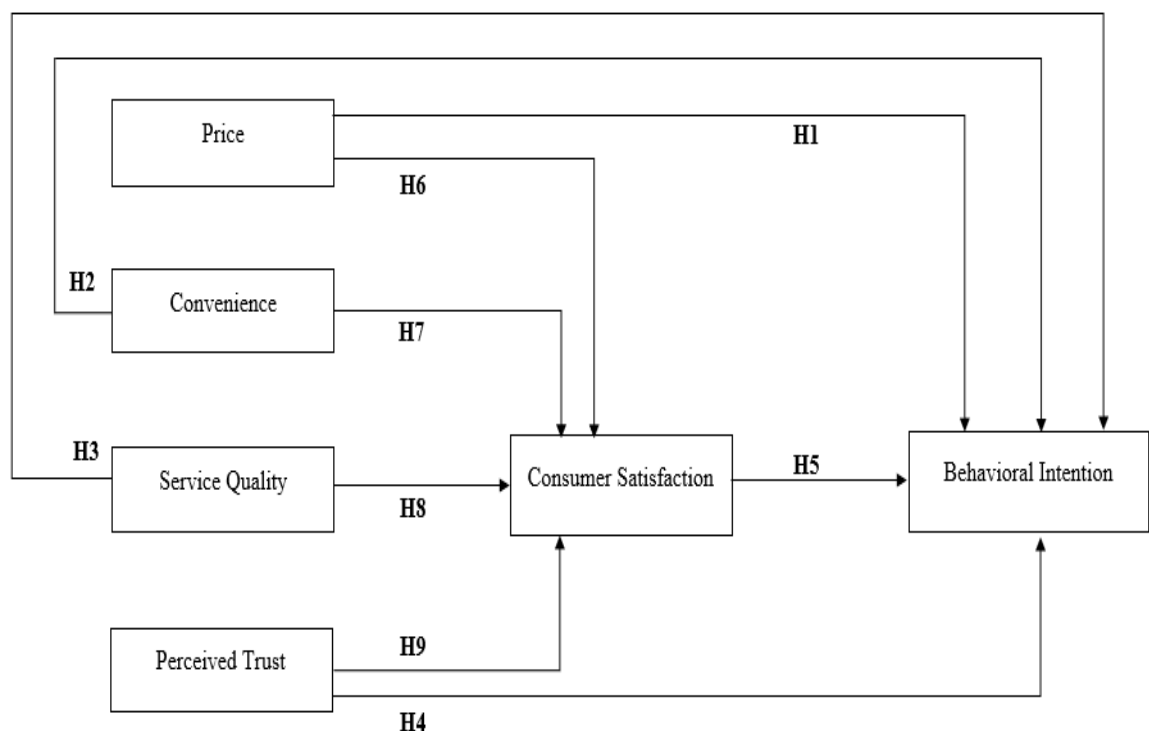
At a glance, customers are considered the king and crucial component for businesses to sustain in a competitive market, including the retail industry. The function of customer expectation and perceived performance can be used as an indicator to support consumer satisfaction (Fornell, Morgeson, Hult, & Van Amburg, 2020). According to Benoit, Kienzler, and Kowalkowski (2020), customer satisfaction with a product or application can be determined by using or consuming it. Hansemark and Albinsson (2004) defined customer satisfaction as an emotional reaction to what they desire and wish to get from the products or services they consume. To support this statement, Hoyer and MacInnis reported that customer satisfaction depends on their happiness and acceptance level of the product or service. Most consumers develop their expectations before shopping, including product value, quality services, convenience, shopping experience, and website quality. Hence, there is a link between consumer satisfaction and buying behavior. A higher level of pleasure can influence customer buying patterns when their expectations are fulfilled. Generally, price, quality, and reliability are the main factors that directly affect customer satisfaction. However, while defining customer satisfaction, two crucial factors need to be considered: customer delight and customer dissatisfaction. Fulfilment of expectations and satisfied customers can create a positive shopping attitude, intentions, decisions, and purchasing behavior. In contrast, dissatisfaction can negatively correlate with these four variables. Retail industry in Malaysia, such as BIG Store Sdn Bhd, 7-Eleven, Tesco, and AEON Co (M) Bhd experiencing a growth rate of 26.5 percent in online retail sales by focusing on customer satisfaction, especially when they shift their distribution channel to become e-commerce during COVID-19 (Kathy, 2022).

H5: Consumer satisfaction is positively related to consumer buying patterns.

### Consumer Behavioral Intention

Consumer behavioral intention can refer to the preference in their behavior in which consumer's attitudes, their choice after considering all those factors regarding them to make their decision regarding the consumer's behavior while purchasing a good either in a traditional shopping or online shopping. According to PwC research (2020), the current situation of the Covid-19 pandemic has affected billions of people and made a historical change in consumer behavior. The factor of time-saving and convenience are provided by online shopping through any e-store of online channel (Tarhini, Alalwan, Al-Qirim, Algharabat, & Masa'deh, 2021). The changes in consumer behavioral intention that shift to online shopping allow the retail industry to utilize e-commerce to promote its sales. This is actively progressing and exercised by most of the retail sector in Malaysia, especially during the outbreak of Covid-19. The data reported by Walmart showed that 74 percent has increased in online sales, which has made the retail industry survive and switch from traditional shopping to online shopping during the lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic (Nassauer, 2020). Therefore, this paper investigates the relationship between the influencing key denominator such as price, convenience, and service quality to affect consumer satisfaction. Besides, this paper intends to find out the correlation between customer satisfaction can directly affect consumer behavioral intention. Figure 1 presents the research framework:

Figure 1. Research Framework



## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The data was gathered using primary data from 200 Malaysian respondents via an online survey through Google Forms. The researchers used a total of 17 items to evaluate the independent variables of price, convenience, service quality and perceived trust in affecting consumer satisfaction and their behavior intention. For example, "Many promotions are provided such as big sales, stock clearance, price discount, etc." to measure the price effectiveness. "It is easy to search and find out a variety of product selection" is to measure the convenience variables, while "The service quality of the online shopping platform meets my expectation" is to measure the satisfaction of consumers toward the service quality of online shopping. Perceive trust is measured through "I feel comfortable and safe when using the online shopping platform for purchases" and "I am satisfied with the online shopping experience" to indicate consumer satisfaction level. Each item was anchored using a 5-point Likert scale with the responses ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Their Cronbach's alpha was 0.696, 0.759, 0.741, 0.790 and 0.801 respectively. Besides, the researchers also measure the behavior intention with the five items proposed by Ulrich Spaan (2020) in a 5-point Likert scale with the responses ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Cronbach's alpha of behavior intention scale was 0.837. The items included "I like to use the online shopping platform for my next purchase" and "I plan to use the online shopping platform frequently in the future".

## RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent's Demography Summary (*N* = 200)

Construct	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	123	61.5
Male	77	38.5
<b>Age</b>		
10 - 25 years old (Gen Z : Born in 1997 - 2012)	134	67.0
26 - 41 years old (Millennials : Born in 1981 - 1996)	40	20.0
42 - 57 years old (Gen X : Born in 1965 - 1980)	20	10.0
58 - 76 years old (Boomers :Born in 1946 - 1964)	6	3.0
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Chinese	66	33.0
Indian	61	30.5
Malay	72	36.0
Siamese	1	0.5
<b>Education Level</b>		
Bachelor's Degree	135	67.5
Diploma	30	15.0
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	7	3.5
Master's Degree	18	9.0
Matriculation	1	0.5
Form 6 STPM	1	0.5
Secondary School	8	4.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Divorced	3	1.5
Married	42	21.0
Single	150	75.0
Widowed	5	2.5
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Employed	42	21.0
Homemaker	11	5.5
Retired	3	1.5
Self-employed	10	5.0
Student	126	63.0
Unemployed	8	4.0
<b>Monthly Household Income</b>		
B40 – RM 4,850 and below	93	46.5
M40 – RM 4,851 – RM 10,970	83	41.5
T20 – RM 10,971 and above	24	12.0

Table 1 above summarizes the demographic of 200 respondents who participated in this survey. Based on the study, most of the respondents are female (61.5%), while males only 38.5%. Over half of the respondents (67%) are from Generation Z within the age range of 10 to 25 years old. The researchers conducted our survey within Malaysia, and analyzed Malaysian ethnicity. Malay gets the majority at 36%, while Chinese (33%) comes next. 67.5 per cent of the respondent's education level is a bachelor's degree,



indicating that most respondents are from undergraduate universities. Hence, single marital status hit the highest at 75%, and for the employment status, most of them are at student proportion (63%). Most of the respondents (46.5%) are from the B40 group with a monthly household income of RM 4,850 and below.

**Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Respondents Purchasing Behavior and Preferences (N = 200)**

Construct	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Have you ever bought goods online, even before the pandemic?</b>		
Yes	173	86.5
No	27	13.5
<b>Would you prefer online shopping even before, during, and after the pandemic?</b>		
Yes	175	87.5
No	25	12.5
<b>How frequently do you use online channels to buy goods during the pandemic?</b>		
Daily	6	3.0
Once a week	29	14.5
Several times a week	37	18.5
Once a month	72	36.0
Once every two months	17	8.5
Once every three months	19	9.5
Never	20	10.0
<b>How much do you spend on online shopping every month?</b>		
Less than RM 500	132	66.0
RM 500 – RM 1,500	49	24.5
RM 1,501 – RM 2,500	17	8.5
RM 2,500 and above	2	1.0

From Table 2, to better understand, most respondents (86.5%) rated that they bought goods online even before the pandemic, and 87.5% preferred to continue shopping online during and after the pandemic. The frequency of respondents shopping online during the pandemic is several times a week (18.5%), and they spend mostly less than RM 500 (66%).

**Table 3. Descriptive Analysis, Cronbach's Coefficients Alpha and Zero Order Correlations All Study Variables**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Price	0.696					
Convenience	0.696**	0.759				
Service Quality	0.490**	0.539**	0.741			
Perceived Trust	0.573**	0.584**	0.692**	0.790		
Consumer Satisfaction	0.521**	0.601**	0.750**	0.656**	0.801	
Behavioral Intention	0.561**	0.664**	0.696**	0.632**	0.798**	0.837
Mean	4.335	4.364	4.158	4.185	4.269	4.288
Standard Deviation	0.626	0.568	0.659	0.674	0.578	0.595
No. of items	3	4	3	3	4	5

Note: N = 200; \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001. Diagonal entries indicate Cronbach's coefficients alpha

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations for the study variables. Our findings revealed that the six variables have acceptable internal consistency reliability with a coefficient alpha range between 0.69 and 0.84. The Cronbach's alpha for the six variables denoted a strong relationship between the items as each coefficient alpha is at a minimal threshold of 0.7 suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010). The correlation coefficient for all the relationships is positively related.

**Table 4. Summary of Regression Analysis**

Variables	Consumer Satisfaction	Behavioral Intention
Price	0.004	0.045
Convenience	0.051	0.228***
Service Quality	0.316***	0.146*
Perceived Trust	0.105	0.045
Consumer Satisfaction		0.500***
Behavioral Intention	0.476***	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.719	0.705
F Value	99.123	92.703
Durbin-Watson Statistic	1.934	1.833

Note: N = 200; \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01; \*\*\*p < 0.001

The researchers tested the hypothesis by the multiple regression analysis. As evident in Table 4, independent variables were price, convenience, service quality, perceived trust, and consumer satisfaction, whereas the dependent variable was behavioral intention. Besides, this finding reveals that price, convenience, service quality, and perceived trust were positively related to consumer satisfaction. Consumer satisfaction is the mediator positively related to consumer behavioral intention.

From the SPSS regression model, a significant value for the dependent variable of behavioral intention shows p < 0.001 for service quality and consumer satisfaction. This implied that they have a strong relationship related to behavioral intention. Besides, as shown in Table 4, consumer behavioral intention was positively connected with service quality and consumer satisfaction, with beta ( $\beta$ ) values of 0.146 and 0.500 respectively. Hence H3 and H5 were supported. In contrast, even if price, convenience, and perceived trust with a positive  $\beta$  value of 0.045, 0.228, and 0.045 respectively, it did not significantly influence the consumer behavioral intention as their significant value is more than p < 0.05. Thus, H1, H2, and H4 were not supported. The value of R<sup>2</sup> was 0.705, which indicates a 70.5% of the variation in consumer behavioral intention is explained by price, convenience, service quality, perceived trust, and consumer satisfaction. These variables could not explain another 29.5% not included in the regression model.

In addition, the researchers also found that consumer satisfaction acts as the mediator between price, convenience, service quality, and perceived trust in affecting consumer behavioral intention. From the SPSS regression model, a significant value for the dependent variable of behavioral intention shows p < 0.001 for convenience and consumer behavioral intention. This implied that they have a strong relationship related to behavioral intention. Besides, as shown in Table 4, consumer satisfaction was positively correlated with convenience, service quality, and behavioral intention of beta ( $\beta$ ), values 0.051, 0.316, and 0.476 respectively. Hence H7, H8, and H5 were supported. In contrast, even if price and perceived trust with a positive  $\beta$  value of 0.004 and 0.105 respectively, it did not significantly influence the consumer behavioral intention as their significant value is more than p < 0.05. Therefore, this result implies that H6 and H9 were not supported. The value of R<sup>2</sup> is 0.719, indicating that the independent variables would affect 71.9% of the variation in the dependent variable.

## **DISCUSSION**

According to the multiple regression results, consumer satisfaction significantly influences consumer behavioral intention towards online shopping. This finding is corroborated by the findings of Nurdianasari and Indriani (2021). They discovered that the greater the online convenience customers experience, the better their satisfaction with online retailers. On the other hand, research has shown that higher purchase satisfaction increases customer repurchase intention (Milaković, 2021). It confirms predictions that future purchases would be driven by the greater frequency of purchases from existing retailers, with the companies' responsiveness and assistance crucial throughout the epidemic. This result implies that consumers satisfied with their purchases from retailers they purchased from during the epidemic are more likely to repurchase from these retailers, implying that most e-commerce businesses will continue to go to the most significant players, such as Amazon (Tam, 2020).

Next, the results showed that convenience has a positive effect and significantly influences consumer behavior intention towards online shopping through consumer satisfaction as a mediator variable. Online shopping such as Lazada, Shopee, and Amazon is more convenient, leading to customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. Research has asserted that online purchasing is increasing due to its convenience (Satar et al., 2020). E-service convenience in the marketplace will boost satisfaction and repurchase intentions. The marketplace's easier access, search procedure, appraisal, and the transaction will boost satisfaction and make customers interested in repurchasing goods from that marketplace. Hence, the better the e-service convenience provided by a marketplace, the more satisfied a consumer will be, resulting in an increase in repurchase intention from customers to the marketplace (Juniwati & Sumiyati, 2020). Besides, the results showed that service quality has a positive effect and significantly influences consumer satisfaction and behavior intention towards online shopping. Handayani, Widodoawati, and Nuryakin (2021) highlighted that more outstanding e-service quality would enhance consumer satisfaction, while Sudaryanto, Subagio, & Meliana (2021) concluded that e-service quality significantly influences repurchase intention. The survey showed that the delivery system was good during the pandemic. Customers look forward to better delivery service, such as the delivery person's behavior, time, packaging, etc., which will affect the overall delivery system and the consumers' satisfaction with it. The report also reveals that online stores are getting better at their service, and consumers' purchasing intentions will grow after the epidemic (Sultana, Debnath, & Habib, 2021).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that consumer satisfaction is a mediator variable that significantly influences consumer behavior intention towards online buying. The perceived trust is corroborated by Mahliza's (2020) research, which trust is an essential factor in the e-commerce market since customers would not purchase if they do not believe the vendor because they cannot directly verify the goods. In addition, the results showed that price does not significantly influence consumer satisfaction and behavior intention towards online shopping. However, based on other research and surveys, we can prove that price is positively related to consumer satisfaction and behavior intention. This is corroborated by Novialeta and Slamet's (2020) research, which found that prices substantially impact consumer satisfaction with online shopping. The online sellers' product prices are better and cheaper than traditional (offline) product prices. Hence consumers feel more satisfied when shopping online. While Gu, Slusarczyk, Hajizada, Kovalyova, & Sakhbieva (2021) indicated that pricing substantially influences customer purchasing behavior since the cheaper a product is priced, the more quantities are sold. Online shoppers were generally more confident and interested in purchasing high-quality goods at lower prices.

This study offers a broader perspective of how important the variables influence consumer behavioral intention. According to the findings, Malaysia's retail industry needs to be aware of the critical factors that could significantly affect customer satisfaction as it substantially impacts consumer behavior regarding online buying. To illustrate, future purchases will be made upon their satisfaction with the independent variables such as the service quality. This indirectly influences their behavioral intention of repurchases from existing retailers. Therefore, retail industries should focus more on activities that fulfill consumer satisfaction. In this study, the researchers found that consumer satisfaction and behavior intention toward online purchasing is greatly influenced by service quality. Therefore, it is advised that the market have a better retailing service to attract more consumers. This indicates that the retail industry needs to upgrade the service quality of online shopping from time to time regarding the delivery service to provide consumers with a more satisfying buying experience. The great e-service convenience supplied by a marketplace will increase customer repurchase intention.

This finding also revealed the convenience of online shopping significantly influenced consumer behavioral intention. It implies that time-saving, flexibility in time and place, and availability provided by online shopping significantly impact consumer buying patterns. The retail industry should consider this in developing its platform to sell its stock online in parallel with providing all those features. Moreover, concerning online security, perceived trust does not considerably influence consumer behavior intention towards online buying. However, it is still possible to demonstrate that perceived trust is favorably associated with behavioral intention. Therefore, retailing businesses should have a secured platform to retain customers' confidence in online shopping. Besides, in this finding, price is not significantly influenced by consumer satisfaction and behavior intention toward online shopping. Hence, it sheds light on how retail industries should identify which pricing and marketing strategy supports consumer needs in price fulfillment. It is positively related to consumer satisfaction and behavior intention. This can happen when retailers provide online purchasing discounts to consumers often. These findings regarding the independent variables of online shopping call for a more valuable outcome of how it affects consumer satisfaction and thus influences their behavior intention, as informants mentioned in the result and discussion of this study. Therefore, the retail industry in Malaysia can carry out relevant implications if they are convinced by the relationship between those variables and realize their importance in affecting consumer behavior intention during COVID-19.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, valuable early insights can be obtained from 200 respondents through the Google Forms questionnaire. The descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression data from IBM SPSS Statistic 27 are used to understand data better, analyze trends, forecast, and plan to validate assumptions by drawing accurate conclusions about the shift in buying behavior toward the e-commerce shopping COVID-19 outbreak.

The lockdown and social distancing to combat the covid-19 virus have generated significant disruptions in consumer behavior. Hence, the willingness of the consumers to use online shopping platforms depends on their satisfaction with the price, convenience, service quality, and perceived trust provided by the retailer. In this study, convenience and service quality are positively correlated to consumer satisfaction, which significantly influences their behavior intention. Besides, the retail industry in Malaysia should emphasize the convenience and service quality of online shopping, such as continually improving their service quality from time to time to ensure the fulfilment of consumer satisfaction. However, throughout this study, even though the price and perceived trust do not significantly influence behavior intention, it still brings a positive impact. Therefore,

it is suggested that the retail industry in Malaysia should improve its price offer and online security. Such suggestions provided in this study enable the retail industries to boost their sales and sustain in the hardship period during the COVID-19 pandemic. Information and descriptive statistics were presented to give the retail industry in Malaysia to make their marketing strategies more targeted and effective.

To sum up, consumer satisfaction is an important mediator in influencing consumer behavioral intention significantly. Upon that, the researchers hope that our findings inspire future research on how consumer perceptions can influence each other when purchasing.

#### LIMITATION

Firstly, our data collection is collected through the Google Form, and the researchers distribute it via social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. As a result, most of the data came from the younger generations (Gen Z), which might reduce the generalizability of this study. The second constraint is that because our questionnaire uses self-report measures such as a 5-point Likert Scale, the likelihood of response biases such as social desirability, personal preferences, acquiescent responses, and other factors cannot be tracked.

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N/A

#### DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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