
Influence of E-Commerce Platforms on Millennial Purchases: Premise for Strategies of New Entrants

Glenn Mark M. Pasardan

Saint Mary's University, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
glennmarkmirandapasardan@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study explored how e-commerce platform features influenced the purchasing behavior of millennial consumers in the key cities of Isabela, Cagayan Valley. It aimed to propose strategies for new e-commerce entrants. Mixed methods were used, combining quantitative data with qualitative responses. Results showed that most respondents were aged 28 to 33 and were Ilocano and Tagalog women. Most were employed and had low to middle incomes, frequently purchasing beauty, fashion, and lifestyle items on Shopee and TikTok Shop. Complex buying behavior, characterized by careful decision-making and brand comparisons, was the most common pattern. While users appreciated platform functionality, such as ease of navigation, trust, and user experience, these factors were more influential in driving purchase decisions. Job status, income, frequency of purchase, and platform used significantly affected perceptions. In contrast, age, gender, ethnicity, type of purchase, and buying behavior showed limited impact. The study proposes trust-focused, mobile-optimized, and culturally-relevant strategies for new entrants. These insights offer a foundation for developing inclusive, user-centered e-commerce platforms in emerging markets.

Keywords: *Cagayan Valley, E-commerce platforms, millennial consumers, new market entrants, purchasing behavior*

INTRODUCTION

The use of internet based methods for selling goods has rapidly become a norm, significantly impacting global consumption patterns. In the Philippines, Shopee leads the ecommerce market, followed by Lazada, TikTok Shop, Facebook Marketplace, and Temu Ph (Sitegiant, 2024). These platforms shape consumer behavior and industry trends by offering diverse products and services. Understanding their influence, particularly on millennial consumers in the cities of Isabela, Cagayan Valley, is crucial for firms entering ecommerce and targeting this demographic.

Millennials, individuals born between 1981 – 1996 aged 28 to 43, according to Beresford Research, are a dynamic and influential demographic shaping industries worldwide. It represent a tech savvy generation with a strong preference for convenience and considerable purchasing power. Comprising about 23% of the global population (World Economic Forum, 2021), they are key players in the growth of the ecommerce sector. The

Philippine ecommerce market is expanding. According to Statista (2024), the market penetration rate is projected to reach 31.89% by 2029, driven largely by millennials' enthusiasm for online shopping. Their buying habits, heavily influenced by social media and digital tools, highlight the need for targeted marketing strategies that resonate with their preferences.

Several studies have explored the factors influencing consumer behavior and loyalty in ecommerce. Wang and Nuangjamnong (2023) emphasized the importance of service quality, satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in China's ecommerce sector. Similarly, Nugroho (2020) found that product attributes and lifestyle heavily influence brand switching among Indonesian millennials.

Linus et al. (2022) noted that income significantly affects millennials' trust and loyalty toward online fashion brands, offering insights applicable to economic factors in the Philippine context. Sumague and Briones (2022) showed how the timing and frequency of social media posts influence purchase intentions, while Dalangin et al. (2021) highlighted the powerful role of influencer marketing in shaping buying decisions among Filipino youth.

Social media's impact on millennial purchasing behavior is profound, directly affecting decisions through promotions and indirectly through trusted influencers. Thus, understanding the traits of effective social media strategies is essential for engaging this demographic in today's competitive ecommerce landscape.

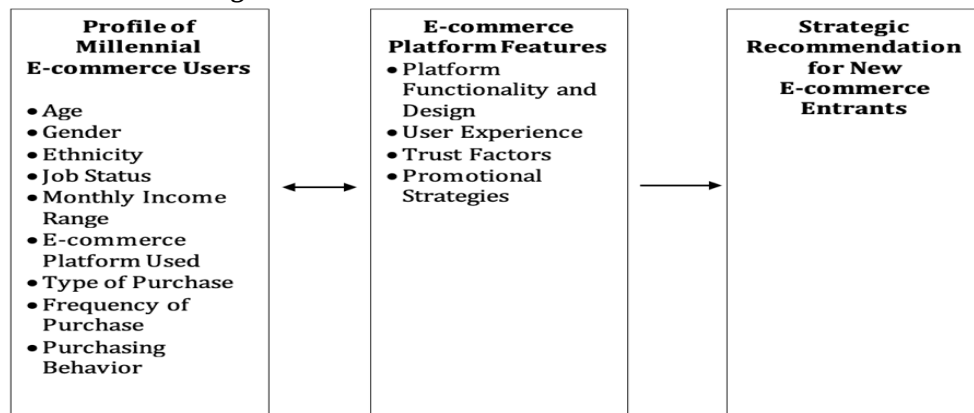
In the Philippine regional context, ecommerce growth reveals unique patterns. Managuelod et al. (2023) found that most consumers in Isabela use GCash, citing ease and reliability despite occasional technical issues. Bangug et al. (2022), studying students at ISU San Mariano, identified cost, convenience, and safety concerns (e.g., scams) as key factors influencing online shopping behavior. While past studies provide valuable insights, many focus on broader or different regional contexts, making it difficult to apply their findings directly to Philippine consumers. This highlights a gap in localized research on ecommerce behaviors.

Addressing this, the present study focuses on the ecommerce environment in Isabela, Cagayan Valley. It examines how service quality, trust, product features, income, and geographic factors influence millennial buying behavior and loyalty. By providing a regional lens, this research helps new ecommerce entrants tailor strategies for the Philippine market, particularly for millennial consumers, leading to better market positioning and operational effectiveness.

This study was conducted to address the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the millennials using e-commerce platforms in terms of the following:
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Ethnicity
 - d. Job Status
 - e. Monthly Income Range
 - f. E-Commerce Platform used
 - g. Type of Purchases
 - h. Frequency of Purchase
 - i. Purchasing Behavior
2. To what extent the following features of the e-commerce platforms influence the purchasing behavior of the respondents:
 - a. Platform Functionality and Design
 - b. User Experience
 - c. Trust Factors
 - d. Promotional Strategies
3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile variables of the millennials and the extent of influence of the features of e-commerce platforms influencing the purchasing behavior?
4. What strategies can be proposed for new e-commerce entrants based from the salient findings of the study?

Figure 1: Research Paradigm



METHODS

This study employed a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to assess how e-commerce features influence millennial purchasing behavior and to propose strategies for new entrants. Quantitative data provided measurable insights on demographics and platform features, while qualitative feedback revealed deeper consumer perceptions. The research was conducted in Isabela, Cagayan Valley, focusing on the cities of Cauayan, Ilagan, and Santiago due to their growing digital engagement and diverse socio-economic background.

The respondents were millennials aged 28–43 residing in selected barangays within the three cities. Stratified random sampling ensured fair representation across the cities,

using 2022–2023 population data from City Planning Offices. A systematic approach using the Raosoft calculator determined the sample size. Recruitment involved visiting establishments, institutions, and homes, with enumerators deployed to assist data collection and increase reach.

A structured questionnaire served as the primary tool, covering demographic profiles, platform features, and purchasing behaviors based on a 4-point Likert scale. Open-ended questions allowed for qualitative responses. Experts in business, research, and education validated the instrument. A pilot test with 20 qualified respondents helped refine the questionnaire for clarity and reliability. Surveys were distributed both online and in person, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.

Descriptive statistics summarized respondent profiles and mean ratings of e-commerce features. MANOVA and ANOVA identified significant relationships between profile variables and feature influence, with Tukey's HSD used for post hoc analysis. Thematic analysis organized qualitative responses into core themes, enriching the understanding of millennial behavior. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha confirmed high internal consistency.

Ethical approval was granted by the Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board. Informed consent was secured digitally and in print, with participation being voluntary and confidential. Data privacy was ensured through secure storage, anonymization, and proper disposal post-study. Participants had the right to withdraw at any time. Results will be disseminated to the Business Licensing Office and DTI in the covered cities to support local e-commerce initiatives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study presented the results of the data analysis and the corresponding discussion based on the findings derived from the data gathered.

Table 1: *Summary of the Profile of the Respondents*

PROFILE	RESULT	f	%
Age	28-33	254	66.31%
Gender	Female	213	55.61%
Ethnicity	Ilocano	196	51.17%
Job Status	Employed	311	81.20%
Monthly Income Range	10-001 – 29,999 Pesos	155	40.47%
E-Commerce Platform Used	Shopee	297	77.55%
Type of Purchases	Beauty & Lifestyle	126	32.90%
Frequency of Purchases	Occasionally	223	58.22%
Purchasing Behavior	Complex	144	37.60%

Table shows that the findings of the study highlighted the role of younger adults (particularly those aged 28 to 33), women, and employed individuals in shaping millennial purchasing behavior on e-commerce platforms in Isabela. These consumers, digitally literate and economically active, preferred platforms particularly Shopee due to trust, ease of use, and mobile integration. Research shows that personalized and convenient services improve purchase intentions among younger users (Suwanan & Allya, 2023), while digital fluency supports impulse buying (Cui et al., 2022). New e-commerce platforms must prioritize fast, secure, and engaging user experiences, along with personalized marketing, loyalty programs, and gamified features to encourage repeat purchases (Gao & Zhao, 2023). Gender data suggests platforms should enhance inclusivity, especially for women and underrepresented groups such as the LGBTQIA+ community (Bulut et al., 2021; Govender & Yavisha, 2023). Trust and service quality also drive satisfaction and loyalty (Ellitan & Suhartatik, 2023).

Cultural and economic diversity influenced digital buying patterns. Ilocano respondents dominated, suggesting the need to localize language and cultural elements in platform design. Minority ethnic groups were underrepresented, emphasizing the importance of digital inclusion (Obeid et al., 2023; Medero et al., 2022). Most users were in low to mid income brackets, making them sensitive to pricing. Affordable payment options and installment plans would appeal to this group (Zheng, 2023; Alamsyah & Hasan, 2023). Preferred purchases focused on lifestyle, fashion, and household items, aligning with studies on millennial values and social commerce behavior (Chikweche et al., 2024). The low rate of furniture purchases may reflect trust and quality concerns in bulky product categories, which require stronger presentation and consistent service (Saleem et al., 2022). Consumers exhibited varied behaviors requiring tailored strategies such as detailed product info, loyalty systems, frequent updates, and strong post purchase support. Together, these insights suggest that new entrants must design inclusive, behavior driven platforms that reflect the cultural and economic realities of their market.

Table 2: Summary of Area Influence

Area	Overall Mean	Verbal Rating
A. Platform Functionality and Design	3.37	Strongly Agree
B. User Experience	3.51	Strongly Agree
C. Trust Factors	3.47	Strongly Agree
D. Promotional Strategies	3.43	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	3.44	Strongly Agree

Legend: 3.26 - 4.00 Strongly Agree = Very High Influence
1.76 - 2.50 Disagree = Low Influence

2.51 - 3.25 Agree = High Influence
1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree = Very Low Influence

User Experience and Trust Factors: It is true that user experience determines trust. Daronnat et al. have proposed results made over reliability and performance by agents in terms of perceived trust for human-agent collaboration environments (Daronnat et al., 2020). According to Zhang et al., quality of user experience, as observed, is strongly related in the manner between brand trust and intention to retain. Their observation was that good user interaction produces higher level of satisfaction with trust in return (Zhang et al., 2023).

So, high attribution mean value to user experience which stands at 3.51 can actually mean the satisfaction but also some basic trust that would induce re-engagement.

Promotional Strategies: That is why effective promotional strategies are increasingly important these days to a successful business. Research done by Haedar places emphasis on encouraging the digital engagement of people as well as customer satisfaction in the tourism industry specifically, where promotional strategies really affect consumer perspectives (Haedar, 2023). This aligns with mean value 3.43 allocated to promotional strategies which illustrates the necessity of adopting such marketing techniques that resonate well with users. Related to this finding are those by Rahman et al. which show, as a case, together, service quality, pricing strategies, and user trust will improve customer loyalty on the basis of a holistic approach toward promotional activities (Rahman et al., 2024).

Platform functionality and design received the minimum mean score of 3.37 among participants. Such results demonstrate that users demonstrate mismatch between their anticipated experience and actual system experience regarding platform functionality and design aspects. The trust users develop in technological interfaces such as IoT voice biometric authentication depends on their perceptions of functionality and security according to Wells and Bello (2023). Unfavorable platform design elements diminish trust levels which could result in customers rating their satisfaction lower as research indicates.

The current assessment methods deliver significant valuable information but operate under certain key constraints. Subjective measurement approaches have the potential to hide essential behavioral elements that drive human behavior. The research results require improvement because they depend too much on particular industry circumstances so they need a larger pool of diverse companies to make the findings useful across all businesses. Investigators in future should blend mixed-methods research designs by surgically uniting quantitative data analysis with qualitative studies to enhance their findings.

Research should advance in these domains through time-oriented studies which track user trust modifications and experience evolution patterns. User interaction dynamics become visible through continuous engagement metrics according to Wong et al. (Zhang et al., 2023). The analysis of user preferences and trust behavior becomes more advanced when artificial intelligence systems analyze emerging data.

Table 3: MANOVA Pillai Test for significant relationship

Profile	Trace Pillai	p-value	Significance
Age	0.021	0.435	Not significant
Gender	0.039	0.057	Not significant
Ethnicity	0.630	0.362	Not significant
Job Status	0.057	0.005	Significant
Frequency of Purchases	0.083	0.002	Significant
Monthly Income Range	0.068	<0.001	Significant
Types of Purchases	0.026	0.862	Not significant

Purchasing Behavior	0.022	0.767	Not significant
E-commerce Platform Used	0.087	0.006	Significant

Table shows the result of MANOVA with Pillai's trace as the test statistic. The profiles age, gender, ethnicity, types of purchase, and behavior have p-values greater than 0.05 (0.435, 0.057, 0.362, 0.862, and 0.767, respectively) which indicates no statistical significance among these specific profiles and the features of e-commerce platforms. The profiles age, gender, ethnicity, types of purchase, and behavior have p-values greater than 0.05 (0.435, 0.057, 0.362, 0.862, and 0.767 respectively). This means that these variables do not significantly influence the features of e-commerce platforms. In practical terms, differences in age, gender, ethnicity, purchase types, and consumer behavior do not lead to meaningful differences in how users interact with or perceive e-commerce platforms. Marketing strategies or platform design changes may not need to be tailored based on these demographic or behavioral factors.

On the same table, the profiles job status, frequency, monthly income, and platform (0.005, 0.002, <0.001, and 0.006, respectively) show p-values that are less than 0.05 which indicate that there is a statistical significance between the specific profiles and the features of e-commerce platforms. This indicates that these variables do significantly affect how consumers engage with e-commerce platforms. For instance, job status may influence purchasing power or time spent shopping online. Frequency of purchase reflects engagement and possibly loyalty. Monthly income likely affects spending behavior and product preferences. The platform used may shape user experience and satisfaction. Jin et al. (2024) stated in their research that platforms that offer greater control and autonomy to workers tend to see higher job satisfaction, which includes features that allow workers to set their schedules, choose tasks, and have more control over their work environment.

All the trace Pillai values are low, except for ethnicity (Pillai's trace = 0.630), which means it is more influential in explaining the differences between the groups on the features of e-commerce platforms (Lee, 2025) and all the rest indicate that there are lesser differences between the groups. Most profiles have low Pillai's trace values, meaning their influence on the differences between groups is weak.

Ethnicity, however, has a high Pillai's trace value (0.630), suggesting it has a stronger multivariate effect, even though its p-value is not below 0.05. This could imply that ethnicity might be influential in subtle or complex ways not captured by the current model. It may warrant further investigation, possibly with a larger sample size or different statistical approach.

Table 4: *Proposed strategies for new entrants*

PLATFORM FEATURES	SUBTHEMES	FREQUENCY
Platform Functionality and Design	Customer support efficiency	14
User Experience	Relevant product recommendation	22
Trust Factors	Reputable business image	33
Promotional Strategies	Promotional marketing	14

The table shows the proposed strategies based on the comments of the respondents focus on four key areas: customer support efficiency, relevant product recommendation, reputable business image, and promotional marketing. Respondents emphasized the need for responsive and efficient customer support. Recommendations include 24/7 multichannel service, prompt updates on product availability and delivery, data privacy compliance, and maintaining a human touch alongside AI tools.

For relevant product recommendation, participants stressed the importance of accurate and authentic listings, real customer reviews, and personalized suggestions based on market research, customer preferences, and location filters. These ensure that buyers receive honest information and can make informed purchasing decisions that match their needs and preferences.

Building a reputable business image was identified as essential. Strategies include strict seller verification, fraud detection, secure payment systems, and eliminating fake reviews. Clear return policies and product authenticity guarantees further enhance consumer trust. These efforts help establish platform integrity and prevent scams, which are major concerns for online shoppers.

In terms of promotional marketing, respondents suggested loyalty programs, flexible payment options, live selling, influencer partnerships, and data-driven campaigns. Emphasis was placed on authentic storytelling, sustainability, and using AI and AR to improve engagement. These strategies reflect user expectations for trustworthy, responsive, and personalized e-commerce experiences, providing a strong foundation for new entrants in the digital marketplace.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that most respondents were employed Ilocano and Tagalog women aged 28 to 33, earning ₱10,001 to ₱29,999. Shopee was the most preferred e-commerce platform, used mainly for occasional purchases in beauty, fashion, and lifestyle. While demographics such as age and gender influenced platform use, they were not the main drivers of customer loyalty or long-term engagement. Instead, behavioral and economic factors like job status, income, purchase frequency, and e-commerce used played more significant roles.

Platform features such as functionality, user interface, and ease of navigation were rated highly, particularly fast loading and intuitive design. While aesthetics and promotional offers were appreciated, they were less influential than trust and usability. The reliability of product information, seller verification, and responsive support mattered more to users than simple discounts or design appeal. Trust and smooth digital experiences were identified as key to driving positive online purchasing behavior.

User engagement and satisfaction were shaped primarily by work conditions, shopping habits, and income levels. Higher-income or frequent shoppers expected better service and personalization. Platform choice also influenced how users rated functionality and trust. To increase loyalty and satisfaction, e-commerce businesses must customize features and marketing efforts to meet the needs of these user segments, particularly those defined by employment and spending patterns.

For new e-commerce entrants in Isabela, success depends on building credibility through verified sellers, secure transactions, and dependable service. Mobile-friendly interfaces, personalized experiences, and real-time updates also build consumer confidence. Emotional security and platform reliability emerged as more important than affordability alone. Strategies such as loyalty programs, flexible payment options, and tailored content using AI or AR can deepen customer relationships and engagement.

Future research should focus on exploring how specific platform features like live chat, honest advertising, seller transparency, and verified reviews influence millennial trust and loyalty. It would also be useful to study how evolving technologies and economic conditions shape consumer behavior across different income groups and regions. A mixed approach using surveys and interviews can provide more nuanced insights into trust, satisfaction, and long-term platform use, ultimately guiding the development of more inclusive and adaptive digital marketing strategies.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PART 1: Profile of the Respondents. Check the box that best describes you.

Age: ☐18-26 ☐27-35 ☐36-43

Gender: ☐Male ☐Female ☐LGBTQIA+

Ethnicity: ☐Ilocano ☐Ibanag ☐Tagalog ☐Gaddang
☐Paranan ☐Yogad

Job Status: ☐Employed ☐Unemployed ☐Self-employed

Monthly Income Range

☐Below 10,000 ☐10,001-29,999 ☐30,000 and above

Which of the following e-commerce platforms do you frequently use?

(Select all that apply)

☐Lazada ☐Shopee ☐Tiktok Shop. ☐Facebook Marketplace

☐Temu Ph ☐Others, please specify: _____

Type of Purchase: Select the category of e-commerce that you most frequently purchase from on e-commerce platforms. *(You may choose only one option).*

- ☐ Beauty & Lifestyle ☐ Electronics & Communication ☐ Furniture
☐ Fashion & Accessories ☐ Household and Car Solutions

Frequency of Purchase: Indicate how often you make purchases on e-commerce platforms by selecting the option that best reflects the typical purchasing frequency. (*Choose only one response only*) ☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Occasionally

Purchasing Behavior: Please read carefully the description and example provided below each purchasing behavior. Then, select the purchasing behavior that best represents the own purchasing habits. (*You may choose only one option*)

☐ **Complex Buying Behavior.** This happens when people think a lot before buying something expensive or important. They compare different brands to choose the best one. *Example:* Buying a new laptop and choosing between Dell, MacBook, or ASUS.

☐ **Dissonance-Reducing Buying Behavior.** This happens when all the choices look the same, so people just pick one with the best price. But after buying, they might feel unsure or worried. *Example:* Buying a washing machine and later checking reviews to feel better about the choice.

☐ **Habitual Buying Behavior.** This is when people buy the same thing again and again without thinking much, just out of habit. *Example:* Always buying the same brand of milk or sunscreen.

☐ **Variety-Seeking Buying Behavior.** This happens when people want to try different brands for fun, even if the product is not that important. *Example:* Buying clothes from different brands to try new styles.

PART 2. Features of E-commerce Platforms: Read each statement carefully and respond based on the personal experience with e-commerce platforms. For each statement, indicate the level of agreement with the various features of e-commerce using the provided scale.

Range	Scale	Level of Agreement	Extent of Influence Interpretation
3.26 – 4.00	4	Strongly Agree	The factor has a very strong influence on millennials' purchasing behavior.
2.51 – 3.25	3	Agree	The factor has a strong influence on millennials' purchasing behavior.
1.76 – 2.50	2	Disagree	The factor has a weak influence on millennials' purchasing behavior.
1.00 – 1.75	1	Strongly Disagree	The factor has a very weak influence on millennials' purchasing behavior.

Scale: Rate the answer based on the personal experience of the e-commerce platform.

4 – Strongly Agree 3 – Agree 2 – Disagree 1 – Strongly Disagree

A. PLATFORM FUNCTIONALITY AND DESIGN

STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
1. The platform loads quickly and works smoothly.				
2. The design of the platform is visually appealing.				
3. The images or videos in the platform are in high quality.				
4. All the information are relevant and updated.				
5. The system performs reliably without slowdown or lag.				
6. The customer support is efficient and provide prompt responses.				
7. The search filters and sorting options work well.				
8. The elements, like colors and fonts, are consistent and appropriate.				
9. The platform mobile or desktop interface adjust smoothly to different screen sizes.				
10. The platform provides helpful information and assistance when encounter problems.				

B. USER EXPERIENCE

STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
1. The platform is easy to navigate, making it simple to find what I need.				
2. It's easy to browse and complete purchases on the platform without confusion.				
3. The platform shows me products based on my interest and past purchases.				
4. The platform provides personalized shopping experience with relevant recommendations.				
5. I appreciate how the platform adapts to my interest, offering products I'm more likely to purchase.				
6. Personalized recommendations make my shopping experience faster and more enjoyable by showing products I like.				
7. Customer reviews and ratings provide useful information that helps me make sound buying decision and use the platform.				
8. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts and experiences with products, which make me feel connected to the platform.				
9. Reviews and testimonials affect my attitude on the platform and its offering.				

10. The lack of positive reviews or feedback discourages me from using the platform.				
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C. TRUST FACTORS

STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
1. I feel secure knowing the platform offers a variety of trusted payment options.				
2. Clear and secure payment methods increase my trust in the platform.				
3. The platform familiar payment options gives me peace of mind when making transaction.				
4. I don't feel worried shopping on the platform because of its well-known brand and positive reputation.				
5. I appreciate the return and refund policy which make me feel more secure in my utilization of the platform.				
6. The presence of reliable customer support on the platform helps me build my trust.				
7. I am concerned about the quality of products when shopping on platform I have never used before.				
8. I am more likely to use a platform I am familiar with and that has a proven track record.				
9. The reputation of the platform reassures me that I am making a safe and reliable choice.				
10. The platform's lack of security features increases my perceived risk when deciding to use it.				

D. PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

STATEMENT	4	3	2	1
1. The presence of an e-loyalty program motivates me to use the platform.				
2. The points and reward system enhance the perceived value, influencing my choice to use the platform.				
3. Promotional discounts and special offers serve as key factors in my decision to use the platform and make purchase.				
4. Seeing my favorite idols or influencers promote the platform increases my interest in using it.				
5. Sales events and time-limited promotions have a direct impact on my likelihood to use the platform for my purchase.				
6. Seeing playful ads capture my attention to use the platform.				
7. Fake ads or misleading discounts discourage me from using the platform and lead me leave negative feedback.				

8. I am more likely to complete my purchase when the platform offers free or discounted shipping.				
9. The fast and reliable process encourages me to choose and shop more on that platform.				
10. Having a tracking information and timely update make me choose that e-commerce platform.				

PART 3. This section allows you to share the personal comments, feedback, or suggestions on e-commerce platforms. The responses will offer valuable insights into the motivations and experiences of millennial consumers, helping us better understand purchasing behavior and identify potential areas for improvement.

>>>>>>>>nothing follows<<<<<<<<<