

Consumer Perception Towards Online Grocery Stores in Delhi NCR

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Abstract: *The online grocery sector has undergone rapid transformation, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consumers increasingly prefer online grocery platforms due to their convenience, competitive pricing, and safety benefits. This study investigates consumer perceptions towards online grocery stores in the Delhi NCR region. Data was collected through a structured survey involving 100 respondents and analyzed to identify key influencing factors, satisfaction levels, challenges, and future intentions. Results indicate that convenience, time-saving, and price advantages are major motivators, while concerns over product quality, delivery efficiency, and transaction security remain challenges. The study concludes with practical recommendations for enhancing customer experiences and building long-term loyalty.*

Keywords: Online Grocery, Consumer Behaviour, Digital Retail, COVID-19 Impact, Customer Satisfaction, E-commerce Adoption

I. INTRODUCTION

The global retail landscape has witnessed a paradigm shift with the emergence of e-commerce, particularly in the grocery segment. Traditionally, grocery shopping has been characterized by physical, in-person visits to stores, allowing consumers to assess the quality and freshness of products firsthand. However, technological advancements, increasing internet penetration, smartphone usage, urbanization, and evolving consumer lifestyles have redefined shopping habits.

Online grocery platforms offer the convenience of shopping from home, a broader product assortment, competitive prices, and multiple delivery options. The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst, significantly accelerating the adoption of online grocery shopping as consumers prioritized health safety, contactless transactions, and home deliveries.

Despite the growth, barriers such as trust issues regarding the freshness of perishable products, delivery inefficiencies, and concerns around payment security persist. This research aims to analyse consumer perception towards online grocery stores, focusing on usage patterns, satisfaction levels, challenges faced, and areas for improvement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid growth of online grocery shopping globally has led to significant academic interest in understanding consumer behaviour in this sector. Research has consistently demonstrated that convenience, accessibility, and technological innovations are primary drivers influencing the shift from traditional grocery shopping to online platforms.

Sheryl E. Kimes (2011) highlighted perceived control and convenience as pivotal determinants for consumers using online food ordering systems. Non-users exhibited higher levels of technology-related anxiety, pointing toward a critical need for user-friendly platform design.

Zulkarnain Kedah (2015) investigated loyalty factors in online food ordering services and found that website design, service quality, and trust strongly influenced customer retention. Service failures, such as delays and incorrect orders,



significantly impacted consumer loyalty, suggesting that operational efficiency is as critical as technological innovation.

Varsha Chavan (2015) noted that mobile applications and smart devices significantly enhanced the online shopping experience, offering new opportunities for order management and customer engagement.

Neha Gupta and Deepali Bhatnagar (2017) examined student behaviours toward online shopping and identified experimental uniqueness, convenience, and customer service as key factors. Their research demonstrated that personalized services and fast response mechanisms improved customer satisfaction levels.

Sabari Shankar R. and Naresh Kumar S. (2018) found that demographic variables such as age, income, and education level have a substantial impact on consumers' online grocery purchasing patterns. Younger, tech-savvy individuals are more receptive to online shopping due to greater familiarity with digital tools.

Das, D. (2018) studied online restaurant ordering systems and emphasized that while technology provides convenience, emotional aspects like the need for personal interaction remain strong among a segment of consumers. This duality suggests that human touch and personalized services should not be entirely abandoned even in digital platforms.

Poulose, S. (2019) noted that service quality elements — such as prompt delivery, customer support responsiveness, and product freshness — are strong determinants of consumer loyalty in online grocery markets.

Nassauer, S. (2019) observed that Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods provided a significant boost to its online grocery segment, illustrating how traditional grocery players can leverage digital platforms for market expansion.

Sethuraman, S. and Parasuraman, A. (2020) discussed perceived value in online shopping and concluded that consumers often weigh the benefits of time-saving and promotions against the perceived risks associated with online transactions.

Global comparisons, such as the work by Harris, P., et al. (2020) in the United States, and Tan and Teo (2019) in Southeast Asia, also affirm that while online grocery shopping is expanding, regional variations in trust, technology access, and cultural preferences significantly affect adoption rates.

Vyshali Trivedi and Ankit Chandni (2021) emphasized the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on grocery shopping habits. Their study, focusing on Gujarat, revealed a major shift in consumer preferences towards online groceries due to safety and health concerns. Consumers valued minimal contact shopping experiences and convenience during lockdowns.

R. Sharma and A. Singh (2020) indicated that logistic infrastructure and last-mile delivery efficiency are increasingly becoming competitive differentiators among online grocery players.

S. Pandey and D. Chawla (2021) in their study found that sustainable practices like eco-friendly packaging and supporting local farmers through digital platforms positively impacted brand perceptions among consumers.

Overall, the literature establishes that online grocery shopping is not merely a transactional convenience but is shaped by a complex interplay of psychological, technological, logistical, and societal factors. Service providers must address these multidimensional concerns to maintain consumer loyalty and sustain growth in an intensely competitive environment.

Objectives

- To understand the consumer perception towards online grocery shopping.
- To determine the factors influencing consumer to purchase in online grocery shop.
- To identify the problems faced by the consumer while online shopping.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Research Design: The study employed an Exploratory research design to gather insights and understand behaviour.
- Primary Data Collection: The major part of the data was collected using primary sources, for this a structured questionnaire was formed and distributed. The questions were mainly designed to get an insight on the consumer perception and their opinion on online grocery stores and its sustainability. Structured questionnaires comprising 20 questions with multiple-choice and Likert scales.



- Secondary Data Sources: secondary data was also used to identify the existing perception of the consumers regarding the online grocery services. For this journal, articles and books were the sources of reference, e-commerce reports, websites, and previous research studies
- Sample Size: The targeted population majorly included people residing in Metropolitan and Sub-urban areas since the services of online grocery markets are currently very limited. The sample aimed to be diverse in terms of age, occupation and income groups since these would help distinguish the types of customers being reached by the service providers 100 respondents.
- Sampling Technique: Simple Random Sampling is a powerful and straightforward method for obtaining unbiased and representative samples, provided the necessary conditions are met.
- Target Region: Delhi NCR.
- Tools for Analysis: descriptive analysis methods were used for data interpretation it offering a clear and concise understanding of datasets

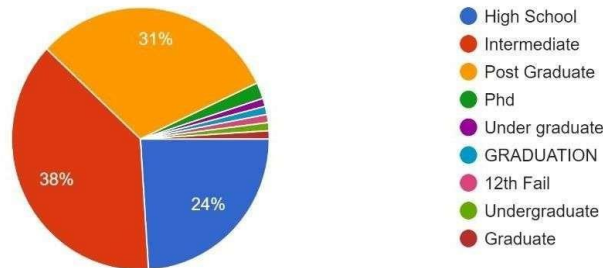
IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis shows that 55% of the respondents are MALE and 45% of the respondents are female. There are more number of males as compared to female i.e 10% more.

The analysis shows that 46% of the respondents are in the age group between 15-25 years, 16% of the respondents are in the age group between 25-35 years, 21% of the respondents are in the age group between 35-45 years, and 17% of the respondents are above the age of 45 years.

Academic Qualifications

100 responses

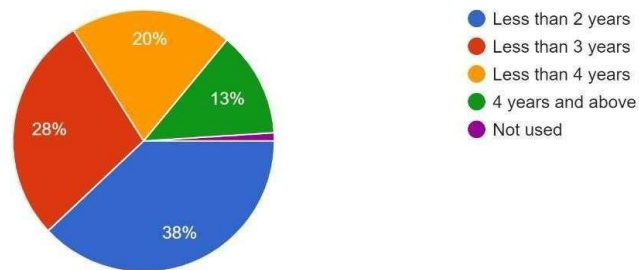


The above analysis shows that 24% of the respondents are in high school, 38% of the respondents are pursuing graduation, 31% of the respondents are pursuing their post graduation, and 7% of respondents are pursuing other degrees than intermediate and post-graduation.

The analysis shows that 28% of the respondents are in the service field, 20% of the respondents are businessman/women, 14% of the respondents are homemaker, and 38% of the respondents are students. This shows that a greater number of respondents are students.

How long have you been using online grocery platforms?

100 responses

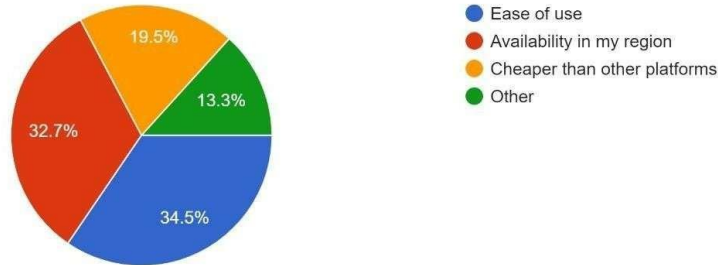


The largest group (38%) has less than 2 years of experience, followed by 28% with less than 3 years, 20% with less than 4 years, 13% with 4 years and above, and 1% who have not used the activity or skill.

Based on this information, you can conclude that out of the 100 respondents, the largest group (38%) has less than 2 years of experience, followed by 28% with less than 3 years, 20% with less than 4 years, 13% with 4 years and above, and 1% who have not used the activity or skill.

What factors influenced you to use these platforms?

100 responses



The largest group (34.5%) chose the platform or service based on ease of use, followed by 32.7% who chose it based on availability in their region, 19.5% who chose it based on price, and 13.3% who chose it based on other factors.

The largest group (33%) is very satisfied, followed by 28% who are satisfied, 22% who are neutral, 11% who are not satisfied, and 6% who are very dissatisfied.

The largest group (32%) engages in the behaviour always, followed by 22% who engage often, 26% who engage sometimes, 12% who engage rarely, and 8% who never engage in the behaviour.

Would you recommend others to buy grocery online?

100 responses



The largest group (34%) strongly recommend, followed by 21% who recommend, 23% who are not sure, 13% who do not recommend, and 9% who strongly do not recommend.

Key Observations:

A significant portion of respondents, 66%, had prior experience using online grocery stores. The primary reasons for using these platforms were ease of use (34.5%) and regional availability (32.7%). While 56% of users expressed satisfaction with the interface, concerns remain, with 57% reporting occasional transaction or delivery issues. Despite these challenges, consumers—particularly younger ones—demonstrated a high frequency of use. However, issues related to trust and service reliability continue to be areas of concern.

V. FINDINGS

Convenience and time-saving emerge as the most critical motivators driving consumer adoption of online shopping platforms. Competitive pricing also plays a significant role in influencing consumer loyalty, encouraging repeat purchases and long-term engagement. However, challenges such as concerns over delivery delays and product freshness continue to hinder wider acceptance, particularly in sectors like online grocery. Younger consumers tend to be early adopters of these platforms, often demonstrating greater openness to experimenting with new digital shopping



experiences. Additionally, a notable trend has emerged wherein consumers are increasingly engaging in hybrid shopping behaviors, blending online and of line modes to optimize their purchasing decisions.

Limitations

This study is limited to a sample size of 100 respondents within the Delhi NCR region, which may constrain the generalisability of the findings. The use of self-reported data introduces the possibility of response biases, potentially affecting the accuracy of the results. Furthermore, the study does not incorporate the perspectives of key stakeholders such as sellers, logistics providers, and platform operators, thereby providing a consumer-centric view only. As a result, the findings may not be uniformly applicable to rural populations or regions with differing infrastructural and demographic characteristics.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The emergence of online grocery shopping has fundamentally altered the way consumers purchase essential goods. Driven initially by the promise of convenience and subsequently accelerated by pandemic-related restrictions, online grocery platforms have transitioned from a luxury to a necessity for a substantial portion of the global population. Findings from this study indicate that convenience, time savings, and competitive pricing are primary motivators behind consumers opting for online grocery shopping. With the ability to shop 24/7, avoid long queues, compare prices, and avail of home deliveries, consumers now experience unprecedented flexibility. Younger consumers, particularly those aged 15–25 years, lead this shift, influenced heavily by technological adeptness and lifestyle demands.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst, pushing even the most reluctant shoppers towards digital platforms. Concerns regarding personal health, the need for contactless transactions, and movement restrictions forced consumers to explore and, ultimately, adapt to online grocery shopping models.

However, the transition is not without challenges. Trust issues continue to impede full-scale adoption. Consumers express concerns about the freshness and quality of perishable goods, order fulfillment accuracy, and transaction security. Although significant improvements have been made in app interfaces, logistics, and data protection measures, negative past experiences still affect customer perceptions.

Another key insight from the research is that while online platforms offer price advantages through discounts and promotions, these financial incentives alone are insufficient for customer retention. Customer service quality, reliable refund policies, efficient grievance redressal mechanisms, and flexible delivery schedules have emerged as crucial determinants of consumer loyalty.

Importantly, the research shows that a considerable proportion of consumers exhibit hybrid behaviour — preferring online shopping for specific items while relying on traditional stores for others. Factors such as the desire to inspect fresh produce physically, enjoy the social aspect of shopping, or access immediate purchases still make brick-and-mortar stores relevant.

For online grocery platforms to succeed long-term, they must shift from price-driven models to value-driven engagement models. This entails offering seamless experiences across web and mobile interfaces, ensuring product quality, being transparent about pricing and delivery policies, and continuously innovating customer support mechanisms.

In conclusion, while online grocery shopping is poised to continue growing, success will hinge on building long-term trust, enhancing service quality, and continuously adapting to the evolving preferences of a diverse consumer base. Companies that invest in technology, logistics, customer relationships, and brand authenticity will be best positioned to lead the future of grocery retail.

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