

GROCERY SHOPPING GOES DIGITAL: FASCINATING SHIFT IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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Abstract:

The emergence of e-commerce platforms, supermarket shopping has experienced a dramatic change in the last few years. Due to variables including price, product variety, ease of use, accessibility, and technical improvements, online grocery shopping has become increasingly popular as a result of this trend. It is unclear, nevertheless, exactly what factors lead to this predilection and how sociodemographic factors interact with them. By examining the complex decision-making processes used by customers in the online grocery market, this study seeks to close this gap. This study uses a multimodal strategy that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies, such as interviews, surveys and data analysis to find subtle insights into the preferences, motives, and pain points of consumers who buy for groceries online. The results show that although accessibility and convenience are important motivators, other elements like cost, product selection, and technology capabilities are equally important. For merchants, advertisers, and other business professionals looking to maximize their online grocery offers and improve the overall consumer shopping experience, these findings offer insightful advice.

Keywords: Online Grocery, Grocery Shopping, Digital Payment

Introduction

In recent years, the way people shop for groceries has transformed significantly due to the rise of e-commerce. Online platforms have changed the game, offering convenience and accessibility that traditional brick-and-mortar stores struggle to match. Consequently, there has been a notable increase in the popularity of online grocery shopping. As consumers increasingly opt for digital channels to meet their grocery needs, understanding what drives this shift becomes crucial for both retailers and marketers. This study aims to uncover the reasons behind the growing preference for online grocery shopping by examining the intricate decision-making processes of consumers. By investigating the various factors that influence consumer choices in this context, the research seeks to provide valuable insights that can guide strategic business decisions and marketing efforts in the competitive e-commerce landscape.

Several interconnected factors influence the decision to embrace online grocery shopping, including convenience, accessibility, pricing, product variety, and technological advancements. While previous research has explored some of these factors in isolation, there remains a gap in understanding the comprehensive decision-making process driving consumer preference for online grocery shopping.

This study aims to fill this gap by taking a multifaceted approach and examining how various determinants interact to influence consumer choices in the online grocery domain. By employing a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods such as surveys, interviews, and data analysis, this study seeks to uncover nuanced insights into consumer motivations, preferences, and pain points associated with online grocery shopping. By identifying key drivers and barriers and exploring emerging trends, the research aims to provide actionable recommendations for retailers and stakeholders looking to optimize their online grocery offerings and enhance the overall shopping experience for consumers.

Statement of Problem:

The precise determinants behind the increasing preference for online grocery shopping over traditional brick-and-mortar stores remain ambiguous. While convenience is often highlighted, a detailed understanding of the specific factors driving this preference, and how socio-demographic variables intersect with them, is lacking. This knowledge gap hampers the ability of retailers and marketers to tailor their strategies effectively. Thus, there's a critical need for research to uncover the underlying motivations behind consumer choice in online grocery shopping through digital mode and offer actionable insights for businesses aiming to enhance their e-commerce operations.

Objective of the study:

1. To know the reasons for preferring grocery e-tailing among customers.

Literature Review:

Accessibility is another key factor driving the preference for online grocery shopping. The ability to access a wide range of products and make purchases without the constraints of physical store hours appeals to many consumers (Huang & Liu, 2018; Li & Zhang, 2019)¹. Price sensitivity also influences consumer behavior in the online grocery space. Research indicates that consumers often compare prices between online and offline channels to secure the best deals (Jiang et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2020)². Additionally, promotional offers and discounts play a significant role in attracting and retaining online grocery shoppers (Lee & Kim, 2017; Tan & Goh, 2019)³.

Product assortment and variety are crucial considerations for consumers when choosing online grocery shopping. Studies have shown that consumers value the wide range of options available online, including specialty items that may not be readily accessible in traditional brick-and-mortar stores (Wu & Wang, 2017; Zhang & Huang, 2020)⁴.

Research Methodology:

A multimodal strategy that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies is used in this study. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior by capturing both qualitative insights and quantitative data. Qualitative research is done to uncover nuanced insights into consumer motivations, preferences, and pain points associated with online grocery shopping. Snowball Sampling is used to identify the sample of 400 responses. Surveys are utilized to gather structured data from a larger sample size. This allows for statistical analysis to identify trends, and patterns in consumer behavior across different demographics and variables.

Reasons for preferring the e-retailers for purchase of groceries through e- tailing

Table No: 1 Descriptive statistics of reasons for preferring the e-retailers for purchase of groceries through e- tailing

Reason	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ability to shop anytime	400	3.05	1.349
Ability to Compare Prices	400	3.03	1.324
Quality	400	3.07	1.330
Easy Accessibility	400	2.96	1.301
Time Consumption	400	3.06	1.378
Wide range of Products	400	2.95	1.306
Easy Payment	400	3.08	1.381
Discounts and Offers	400	3.06	1.394
Return Policy	400	3.07	1.304
Delivery Options	400	3.08	1.217

Source: Computed Data

The analysis of descriptive statistics reveals significant insights into the factors guiding consumers' choices of e-retailers for grocery purchases through e-tailing. Notably, respondents, on average, assigned high ratings to key factors. Leading the preferences are "Quality" (Mean = 3.07) and "Delivery Options" (Mean = 3.08), underscoring the paramount importance consumers place on product quality and the availability of diverse delivery choices in their selection of e-retailers for grocery shopping. Equally pivotal are "Easy Payment" (Mean = 3.08) and "Discounts and Offers" (Mean = 3.06), signifying the crucial roles of convenient payment methods and appealing promotional incentives in shaping consumers' decisions. The aspect of "Ability to shop anytime" (Mean = 3.05) emerges as another vital factor, highlighting the significance of shopping flexibility in influencing consumer preferences. Conversely, "Wide range of Products" (Mean = 2.95) received a slightly lower mean rating, suggesting that, while important, a diverse product range might be relatively less critical compared to other influential factors.

Examining standard deviations reveals the extent of variability in respondent opinions. Factors such as "Easy Payment," "Discounts and Offers," and "Delivery Options" exhibit higher standard deviations, indicating a broader range of opinions among respondents

regarding the significance of these factors. In contrast, factors like "Quality" and "Time Consumption" demonstrate lower standard deviations, suggesting more uniform opinions on these aspects. This nuanced understanding emphasizes the multifaceted nature of consumer preferences in the dynamic landscape of e-tail grocery shopping.

Reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms by gender

Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant mean difference in the reasons influencing the preference level of different gender of customers among e-tailing platforms.

Table No: 2 –Gender and reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ability to shop anytime	Between Groups	.267	1	.267	.147	.702
	Within Groups	725.830	398	1.824		
	Total	726.098	399			
Ability to Compare Prices	Between Groups	.050	1	.050	.029	.866
	Within Groups	699.460	398	1.757		
	Total	699.510	399			
Quality	Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.001	.969
	Within Groups	706.037	398	1.774		
	Total	706.040	399			
Easy Accessibility	Between Groups	.001	1	.001	.000	.985
	Within Groups	675.509	398	1.697		
	Total	675.510	399			
Time Consumption	Between Groups	.094	1	.094	.049	.824
	Within Groups	757.344	398	1.903		
	Total	757.438	399			
Wide range of Products	Between Groups	.147	1	.147	.086	.769
	Within Groups	679.950	398	1.708		
	Total	680.098	399			
Easy Payment	Between Groups	.993	1	.993	.520	.471
	Within Groups	759.605	398	1.909		
	Total	760.597	399			
Discounts and Offers	Between Groups	.043	1	.043	.022	.883
	Within Groups	775.395	398	1.948		
	Total	775.437	399			
Return Policy	Between Groups	.304	1	.304	.179	.673
	Within Groups	677.736	398	1.703		
	Total	678.040	399			
Delivery Options	Between Groups	.485	1	.485	.327	.568
	Within Groups	590.113	398	1.483		
	Total	590.597	399			

Source: Computed Data

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to assess potential differences in mean scores for factors influencing e-tailer preferences across various e-tailing platforms. The p-values associated with the F-statistic for "Ability to shop anytime" ($p = 0.702$), "Ability to Compare Prices" ($p = 0.866$), "Quality" ($p = 0.969$), "Easy Accessibility" ($p = 0.985$), "Time Consumption" ($p = 0.824$), "Wide range of Products" ($p = 0.769$), "Easy Payment" ($p = 0.471$), "Discounts and Offers" ($p = 0.883$), "Return Policy" ($p = 0.673$), and "Delivery Options" ($p = 0.568$) all exceeded the common significance level of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis, positing no significant mean differences among e-tailing platforms, is upheld for all factors. These results suggest that the observed variations in mean scores across platforms are not statistically significant for the specified reasons, implying a degree of consistency in consumer preferences.

Reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms by Age Group

Table No: 3 – Age and reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ability to shop anytime	Between Groups	6.816	3	2.272	1.251	.291
	Within Groups	719.282	396	1.816		
	Total	726.097	399			
Ability to Compare Prices	Between Groups	5.698	3	1.899	1.084	.356
	Within Groups	693.812	396	1.752		
	Total	699.510	399			
Quality	Between Groups	7.776	3	2.592	1.470	.222
	Within Groups	698.264	396	1.763		
	Total	706.040	399			
Easy Accessibility	Between Groups	4.912	3	1.637	.967	.408
	Within Groups	670.598	396	1.693		
	Total	675.510	399			
Time Consumption	Between Groups	5.200	3	1.733	.912	.435
	Within Groups	752.238	396	1.900		
	Total	757.438	399			
Wide range of Products	Between Groups	5.571	3	1.857	1.090	.353
	Within Groups	674.527	396	1.703		
	Total	680.098	399			
Easy Payment	Between Groups	4.990	3	1.663	.872	.456
	Within Groups	755.607	396	1.908		
	Total	760.597	399			
Discounts and Offers	Between Groups	4.292	3	1.431	.735	.532
	Within Groups	771.146	396	1.947		
	Total	775.437	399			

Return Policy	Between Groups	2.314	3	.771	.452	.716
	Within Groups	675.726	396	1.706		
	Total	678.040	399			
Delivery Options	Between Groups	5.678	3	1.893	1.281	.280
	Within Groups	584.920	396	1.477		
	Total	590.597	399			

Source: Computed Data

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether there are significant mean differences in the preference level of customers among different age groups for various reasons. The p-values associated with the F-statistic for "Ability to shop anytime" ($p = 0.291$), "Ability to Compare Prices" ($p = 0.356$), "Quality" ($p = 0.222$), "Easy Accessibility" ($p = 0.408$), "Time Consumption" ($p = 0.435$), "Wide range of Products" ($p = 0.353$), "Easy Payment" ($p = 0.456$), "Discounts and Offers" ($p = 0.532$), "Return Policy" ($p = 0.716$), and "Delivery Options" ($p = 0.280$) all exceed the conventional significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis, indicating no significant mean differences in preference across age groups for these reasons, is retained. These results suggest that, for the specified factors, the observed variations in mean scores among different age groups are not statistically significant, indicating a degree of consistency in preference patterns across age categories.

Reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms by Occupation

Table No: 4 – Occupation and reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ability to shop anytime	Between Groups	3.532	4	.883	.483	.748
	Within Groups	722.566	395	1.829		
	Total	726.098	399			
Ability to Compare Prices	Between Groups	3.977	4	.994	.565	.688
	Within Groups	695.533	395	1.761		
	Total	699.510	399			
Quality	Between Groups	4.776	4	1.194	.673	.611
	Within Groups	701.264	395	1.775		
	Total	706.040	399			
Easy Accessibility	Between Groups	7.061	4	1.765	1.043	.385
	Within Groups	668.449	395	1.692		
	Total	675.510	399			
Time Consumption	Between Groups	4.912	4	1.228	.645	.631
	Within Groups	752.526	395	1.905		
	Total	757.438	399			
Wide range of Products	Between Groups	3.552	4	.888	.518	.722
	Within Groups	676.546	395	1.713		

	Total	680.098	399			
Easy Payment	Between Groups	3.293	4	.823	.429	.787
	Within Groups	757.305	395	1.917		
	Total	760.597	399			
Discounts and Offers	Between Groups	2.397	4	.599	.306	.874
	Within Groups	773.040	395	1.957		
	Total	775.437	399			
Return Policy	Between Groups	2.424	4	.606	.354	.841
	Within Groups	675.616	395	1.710		
	Total	678.040	399			
Delivery Options	Between Groups	3.486	4	.871	.586	.673
	Within Groups	587.112	395	1.486		
	Total	590.598	399			

Source: Computed Data

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore potential mean differences in the preference level of customers among individuals of different occupations for various reasons. The p-values associated with the F-statistic for "Ability to shop anytime" (p = 0.748), "Ability to Compare Prices" (p = 0.688), "Quality" (p = 0.611), "Easy Accessibility" (p = 0.385), "Time Consumption" (p = 0.631), "Wide range of Products" (p = 0.722), "Easy Payment" (p = 0.787), "Discounts and Offers" (p = 0.874), "Return Policy" (p = 0.841), and "Delivery Options" (p = 0.673) all exceed the conventional significance level of 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant mean differences in preference across different occupations for these reasons, is maintained. These findings imply that, for the specified factors, there are no statistically significant variations in mean scores among individuals with different occupations, indicating a level of consistency in preference patterns regardless of occupation.

Reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms by Income
Table No: 5 – Income and reasons influencing preference level of customers among e-tailing platforms

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ability to shop anytime	Between Groups	2.549	4	.637	.348	.845
	Within Groups	723.548	395	1.832		
	Total	726.098	399			
Ability to Compare Prices	Between Groups	3.898	4	.974	.553	.697
	Within Groups	695.612	395	1.761		
	Total	699.510	399			
Quality	Between Groups	4.795	4	1.199	.675	.609
	Within Groups	701.245	395	1.775		
	Total	706.040	399			
Easy	Between Groups	6.852	4	1.713	1.012	.401

Accessibility	Within Groups	668.658	395	1.693		
	Total	675.510	399			
Time Consumption	Between Groups	7.206	4	1.801	.948	.436
	Within Groups	750.232	395	1.899		
	Total	757.438	399			
Wide range of Products	Between Groups	6.510	4	1.628	.954	.432
	Within Groups	673.587	395	1.705		
	Total	680.098	399			
Easy Payment	Between Groups	9.057	4	2.264	1.190	.315
	Within Groups	751.541	395	1.903		
	Total	760.598	399			
Discounts and Offers	Between Groups	6.427	4	1.607	.825	.510
	Within Groups	769.011	395	1.947		
	Total	775.437	399			
Return Policy	Between Groups	5.644	4	1.411	.829	.507
	Within Groups	672.396	395	1.702		
	Total	678.040	399			
Delivery Options	Between Groups	7.120	4	1.780	1.205	.308
	Within Groups	583.478	395	1.477		
	Total	590.598	399			

Source: Computed Data

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine potential mean differences in the preference level of customers among individuals with different income levels for various reasons. The p-values associated with the F-statistic for "Ability to shop anytime" ($p = 0.845$), "Ability to Compare Prices" ($p = 0.697$), "Quality" ($p = 0.609$), "Easy Accessibility" ($p = 0.401$), "Time Consumption" ($p = 0.436$), "Wide range of Products" ($p = 0.432$), "Easy Payment" ($p = 0.315$), "Discounts and Offers" ($p = 0.510$), "Return Policy" ($p = 0.507$), and "Delivery Options" ($p = 0.308$) all exceed the conventional significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant mean differences in preference across different income levels for these reasons, is retained. These findings imply that, for the specified factors, there are no statistically significant variations in mean scores among individuals with different income levels, indicating a level of consistency in preference patterns regardless of income.

Suggestions

- By leveraging insights from this study, retailers can tailor their offerings to meet the diverse needs and preferences of online shoppers, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- Marketers can use the insights gleaned from this research to craft targeted strategies that resonate with different demographic segments and effectively communicate the value proposition of online grocery shopping.

- From personalized promotions to enhanced user experiences, marketers have the opportunity to leverage the findings of this study to drive engagement and conversion in the digital space.
- Additionally, industry professionals involved in e-commerce operations, logistics, and technology development can utilize the insights from this study to identify emerging trends and opportunities for innovation.
- By staying abreast of consumer preferences and market dynamics, industry stakeholders can proactively adapt their strategies and infrastructure to meet the evolving demands of online grocery shoppers.

Conclusion

This study delved into the evolving landscape of grocery shopping, where e-commerce has revolutionized consumer behavior. By investigating the factors fueling the shift towards online grocery shopping and examining how demographics intersect with these motivations, we gained valuable insights. The analysis revealed that convenience, accessibility, pricing, product variety, and technological advancements are pivotal drivers influencing consumer decisions in the online grocery realm. These findings hold significant implications for retailers, marketers, and industry professionals in the e-commerce sphere. Armed with these insights, businesses can tailor their offerings and strategies to better align with the needs and preferences of online shoppers. This, in turn, can bolster customer satisfaction, foster loyalty, and elevate the overall shopping experience. Moreover, the study underscores the potential for targeted marketing strategies, customized promotions, and innovative user experiences to drive engagement and conversion in the digital grocery landscape.

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