



IMPACT OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION ON THE GROWTH OF ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technology and the widespread adoption of the internet have significantly transformed consumer buying behavior across the globe. One of the most notable developments in recent years is the emergence and growth of online grocery shopping, which has revolutionized the traditional retail landscape. This research paper aims to analyze consumer perception towards online grocery shopping, focusing on key determinants such as convenience, pricing, product quality, trust, and delivery efficiency.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 200 respondents, while secondary data was gathered from academic journals, articles, and existing research studies. The paper concludes that while online grocery shopping has immense growth potential, especially in developing economies like India, companies must address consumer concerns and improve service quality to ensure long-term success. The research identifies the factors influencing consumer adoption of online grocery platforms and highlights the challenges faced by consumers while using such services.

Keywords Online Grocery Shopping, Consumer Perception, E-commerce, Digital Retail, Customer Satisfaction, Buying Behavior, Technology Adoption

Introduction

The evolution of e-commerce has dramatically altered the way consumers purchase goods and services. With the increasing penetration of the internet and smartphones, online shopping has become a convenient alternative to traditional retail. Among various sectors, the grocery segment has witnessed significant transformation due to the emergence of online grocery platforms. Online grocery shopping allows consumers to purchase daily essentials such as

fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and household items through digital platforms. These products are delivered directly to the consumer's doorstep, eliminating the need to visit physical stores. This shift has been driven by factors such as busy lifestyles, increasing urbanization, and the demand for convenience. Consumer perception refers to the process by which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to form a meaningful understanding of products and services. In the context of online grocery shopping, perception is influenced by multiple factors including website usability, pricing, product quality, delivery services, and customer support. Positive consumer perception leads to increased customer satisfaction, repeat purchases, and brand loyalty, while negative perception can discourage adoption and reduce trust in online platforms.

In India, traditional grocery shopping through local kirana stores is still very popular. These stores offer personal interaction, immediate availability, and trust. However, due to increasing internet usage, busy lifestyles, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, many consumers have started using online grocery services. Even though the trend is growing, there are still some challenges that affect consumer perception.

Challenges Online grocery stores face several important challenges that affect their operations and customer satisfaction. One of the major issues is maintaining the quality and freshness of perishable items such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat, which require proper storage, temperature control, and hygienic handling. Any compromise in quality can lead to dissatisfaction and loss of customer trust. Another significant challenge is managing logistics and last-mile delivery, as timely and accurate delivery depends on factors like traffic, delivery routes, and operational efficiency, making it both complex and costly. Building consumer trust is also difficult because customers cannot physically inspect products before purchase, and concerns regarding product quality, payment security, and data privacy further affect their confidence. In addition, online grocery platforms face high operational and infrastructure costs, including warehousing, cold storage, transportation, and technology systems, which reduce profit margins and make competitive pricing difficult. Inventory management is another challenge, as businesses must balance stock levels to avoid wastage due to overstocking and customer dissatisfaction due to stock shortages. These platforms are also highly dependent on technology, and issues like app crashes, slow websites, or payment failures can negatively impact the user experience. Managing returns and refunds is more complicated for perishable goods, as such items cannot always be returned, leading to dissatisfaction among customers.

Moreover, intense competition in the market forces companies to offer heavy discounts and promotions, affecting profitability and customer retention. Providing effective customer service is essential but challenging, as quick resolution of complaints related to delivery or product quality is necessary to maintain a positive brand image. Lastly, online grocery stores must comply with various food safety regulations, consumer protection laws, and e-commerce policies, and adapting to these changing requirements while managing costs remains an ongoing challenge.

Research Methodology

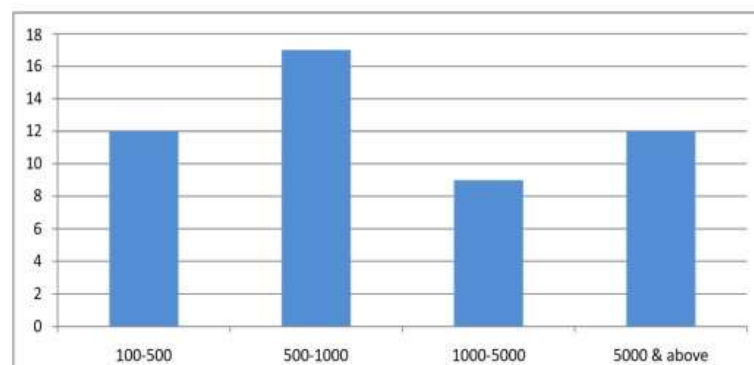
The research is descriptive in nature and focuses on understanding consumer perception towards online grocery shopping. Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire from respondents who are familiar with online shopping. Secondary data was collected from research papers, articles, and online sources. The sampling method used is quota sampling, and the respondents mainly include working professionals and individuals who use the internet regularly. The study area includes urban and semi-urban regions, which helps in understanding different types of consumer behaviour.

The main objectives of the study are to analyze consumer perception, identify factors influencing online grocery shopping, and understand the problems faced by consumers. However, the study has some limitations such as limited sample size, focus on specific areas, and possible bias in responses.

Results and Discussion

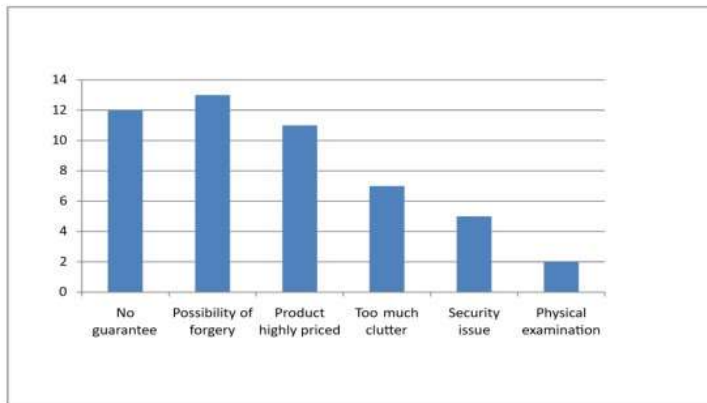
The results of the study provide a clear understanding of how consumers perceive online grocery shopping. It was

observed that most of the respondents belong to the younger and middle-aged groups. These consumers are more comfortable using technology and are open to trying new



methods of shopping. Working professionals, in particular, showed a higher preference for online grocery shopping because it helps them save time and effort. One of the most important

factors influencing consumer perception is convenience. Many respondents stated that they prefer online grocery shopping because it allows them to order products from home without visiting crowded stores. This is especially helpful for people with busy schedules. In addition, online platforms offer a wide variety of products, which makes it easier for consumers to find everything in one place. The ability to compare prices and get discounts also encourages consumers to shop online.



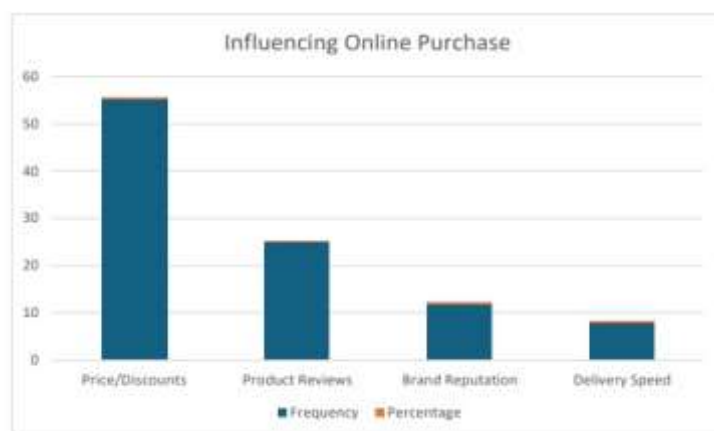
At the same time, the study also highlights several challenges. A major issue is that consumers cannot physically check the products before purchasing them. This creates doubts about the quality and freshness of items, especially fruits and vegetables.

Some respondents also mentioned that they have received damaged or low-quality products, which

reduces their trust in online platforms. Another common problem faced by consumers is delivery-related issues. Delayed deliveries, wrong items, or additional charges can create dissatisfaction. Since grocery items are needed on a daily basis, timely delivery is very important. If the service is not reliable, consumers may prefer to go back to traditional stores.

Trust and security are also important factors. Even though digital payments are widely used,

some consumers still feel uncomfortable sharing their financial details online. Because of this, many people prefer cash on delivery. A user-friendly website, secure payment system, and good customer service can help in building trust among consumers. It was also found that



many consumers still depend on local kirana stores for grocery shopping.

These stores are trusted and provide immediate service. Although online grocery shopping is growing, it has not completely replaced traditional methods.

Overall, the study shows that online grocery shopping is becoming popular, but there is still a need to improve quality, delivery, and trust to increase its usage.

Conclusion

From the study, it can be concluded that online grocery shopping is an emerging trend that is gradually gaining acceptance among consumers. It offers several benefits such as convenience, time-saving, and access to a wide range of products. These advantages make it attractive, especially for younger consumers and working professionals.

However, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed. Issues related to product quality, delivery delays, and lack of trust prevent many consumers from fully adopting online grocery shopping. Traditional stores continue to remain popular due to their reliability and personal connection with customers.

For online grocery platforms to succeed, they need to focus on improving product quality, ensuring timely delivery, and building customer trust. With continuous improvements and better services, online grocery shopping has the potential to grow further in the future.

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