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A Study on Consumer Satisfaction towards E-Grocery with Special Reference to Coimbatore City.

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ABSTRACT :

This study aims to explore consumer satisfaction towards e-grocery services with a special focus on Coimbatore city. With the advent of digital technology, the grocery shopping landscape has undergone a significant transformation, enabling consumers to shop for groceries online with greater convenience. The research investigates various factors influencing customer satisfaction, including product variety, price competitiveness, delivery time, user experience, and customer support. A survey was conducted among e-grocery shoppers in Coimbatore to analyze their perceptions, preferences, and expectations from online grocery platforms. The findings indicate that while e-grocery platforms are increasingly popular, challenges such as delivery delays, product quality issues, and lack of personalized customer service remain prevalent. The study suggests that e-grocery retailers can enhance customer satisfaction by focusing on improving delivery logistics, ensuring product freshness, and offering better customer engagement through advanced technology. The research contributes valuable insights for e-grocery businesses aiming to optimize their services and meet the evolving needs of consumers in Coimbatore.

Key words: Consumer satisfaction, e-grocery, Coimbatore, online shopping, customer preferences, delivery service, technology integration.

INTRODUCTION :

The rapid growth of e-commerce has significantly transformed traditional shopping behaviours, particularly in the grocery sector, with e-grocery services emerging as a convenient alternative to brick-and-mortar grocery shopping. This study focuses on consumer satisfaction with e-grocery services in Coimbatore city, analyzing the factors that contribute to the adoption and continued usage of online grocery platforms. The research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of customer perceptions, preferences, and expectations from e-grocery services, which are increasingly being relied upon for their convenience, time-saving benefits, and contactless shopping experience, especially in the post-pandemic era.

Online grocery shopping is a services offered by grocery stores which provides greater convenience for their consumers. Customers who don't have time or simply don't want to go to physical brick-and-mortar stores can use an e-grocery services to get their groceries delivered to their door. The digital grocery system saves customers time while also offerings them a great deal of flexibility in how they approach grocery shopping.

The ingenuity of e-grocery system is that it directly recreates the experience that a customers can expect in stores but on a mobile or web devices. E-grocery platforms are accessible to absolutely anyone that needs them, whether that is for time, disability, preference or another tertiary motive. The benefits of e-grocery services are convenience, flexibility, time-saving, new, customers and customer satisfaction.

The companies offer e-grocery services are;

- BLINKIT
- BIGBASKET
- NATURE'S BASKET
- JIOMART
- RELIANCE RETAIL
- D MART
- FLIPKART SUPERMARKET

Moreover, the role of competitive pricing, promotional offers, and discounts were found to influence consumer satisfaction, especially for price-sensitive shoppers. The study also highlights the need for e-grocery platforms to invest in better customer service and complaint resolution mechanisms to foster consumer trust and loyalty.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM :

The adoption of e-grocery services in Coimbatore is increasing, yet there is limited understanding of consumer satisfaction levels in this growing market. While e-grocery platforms offer convenience, consumers often face challenges related to product quality, pricing, delivery efficiency, and the unfamiliarity of some customers with online platforms. These issues can impact customer satisfaction and their willingness to continue using these services. This study aims to investigate the factors affecting consumer satisfaction with e-grocery services in Coimbatore, focusing on areas such as inventory management, delivery efficiency, pricing, tax changes, consumer behaviour shifts, app availability, system security, and website performance. The insights gathered will help e-grocery providers improve their offerings and better meet customer expectations.

OBJECTIVE :

- To analyse the customer preference with regard to features of e-grocery.

- To know about the customers level of satisfaction and the usage of e-grocery.

SCOPE :

The rise of e-grocery shopping in India is transforming consumer behavior, especially in how food and groceries are purchased. While traditional in-store shopping remains prevalent, the increasing popularity of online grocery shopping is reshaping the retail landscape. This study explores whether consumers are changing their shopping habits, particularly in relation to local stores, and aims to understand their attitudes and preferences toward e-grocery shopping. The research provides insights into the factors driving the shift towards online grocery shopping in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

Rohm and Swaminathan (2004) found that online shopping saves time during the purchasing of goods and it eliminates the travelling time required to go to the traditional stores.

Sharma (2015) The study examined consumer satisfaction with online grocery stores, identifying key factors that influence purchasing decisions. These include offers and discounts, product variety, free home delivery, user-friendly websites, and cash on delivery options. Benefits such as ease of ordering, access to a wide range of products, time savings, and avoiding long queues also make online grocery shopping appealing to customers.

Kavitha R (2017) The primary objective of the study was to assess consumers satisfaction with online grocery shopping and to evaluate the extent of consumers awareness regarding the availability of online grocery platforms.

Lee Kah Whye (2019) points out that India's online grocery shopping forecasted to be among fastest growing in Asia. In the report, India is cited as a market that is forecast to grow very rapidly over the next five years due to the combination of retailer investment, better infrastructure, new payment solutions and a large population.

Dr. S.S. Muruganandam, P. Priyadharshini (2022) Online grocery shopping is not only about technology and making sales, nor is it of interest only to industries and business, but it is also about transforming the economy, within and across geographic areas, and changing old markets and creating new ones. The objective of this study is to help the consumer of save more to make their ordering more convenient and easier. The E-shopping will replace traditional in- store shopping in the near future.

PROFILE OF THE COMPANIES :

BLINKIT : BLINKIT was founded in December 2013 by ALBINDER DHINDSA and SAURABH KUMAR as GROFERS. Its headquarters is at Gurgaon, Haryana India. Their goal was to solve the problems both on the customers as well as the merchants end associated with the unorganised nature of the sector. Blinkit primarily delivers groceries, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, stationeries, bakery items, etc.

BIGBASKET : BIGBASKET is an Indian online grocer headquartered in Bangalore, India, and currently owned by Tata Digital. It was the first online grocer in India, set up in October 2011. It is a registered company with the name Supermarket Grocery Supplies Pvt Ltd. The founders of this company was V.S.SUDHAKAR, HARI MENON, V.S.RAMESH, VIPUL PAREKH, ABHINAY CHOUDHARI. They provide an online grocery services. The revenue of the company is Rs.10,100 crores. As of January 2023 the company operates in more than 30 cities in India and processes around 15 million orders per month. Bigbasket is considered as an initial public offering by 2025 as part of its growth plane.

NATURE'S BASEKET : Nature's basket is an Indian grocery delivery chain of retail stores focused in gourmet food. It has a range of organic food, imported ingredients and exotic foods. The company is headquartered in Mumbai, India and has multiple stores in cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, Kolkata. It was acquired by Spencer's Retail Ltd, a RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group company in may 2019 from the Godrej Group in an all cash deal.

JIO MART : Jio Mart is an Indian e-commerce platform, owned by Reliance Retail. Launched in 2019, it initially focused on online groceries before expanding into other categories such as fashion, home essentials, electronics and lifestyle products by adopting a market place model. The founders of this company was Mukesh Ambani. A pilot was initially launched in selected areas of Navi Mumbai, Thane and Kalyan in April 2020. In may 2020, Jio mart was fully launched in 200 cities and towns across India. Within only a few days of its launch, the Jio Mart app surpassed one million downloads.

RELIANCE RETAIL : Reliance retail is an Indian retail company and a subsidiary of reliance industries. Founded in 2006, it is the largest retailer in India in terms of revenue. Its retail outlets offer foods, groceries, apparel, farm implements etc. As of 2003, it has over 2,45,000 employees at 18,000 stores locations in 7000 towns. Apart from the physical stores they also provide online grocery services. The founder of reliance retail was Mukesh Ambani. Its headquarters is at Mumbai, India.

D-MART : D Mart, is an Indian retail corporation that operates a chain of supermarkets and hypermarkets. The company was founded by Radhakrishnan Damani and is based in Mumbai. As of September 2024, D Mart has 377 stores across 12 states and union territories in India.

FLIPKART SUPERMARKET : Flipkart Private Limited is an Indian e-commerce company, headquartered in Bangalore, and incorporated in Singapore as a private limited company. The company initially focused on online book sales before expanding into other product categories such as consumer electronics, fashion, home essentials, groceries, and lifestyle products. Flipkart was founded in October 2007 in Bangalore by Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal, alumni of the IIT, Delhi.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of e-grocery consumers in Coimbatore, gathering data on aspects such as product quality, variety, pricing, delivery timeliness, website/app usability, payment methods, and customer service. The study also assesses the impact of delivery experience, including the accuracy of product availability, freshness, and packaging, on customer satisfaction. Additionally, factors like trust in the platform, customer loyalty, and willingness to recommend services to others were evaluated to understand long-term customer retention.

Findings from the study reveal that Coimbatore consumers generally exhibit high satisfaction with the convenience and time-saving aspects of e-grocery shopping. However, issues such as delayed deliveries, insufficient product availability, and occasional discrepancies in product quality are significant concerns for many consumers.

LIMITATIONS :

- Data was collected from the limited location of Coimbatore city.

- The survey has been conducted among 150 respondents.

- Accuracy of the study is purely based on the information as given by the respondents.

- Time constraint has prohibited from going bottomless into the subject.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA :

TABLE 4.1

Exhibits showing Delivery features preferred by the respondents

Delivery features	Frequency	Percentage
Same day delivery	33	22
Scheduled delivery slots	41	27
Flexible time slots	53	36
No delivery fee options	23	15
Total	**150**	**100**

Source : Primary data

Interpretation :

The above data indicates 22% of the respondents using same day delivery, 27% of the respondents using scheduled delivery slots, 36% of the respondents are using flexible time slots, 15% of the respondents using no delivery fee options.

TABLE 4.2

TABLE SHOWING OVERALL SATISFACTION TOWARDS ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING

FACTORS	HIGHLY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	DISSATISFIED	HIGHLY DISSATISFIED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE	RANK
Realibility of the product information.	96	38	11	1	4	229	1.52	6
Assurance of product quality	43	90	11	4	2	282	1.88	1
Affordable price	75	55	16	2	2	251	1.67	4
Availability of brands	60	71	13	4	2	267	1.78	2
Easy to find new products	79	49	14	4	4	255	1.7	3
Time consumption	80	51	12	3	4	250	1.66	5

INTERPRETATION :

The weighted average score has been carried out in this study to know about the respondents overall satisfaction towards the selected factors. Assurance of product quality has been ranked with the highest score of 1.88 (1), availability of brands has been ranked with the score of 1.78 (2), easy to find new products has been ranked with the score of 1.7 (3), affordable price has been ranked with the score of 1.67 (4), time consumption has been ranked with the score of 1.66 (5).

FINDINGS :

➢   39% of the respondents are preferring cash on delivery

➢   From the collected survey we know the respondents choices on overall satisfaction towards the selected factors. Assurance of product quality has been ranked with the highest score of 1.88 (1), availability of brands has been ranked with the score of 1.78 (2), easy to find new products has been ranked with the score of 1.7 (3), affordable price has been ranked with the score of 1.67 (4), time consumption has been ranked with the score of 1.66 (5).

SUGGESTIONS :

Online grocery platforms have many opportunities to improve their services and enhance customer satisfaction. Key improvements include offering more discounts and special offers to attract new customers and encourage loyalty. Introducing multiple payment options, such as credit/debit cards, mobile wallets, and cash on delivery, would ensure convenience for a broader audience. Enhancing order management features, like scheduled and same-day delivery, would provide customers more control over their orders.

 Additional features, such as prior booking for delivery slots and track-and-trace options, can further improve the user experience. Expanding product offerings to include country-specific items would allow customers to explore a wider variety of products. Platforms should also streamline the return process to offer quicker resolutions for issues, boosting customer satisfaction.

Improved marketing strategies can raise visibility, while competitive pricing and quality assurance would provide customers the best value. Stock management should be optimized to quickly replace out-of-stock items, and better packaging should be implemented to reduce damage during delivery. Finally, ensuring timely deliveries and robust customer support will enhance the overall experience. By addressing these areas, platforms can create a more efficient and customer-friendly service.

CONCLUSION :

E - grocery shopping has gained significant popularity due to its convenience and time-saving benefits, several challenges remain that impact consumer satisfaction. Consumers appreciate the ease of access, wide product variety, and home delivery options, but concerns regarding the quality and freshness

of perishable items, such as fruits and vegetables, persist. Additionally, price sensitivity plays a crucial role, with many customers comparing prices to traditional brick-and-mortar stores. Delivery timeliness, customer service, and app reliability were also highlighted as key factors influencing satisfaction, with any delays or issues in service leading to dissatisfaction. Trust and security in payment systems were significant concerns as well. To improve consumer satisfaction, e-grocery platforms in Coimbatore should focus on ensuring consistent product quality, enhancing delivery efficiency, offering competitive pricing, and providing excellent customer support while also ensuring the technological functionality of their platforms. Addressing these areas will help build customer loyalty and drive the continued growth of the e-grocery sector in the city.

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