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A Study on Consumers Attitude Towards Online Shopping For Food Products

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Abstract
Internet advancement has led to online shopping for various products and services, including food. Online food shopping is a relatively new process and should be understood well to benefit the markets. The present study aims to study the online food purchases frequency in the context of market segments. This research study is carried out in New Delhi (NCR) region with a sample size of 427 responses. Descriptive data were analyzed through means, percentage and frequency. Inferential data was analyzed for checking of association and correlation. Results show that young and educated consumers are the most frequent buyers of online food. Respondents have a rational personality and hold a moderate interest in online food purchasing. Results of Chi-square indicate the association between age, income, education and online food purchase frequency. Furthermore, there is no correlation between psychographic attributes and online food purchase frequency. Finally, there is a correlation relationship between usage status and online food purchase frequency but no relationship between usage rate and online food purchase frequency.

Key Words: *Purchase Frequency, Online Food Shopping, Market Segments.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

As a consequence of rapid expansion of e-commerce, the internet has evolved into a new platform, a route, and even a transaction forum for both parties to convey their transaction demands. It introduces unique products and trades using digitalization and virtualization patterns, causing a shift in the competitive structure of a business. Customers no longer shop for items or services through limited physical channels but through the new channel provided by computers and the internet. If consumers could shop for things on the internet from the comfort of their own homes, transportation and search costs would be reduced (Bakos, 1997). Consumer behavior towards the internet has expanded opportunities for a wide range of businesses, from smaller organizations to big businesses. Internet banking has made it easier to run a variety of online businesses, including online food ordering. The convenience of online meal ordering caters to the needs of busy people who are able to place an order and have it delivered via the internet Previous studies on food ordering have focused on the factors that influence trust, satisfaction, and loyalty in the offline consumer environment. Scholars have recently realized that the online environment provides excellent opportunities for interactive and personalized m (Burke, 2002). Marketing Compared with the traditional offline market, the online market provides more interactive and personalized marketing (Wind & Rangaswamy, 2001). Because of the rapid growth of e-commerce, online food purchasing has overcome numerous hurdles outlined by academicians a decade earlier, such as long website loading time, transaction issues, payment security, and delivering low-quality food products (Amir & Rizvi, 2017)(Hansen, 2005). The lack of trust, followed by a lack of choice, is the most important reason why consumers do not intend to purchase food via the internet. Consumers who plan to buy food through the internet, on the other hand, will do so for a variety of reasons, the most important of which is the cheaper cost, followed by increased convenience and better access that the internet provides (Kitsikoglou, Chatzis, Panagiotopoulos, & Mardiris, 2014). When purchasing well-known and standardized foods and assisting local producers, consumers will most likely modify their behaviour and shop more frequently over the internet (Kitsikoglou, Chatzis, Panagiotopoulos, & Mardiris, 2014). Most of the research on online food purchasing has offered significant evidence showing both the risks and benefits of doing business online. However, the majority of these researches generalize all forms of online shopping; ignoring the reality that purchasing food online is fundamentally different from purchasing other goods (Liu & Lin, 2020). As far as the online food industry is concerned, there are various issues and problems that restrict their reach to a few metropolitan cities. According to (Ghosh & Saha, 2018), online food delivery services are primarily based in a few major metro cities in India. Since India has diverse consumer groups it is important to understand online food consumer purchases from the perspective of consumer segments which is relatively less in extant literature.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Internet shopping is quickly expanding, and it now encompasses the majority of marketing's major spheres. According to reports, online food purchasing is a relatively new yet potential area of electronic commerce. However, just a few studies have looked at how consumers perceive buying food online in a cultural environment. The most popular for online food purchase is that

most shopping sites offer things that appeal to and entice young people (Kapoor, Maurya, & Kamalvanshi, 2017). According to Anwar et al (2021) four variables, namely social influence, information quality, price-saving orientation, and time-saving orientation, have a significantly positive effect on attitudes about online food delivery services, increasing the intention to utilise the app. The attitude about online food delivery services does significantly impact the willingness to use. Additionally, age was insignificant in mediating the association between attitude and intention to use (Pitchay, Ganesan, Zulkifli, & Khaliq, 2021). In a study on determinants that affect consumer decisions while purchasing food online, reports that the top aspect that directly affects the success of online food delivery is delivery speed, service quality, price, and the condition of the food provided (Saad, 2021).

Vikas & Shelly (2020) conducted a study to uncover various risk / benefit views associated with customers' use and adoption of online food delivery applications (OFDAs) in India. The study reveals that consumers' use and selection of OFDAs is found to be influenced not just by risk/ benefit aspects, but also by their overall attitudes and behaviours. Consumers' overall attitude toward the usage of OFDAs was also found to be positively influenced by a drop in perception of risk or an increase in benefit perception (Gupta & Duggal, 2020). M. Senthil et al (2020) highlights that role of discount variables is perceived differently by Generation X than by other generations. Restaurant owners should concentrate on providing greater convenience and discounts to their customers, as these are the primary reasons why they order food online (Senthil, Gayathri, & K.S.Chandrasekar, 2020). Anupama & Rinky (2019) in their study reveal that young people have a modestly positive attitude regarding Online Food Delivery (OFD), with the affective component of attitude having the greatest impact on attitude (Dave & Trivedi, 2019). Ou Wang & Simon Somogyi (2018) highlights the role of attitudes of consumers and purchase intentions regarding online food purchasing were positively related to perceived incentives and adversely related to perceived complexity (Wang & Somogyi, 2018).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Instrument Development

The researchers have developed the research instrument in line with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part relates to the demographic profile of the respondents and the second part relates to psychographic characteristics, behavioural characteristics, and purchase behaviour of the respondents.

Sampling and Data Collection

Target population: The population of this research study includes residents of the Delhi NCR. The Delhi NCR was targeted because of its metropolitan nature and extensive coverage of online food delivery service providers.

Sources of Data: The study is based on primary data. Primary data has been collected from consumers through a structured questionnaire. The researcher has adopted the combination of personal interview and self-administration. The respondents were selected from prominent public places such as metro stations.

Sample Selection and Survey Administration: The survey was carried out at metro stations in the Delhi NCR. The Delhi NCR has a network of 253 metro stations covering the entire Delhi region. The sample size was set at 450 respondents. The researcher has selected 10 percent of the total metro stations in the sample that comes to 25 metro stations. A systematic random sampling technique was used to include 25 metro stations in the sample. Systematic sampling is the random method of selecting the sample wherein the first item is included at random and subsequent items are included at equal intervals from the first item (Kothari, 2004). A list of metro stations in the Delhi metro network was compiled from official website of Delhi Metro and the list was arranged in alphabetical order. In the next step, the first metro station was chosen through a random method and subsequent 24 stations were included at equal intervals from the first number. A total of 18 respondents were included from each metro station taking the total sample size to 450 respondents. The respondents at each site of data collection were requested to be part of the survey. On their acceptance to the invitation, the respondents were either given a questionnaire for self administration or personally interviewed.

Data Cleaning: Before proceeding with data analysis, a data cleaning exercise was carried out to remove any inconsistencies or incorrect entries. While checking for data accuracy, 23 responses were either ineligible or required clarification. Since no contact details were collected from the respondents, they could not be traced. Therefore, 23 responses required deletion to proceed with further analysis. The final data set has 427 responses.

Data Analysis: The data is analyzed from descriptive and inferential perspectives. The descriptive analysis is presented through frequency, percentage, and arithmetic mean. The inferential statistics have been performed to check the association between demographic characteristics, psychographic characteristics and behavioural characteristics, and purchase frequency of food through online mode. The association between the variables of interest has been checked through Pearson chi-square.

Table: 1

	Frequency	**Percent**
Age		
Less than 20	71	16.6
20-30	243	56.9
30-40	53	12.4
40-50	32	7.5
Above 50	28	6.6
Education		
Less than high school	1	0.2
High School	36	8.4
Graduate	150	35.1
Post graduate	166	38.9

Doctorate	74	17.3
Income		
Less than 10000	170	39.8
10000-30000	86	20.1
30000-50000	61	14.3
50000-70000	99	23.1
Above 70000	11	2.5
Family Size		
Less than 2	9	2.1
2-4	171	40.0
4-6	181	42.4
6-8	58	13.6
Above 8	8	1.9
Gender		
Male	298	69.8
Female	127	29.7
Prefer not to say	2	0.5
Monthly Expenditure on Food		
Less than 5000	150	35.1
5000-10000	146	34.2
10000-15000	62	14.5
15000-20000	35	8.2
Above 20000	34	8.0
Total		

The table 1 displays the age distribution of the sample's respondents. Most of the consumers lie in the age group of 20-30, indicating that most of the users of online food purchasing are young consumers. As far as their education is concerned, most of the sample respondents are graduates and postgraduates. The income group of less than 10000 has the highest number of respondents, which implies online purchasers of food are young and low-income earners or maybe with no income. Males are 298, and females are 127 purchasers of food through online mode. Also, there are two persons who does not show their gender. As far as their expenses are concerned for the purpose of online food purchasing, most of the respondents lie in the income group of less than 5000.

4. RESULTS

Table 2: Purchase Frequency of Food through Online Mode

Purchase frequency of food through online mode	Frequency	Percent
Daily	8	1.9
Alternate days	45	10.5
Three times a week	25	5.9
Twice a week	41	9.6
Once a week	308	72.1
Total	427	100.0

As shown in the table 2, consumers mostly purchase food once a week with a frequency of 308, which constitutes 72.1 %. After that, consumers buy on alternate days and twice a week, almost with the same frequency. The third-largest consumer group buys three times a week, constituting 5.9% of the total sample size. The last and least are daily consumers, 8 in frequency with 1.9%.

Table 3: Behavioural Attributes

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Usage Status	427	1.00	5.00	3.35	1.28
Usage Rate	427	1.00	5.00	2.52	1.07

The table 3 displays the mean values of both the usage status as well as usage rate towards online food buying of the consumers. It clearly shows that the arithmetic mean of usage status is 3.35, which implies consumers are the first-time users. The average usage rate is 2.52, indicating that customers use online food with a low usage rate.

Table 4: Psychographic Attributes

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personality	427	1.00	5.00	3.22	0.92
Food interest	427	1.00	5.00	3.25	0.86
Opinion on online food purchase	427	1.00	5.00	3.25	0.81

The table 4 displays the psychographic characteristics of the sample respondents. The table clearly indicates that the arithmetic mean of personality is 3.22, implying the rational personality of the sample respondents. The consumers' average level of interest in food is 3.25, indicating a moderate level of interest in food. The arithmetic mean of opinion regarding online food purchasing is 3.25, indicating that respondents have moderate views on food purchase via online mode.

Table 5: Association between Demographic Characteristics and Purchase Frequency

	Pearson chi square value	P value	Decision	Association
Age	147.445	.000	H0: rejected	Yes
Education	39.621	.000	H0: rejected	Yes
Income	166.839	.000	H0: rejected	Yes
Gender	7.603	.773	H0: accepted	No
Family size	28.168	.105	H0: accepted	No

The table 5 shows the demographic attributes and purchase frequency association. The p-value of age, income, and education is .000, which shows that the hypothesis is supported and indicates the association between age, education, and income regarding purchase frequency of online food. Also, Gender and family size have p values of .773 and .105, respectively, indicating no association between gender and family size towards purchase frequency of online food.

Table 6: Correlation between Psychographic Characteristics and Purchase Frequency

	Pearson Correlation	P value	Decision	Relationship?
Personality	.051	.294	H0: accepted	No
Interest	.047	.332	H0: accepted	No
Opinion	.040	.415	H0: accepted	No

The table 6 displays the correlation between psychographic characteristics and purchase frequency of online food. The Pearson Correlation value between personality and purchase frequency of online food is .051, and the p-value is .0294; indicating no relationship between the frequency of online food purchases and the user's personality. Pearson Correlation between interest and purchase frequency of online food is .047 and p-value is .332 indicating no relationship between interest and the frequency of online food purchases. Pearson Correlation between interest and purchase frequency of online food is .040 and p-value is .415 indicating no relationship between opinion and the frequency of online food purchases.

Table 7: Correlation between Behavioural Attributes and Purchase Frequency

	Pearson Correlation	P value	Decision	Relationship?
Usage status	.106	.028	H0: rejected	Yes
Usage rate	.117	.105	H0: accepted	No

The table 7 shows the correlation between behavioural characteristics and purchase frequency of online food. The Pearson Correlation value between usage status and purchase frequency of online food is .106 and p-value is .028; indicating the relationship between the frequency of online food purchases and the status of the user. Pearson Correlation between usage rate and purchase frequency of online food is .117 and p-value is .105 indicating no relationship between the frequency of online food purchases and the usage rate.

5. DISCUSSION

Internet is the easiest tool in contemporary times, bringing almost all tasks to the fingertips. As far as business and marketing are concerned internet has also changed the scenario of doing business. Online shopping has become highly popular in modern times because of the ease of use, wide range of products and services offered on websites, and people have easily accepted online shopping because it offers convenience and easiness to them. Online shopping is done for various products and services; in the same way, online shopping is done for food products also. Despite the fact that the food business was late to adopt online delivery services, its reach has expanded to practically every corner of the country. Swiggy and Zomato are the most popular and used applications to order food online in the country. Nevertheless, according to (Ghosh & Saha, 2018), most online food delivery services are confined to a few metropolitan areas. This study represents that most of the online food delivery services users are from the young age group, and most of them are graduates and postgraduates. It can be understood that online food shopping is highly popular among young and educated consumers. Most of the respondents from the sample purchase online food one time in a week, and most of the consumers are first-time users and have low usage rate. Consumers have a rational personality and moderate interest and moderate opinion regarding online food shopping. Age, education, and income are associated with online food purchase frequency, while gender and family size have no association with online food purchase frequency. Psychographic attributes (personality, interest and opinion) have no relationship with regards to online food purchase frequency. There is a relationship between usage status and online food purchase frequency; on the other hand, usage rate has no relationship with regards to online food purchase frequency.

6. IMPLICATIONS

Theoretically, the study provides a framework for online food shopping through the cross-sections of market segments. Practically, this paper provides implications for managers. Since online food delivery services are confined to select areas in India, managers have to focus on building sustained campaigns centered on market segmentations. The marketing campaigns must focus on younger age groups, highly qualified groups, and people because these groups have shown an association with the purchase frequency of online food. Efforts must be put to bring non-users and potential users to the fold of users; it may cause higher purchase frequency as shown in the study. Non-users must be targeted through awareness campaigns, and potential users must be targeted through highlighting potential benefits associated with online food shopping such as convenience, offers and discounts, etc.

7. CONCLUSION

This study adds to the literature through an understanding of online food purchases from the perspective of market segments. This research highlights that concerted efforts must be put to bring different demographic groups into the fold of online food purchases. Special emphasis must be put on young and educated consumers. Additionally, non-users and potential users must be targeted through customized campaigns.

Online food delivery services are expected to increase across India if managers understand their consumers through market segments. An increased consumer reach would ultimately benefit online food delivery service providers, and in the long run, it is expected to strengthen the Indian food industry.

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