

## Consumer perception towards online grocery shopping with reference to demographic determinants during epidemics in Chengalpattu district

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**Abstract:** Digital is driving the way for the marketing sector, and digital technologies have recently been employed to locate the finest items or services to meet demand. In order to improve accessibility and customization for the general public, marketers are being compelled to use digital technologies. Because of the broad presence of COVID – 19, marketers are being pushed to adopt online business to give the finest services, and online mobile applications are becoming increasingly important in ensuring that every consumer's needs are met. This motivates marketers to provide appropriate services without boundaries. The study's main purpose is to learn more about how the demographic determinants of consumer buying behavior affects the online shopping behavior in case of grocery products and also analyze the consumer's perception about the quality or quantity of groceries purchased through the internet during COVID – 19 pandemic. This research article has been framed with the aid of 157 respondents who were using online platform for their products purchasing.

**Keywords:** Digital, COVID – 19, Internet, Grocery, Customization, Perception, Mobile applications, Technologies.

### Introduction

Selling groceries online has not followed the same development trend as other things sold online such as garments, household appliances, electronics, books, etc., even though online shopping has been a quickly developing industry in the virtual world. Purchase intention and accessibility of the consumer were key factors in the e-business sector's quick expansion. The expansion of online groceries, on the other hand, has completely transformed the food sector as a result of client relationships. It gives the benefits of the product while also making a business more accessible for clients who want to feel pampered every day. In the days and weeks leading up to Covid-19's breakout and the closure of malls and stores, the majority of people turned to internet marketing to buy provisional items. The goal of a content marketing strategy is to develop material that will reach the customer. Customers associate with the brand to meet their requirements as a result of this. This study shows, even if pandemic exists, consumers are able to purchase their desired brand products through online mode.

When trying to understand and respond to clients, demographics are an important set of factors to consider. Age, sex, income, education, marital status, and mobility are all

characteristics that might influence consumer behavior significantly. People with various financial levels seek to buy items of various types and grades. As a result, various socioeconomic classes purchase in a variety of ways. As a result, income may play a key role in identifying the target demographic. Kmart, for example, caters to middle- and lower-income clients, whereas many designer fashion stores cater to upper-income customers.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To analyze the awareness among consumers about online grocery shopping websites or mobile application
2. To examine the opinion about the quantity and quality of the products or services offered through online shopping during COVID – 19 pandemic compared to Pre – pandemic.
3. To examine whether the demographic determinants affects the consumers' expectations towards quality or quantity

### **Review of literature**

#### **Adarsh Nampoothiri S & Pravitha N R (2021)**

According to this article, consumers have a high positive review of internet buying. Moreover, it was discovered that young people frequently used the internet to learn about product reviews before purchasing.

#### **Jihyo Moon et al (2021)**

This article revealed that the protection Motivation Theory is more suitable in understanding consumer behavior under COVID – 19 conditions. Before COVID – 19, consumers utilized offline and online mode of shopping based on their convenience. However, in the persistence of COVID – 19, consumers are predicted to use online shopping channels actively in a short amount of time.

#### **Dr. Jayasankara Prasad & Yadaganti Raghu (2018)**

In this article, the authors claimed that the ease of doing grocery shopping online and the resulting time savings are important factors influencing online grocery purchasing behavior.

#### **Pauzi et al (2017)**

According to the study, Factors such as social influencers, enabling circumstances, physiological motives, risk perception, and brand trust were essential to online merchants in driving Malaysian customers to purchase groceries online.

### **Limitation of the study**

1. This study is conducted based on the population only from Chengalpattu district. Hence, it is hard to generalize to a large population.
2. Time factor is the major constraint in this study.
3. Demographic determinants alone have been focused in this study.

### **Statement of Problem**

Online business (E - Commerce) has been drastically increasing in the current scenario especially during the epidemic period. Due to the advancement of technologies and involvement of the internet in all forms of sectors, the people are forced to adopt technology. As our country is developing in nature, this shift has a huge effect towards economic conditions. Moreover, the prevalence of COVID – 19 pandemic, made the consumer to switchover from offline to online mode of purchase. Even with the sudden change to online way of shopping mode, some consumers are not well aware of digital mobile applications and shopping websites and marketers too are facing challenges to make effective advertisements in order to capture the minds of consumers. In the event of an abnormal situation such as COVID – 19 pandemic, even marketing channels too got affected. Consumers were urged to purchase any brands which are available in the market irrespective of their brand preference during this emergency period. This study examines even in pandemic and emergency situations whether the consumer is able to purchase their available preferred brands with the expected quantity along with good quality or not.

### **Research methodology**

**157 samples** were collected for this study through a random sampling method. This research article contains both primary and secondary data. However, this research paper primarily depends upon primary data which are collected from various consumers residing within Chengalpattu district through questionnaires. IBM SPSS 2020 was used for data analysis. Regression, Correlation and percentage analysis methods have been employed in this study as research tools.

Data analysis

Table 1

Demographic determinants

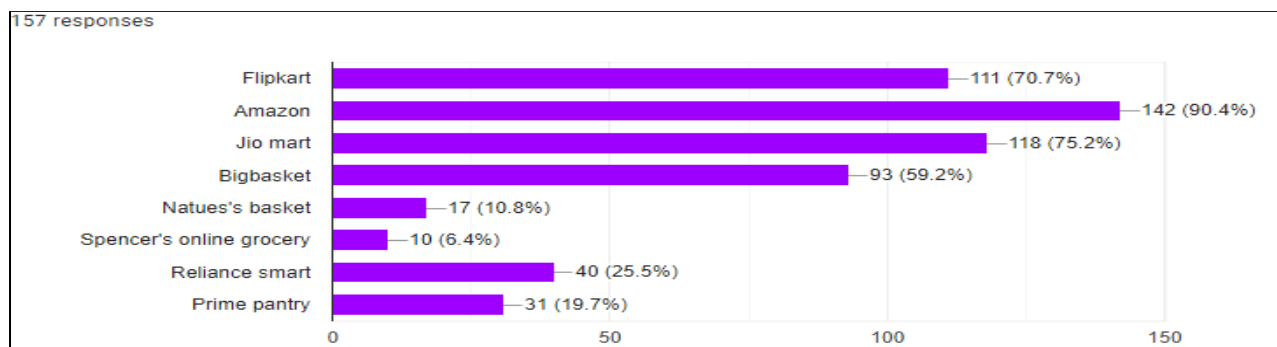
Demographic Factors	Options	Frequency	Percent
Age	10 – 25	107	68.2
	26 – 40	36	22.9
	40 and Above	14	08.9
Qualification	SSLC / HSC	16	10.2
	UG	88	56.1
	PG	51	32.5
	Illiterate	02	01.3
Gender	Male	98	62.4
	Female	59	37.6
Area of Residence	Urban	77	49.0
	Rural	38	24.2
	Sub - urban	42	26.8
Family Income Per Month	Below Rs 30000	93	59.2
	Rs 30000 – Rs 50000	52	33.1
	Rs 50000 and Above	12	07.6

Primary Source

From the table 1, majority of the respondents laid between the age group of 10 – 25 with 68.2% and the frequencies for the same were 107 participants, Most of the respondents had completed their undergraduate program with 56.1% and the frequencies for the same were 88, majority of the respondents were male with 62.4% followed by the frequency value of 98 out of 157. From the above table, it is clear that more respondents were from urban areas and the frequency for the same was 77 with 49%, majority of the respondents fall in the lowest category that is below Rs 30000 with 59.2% and responders were 93 out of 157.

Awareness among consumers towards the online application / Website for purchasing online groceries during pandemic

Figure 1

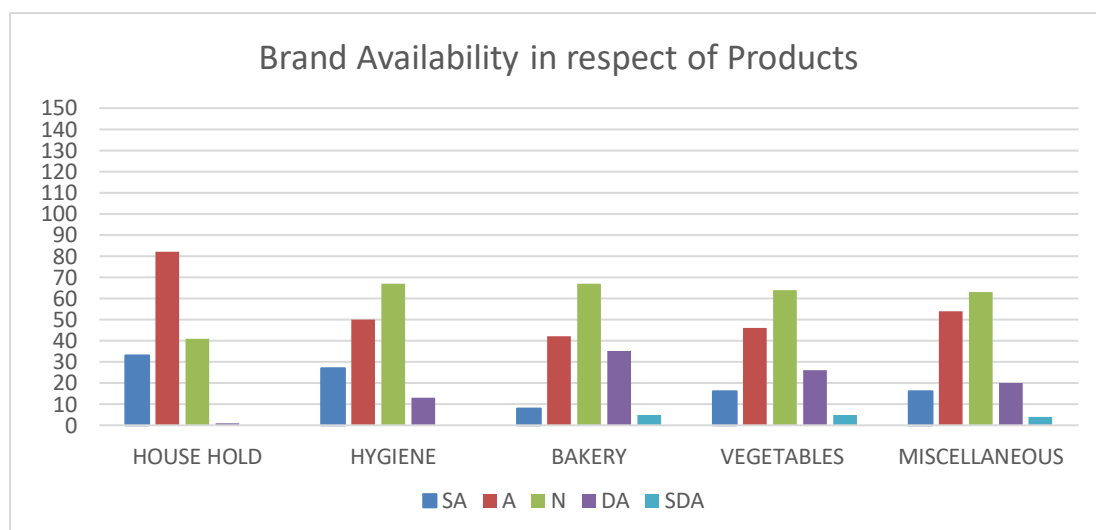


**Interpretation**

From the above table and chart, it is concluded that the majority of the respondents are familiar with online purchasing platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Jio mart, Bigbasket, etc., and the responses for the same are 90.4%,70.7%,75.2% and 59.2% respectively. Moreover, some of the mobile applications / websites are not yet popular among consumers such as Spencer’s online grocery and Nature’s basket and the responses received for those could be 6.4% and 10.8% respectively. Hence, as a marketer who is dealing with the E – Commerce platform for their products and services, they must focus on many advertising promotional strategies and use digital marketing tools to place their online services in the minds of consumers.

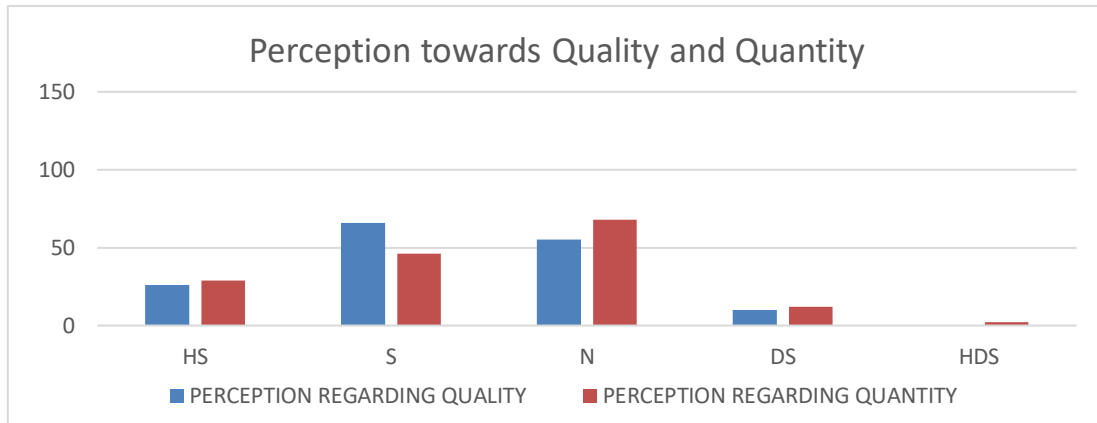
**Availability of Expected brand through online in respect of following types of products during pandemic compared to pre - COVID era.**

**Figure 2**



**Consumer opinion about quantity and quality of products purchased through online during epidemics**

**Figure 3**



**Reliability test**

**Table 2**

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.802	12

**Result**

The reliability test is done to analyze whether the questionnaire is valid as well as internal consistency of items. According to the rule, the Cronbach’s alpha should be good if it is more than 0.05.

This questionnaire has Cronbach’s alpha of 0.802 which shows that the questionnaire is correct and valid. Therefore, further analyses can be made on the collected data.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**H<sub>0</sub>**= There is no relationship between gender and Expectation towards quality of groceries received through online during pandemic

**H<sub>1</sub>**= There is a relationship between gender and Expectation towards quality of groceries received through online during pandemic

**Correlation**

**Table 3**

**Correlations**

		Gender	Expectation towards Quality
Gender	Pearson	1	.009
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.907
	N	157	157

Expectation towards Quality	Pearson Correlation	.009	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.907	
	N	157	

### Interpretation

The significant value of 0.907 is more than 0.05 which is significant at 5% level. It infers that the  $H_0$  is accepted and the  $H_1$  is rejected. There is no relationship between gender and Expectation towards quality of products or services received through online during pandemic. Hence, gender of the consumers does not have any influence on quality of products or services.

### Regression (Family income and Expectation towards quality)

$H_0$ = There is no relationship between Family income and Expectation towards quality of groceries received through online

$H_1$ = There is a relationship between Family income and Expectation towards quality of groceries received through online.

**Coefficients (Table 4)**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.587	.166		15.594	.000
1 FAMILY INCOME PER MONTH (PM)	-.185	.103	-.143	-1.804	.073

a. Dependent Variable: Opinion [Perception of quality of groceries purchased through online mode]

### Interpretation

Independent variable	Sig Value	Hypothesis Results	Interpretation	Equation
INCOME	0.05	The sig value 0.073 which is more than 0.05 at 5% significant level. Hence, $H_0$ accepted and $H_1$ rejected.	There is no significant change in the perception of quality of groceries purchased through online mode due to the family income	$Y=2.587-0.185X$

### Regression (Gender and Expectation towards quantity)

**H<sub>0</sub>**= There is no relationship between gender and Expectation towards quantity of groceries received through online

**H<sub>1</sub>**= There is a relationship between gender income and Expectation towards quantity of groceries received through online

**Coefficients (Table 5)**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.848	.220		12.966	.000
GENDER	-.297	.151	-.156	-1.971	.051

a. Dependent Variable: Opinion [Perception of quantity of groceries purchased through online]

Independent variable	Sig Value	Hypothesis Results	Interpretation	Equation
GENDER	0.05	The sig value 0.051 which is more than 0.05 at 5% significant level. Hence, H <sub>0</sub> accepted and H <sub>1</sub> rejected.	There is no significant change in the perception of quantity of groceries purchased through online mode due to the family income	Y=2.848-0.297X

**Conclusion:**

Consumer needs and requirements have been significantly influenced by technological improvements and resulting in the expansion of retail. As a result of this, online shopping is becoming increasingly popular in India. During this research study, it was observed that residents of Chengalpattu are extremely engaged, attentive, and knowledgeable about the internet. They also have a positive image of online shopping. Since, COVID – 19 still exists, more research is needed to examine customer perceptions of online grocery purchasing before and after COVID – 19. The primary goal of this research is to determine whether or not demographic characteristics affect or influence customer purchasing behavior when shopping for groceries through online mode. According to the findings of this study's hypothesis testing, demographic characteristics like as income and gender have no effect on consumer expectations of quality and quantity of purchasing groceries through the internet during a pandemic. Hence, consumer's expectations of quality and quantity of groceries through online mode do not relay on demographic variables such as income and gender.

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