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A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF GROCERY PRODUCTS IN E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS THROUGH ADD-ON VALUE STRATEGIES IN COIMBATORE CITY

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Introduction

The digital era has revolutionized global business operations, influencing not only how companies market their products but also how consumers search for, evaluate, and purchase them. Over the past decade, the retail industry in India has undergone a paradigm shift with the integration of digital technologies and the exponential growth of e-commerce. The advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), the affordability of smartphones, and the widespread accessibility of high-speed internet have collectively accelerated the transformation from traditional brick-and-mortar shopping to online retailing. Consumers today enjoy the flexibility of purchasing products anytime and anywhere, leading to the emergence of an increasingly convenience-oriented shopping culture.

Among the various segments of e-commerce, online grocery retailing has emerged as one of the fastest-growing and most promising domains. Traditionally, grocery shopping has been characterized by physical visits to local markets, supermarkets, or neighborhood stores where consumers personally assess the freshness and quality of products. However, with the evolving lifestyle patterns, dual-income households, urbanization, and the growing penetration of digital payment systems, online grocery platforms have become a preferred alternative for time-constrained consumers. These platforms not only deliver groceries to the doorstep but also integrate technology-driven features such as real-time order tracking, subscription-based delivery, and personalized offers to enhance the overall consumer experience.In India, leading players such as BigBasket, Blinkit, Amazon Fresh, Jiomart, and Flipkart Supermart have transformed grocery retailing by offering a wide assortment of products, competitive pricing, and value-added services.

The introduction of add-on value strategiesincluding loyalty rewards, promotional discounts, cashback offers, bundled product deals, free delivery thresholds, and membership-based privileges has further strengthened consumer engagement and retention. These strategies are designed to provide more than just functional benefits; they aim to create an emotional and psychological bond between the consumer and the brand. By delivering convenience, savings, and personalized experiences, these platforms seek to cultivate long-term customer loyalty and trust.

Statement of the Problem

Although online grocery retailing has grown substantially, it faces several challenges in terms of consumer trust, product quality perception, and service differentiation. Consumers often perceive a gap between expectations and actual service delivery in terms of product freshness, delivery accuracy, and after-sales support.

E-commerce players are attempting to bridge this gap by introducing *add-on value strategies* loyalty rewards, cashbacks, product bundling, subscription discounts, and express delivery options to improve customer retention and satisfaction. However, the extent to which these strategies influence consumer perception and buying behavior, especially in semi-urban markets like Coimbatore, remains underexplored.

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Furthermore, demographic variables such as age, income, education, and occupation may play a significant role in shaping these perceptions. The problem, therefore, lies in identifying whether and how add-on value strategies contribute to positive consumer perception and behavioral intentions, and whether these associations vary across demographic profiles.

Significance of the Study

This study holds academic, managerial, and practical significance:

1. **Academic Significance:** It contributes to consumer behavior and e-commerce literature by linking the concept of *perceived value* with add-on strategies in online grocery retailing an area with limited empirical research in Indian contexts.
2. **Managerial Significance:** The findings will help e-commerce managers design and implement effective add-on value programs that align with the preferences of different demographic groups.
3. **Practical Significance:** Insights from this research can support policymakers and entrepreneurs in enhancing digital consumer trust and promoting digital retail adoption in tier-II cities such as Coimbatore.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the demographic profile of consumers purchasing grocery products through e-commerce platforms in Coimbatore city.
2. To analyze the perception of consumers towards online grocery shopping.
3. To assess how add on value strategies affect consumer perception
4. To analyse the relationship between consumer demographic profile and their perception towards online grocery products.
5. To provide a suggestion for improving the effectiveness of add on value strategies in online grocery marketing

Research Methodology

Research Design

The present study adopts a **descriptive research design**. This design is most appropriate as it seeks to describe, interpret, and analyze the perceptions, preferences, and opinions of consumers towards **online grocery products** and to evaluate the **role of add-on value strategies** (such as discounts, loyalty programs, faster delivery, and personalized recommendations) in influencing consumer satisfaction and purchase behavior. The descriptive design helps in providing a clear picture of the prevailing trends in consumer attitudes and the factors that shape their decision-making process in the context of online grocery shopping.

Area of Study

The research is confined to **Coimbatore city**, Tamil Nadu, a region recognized for its rapid digitalization and high adoption of e-commerce services. Coimbatore serves as a suitable location due to its well-developed infrastructure, increasing number of tech-savvy consumers, and strong presence of major online grocery platforms such as **BigBasket, Amazon Fresh, FlipkartSupermart, and Jiomart**. This urban consumer base offers a rich environment for understanding changing shopping patterns and the role of value-added services in enhancing online grocery experiences.

Population

The **target population** of this study comprises **consumers residing in Coimbatore city** who have purchased grocery products through online or e-commerce platforms such as BigBasket, Amazon Fresh, FlipkartSupermart, Jiomart, or similar digital marketplaces **at least once within the last six months**.

This inclusion criterion ensures that the respondents have recent experience with online grocery shopping, making their opinions relevant and reliable for the study.

Sampling Design and Sample Size

Sampling Method

The study uses a stratified random sampling technique.

Under this method, the total population of online grocery consumers in Coimbatore is divided into **strata (subgroups)** based on key demographic factors such as:

- **Age group** (e.g., 18–25 years, 26–35 years, 36–45 years, above 45 years).
- **Gender** (male, female, others).
- **Monthly income level** (below ₹25,000; ₹25,000–₹50,000; ₹50,000–₹1,00,000; above ₹1,00,000).

This stratification ensures that every significant demographic category is proportionally represented in the sample, thereby increasing the accuracy and representativeness of the findings. From each stratum, respondents are selected randomly to minimize bias.

Sample Size: A total of 365 respondents have been chosen for the study. This number is determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, which provides statistically valid sample sizes for large populations with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. This ensures that the sample size is adequate to generalize the results to the broader consumer population in Coimbatore.

Sample Selection Procedure

1. The city was divided into key residential and commercial zones (e.g., Gandhipuram, Peelamedu, RS Puram,Singanallur andsaravanampatti.).
2. From each zone, online grocery users were identified through digital community groups, social media, and referral contacts.
3. The respondents were then categorized into demographic strata (based on age, gender, and income).
4. Within each stratum, random selection was carried out to finalize the respondents until the total reached 365.
   This process ensured equitable representation and minimized sampling error.

Data Collection Method

Primary Data

Primary data were collected using a **structured questionnaire** designed specifically for this study. The questionnaire consisted of:

- **Closed-ended questions** to capture demographic details and general shopping behavior.
- **Likert-scale statements** (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to measure perceptions, attitudes, and satisfaction levels related to online grocery shopping and add-on value strategies.

The questionnaire was distributed both **online (via Google Forms)** and **offline (printed forms)** to ensure wider reach and convenience for respondents. Prior to data collection, a **pilot study** was conducted with 30 respondents to ensure the reliability and clarity of the instrument.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from various credible sources such as:

1. Academic journals and published research articles on consumer behavior and e-commerce.
2. Market reports and whitepapers on the Indian online grocery sector.
3. Company websites and press releases (BigBasket, Amazon Fresh, etc.).
4. Government and industry reports from sources such as FICCI, Nielsen, and Statista.
   These data supported the interpretation of primary findings and helped in establishing a theoretical foundation for the study.

Review of literature

The study by **Anshu, Kumari, Gaur, and Singh (2022)** highlights how different dimensions of the online grocery experience shape customers' attitudes and ultimately their intention to buy again. The researchers emphasize three key aspects of the customer journey—**convenience, service recovery, and delivery experience**—as major drivers of positive customer attitudes. Convenience refers to how easy and efficient customers perceive the online shopping process to be, including product search, ordering, and checkout. When customers feel that the platform saves time and reduces effort, their attitude toward the retailer becomes more favorable. Similarly, a strong **recovery experience**, meaning how effectively the retailer handles issues such as product errors or delays, reassures customers and strengthens trust. The **delivery experience**, which includes punctuality, product condition, and accuracy of orders, also plays a vital role in shaping satisfaction and positive evaluation of the retailer.

Anshu, Kumari; Gaur, Loveleen; Singh, Gurmeet(2022) in their study Using data from 526 respondents, they found that key antecedents of online customer experience (convenience, recovery, delivery experience) significantly affect consumer attitude toward online grocery shopping. Value co-creation moderates this relationship: at *lower* levels of co-creation, the effect is strong; as co-creation increases, the moderation effect weakens (except for delivery experience.They propose an *Online Customer Experience Attitude-Behaviour-Context* model tailored for online grocery retailing. They include **value co-creation** as a moderating variable in this model. **Relevance to add-on value**: Value co-creation is a form of "add-on value strategy" involving customers to improve service (e.g., in delivery) boosts attitude and repurchase..**Antecedents of Online Customer Experience**: They identify **convenience**, **recovery**, and **delivery experience** as key antecedent dimensions of online customer experience These antecedents **significantly impact** customers' **attitude** toward the online grocery retailer.

Table No.4.1:Showing the Age of the Respondents

Sl.No	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	Below 20 years	36	9.9
2	21-30 years	99	27.1
3	31-40 years	108	29.6
4	41-50 years	81	22.2
5	above 50 years	41	11.2

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Sl.No	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	Below 20 years	36	9.9
2	21-30 years	99	27.1
3	31-40 years	108	29.6
4	41-50 years	81	22.2
5	above 50 years	41	11.2
	Total	**365**	**100.0**

Interpretation: The table reveals that the majority of the respondents (29.6%) belong to the age group of 31–40 years, followed by 27.1% in the 21–30 years category. Respondents aged 41–50 years constitute 22.2% of the sample. Those above 50 years account for 11.2%, while respondents below 20 years represent the smallest group at 9.9%. This indicates that most respondents are in their economically active and productive age groups.

Major Finding: The largest proportion of respondents (29.6%) falls within the 31–40 years age group.

Table No.4.2:Showing the Gender of the Respondents

Sl.No	Gender	Frequency	Percent
1	Male	216	59.2
2	Female	143	39.2
3	Transgender	6	1.6
	Total	**365**	**100.0**

Interpretation: The table shows that male respondents constitute the majority with 59.2% of the sample. Female respondents account for 39.2%, while transgender respondents represent only 1.6%. This indicates a higher participation of males compared to females and transgender individuals in the study.

Major Finding: Male respondents dominate the sample, accounting for 59.2% of the total respondents.

Table No.4.3: Showing The Educational Qualifications of the Respondents

Sl.No	Educational qualifications	Frequency	Percent
1	School	129	35.3
2	Under graduate	110	30.1
3	Post graduate	105	28.8
4	Others	21	5.8
	Total	**365**	**100.0**

Interpretation: The table indicates that 35.3% of the respondents have completed school education, making it the largest educational category. Undergraduate respondents account for 30.1%, while postgraduates represent 28.8%. Only 5.8% belong to other educational categories. This suggests that the respondents possess varying educational backgrounds, with school-level education being the most common.

Major Finding: A majority of respondents (35.3%) have school-level education.

Table No.4.4: Showing the Occupation of the Respondents

Sl.No	Occupation	Frequency	Percent
1	Student	42	11.5
2	Employed	104	28.5
3	Self employed	99	27.1
4	Home maker	108	29.6
5	Retired	12	3.3
	Total	**365**	**100.0**

Interpretation: The table shows that homemakers constitute the largest occupational group (29.6%), followed closely by employed respondents (28.5%) and self-employed respondents (27.1%). Students account for 11.5%, while retired individuals represent only 3.3%. This reflects a diverse occupational distribution among respondents.

Major Finding: Homemakers form the largest occupational category, representing 29.6% of the respondents.

Table No.4.5: Showing The Monthly Income of The Respondents

Sl.No	Monthly income	Frequency	Percent
1	Below Rs.20000	24	6.6
2	Rs.20001-40000	114	31.2
3	Rs.40001-60000	111	30.4
4	Rs.60001-80000	93	25.5
5	Above Rs.80000	23	6.3
	Total	**365**	**100.0**

Interpretation: The table reveals that 31.2% of the respondents earn between Rs.20,001 and Rs.40,000 per month, making it the largest income group. Respondents earning Rs.40,001–60,000 account for 30.4%, while those earning Rs.60,001–80,000 constitute 25.5%. The lowest proportions are found among respondents earning below Rs.20,000 (6.6%) and above Rs.80,000 (6.3%).

Major Finding: The majority of respondents (31.2%) earn a monthly income between Rs.20,001 and Rs.40,000.

1. I frequently purchase grocery products through online V1.
2. I prefer e-commerce platforms over physical stores for grocery shopping V2.
3. I rely on online reviews before purchasing groceries online V3.
4. I trust the quality of grocery products sold on e-commerce platforms V4.
5. I compare prices across different e-commerce platforms before buying groceries V5.
6. Realtime order tracking is useful and convenient V6.
7. Delivery personnel behave professionally during the delivery V7.
8. E-commerce platforms provide a wide variety of grocery products V8.
9. The online shopping interface of e-commerce platforms is user-friendly-V9.
10. E-commerce platforms offer timely delivery of grocery products-V10.

Table No.4.6, Table Showing The Agree Level of The Respondents Regarding The Select Variables

Sl No	Variables	Agree Level					Total
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1	V1	54	210	48	35	18	365
2	V2	51	210	50	37	17	365
3	V3	44	219	50	35	17	365
4	V4	56	201	50	38	20	365
5	V5	40	215	55	38	17	365
6	V6	54	209	48	36	18	365
7	V7	53	201	54	39	18	365
8	V8	46	210	49	39	21	365
9	V9	47	216	50	35	17	365
10	V10	55	199	53	38	20	365

Table 4.6 – Interpretation of Agree Level of Respondents Regarding Selected Variables

V1: I frequently purchase grocery products through online

Among the respondents, 54 strongly agreed and 210 agreed that they frequently purchase grocery products online. A smaller number remained neutral (48), while 35 disagreed and 18 strongly disagreed. The findings indicate that online grocery shopping has become a regular purchasing practice for a majority of consumers.

Major Finding:

A majority of respondents (**264 out of 365**) agreed that they frequently purchase grocery products through online platforms.

V2: I Prefer e-commerce platforms over physical stores for grocery shopping

The table shows that 51 respondents strongly agreed and 210 agreed that they prefer e-commerce platforms to physical stores for grocery shopping. Only a limited number expressed disagreement. This suggests a growing preference for the convenience and accessibility offered by online shopping platforms.

Major Finding

Most respondents (**261 out of 365**) prefer e-commerce platforms over traditional physical stores for grocery shopping.

V3: I rely on online reviews before purchasing groceries online A total of 44 respondents strongly agreed and 219 agreed that they rely on online reviews before making grocery purchases. The results indicate that customer reviews play an important role in influencing purchasing decisions and building consumer confidence.

Major Finding

The majority of respondents (**263 out of 365**) rely on online reviews before purchasing grocery products online.

V4: I trust the quality of grocery products sold on e-commerce platforms
The data reveal that 56 respondents strongly agreed and 201 agreed that they trust the quality of grocery products available on e-commerce platforms. Although some respondents remained neutral or expressed disagreement, positive responses dominated the overall opinion.

Major Finding:
A considerable majority (**257 out of 365**) trust the quality of grocery products sold through e-commerce platforms.

V5: I compare prices across different e-commerce platforms before buying groceries
The table indicates that 40 respondents strongly agreed and 215 agreed that they compare prices across various online platforms before making a purchase. This demonstrates that consumers actively seek value for money and make informed purchase decisions.

Major Finding:
Most respondents (**255 out of 365**) compare prices across different e-commerce platforms before purchasing groceries.

V6: Realtime order tracking is useful and convenient
Among the respondents, 54 strongly agreed and 209 agreed that realtime order tracking is useful and convenient. The results highlight the importance of transparency and order visibility in enhancing the online shopping experience.

Major Finding
A majority of respondents (**263 out of 365**) consider realtime order tracking useful and convenient.

V7: Delivery personnel behave professionally during the delivery
The table shows that 53 respondents strongly agreed and 201 agreed that delivery personnel behave professionally during delivery. The findings suggest that delivery service quality contributes positively to customer satisfaction.

Major Finding
Most respondents (**254 out of 365**) are satisfied with the professional behavior of delivery personnel.

V8: E-commerce platforms provide a wide variety of grocery products
A total of 46 respondents strongly agreed and 210 agreed that online grocery platforms offer a wide variety of products. This indicates that product assortment is one of the strengths of e-commerce grocery services.
Major Finding
The majority of respondents (**256 out of 365**) believe that e-commerce platforms provide a wide variety of grocery products.

V9: The online shopping interface of e-commerce platforms is user-friendly
The table reveals that 47 respondents strongly agreed and 216 agreed that the online shopping interface is user-friendly. The findings suggest that consumers find online grocery applications and websites easy to navigate and operate.

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Major Finding

A significant majority (**263 out of 365**) feel that e-commerce platforms provide a user-friendly shopping interface.

V10: E-commerce platforms offer timely delivery of grocery products

The data show that 55 respondents strongly agreed and 199 agreed that online grocery platforms offer timely delivery. Positive responses considerably outnumbered negative responses, indicating satisfaction with delivery performance.

Major Finding

Most respondents (**254 out of 365**) agree that e-commerce platforms provide timely delivery of grocery products.

Overall Interpretation

The overall results demonstrate a highly favorable attitude toward online grocery shopping among the respondents. For all ten variables, the combined number of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses is substantially higher than the neutral and disagreement categories. Respondents frequently purchase groceries online, prefer e-commerce platforms over physical stores, rely on online reviews, and trust the quality of products offered. They also appreciate features such as price comparison, realtime order tracking, professional delivery services, wide product availability, user-friendly interfaces, and timely delivery. These findings indicate strong consumer acceptance and satisfaction with online grocery shopping services.

Overall Finding

The study reveals that respondents generally hold a positive perception of online grocery shopping, with the highest level of agreement observed for **relying on online reviews (263 respondents), realtime order tracking (263 respondents), and user-friendly shopping interfaces (263 respondents)**. This suggests that convenience, transparency, and ease of use are the key factors driving consumer satisfaction and continued adoption of online grocery platforms.

Table No.4.7: Linkage Between The Respondents Based On Age And Their Agree Level Regarding The Statement Realtime Order Tracking Is Useful And Convenient

Age	Count	Realtime order tracking is useful and convenient					Total
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Below 20 years	Count	4	29	2	1	0	36
	Expected Count	5.3	20.6	4.7	3.6	1.8	36.0
21-30 years	Count	18	37	13	21	10	99
	Expected Count	14.6	56.7	13.0	9.8	4.9	99.0
31-40 years	Count	14	77	7	6	4	108
	Expected Count	16.0	61.8	14.2	10.7	5.3	108.0
41-50 years	Count	14	55	12	0	0	81
	Expected Count	12.0	46.4	10.7	8.0	4.0	81.0
above 50 years	Count	4	11	14	8	4	41
	Expected Count	6.1	23.5	5.4	4.0	2.0	41.0
Total	**Count**	**54**	**209**	**48**	**36**	**18**	**365**

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Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	85.781[a]	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	93.865	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.188	1	.665
N of Valid Cases	365		
a. 7 cells (28.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.78.			

Interpretation of Table No. 4.7

Linkage between the respondents based on age and their agreement level regarding the statement "Real-time order tracking is useful and convenient."

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 85.781 with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This indicates that there is a statistically significant association between age and respondents' perception of the usefulness and convenience of real-time order tracking.

Conclusion

The analysis reveals that respondents generally perceive real-time order tracking as a useful and convenient feature of online grocery shopping. However, the degree of acceptance differs across age groups. Younger and middle-aged respondents demonstrate stronger approval of tracking facilities, whereas older respondents show comparatively mixed opinions. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 significance level, it is concluded that **a significant relationship exists between age and respondents' perception of real-time order tracking**. Therefore, age plays an important role in shaping consumers' attitudes toward order-tracking features offered by e-commerce grocery

Table No.4.8: Linkage Between The Respondents Based On Age And Their Agree Level Regarding The Statement Delivery Personnel Behave Professionally During The Delivery

Age	**Count**	**Delivery personnel behave professionally during the delivery**					
		Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Total**
Below 20 years	Count	2	20	9	4	1	36
	Expected Count	5.2	19.8	5.3	3.8	1.8	36.0
21-30 years	Count	17	67	7	5	3	99
	Expected Count	14.4	54.5	14.6	10.6	4.9	99.0
31-40 years	Count	23	51	18	11	5	108
	Expected Count	15.7	59.5	16.0	11.5	5.3	108.0
41-50 years	Count	7	35	16	17	6	81
	Expected Count	11.8	44.6	12.0	8.7	4.0	81.0
above 50 years	Count	4	28	4	2	3	41
	Expected Count	6.0	22.6	6.1	4.4	2.0	41.0
Total	**Count**	**53**	**201**	**54**	**39**	**18**	**365**

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Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	**df**	**Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	39.602[a]	16	.001
Likelihood Ratio	39.851	16	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.998	1	.046
N of Valid Cases	365		
a. 6 cells (24.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.78.			

Interpretation of Table No. 4.8
Linkage between the respondents based on age and their agreement level regarding the statement "Delivery personnel behave professionally during the delivery."

The **Pearson Chi-Square value is 39.602 with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.001**, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This indicates that **there is a statistically significant relationship between age and respondents' perceptions of the professionalism of delivery personnel during grocery deliveries**.

Conclusion
The analysis demonstrates that respondents generally perceive delivery personnel as professional during the delivery process. However, the level of agreement differs across age groups, indicating variations in customer experiences and expectations. Since the p-value (0.001) is lower than the 0.05 significance level, it is concluded that **a significant association exists between age and perceptions of delivery personnel professionalism**. Therefore, age is an important factor influencing how consumers evaluate the conduct and professionalism of delivery personnel in online grocery shopping services.

Table No.4.9: Garrett Ranking Table

Rank	Problem Code	Problem Statement	Garrett Mean Score
1	P8	Delivery charges or hidden costs are a problem for me	**6.68**
2	P6	Customer service is slow or unhelpful in resolving issues	**6.55**
3	P1	I often face delays in the delivery of grocery products	**6.34**
4	P7	I face difficulties in returning or exchanging grocery products	**6.32**
5	P3	I experience difficulty navigating e-commerce websites or apps	**6.31**
6	P10	I feel that the packaging of grocery products is inadequate	**6.17**

7	P5	Payment failures or issues occur occasionally while making online purchases	**6.16**
8	P2	The products delivered are sometimes damaged or of poor quality	**6.12**
9	P9	I sometimes receive incorrect or incomplete orders	**6.10**
10	P4	Out-of-stock products are a frequent issue	**6.04**

Interpretation

The Garrett ranking analysis reveals that **delivery charges and hidden costs (P8)** emerged as the most critical problem experienced by online grocery shoppers, obtaining the highest mean score of 6.68. This indicates that customers are highly sensitive to additional costs incurred during online purchases and perceive such charges as a major inconvenience.

The second most important issue is **slow or unhelpful customer service (P6)** with a mean score of 6.55. This suggests that consumers expect prompt support and effective resolution of their concerns, and dissatisfaction arises when service quality falls short of expectations.

Delivery delays (P1) secured the third rank with a mean score of 6.34, indicating that timely delivery remains a significant determinant of customer satisfaction in online grocery shopping.

Problems related to **returns and exchanges (P7)** and **difficulty navigating websites or applications (P3)** occupied the fourth and fifth positions respectively, showing that both operational efficiency and user-friendly digital interfaces are important for enhancing the shopping experience.

The lower-ranked issues include **poor packaging (P10)**, **payment failures (P5)**, **damaged products (P2)**, **incorrect or incomplete orders (P9)**, and **out-of-stock products (P4)**. Although these concerns were reported by respondents, their comparatively lower scores suggest that they are perceived as less severe than pricing, customer service, and delivery-related issues.

Findings

1. **Delivery charges and hidden costs** were identified as the most significant challenge faced by online grocery consumers.
2. **Customer service inefficiency** was the second most prominent concern, highlighting the need for faster and more effective support systems.
3. **Delivery delays** remain a major operational issue affecting customer satisfaction.
4. Consumers reported considerable difficulties in **returning or exchanging products**, indicating the need for a simpler return policy.
5. **Website and app navigation issues** continue to influence the online shopping experience, emphasizing the importance of user-friendly platforms.
6. **Packaging inadequacy** and **payment-related issues** were moderately significant concerns among respondents.

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Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are proposed to improve consumer satisfaction and strengthen the effectiveness of add-on value strategies in online grocery retailing:

1. **Reduce Delivery Charges and Enhance Price Transparency**
   - Since delivery charges and hidden costs were identified as the most significant problem, online grocery platforms should adopt transparent pricing policies.
   - Free delivery thresholds, subscription-based delivery plans, and clearly displayed charges can help improve customer trust and satisfaction.
2. **Strengthen Customer Service Support**
   - Customer service should be made more responsive and efficient through 24/7 support channels, AI-powered chatbots, and faster complaint-resolution mechanisms.
   - Timely assistance can improve consumer confidence and encourage repeat purchases.
3. **Improve Delivery Efficiency**
   - Grocery retailers should focus on reducing delivery delays through better logistics management, route optimization, and real-time communication with customers.
   - Providing accurate delivery time estimates can further enhance the shopping experience.
4. **Simplify Return and Exchange Procedures**
   - Easy and hassle-free return policies should be implemented to reduce customer concerns regarding product quality and incorrect deliveries.
   - Quick refunds and replacement options can increase consumer trust in online grocery platforms.
5. **Enhance User Experience of Websites and Mobile Applications**
   - E-commerce platforms should continuously improve their website and mobile app interfaces to ensure easy navigation, quick product search, and smooth checkout processes.
   - User-friendly platforms can attract both new and existing customers across different age groups.
6. **Expand and Personalize Add-On Value Strategies**
   - Retailers should offer personalized discounts, loyalty rewards, cashback offers, subscription benefits, and product bundle deals based on customer preferences and purchase history.
   - Such value-added services can increase customer engagement and strengthen brand loyalty.
7. **Focus on Age-Specific Marketing Strategies**
   - Since age significantly influences perceptions regarding real-time order tracking and delivery professionalism, retailers should customize communication and service features according to different age groups.
   - Younger consumers may appreciate advanced tracking features, while older consumers may benefit from simplified interfaces and additional customer support.
8. **Maintain Product Quality and Packaging Standards**
   - Proper packaging and quality control measures should be adopted to minimize damage during transportation and preserve product freshness.
   - Consistent product quality can positively influence consumer perception and long-term satisfaction.
9. **Encourage Consumer Reviews and Feedback**
   - As respondents highly rely on online reviews, retailers should encourage genuine customer feedback and actively address negative reviews.

- This can improve credibility and assist potential customers in making informed purchasing decisions.

10. **Promote Digital Awareness and Trust**
    - Educational campaigns and awareness programs can help consumers understand online shopping features, digital payments, order tracking systems, and security measures.
    - Such initiatives can further increase the adoption of online grocery shopping, especially among less experienced users.

Conclusion

The present study examined consumer perception towards online grocery products and the influence of add-on value strategies among consumers in Coimbatore city. The findings reveal that online grocery shopping has gained substantial acceptance among consumers due to its convenience, accessibility, product variety, and time-saving benefits. A majority of respondents expressed positive perceptions regarding online grocery platforms, particularly with respect to online reviews, real-time order tracking, user-friendly interfaces, product quality, and timely delivery services.

The demographic analysis indicates that most respondents belong to the economically active age groups and represent diverse educational, occupational, and income backgrounds. The study further established that demographic factors, particularly age, significantly influence consumer perceptions regarding real-time order tracking and the professionalism of delivery personnel.

The Garrett Ranking analysis identified delivery charges and hidden costs as the most critical challenges faced by consumers, followed by customer service inefficiencies and delivery delays. These issues highlight the need for online grocery retailers to improve operational efficiency and customer support systems.

The study concludes that add-on value strategies such as loyalty rewards, cashback offers, promotional discounts, personalized services, and efficient delivery systems play a vital role in shaping positive consumer perceptions and enhancing customer satisfaction. When effectively implemented, these strategies not only increase perceived value but also strengthen customer loyalty and repurchase intentions.

Overall, the future growth of online grocery retailing depends on the ability of e-commerce platforms to deliver superior value, maintain service quality, address consumer concerns, and continuously innovate according to changing customer expectations. By focusing on customer-centric value-added services, online grocery retailers can achieve sustainable growth and strengthen their competitive position in the evolving digital marketplace.

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