

## Consumer Preferences in Online Food Delivery Systems: An Analytical Study with a Focus on Coimbatore District

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### ABSTRACT

The online food delivery services in India have experienced a notable shift in tastes in recent years, reflecting the changing culinary scene and consumer behaviors in the country. Due to the growing popularity of smartphones and the rapid rate of urbanization, Indians are increasingly using digital platforms to fulfill their culinary desires. This transition has resulted in an abundance of options for consumers, each providing distinctive characteristics, varied culinary styles, and effortless user interactions. Convenience, affordability, variety, and reliability are important elements that influence user preferences in the dynamic and competitive online meal delivery business in India. This study evaluates the client preferences about online food delivery systems, specifically focusing on the Coimbatore district.

**Keywords:** preferences, online food delivery, competitive market, coimbatore district

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the proliferation of technology and the growing need for ease has revolutionized the process of ordering and savoring food. Online food delivery platforms have become a popular solution that links hungry customers with a diverse range of restaurants and cuisines, providing convenient and efficient delivery services directly to their homes. These applications have transformed the food sector by offering a quick and effective solution for consumers to fulfill their needs without the need to go outside their houses. Online meal delivery software function as a platform that unites clients, restaurants, and delivery staff. The platform provides a user-friendly interface that enables clients to easily navigate among a wide variety of eateries, peruse menus, and effortlessly place orders using their smartphones or PCs. These platforms utilize the capabilities of the internet and mobile technology to offer users a smooth and effortless ordering experience. Online meal delivery solutions encompass several essential components and features:

**Restaurant Selection:** Online meal delivery platforms collaborate with a diverse range of local eateries, encompassing both well-known fast food franchises and upscale gourmet businesses. These platforms offer clients a wide selection of eateries, frequently including reviews, ratings, and menus to assist users in making well-informed choices. Menu Exploration: Users have the ability to navigate through digital menus from different restaurants that are accessible on the site. These menus usually contain comprehensive explanations of the foods, ingredients, prices, and even allergen information, to accommodate various dietary choices and constraints.

**Customization & Special Requests:** Customers have the option to personalize their orders by choosing specific ingredients or making alterations to accommodate their preferences. Users can modify their meals to their liking, which guarantees a good dining experience.

**Efficient Ordering Process:** Online food delivery programs simplify the process of placing orders, allowing users to easily select items, indicate quantities, and provide delivery information, including the address and chosen payment method. The applications also provide safe online payment methods, such as credit cards, digital wallets, and cash on delivery.

**Real-Time Order Tracking:** After an order is confirmed, clients have the ability to monitor its progress in real-time. This feature offers clarity and enables consumers to precisely gauge the estimated delivery time. Updates are commonly delivered via notifications or within the application itself.

**Delivery Logistics:** Online food delivery programs streamline the delivery process by allocating orders to delivery professionals, commonly known as "delivery partners" or "riders." These personnel collect the meal from the restaurant and guarantee its timely and secure delivery to the customer's destination. GPS technology can be utilized by advanced apps to optimize routes and reduce delivery times.

**Ratings and Reviews:** Once consumers have received their orders, they can assess their overall experience and provide feedback for the restaurant, delivery service, or both. This feedback system serves the purpose of upholding quality standards and enabling prospective users to make well-informed selections by considering the experiences of past customers. Online food delivery software often provide loyalty programs, reward points, and discounts as incentives to promote consumer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. These incentives can vary from complimentary shipping to exclusive offers and promotional discounts.

**Supplementary Characteristics:** Certain applications extend beyond the fundamental food delivery services and provide further functionalities like advance ordering, table reservations, and group ordering, thereby improving the overall convenience and usefulness of the platform.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a study conducted by Jaiswal (2016), the researcher examined the influence of online meal delivery services on the growth of the restaurant industry in India. The primary aim of the study was to identify the factors contributing to the growing demand for online meal delivery services in India. The secondary data utilized in this inquiry. The expansion of online meal delivery services can be attributed to several causes, including changing customer preferences, rising earnings, and an increase in the number of employed women (18). The primary barriers to the growth of the online meal delivery industry in India are the lengthy delivery times, fragmented supply chains, limited investment, inadequate workforce, and subpar quality.

In 2017, Parashar and Ghadiyali conducted a study analyzing the attitudes and opinions of customers towards digital food service applications. The researchers analyzed the factors that affect how customers perceive food delivery applications, as well as the digital meal delivery apps that are most commonly utilized. Both primary and secondary sources have contributed to the compilation of data. The whole sample consisted of 129 respondents. The research uses Chi square, Cronbach's alpha, weighted average, and descriptive analysis as instruments for analysis and conclusion-making. Foodpanda was found to be the preferred food application among users, surpassing Swiggy and Zomato.

In a study conducted by Trivedi (2018), the researcher investigated the viewpoints of Indian consumers regarding the process of purchasing meals online. A total of fifty-five participants contributed primary data. The samples were selected using convenience sampling. He concluded that online ordering sparked the interest of people, particularly the younger generation in India. In India, the conventional methods of acquiring food, such as eating out or putting orders at restaurants, remain popular among the population.

Sing and Kaur (2018) assessed the satisfaction of customers with online fast food ordering. The growth of online food ordering was decelerating due to the widespread availability and affordability of internet access, as well as the rising utilization of electronic devices among the local population. This study employed an exploratory research technique. The study's sample consisted of two hundred users who used the programs for online meal ordering. The core data for the study was collected through face-to-face interviews and a standardized questionnaire. Two statistical approaches, correlation and Chi square test, have been utilized for analysis. The study's findings indicate that 32.5% of respondents cited convenience (online or mobile app), product variety, and delivery speed as the primary factors influencing their decision to make online purchases. Approximately 27.5% of respondents emphasized the significance of food freshness, whereas 10% highlighted the importance of after-sale services. When placing an order for pizza on the internet, Pizza Hut and Domino's emerged as the most widely favored brands, with a significant number of participants being knowledgeable about the marketing strategies employed by these companies.

Roopa and Kumar did a study on food ordering and digitization in Bangalore in the year 2020. The primary objectives of this study were to identify the factors that contribute to customer satisfaction levels and consumer preferences for online food aggregators. In order to achieve these objectives, a total of 318 clients based in Bangalore were collected using Google forms and surveys. The samples were obtained by purposive sampling methods and convenience sampling. The data was assessed using chi-square, multiple regression, and factor analysis. The choice of consumers to buy meals online instead of dining out at restaurants was mostly affected by factors such as search engine rankings, carousel ads, live order monitoring, delivery timeframes, coupon codes, discounts, and notifications on mobile devices.

### III. SAMPLING DEFINITION

The Sample Design is stratified random sampling through which 600 samples have been selected by the researcher to carry out the study to assess the preference of customers in online food delivery system.

### IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To assess the preference of online food delivery system with special reference to Coimbatore district.

### V. STATISTICAL TOOL USED

Garret Ranking

### VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 6.1 Garrett Ranking Technique

This technique is used to rank the preference of the respondents on different aspects of the study. The order of merit given by the respondents were converted into ranks by using the following formula.

<b>Percentage Position = <math>\frac{100(R_{IJ} - 0.5)}{N_j}</math></b>	
Where $R_{IJ}$	= Rank given for I <sup>th</sup> factor by J <sup>th</sup> individual
$N_j$	= Number of factors ranked by J <sup>th</sup> individual

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Henry E.Garret. Then for each factor the scores of individual respondents are added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom the scores were added. These mean scores for all the factors were arranged in the descending order, ranks given and most important aspects identified.

**Table 1:** Rank the Reason for Preference of Online Food Delivery System with Special Reference to Tirupur District

S.No	Factors	Total score	Mean score	Rank
1	Advertisement	3972.5	5.68	III
2	Friends & Relatives	4158.5	5.94	I
3	Offers & coupons from other Apps	3904.5	5.58	IV
4	No time for preparing(Time saving)	3391	4.84	VI
5	Money saving	4143	5.92	II
6	Different food menu	3725.5	5.32	V
7	Diverse Restaurants	3167	4.52	VII
8	Hot& fresh food	2819	4.03	VIII
9	Hygiene food	2779.5	3.97	IX
10	Sufficient quantity of food	2700	3.90	XI
11	Different types of mode of payment	2500	3.60	XV
12	Prise Comparison	2655	3.82	XIV
13	Convenient Delivery charges	2640	3.79	XIII
14	Large number of reviews	2690	3.89	XII
15	Door Delivery option	2764	3.95	X

Source: Primary Data and computed

The table above displays the ranking of reasons for the preference of online meal delivery systems, specifically in the Coimbatore district. The survey participants picked "Friends & Relatives" as the top choice, with a total score of 4158.5 and a mean score of 5.94. The category of "Money saving" achieved a second-place ranking, with a total score of 4143 and a mean score of 5.92. The category "Offers & coupons from other Apps" ranked third and fourth, with total scores of 3972.5 and

3904.5, and mean scores of 5.68 and 5.58, respectively. The food menu labeled as "Different" achieved a ranking of fifth place, with a total score of 3725.5 and a mean score of 5.32. "No time for preparing" ranked sixth with a total score of 3391 and a mean score of 4.84. "Diverse Restaurants" and "Hot & fresh food" were seventh and eighth, respectively, with total scores of 3167 and 2819. The mean scores for these establishments were 4.52 and 4.03, respectively. The category of "Hygiene food" achieved a ranking of ninth place, with a total score of 2779.5 and a mean score of 3.97. The "Door Delivery option" ranked eighth with a total score of 2764 and a mean score of 3.95. Furthermore, the factors that ranked eleventh to fifteenth in consumer preferences were an ample supply of food, a high volume of reviews, reasonable delivery charges, the ability to compare prices, and a variety of payment options.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The rise in popularity of online food delivery services in recent years is a result of changing consumer tastes. Users value the convenience and diverse array of food choices accessible at their disposal, enabling them to place orders from a vast selection of eateries and culinary styles. The popularity of online food delivery applications is influenced by various aspects, such as the time-saving convenience they offer, the ability to make contactless transactions, the real-time order tracking feature, and the convenience of digital payment alternatives. Furthermore, user evaluations and ratings have a substantial impact on influencing preferences, as they offer transparency and aid in making well-informed decisions. The continuous expansion and broadening of the online meal delivery sector suggest that these preferences are expected to keep changing, driven by technical progress, concerns about sustainability, and alterations in dining patterns. In general, internet meal delivery programs have revolutionized the process of ordering food by providing convenience, a wide range of options, and improved effectiveness. The company offers a cohesive digital platform that links clients, restaurants, and delivery staff, resulting in a mutually beneficial situation for all parties concerned. With the continuous advancement of technology, these applications are expected to further develop, bringing in novel functionalities and enhancing the entire consumer experience in the realm of food delivery.

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