**Online Food Purchasing Habit Among the Hostel Students in Anand City**

# **ABSTRACT**

This research explores the online food delivery consumption patterns among college students in Anand City, focusing on the influence of area of residence (rural vs. urban) on purchasing behavior. Data collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire reveals significant differences in frequency and preferences between rural and urban users. While awareness of online food delivery services is high (94%), urban respondents demonstrate a higher tendency for frequent purchases compared to rural counterparts, with weekly and monthly orders being more common in urban areas. Platforms like Swiggy and Zomato dominate the market, preferred for their reliability and variety, whereas other services see minimal usage. Fast delivery, discounts, and reasonable pricing emerge as key factors influencing purchase decisions. Despite growing acceptance, a significant portion of respondents still prefer cooking at home or dining out, primarily due to concerns about food quality, hygiene, and delivery costs. Payment preferences reveal a strong inclination toward digital payments, especially UPI, with cash on delivery remaining popular. Customer satisfaction is highest for Swiggy and Zomato, while other platforms lag behind. Respondents emphasize the need for improvements in delivery charges, food quality, and service speed to enhance the overall experience. The study highlights the evolving food consumption landscape in Anand, emphasizing the growing importance of online food delivery while underscoring challenges related to affordability, trust, and service quality.

**Keywords:** Online Food Purchasing, Frequency of Purchase, Area of Residence, Rural vs. Urban Consumers, Consumer Behavior, Chi-Squared Test, Statistical Analysis, Dependency Relationship, E-commerce in Rural Areas, Urban Purchasing Trends

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# **INTRODUCTION**

The online food delivery industry in India has undergone rapid growth over the past decade, driven by factors such as increased smartphone penetration, widespread internet access, and changing consumer lifestyles. Platforms like Zomato, Swiggy, Domino's, and others have reshaped how people order and consume food. With urbanization and busy work schedules, consumers increasingly prefer the convenience and variety offered by these services. However, despite their popularity, challenges such as operational costs, quality control, customer trust, and delivery efficiency remain. This section reviews key literature that explores various aspects of the online food delivery industry, consumer perceptions, and the factors influencing its adoption and sustainability in India

The online food delivery market in India has gained significant momentum, largely driven by applications like Zomato and Swiggy. These platforms have capitalized on technological advancements, changing lifestyles, and the growing demand for convenience. An analysis of consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions reveals that these platforms are widely preferred for their ease of use, variety of options, and attractive deals. However, studies highlight that the consumers’ intentions are influenced not only by convenience but also by factors like delivery speed, food quality, pricing, and overall customer experience. The platforms’ ability to address these factors directly impacts user retention and loyalty, which are critical for sustaining growth in a highly competitive market.

Consumer satisfaction during critical periods, such as the COVID-19 lockdown, further showcased the importance of online food delivery services. Research suggests that during the pandemic, university students and other consumers heavily relied on these platforms due to restrictions on dining out. The findings highlight that satisfaction and loyalty were driven by factors like safety measures, contactless delivery, and the ability to fulfill urgent needs. By addressing these concerns, platforms like Zomato and Swiggy managed to maintain their customer base and build trust during uncertain times.

The dynamics of customer satisfaction in the online food delivery industry also underscore the importance of personalized marketing and customer-centric approaches. Studies on the Indian market reveal that while platforms have been successful in delivering on convenience, challenges such as high delivery charges, inconsistent service quality, and lack of transparency in pricing often lead to customer dissatisfaction. Addressing these concerns through strategies like transparent pricing, loyalty programs, and improved delivery reliability has been key to ensuring long-term customer satisfaction.

The success of food delivery applications in India is attributed to a mix of strategic marketing, innovation, and adaptability. The use of data analytics and AI to personalize user experiences, coupled with strong promotional campaigns, has helped platforms dominate the market. Despite the stiff competition, platforms like Zomato and Swiggy have managed to lead by constantly evolving their services to meet customer expectations. However, challenges such as operational costs, regional competition, and customer retention remain critical, requiring platforms to continuously innovate and adapt their strategies to sustain growth.

# **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

1. To analyze the relationship between the frequency of purchasing food online and the area of residence (rural vs. urban).
2. To compare the purchasing patterns of rural and urban respondents across different frequency categories (daily, weekly, monthly, rarely, and never).
3. To identify the extent to which urban respondents exhibit higher online food purchasing frequency compared to rural respondents.
4. To evaluate whether the area of residence significantly influences the purchasing behavior of respondents regarding food orders online.

# **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The relevant data for the research study was collected by using a primary survey done by a questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled out by respondents using Google Forms. In the present study, there were around 100 number of respondents. Respondents were students and they were randomly selected from colleges in Anand City. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

# **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## **4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The demographic characteristics of respondents from Colleges of Anand City were surveyed, covering various aspects such as age, gender, educational level, occupation of family, monthly family income, health consciousness and Area of residence.

## **4.1.1 Age distribution**

The age distribution shows a concentration in the younger age groups. The largest age group was 18-22 years, making up 72% of the total respondents. This was followed by those 23-27 years (15%), those aged Below 18 (10%). and those aged Above 27 years (3%).

Table 1 Age Wise Distribution of Respondent **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Age** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Below 18 | 10 | 10 |
| **2** | 18-22 | 72 | 72 |
| **3** | 23-27 | 15 | 15 |
| **4** | Above 27 | 3 | 3 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **4.1.2 Gender Distribution**

The gender distribution of the respondents indicates a significantly higher numbers of males compared to females. Males constituted 84% of the total sample, while Females accounted for 16%.

Table 2 Gender Wise Distribution of Respondent **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Gender** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Male | 84 | 84 |
| **2** | Female | 16 | 16 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

**4.1.3** **Educational qualification:**

Respondents' educational qualifications were divided into three categories. The majority of respondents were undergraduates, comprising 74% of the total, while postgraduates accounted for 33% and only Doctorates accounted for 4%.

Table 3 Educational Wise Distribution of Respondent **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Educational** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| 1 | Undergraduate | 74 | 74 |
| 2 | Postgraduate | 22 | 22 |
|  | Doctorate | 4 | 4 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **Area of** **Residence:**

Respondents' area of residence was divided into two categories. Rural 59% & Urban 41%.

Table 4 Area Wise Distribution of Respondent **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Area** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Rural | 59 | 59 |
| **2** | Urban | 41 | 41 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

* + 1. **Monthly family income:**

Monthly family income was categorized into Four brackets. The most common income bracket was 50000 - 10000 INR, representing 38% of the respondents. The second most common income range was 10000 - 50000 INR, comprising 35% of respondents. The income ranges of Above 100000 INR (16%), and Below 10000 INR (11%) followed.

Table 5 Monthly family income Wise Distribution of Respondent **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Family Income (Monthly) (in Rupees)** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| **1** | Below 10000 | 11 | 11 |
| **2** | 10000 - 50000 | 35 | 35 |
| **3** | 50000 - 100000 | 38 | 38 |
| **4** | Above 100000 | 16 | 16 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **Health consciousness:**

Health conscious was categorized into five brackets. The most common health consciousness bracket was Conscious, representing 43% of the respondents. The second most common health consciousness range Moderate, comprising 37% of respondents. The health consciousness ranges of Highly conscious (20%), and other two bracket was zero percent.

Table 6 Health consciousness of respondents **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Health consciousness** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| **1** | Highly conscious | 20 | 20 |
| **2** | Conscious | 43 | 43 |
| **3** | Moderate | 37 | 37 |
| **4** | Not conscious | 0 | 0 |
| **5** | Not at all conscious | 0 | 0 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **Awareness of online food delivery services available in Anand**

The Table indicates that 94% of respondents are aware of online food delivery services available in Anand city. This is a significant proportion, highlighting the widespread recognition of such services in the area. Only 6% of respondents are not aware of online food delivery services in Anand city, demonstrating their limited reach among a small segment of the population.

Table 7 Awareness of online food delivery services of respondents **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Awareness** | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
| **1** | Yes | 94 | 94 |
| **2** | No | 6 | 6 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

The awareness of online food delivery services in Anand city is depicted in the Table.

## **4.4** **Frequency of Purchasing Food Online**

Table 8 illustrates the frequency of online food purchases among 100 respondents. The majority of respondents (55.32%) reported that they rarely purchase food online, followed by 19.15% who do so monthly. Only 11.70% purchase food online weekly, while daily purchases are minimal at 4.26%. Additionally, 15.96% of respondents stated they never buy food online. This indicates that online food purchasing is relatively infrequent among the surveyed individuals.

Table 8 Frequency of Purchasing Food Online of respondents **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr no.** | **Time of Purchasing** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Daily | 4 | 4.26 |
| **2** | Weekly | 11 | 11.70 |
| **3** | Monthly | 18 | 19.15 |
| **4** | Rarely | 52 | 55.32 |
| **5** | Never | 15 | 15.96 |
|  | **Total** | **94** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **4.5** **Awareness vs. Area of Residence**

Table 9 Awareness vs. Area of Residence for Purchasing Food Online of respondents **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Residence** | **Aware respondents** | **Frequency** |
| **Rural** | 55 | 58.51 |
| **Urban** | 39 | 41.49 |
| **Total** | **94** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

A survey was conducted to analyze the relationship between awareness and the area of residence (rural or urban). The data revealed that out of 94 aware respondents, 55 were from rural areas and 39 were from urban areas. Similarly, among 6 not aware respondents, 4 were rural, and 2 were urban. A chi-squared test was applied to determine whether awareness is dependent on the area of residence.

The calculated χ2\chi^2χ2 value was **0.155** (df = 1, p > 0.05), which is significantly lower than the critical value of **3.841** at the 5% significance level. Thus, there is no significant relationship between awareness and the area of residence. Awareness appears to be independent of whether respondents reside in rural or urban areas.

4**.6 Analysis of Frequency of Purchasing Food Online by Area of Residence**

Table 10 Analysis Frequency of Purchasing Food Online by Area of Residence **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Residence** | **Daily** | **Weekly** | **Monthly** | **Rarely** | **Never** | **Total** |
| **Rural** | 2 | 3 | 7 | 35 | 8 | **2** |
| **Urban** | 2 | 8 | 11 | 15 | 3 | **2** |
| **Total** | **3** | **12** | **18** | **52** | **15** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

The analysis reveals that rural respondents (55 out of 94) are less frequent purchasers of food online, with the majority (63.64%) purchasing rarely. In contrast, urban respondents show a relatively higher tendency toward weekly (20.51%) and monthly (28.21%) purchases. While daily online food purchases are minimal in both groups, rural areas have a higher share of those who never purchase food online (14.55%) compared to urban areas (7.69%). Overall, the data suggests that urban residents are more engaged in regular online food purchasing than their rural counterparts.

A chi-squared test was conducted to determine if purchasing frequency depended on the area of residence. The test yielded χ2=12.394\chi^2 = 12.394χ2=12.394 (df = 4, p < 0.05), indicating a significant relationship. Thus, purchasing frequency is dependent on whether respondents reside in rural or urban areas.

## **4.7 Preference for Online Food Delivery & Dining Out**

The data shows that 40% of respondents do not prefer online food delivery over dining out, while an equal proportion (40%) prefer it only sometimes. Only 20% of respondents consistently prefer online food delivery. This suggests that while there is some interest in online food delivery, traditional dining out remains more favored or equally preferred by most respondents.

Table 11 Study of Preference for Online Food Delivery & Dining Out **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr No.** | **Time of Purchasing** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Yes | 20 | 20 |
| **2** | No | 40 | 40 |
| **3** | Sometimes | 40 | 40 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

Source: Primary data

## **4.8** **Frequency of Online Food Purchases Across Platforms**

The data shows varying levels of usage across different online food platforms. The data indicates that Swiggy and Zomato are the most frequently used platforms for online food purchases, with Swiggy showing the highest number of weekly (10) and monthly (14) users, followed by Zomato with 23 monthly and 5 weekly users. Other platforms like Zepto, Blinkit, Amul Green, and La Pinoz are rarely or never used by the majority of respondents, as indicated by high “Never” frequencies (e.g., Zepto: 82, Blinkit: 73). This suggests that food delivery aggregators like Swiggy and Zomato have significantly higher market penetration and usage compared to brand-specific or grocery-based platforms among the respondents.

Table 12 Frequency of Online Food Purchases Across Platforms **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sr. no. | Online Platforms | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Rarely | Never |
| 1 | ZEPTO | 3 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 82 |
| 2 | SWIGGY | 2 | 10 | 14 | 48 | 26 |
| 3 | ZOMATO | 3 | 5 | 23 | 56 | 16 |
| 4 | BLINK IT | 3 | 1 | 6 | 56 | 73 |
| 5 | DOMINO'S | 2 | 5 | 7 | 34 | 52 |
| 6 | AMUL GREEN | 3 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 81 |
| 7 | LA PINOZ | 3 | 3 | 8 | 24 | 62 |
| 8 | Other online application | 3 | 1 | 2 | 15 | 69 |

Source: Primary data

**4.9** **Frequency of Different Food Types Ordered Online**

The data reveals diverse preferences for online food orders across different categories. Among various food types ordered online, Pizza and Burgers are the most frequently ordered, with Pizza having the highest share of monthly (16) and weekly (9) orders. Other popular items include Paubhaji and Indian Cuisine, though these are ordered less frequently and are marked by higher "Rarely" and "Never" responses. Food categories such as Mag Pulav, Chinese Dishes, Desserts/Beverages, and Health/Fitness Food show low regular ordering and a high percentage of never ordered responses (over 60%). This suggests that fast food items like pizza and burgers dominate online food preferences, while traditional or niche food items are less frequently ordered.

Table 13 Frequency of Different Food Types Ordered Online **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sr. no. |  Type of food | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Rarely | Never |
| 1 | Pizza | 4 | 9 | 16 | 41 | 30 |
| 2 | Burgers | 2 | 8 | 14 | 44 | 32 |
| 3 | Paubhaji | 4 | 2 | 11 | 31 | 52 |
| 4 | Mag pulau | 2 | 6 | 8 | 21 | 63 |
| 5 | Chainies Dishes | 3 | 4 | 8 | 15 | 70 |
| 6 | Indian Cuisine | 5 | 2 | 13 | 20 | 60 |
| 7 | Desserts/Beverages | 4 | 4 | 7 | 23 | 62 |
| 8 | Health/Fitness Food | 4 | 2 | 8 | 19 | 67 |

Source: Primary data

## **4.10** **Preferred Payment Methods for Online Food Orders**

The data highlights the preferred payment methods for online food orders. The most preferred payment method among respondents is UPI (e.g., GPay, PhonePe), used by 65 out of 94 respondents. This is followed by Cash on Delivery, preferred by 49 respondents. Credit/Debit cards are used by very few (4 respondents), and another 4 respondents reported not using any payment method, possibly indicating non-users of online food services. The data highlights a clear shift toward digital payments, especially UPI, for online food transactions. This suggests that digital payment methods, particularly UPI, have become the dominant mode of transaction, though cash remains a substantial alternative.

Table 14 Preferred Payment Methods for Online Food Orders **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Payment Methods** | **Frequency** |
| **1** | Cash on Delivery | 49 |
| **2** | UPI (Gpay, Phone Pay, Other...) | 65 |
| **3** | Credit card/ Debit card | 4 |
| **4** | No | 4 |

Source: Primary data

**4.11** **Average Monthly Spending on Online Food Orders**

The majority of respondents (65%) spend less than ₹500 per month on online food orders, while 23% spend between ₹500 and ₹1,000. Notably, no respondents reported spending between ₹1,001 and ₹2,000, and only 6% spend more than ₹2,000 monthly. This indicates that most users keep their online food expenses relatively low, suggesting either infrequent ordering or preference for budget-friendly options. This suggests that while many people use online food delivery services, most are spending modestly, with high-spending habits being relatively uncommon.

Table 15 Average Monthly Spending on Online Food Orders **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Spend On Online Food Orders** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **1** | Less than ₹500 | 70 | 65 |
| **2** | ₹500 - ₹1,000 | 24 | 23 |
| **3** | ₹1,001 - ₹2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| **4** | More than ₹2,000 | 6 | 6 |

Source: Primary data

## **4.12 Preferred Time of Day for Placing Online Food Orders**

Table 16 Preferred Time of Day for Placing Online Food Orders **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Time of Day** | **Frequency** |
| **1** | Breakfast | 10 |
| **2** | Lunch | 23 |
| **3** | Dinner | 56 |
| **4** | Late-night snacks | 40 |
| **5** | Evening Snacks | 19 |

Source: Primary data

The majority of respondents prefer to place online food orders during dinner time (56), followed by late-night snacks (40). Lunch is the next most popular time (23), while fewer respondents order during evening snacks (19) and breakfast (10). This suggests that dinner and late-night snacking are the peak times for online food ordering among the surveyed group. This suggests that dinner and late-night snacks are the peak times for online food orders.

 **4.13 Factors Influencing the Decision to Purchase Food Online**

Table 17 Study of Factors Influencing the Decision to Purchase Food Online **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Decision to Purchase** | **Frequency** |
| **1** | Convenience | 26 |
| **2** | Reasonable price | 33 |
| **3** | Loyalty / Preference | 20 |
| **4** | Reward | 18 |
| **5** | Discounts/Offers | 42 |
| **6** | Variety of food options | 29 |
| **7** | Fast delivery | 48 |
| **8** | Food Quality and Hygiene | 26 |

Source: Primary data

The data highlights several factors that influence online food purchasing decisions. The most influential factor in deciding to purchase food online is fast delivery (48 respondents), followed by discounts/offers (42) and reasonable price (33). Other notable factors include variety of food options (29), convenience and food quality and hygiene (both 26), as well as loyalty/preferences (20) and rewards (18). This indicates that speed, cost savings, and promotions strongly impact online food buying decisions. This suggests that customers prioritize speed, affordability, and diverse options when choosing to order food online.

**4.14** **Customer Satisfaction with Online Food Delivery Platforms**

Table 17 Customer Satisfaction with Online Food Delivery Platforms **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Platforms** | **very dissatisfied** | **dissatisfied** | **neutral** | **satisfied** | **Very satisfied** |
| **1** | Zepto | 27 | 13 | 36 | 10 | 8 |
| **2** | Swiggy | 14 | 7 | 27 | 32 | 14 |
| **3** | Zomato | 12 | 12 | 16 | 34 | 20 |
| **4** | Blink It | 26 | 15 | 31 | 17 | 5 |
| **5** | Domino's | 25 | 12 | 32 | 16 | 9 |
| **6** | Amul Green | 23 | 11 | 39 | 13 | 8 |
| **7** | La Pinoz | 22 | 13 | 33 | 14 | 12 |
| **8** | Other online application | 31 | 9 | 39 | 9 | 6 |

Source: Primary data

The data indicates varying levels of customer satisfaction across online food delivery platforms. Among the platforms, Zomato and Swiggy have the highest levels of customer satisfaction, with 54% and 46% of respondents rating them as satisfied or very satisfied respectively. In contrast, platforms like Zepto, Blink It, Domino’s, Amul Green, and Other online applications have a higher proportion of respondents who are very dissatisfied or dissatisfied, indicating lower overall satisfaction. Many respondents remain neutral across most platforms, but Zomato and Swiggy clearly lead in customer approval. This suggests that Swiggy and Zomato lead in customer satisfaction, while other platforms struggle to meet user expectations.

## **4.15** **Desired Improvements in Online Food Delivery Services**

Table 18 Desired Improvements in Online Food Delivery Services **(n=94)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sr. no.** | **Improvements** | **No.** |
| 1 | Better food quality | 44 |
| 2 | Faster delivery | 42 |
| 3 | Lower delivery charges | 49 |
| 4 | More discounts/offers | 37 |
| 5 | Transparent Pricing | 37 |

Source: Primary data

The data highlights key areas where users would like to see improvements in online food delivery services. Respondents primarily desire lower delivery charges (49), followed closely by requests for better food quality (44) and faster delivery (42). Additionally, more discounts/offers and transparent pricing are also important improvements sought by customers, with 37 respondents each indicating these needs. These highlights cost and service efficiency as key areas for enhancing customer satisfaction in online food delivery, suggesting that most feedback focuses on affordability, speed, and quality. These insights indicate a demand for services that balance cost-effectiveness with reliability and quality.

## **4.16** **Reasons for Not Purchasing Online Food**

Table 19 Reasons for Not Purchasing Online Food **(n=100)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sr. no. | particular | No. |
| 1 | I prefer cooking or eating homemade food. | 46 |
| 2 | I am concerned about food quality and hygiene. | 42 |
| 3 | I find online food expensive. | 33 |
| 4 | Delivery charges are too high. | 35 |
| 5 | I do not trust online platforms. | 17 |
| 6 | The delivery time is too long. | 19 |
| 7 | I prefer dining out or takeaway. | 26 |
| 8 | I am not familiar with online food ordering platforms. | 9 |
| 9 | I had bad experiences with online food orders in the past. | 13 |
| 10 | Other | 4 |

Source: Primary data

The data reveals that The primary reasons for not purchasing food online are a preference for cooking or eating homemade food (46%) and concerns about food quality and hygiene (42%). Other significant factors include perceiving online food as expensive (33%) and high delivery charges (35%). Trust issues with online platforms (17%), long delivery times (19%), and a preference for dining out or takeaway (26%) also contribute. A smaller number of respondents cited unfamiliarity with online ordering (9%) and past bad experiences (13%) as reasons. This suggests that both cost and quality concerns, along with personal habits, influence reluctance toward online food purchases. These findings suggest that cost, trust, and quality are key barriers for potential users of online food delivery services.

# **SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION**

The study surveyed 100 respondents, primarily college students from Anand City, to understand their demographic profiles, awareness, preferences, and behaviors related to online food delivery services. The majority of respondents were young (72% aged 18-22), predominantly male (84%), and mostly undergraduates (74%). A significant proportion resided in rural areas (59%), with diverse family income levels and moderate to high health consciousness.

Awareness of online food delivery services was very high at 94%, indicating widespread recognition in the region. However, actual usage frequency varied, with 55% purchasing online rarely and 16% never purchasing food online. Urban respondents demonstrated significantly higher frequency of online food purchases compared to rural counterparts.

Swiggy and Zomato emerged as the dominant platforms, reflecting greater market penetration and customer preference, while other platforms like Zepto and Blinkit had minimal usage. Fast food items such as pizza and burgers were the most ordered food types online, especially during dinner and late-night hours.

UPI was the most preferred payment method, highlighting a trend towards digital transactions, though cash on delivery remained popular. Most respondents spent modestly on online food orders, with 65% spending less than ₹500 monthly.

Key factors influencing online food purchasing decisions included fast delivery, discounts/offers, reasonable pricing, and variety of food options. Customer satisfaction was highest for Swiggy and Zomato, whereas other platforms received mixed or low ratings. Respondents expressed a strong desire for improvements in delivery charges, food quality, and delivery speed.

Among those not purchasing food online, primary reasons were a preference for homemade food, concerns about food quality and hygiene, and perceptions of high cost and delivery charges. Trust issues and past negative experiences also influenced non-adoption.

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# **CONCLUSION**

The study indicates high awareness of online food delivery services in Anand City, with 94% of respondents familiar with these platforms. However, actual usage remains limited, especially in rural areas where purchases are less frequent compared to urban counterparts. Swiggy and Zomato dominate the market, enjoying higher customer satisfaction and frequent usage. Fast delivery, reasonable pricing, and discounts strongly influence online food purchasing decisions. Most consumers prefer digital payments, particularly UPI, while spending modest amounts monthly. Despite growing interest, many respondents still favor homemade food due to concerns about quality, hygiene, and cost. To increase adoption, online food services must focus on improving food quality, reducing delivery charges, and ensuring faster deliveries. Enhancing trust and transparency will be vital to converting hesitant users. Overall, while online food delivery is expanding, addressing affordability, quality, and service reliability remains key to capturing a larger market share in Anand City.

**DISCLAIMER:**

**Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.**

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