

“Consumer Behavior and E-commerce Adoption in the Food Industry in Saudi Arabia”

Researcher:

Ahlam Sultan Almutairi
MBA-DM Digital Marketing
Saudi Electronic University

Supervisor:

Dr.Sager Alharthi



<https://doi.org/10.36571/ajsp741>

Abstract:

Consumer behavior and the adoption of e-commerce by the food industry are crucial during Saudi Arabia's digital revolution. As the Kingdom adopts technology and online food platforms grow, businesses must understand consumer preferences to compete. Shopping has gone digital thanks to smartphones and the internet. This required empirical research on food sector e-commerce adoption drivers, trends, and barriers. Strategic analysis must consider Saudi Arabia's socio-cultural fabric and consumer preferences, but global e-commerce trends are useful. This research examined e-commerce adoption drivers and barriers to help businesses improve marketing and consumer engagement, and policymakers target interventions to sustain growth and innovation in the Saudi Arabian food industry's growing e-commerce ecosystem. The study utilized a quantitative research design to investigate consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption in the Saudi Arabian food industry. Furthermore, integrating sustainability, ethical sourcing, and corporate social responsibility in digital strategies could enhance brand reputation and attract environmentally-conscious consumers. Exploring the convergence of online and offline retail, virtual reality shopping experiences, and the impact of social commerce trends may drive differentiation, competitive advantage, and leadership within the digital food retail space.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, E-commerce adoption, Saudi Arabia, Food industry, Digital transformation, Sustainability, Innovation

Introduction:

In the midst of rapid technological advancement and global integration, the world witnesses unprecedented growth, particularly in emerging economies like Saudi Arabia. The advent of digitalization has revolutionized various industries, including the food sector, reshaping consumer behavior and business practices. As humanity continues to evolve, our understanding of societal dynamics deepens, presenting new opportunities and challenges for businesses and policymakers alike. Consumer behavior and the adoption of e-commerce by the food industry are crucial during Saudi Arabia's digital revolution. As the Kingdom adopts technology and online food platforms grow, businesses must understand consumer preferences to compete. Shopping has gone digital thanks to smartphones and the internet (Hamli & Sobaih, 2023). This requires empirical research on food sector e-commerce adoption drivers, trends, and barriers. Strategic analysis must take into account Saudi Arabia's socio-cultural fabric and consumer preferences, but global e-commerce trends are useful. This research examines e-commerce adoption drivers and barriers to help businesses improve marketing and consumer engagement, and policymakers target interventions to sustain growth and innovation in the Saudi Arabian food industry's growing e-commerce ecosystem.

Problem of the Study

The rapid adoption of digital technologies in Saudi Arabia's food industry created both opportunities and challenges. Despite the growth in online food platforms and increasing consumer use of e-commerce, there was limited understanding of the specific factors driving or hindering e-commerce adoption within this sector. Companies lacked a comprehensive view of consumer behavior, preferences, and barriers to adoption, which were essential for competing effectively and enhancing customer engagement. Additionally, there was a need for strategic insights that considered Saudi Arabia's unique socio-cultural dynamics and aligned with global e-commerce trends. Without this knowledge, businesses struggled to implement effective marketing strategies, and policymakers missed key areas for promoting sustainable growth in the food e-commerce ecosystem.

This study aimed to address this gap by investigating the factors that influenced consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption in Saudi Arabia's food industry, providing actionable insights to enhance industry growth and sustainability.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H1: e-loyalty has a positive and significant impact on brand popularity among Saudi consumers in the food industry.
H2: e-trust has a positive and significant impact on brand popularity among Saudi consumers in the food industry.

- H3: e-satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on brand popularity among Saudi consumers in the food industry.
H4: Brand popularity has a positive and significant impact on online food purchase behavior among Saudi consumers in the food industry.
H5: Brand popularity mediates the relationship between consumer loyalty to e-commerce platforms and online food purchase behavior among Saudi consumers in the food industry.
H6: Brand popularity mediates the relationship between consumer trust in e-commerce platforms and online food purchase behavior among Saudi consumers in the food industry.
H7: Brand popularity mediates the relationship between consumer satisfaction with e-commerce platforms and online food purchase behavior among Saudi consumers in the food industry.

Objectives of the Study

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are tailored to investigate the intricacies of consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption within Saudi Arabia's food industry:

1. What factors drive consumer preferences and e-commerce adoption in the food industry in Saudi Arabia?
2. What are the key challenges hindering e-commerce adoption among food businesses in Saudi Arabia?

Primary Objective

Aligned with the research questions, the objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

To explore the critical drivers influencing consumer preferences and e-commerce adoption within the Saudi food industry.

Sub-objectives:

- Identify the essential skills and resources necessary for successful e-commerce implementation within food businesses.
- Examine the input factors crucial for overcoming barriers to e-commerce adoption in the food industry.

Importance of the Study

This study holds paramount significance for both managerial and academic realms, contributing to the understanding of consumer behavior and e-commerce dynamics within the Saudi food industry:

Managerial Relevance

The findings of this research offer actionable insights for food industry practitioners, enabling informed decision-making in navigating the e-commerce landscape and enhancing competitiveness.

Scientific Relevance

From a scholarly perspective, this study occupies a unique vantage point within the burgeoning field of e-commerce research, shedding light on previously unexplored facets of consumer behavior and market dynamics in Saudi Arabia. By illuminating the drivers and impediments of e-commerce adoption within the context of the Saudi food industry, this research contributes to the expanding corpus of knowledge, enriching our understanding of the evolving interplay between technology, culture, and commerce in the digital age.

Limitations of the Study

The consideration of future research fields is essential for an organization to be ahead of the trend, to understand the changing behaviors of the consumers, as well as to take advantage of emerging technologies for sustainable growth. Tracking longitudinal studies that record consumer choice, digital adoption phenomenon, and market trends over long intervals will lead to a more profound knowledge of changing consumer psychographics and digital consumption patterns. Comparative studies across different regions, cultures and market segments can reveal subtle differences in consumer behaviors, preferences and brand interactions, which can guide targeted marketing strategies and market expansion initiatives.

Moreover, investigating how the emergence of new technologies such as block chain, IoT, and AI affect supply chain management, customer experiences, and business sustainability within the digital food retail sector opens a wide field for increasing performance, customer engagement, and innovation. Considering consumer attitudes toward sustainability, ethical sourcing, and corporate social responsibility within the digital food retail space will help create eco-friendly marketing strategies, grow the brand reputation, and attract green-minded consumers. Apart from that, studying the convergence of offline and online retail experiences, the role of virtual reality in enhancing digital shopping experiences, and the influence of social commerce trends on consumer behaviors can lead to new ways of differentiation, competitive advantage, and market leadership in the digital food retail domain.

Terms and Definitions

E-commerce Adoption: Refers to the uptake and integration of digital platforms and online shopping tools by consumers and businesses, specifically within the food industry in Saudi Arabia. Adoption rates are influenced by factors such as convenience, trust, and availability of online services.

Consumer Behavior: The patterns, attitudes, and decision-making processes of Saudi consumers related to their engagement with e-commerce platforms. This includes preferences for online food purchases influenced by social, cultural, and technological factors.

E-Trust: The level of trust Saudi consumers place in online food platforms, largely influenced by platform security, data protection, and transparency in transactions. E-trust is crucial for building consumer loyalty and encouraging repeat purchases.

E-Loyalty: Refers to the commitment and repeat purchase behavior of Saudi consumers toward specific online food brands. E-loyalty is driven by factors such as satisfaction with the online shopping experience, brand reliability, and customer service.

E-Satisfaction: The satisfaction Saudi consumers feel from their online shopping experiences, measured by factors like product quality, service, ease of use, and overall fulfillment of expectations.

Social Media Influence: The role of social media platforms in shaping consumer decisions within the e-commerce space. In Saudi Arabia, brand popularity and recommendations on social media heavily impact consumer choices in the digital food sector.

Brand Popularity: The perceived attractiveness and trustworthiness of a food brand on digital platforms. Popular brands on social media are more likely to influence purchase decisions among Saudi consumers.

Literature Review (Framework and Previous Studies)

Literature review content from the source document...

Technology, cultural, and market constraints affect food business e-commerce adoption and consumer behavior. This section reviews Saudi food sector customer behavior and e-commerce adoption research.

Consumer Behavior in E-commerce

Saudi food e-commerce customers are affected by changing tastes, socio-cultural norms, and technology. In cities that value convenience and time-saving, online grocery and meal purchasing is growing as the Kingdom digitizes. Due to hectic schedules and traffic, Saudi customers are using e-commerce platforms to speed up their purchasing, stressing the importance of convenience in food industry e-commerce (Hamli & Sobaih, 2023). Saudis value online security, trust, and authenticity. Saudi consumers trust e-commerce sites with secure payment methods, clear product information, and fast, reliable service. E-commerce platforms must earn the confidence to overcome skepticism and promote adoption among Saudi consumers, who appreciate traditional business methods. Product assortment affects the Saudi food industry's e-commerce consumer behavior. Local foodstuffs, imported goods, and specialist items for Saudi cuisines and cultures are desired. Saudi consumers' preferences can be met with more products, improving online shopping engagement and loyalty.

E-commerce Adoption Factors

E-commerce adoption influences Saudi food sector customer behavior, digital transformation, and market dynamics. Traditional retailers in the Kingdom must understand what motivates private and company e-commerce adoption. Saudi shoppers want fast, convenient shopping for their busy lifestyles and different demographics. E-commerce allows shoppers to avoid malls and checkout lines from home or work. E-commerce is popular in Saudi Arabia because consumers value security, privacy, and reliability (Amornkitvikai et al., 2021). To build trust, E-commerce platforms must protect sensitive data, customer rights, openness, and accountability. E-commerce companies must adopt robust security processes, secure payment systems, and clear return policies to reassure Saudi consumers and promote continuous engagement as cybersecurity

worries grow. Product quality, transit reliability, and transaction security affect e-commerce adoption. Saudi e-commerce platforms must educate, raise awareness, and collaborate to build consumer trust. E-commerce companies may minimize adoption barriers and develop long-term connections with Saudi customers by emphasizing openness, accountability, and customer-centricity, encouraging sustainable growth and innovation in the food industry's digital environment.

Socio-Cultural Influences

Saudi food industry consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption are complex socio-cultural, technological, and commercial interactions. Islamic beliefs, family-centric culture, and social conventions influence Saudi Arabia's digital revolution and public attitudes toward technology and online business. Saudi society values family and makes choices collectively. Discussions and family recommendations affect online shopping (Alghamdi, 2023). Since Islamic modesty, privacy, and gender segregation affect product preferences and online interactions, e-commerce platforms must overcome cultural sensitivities and create trust with Saudi consumers. Gender-based e-commerce in Saudi Arabia shows women's digital economic potential and social standards. E-commerce lets women work from home, breaking down gender barriers in public spaces. The Saudi digital economy empowers women through online purchasing and commerce. Millennials and Generation Z are changing consumer behavior and e-commerce in the Kingdom with digital literacy and lifestyle goals. In Saudi Arabia, younger generations' e-commerce habits shape industry, technology, and consumer expectations.

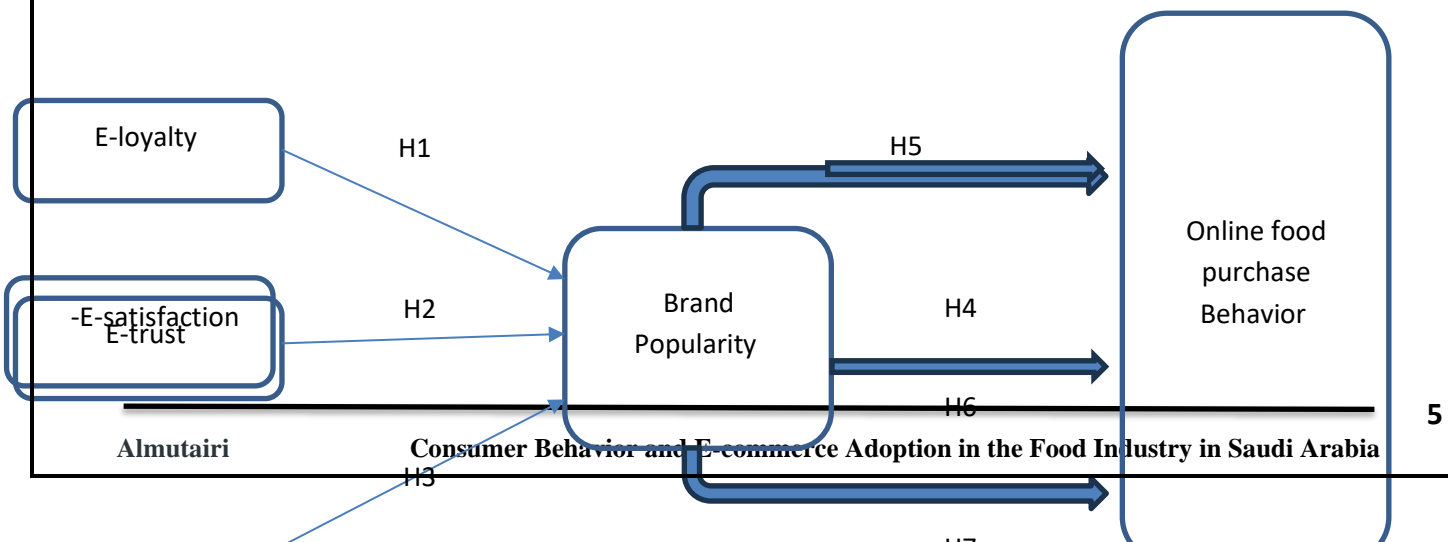
Global and Regional Trends

Due to global and regional e-commerce trends, the Saudi food business must adapt to changing customer behaviors and technology. Saudi Arabia is increasingly digitizing. Therefore, consumers desire personalized, simple, and frictionless online food shopping. Data analytics and machine learning algorithms are needed to offer Saudi consumers diet-specific advice, promotions, and product selections on food e-commerce platforms (Al-Maliki, 2021). Food companies need omnichannel integration to boost brand loyalty and customer engagement across websites, mobile apps, and stores. Using an omnichannel approach, food businesses may let customers research, buy, and receive their orders through their chosen channels, improving customer satisfaction and repeat purchases. To stay competitive in the digital marketplace, stakeholders in the Saudi Arabian food industry should benefit from evolving trends and client preferences as they embrace digital innovation and global e-commerce best practices.

Research Gaps and Opportunities

E-commerce penetration and customer behavior in Saudi Arabia's food industry are poorly researched, making market dynamics and regulations unclear. International e-commerce and consumer behavior research has increased, but Saudi food market studies still need to be conducted. Through this gap, researchers can investigate the Kingdom's evolving market landscape's difficulties, preferences, and trends affecting e-commerce adoption and customer behavior. Few studies have examined Saudi food industry e-commerce consumer preferences (Al-Maliki, 2021). Businesses and authorities must understand Saudi consumers' buying decisions, product preferences, and shopping patterns to improve e-commerce platforms and market competitiveness. E-commerce legislation and practices for Saudi Arabia's food business are seldom examined. As the Kingdom embraces digital transformation and e-commerce, governments must innovate while protecting consumers, privacy, and security. The regulatory landscape, compliance requirements, and industry standards can reveal gaps and opportunities to improve responsible e-commerce and customer trust in online transactions. Technology and internet platforms impact Saudi food e-commerce.

Research Model



Methodology (Study Tool if any)

This quantitative study explored customer behavior and e-commerce uptake in the flourishing Saudi food business (Algamash et al., 2022). Online food purchases and e-commerce platforms are examined for reasons, beliefs, and attitudes. We investigate quantitative dynamics to understand consumer decisions and industrial tactics. The study examines Saudi customer behavior and e-commerce adoption outside conventional restrictions. The Saudi Arabian market-relevant research enables educated decisions, new strategies, and revolutionary digital food retail projects.

Research Design

This study will utilize a quantitative research design to investigate consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption in the Saudi Arabian food industry. The quantitative research explores consumers' and industry stakeholders' motivations, views, and attitudes around online food purchases and e-commerce platforms (Alotaibi & Aloud, 2023). The research helps understand Saudi customer decision-making and e-commerce adoption. This quantitative exploratory study analyzes customer behavior and e-commerce adoption in the booming Saudi food business sector. It examines consumer and industry behavior for online food purchases and e-commerce platforms.

This study targets Saudi people 18 and older who buy food online and utilize e-commerce, including urban and rural Saudis from varied socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.

The study will use convenience sample and purposive sampling. Purposeful sampling will select participants based on online food purchases and e-commerce experience. The convenience sample will help find diverse viewpoints and experiences through target population networks and referrals.

Theoretical saturation will determine sample size—data collection until no new ideas or themes emerge from the analysis. Because the study is exploratory and the target group is diverse, 235 volunteers are expected. The sample size may be modified during data collection to guarantee theme saturation and coverage.

Data Collection Methods

This study will collect data through a survey utilizing a pre-tested and pre-developed scale from previous studies. Google Forms will host the poll, which responders will access via WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Structured questionnaires will gather customer preferences, buying behaviors, e-commerce platform ratings, and business adoption problems. The surveys will be well-designed and standardized for data consistency and cross-group comparisons. The study will consist of 235 participants. The stratified sample will include different demographics and company sizes to improve study generalizability (Algamash et al., 2022). Questionnaires reduce answer bias and improve data dependability. Social media shopping from previous research will be surveyed to acquire insights. These interviews will highlight Saudi customer behavior and e-commerce adoption. Semi-structured interviews enable question flexibility and data consistency (Amornkitvikai et al., 2021). Participants will be asked about their online food purchases and e-commerce experiences. Participants will assess their agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data Analysis

This study quantitatively examines customer behavior in the Saudi food industry and e-commerce adoption. The CFA verifies quantitative concepts and factors. Consumer and industry stakeholder surveys will assess online food purchase and e-commerce motivations, beliefs, and attitudes. The study will evaluate e-commerce platform trust, convenience, online purchase satisfaction, and delivery. Using quantitative interview findings, CFA operationalizes factors or latent variables into indicators or survey items. E-commerce platform confidence is measured by perceived reliability, transaction security, and policy openness. Online buying convenience depends on navigation, product diversity, and payment options. Saudi online food and e-commerce shoppers will receive a standardized questionnaire containing these survey items.

Setting, Sample, and Data

The research employed most of the online approaches to data collection as most people prefer online engagement since the Covid-19 outbreak. Nevertheless, a significant part of the data, about 15%, was obtained by offline means. In stratified-cum-purposive sampling technique, we will use previously done studies that formed the basis of the selection of items. The emphasis was on practitioners based in academia, including professors and university associates of advanced business administration institutions KSA. The country was selected as they have seen a potential for a significant increase in the online sales of food and beverages amid the present pandemic. Our sample group was respondents who had bought online food from the last month to three months.

A multi-sectional questionnaire was developed with some parts on demography and socioeconomics, another one with measurement items for all constructs, and the last one with open-ended questions for suggestions or comments (Khalednejad et al., 2022). In section B, the survey included a seven-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly. Groups of magnetized participants got the questionnaire via email. After a week, we sent a reminder to cover those participants for every person who still needed to answer the questionnaire. This survey was designed according to previous research and incorporated customer preferences, observations on purchasing behavior, e-commerce platform reliance, restrictions, and

obstacles to e-commerce adoption. The questionnaires used had standardized scales and response forms to provide data consistency and allow for cross-group comparisons.

Consumer focus groups, online shop owners, and food industry experts were interviewed via in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative and quantitative data. (Amornkitvivikai et al., 2021). Research/interviews aimed to collect information revealing people's profound understanding of buying food online and their adoption of e-commerce. The interviews were adaptable, relying on probing commissions of questions and follow-up issues to make sure harvesting of the whole information was done.

The data was collected in 2024 and covered a total of 442 respondents. Overall, this survey netted more than 400 respondents, while some were discarded in the data analysis process for involving little or no participant names. A pilot study of twenty marketing faculty members was carried out to mark the scales down, and we returned the measures accordingly. Articles were retained for the final study with the initial low thresholds so that a recommendation could be made.

Details of the respondents and data collection procedures are outlined in Table 1 below

Table 1

	Participants Sample
Gender	
Male	51
Female	391
Total	442
Age	
18 – 24	49
26 - 34	329
35 - 44	52
45 - 54	13
55 Years and above	1
Total	442
Education	
High School	109
Diploma/Certificate	24
Bachelor's degree	260
Master's degree	42
Doctorate/Ph.D.	7
Total	442
I make food-related purchases through social media platforms	
Strongly Disagree	16
Disagree	6
Neutral	28
Agree	170
Strongly Agree	222
Total	442

Gender distribution reveals a notable predominance of females, with 391 female participants compared to 51 males. This gender disparity suggests a higher representation of women in the sample and could potentially impact consumer behavior analysis. Age demographics depict a significant concentration within the 26-34 age range, with 329 participants falling into this category. This age group likely represents a key demographic for marketers targeting consumers through social media platforms, given their substantial presence within the sample. Educational backgrounds exhibit a diverse range of attainment levels, with the highest proportion holding Bachelor's degrees (260 participants), followed by High School (109), Master's degrees (42), Diploma/Certificate (24), and Doctorate/Ph.D. (7). This varied educational profile indicates a mix of educational experiences within the sample, which could influence purchasing behavior and preferences.

Attitudes towards making food-related purchases through social media platforms showcase a generally positive inclination, with a majority either agreeing (170 participants) or strongly agreeing (222 participants) with the statement. This suggests that a significant portion of the sample perceives social media platforms as viable channels for food-related purchases, potentially influencing their consumer behavior and shopping habits. Overall, these insights underscore the importance of considering demographic factors, educational backgrounds, and consumer attitudes when analyzing

purchasing behavior, particularly in the context of online platforms such as social media. Understanding these dynamics can inform marketing strategies and enhance engagement with target audiences in the food retail sector.

Constructs and Variables

This study analyzed numerous structures and variables to examine Saudi Arabian food sector customer behavior and e-commerce adoption. Researchers measure variables (Creswell, 2014). Using the conceptual model, many concepts and aspects are used to investigate customer behavior and e-commerce adoption in Saudi Arabia's food market (Figure 1). The study used literature-based constructs. Faith in Online Food Retailers (TOR) measures consumers' trust in digital retail platforms' transaction security and reliability (Zaheer et al., 2024). Saudi consumers' trustworthiness in the e-commerce platform and online food purchases was assessed using this concept.

PCIFS, another critical factor, measured customers' views of convenience in online food shopping (Dissanayake et al., 2021). This model considered ordering and delivery speed to determine how convenience influences food industry e-commerce adoption. Customers' perceptions of online food product variety and quality were also assessed using PPAQ (Bußler et al., 2020). The study examined digital food retail consumer preferences, product selection, and quality decision-making using PPAQ.

The Pricing and Promotions Strategy Index (PSPI) conducted a thorough investigation into the intricate workings of online food shopping, highlighting the significant impact of pricing strategies and promotional activities on consumer behavior. Through a detailed examination of pricing competitiveness and the influence of promotions on purchasing habits, PSPI uncovered valuable insights into effective marketing strategies within the food industry's online market. Building upon the foundational research by Hassen et al. (2021), which emphasized the importance of factors like E-commerce Adoption (EA) and Customer Satisfaction with Online Food Purchases (CSOFP), PSPI provided a nuanced understanding of consumer behavior and the shifting trends in e-commerce adoption within Saudi Arabia's food sector. This holistic approach not only clarified the complexities of consumer decision-making but also offered essential guidance for shaping strategic plans and policies in digital food retailing. Armed with these insights, stakeholders in the food industry were better equipped to develop customized strategies that resonated with online consumers' preferences, thereby improving their competitive edge and fostering sustainable growth in the digital marketplace.

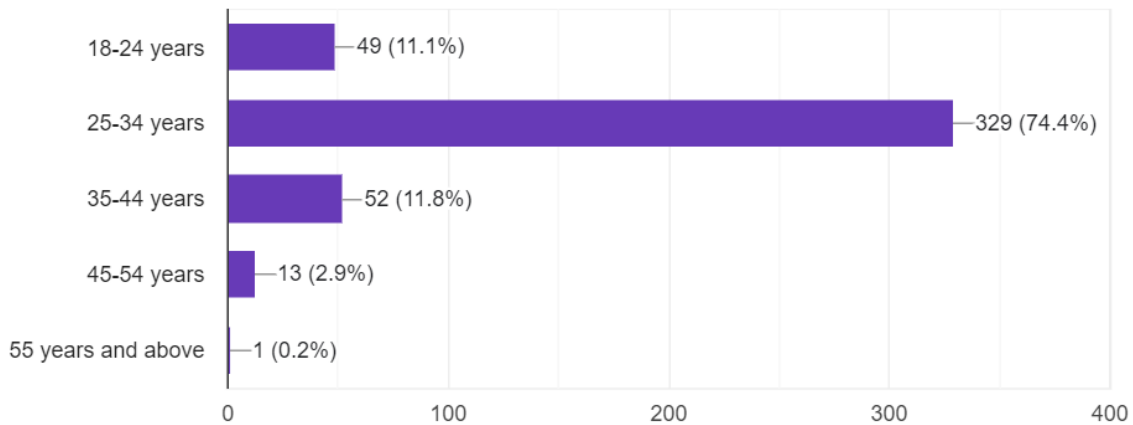
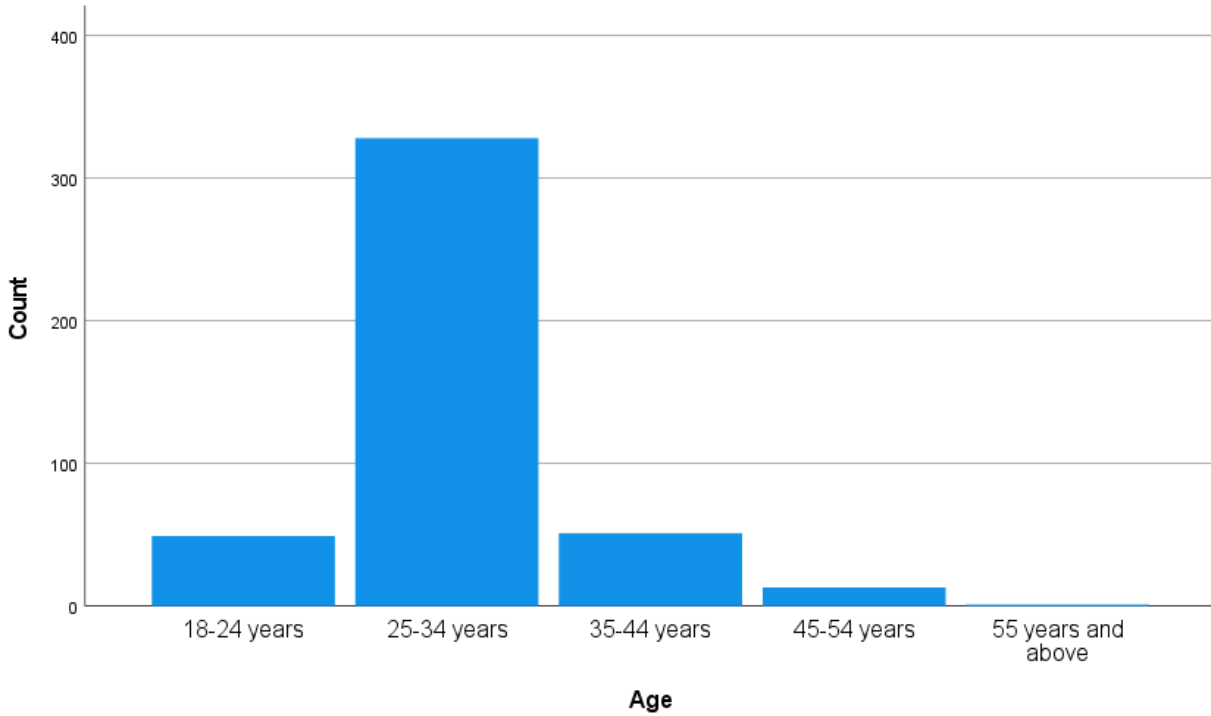
Results, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Results

Demographics

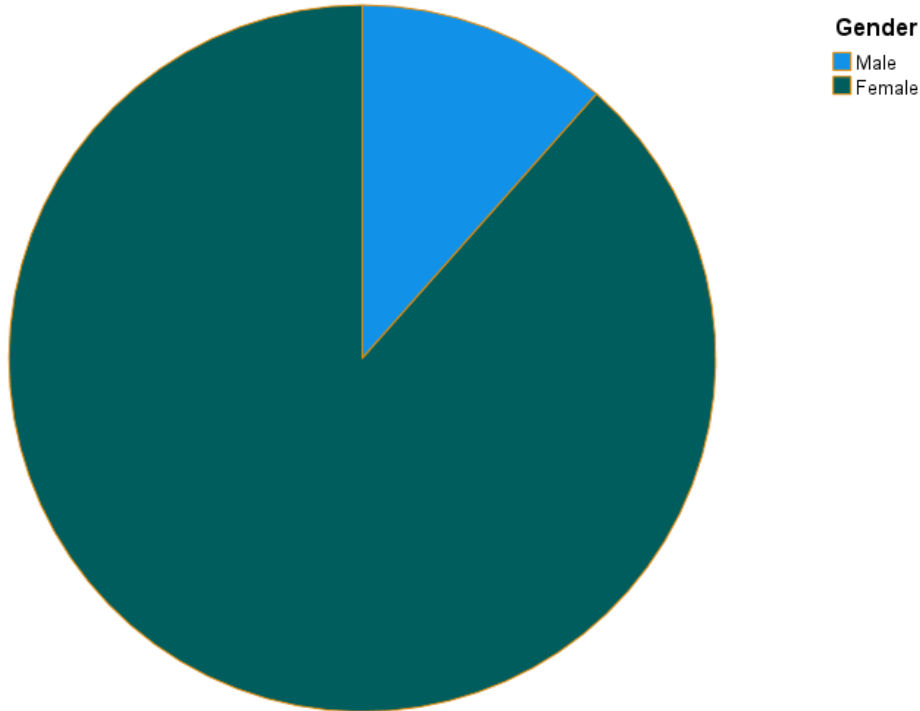
The research participants were asked crucial demographic questions during this study. These questions were on Gender, Age, Level of Education and Nationality. The data collected was analyzed and presented in tables, graphs and figures.

The first question that the researcher asked the participants was their age. The age group question was asked to gauge the enthusiasm of young people towards adopting e-commerce compared to the perceived reluctance of older generation people, often labeled as technophobic. The diagram below illustrates the distribution of age groups among survey participants. Among the total respondents, 49 (11.1%) belonged to the age group of 18-24 years, 329 (74.4%) were in the 25-34 years range, 52 (11.8%) belonged to the 35-44 years range, 13 (2.9%) were in the 45-54 years range and only 1 representing 0.2 of the entire sample space belonged to the age group of 55 years and above.

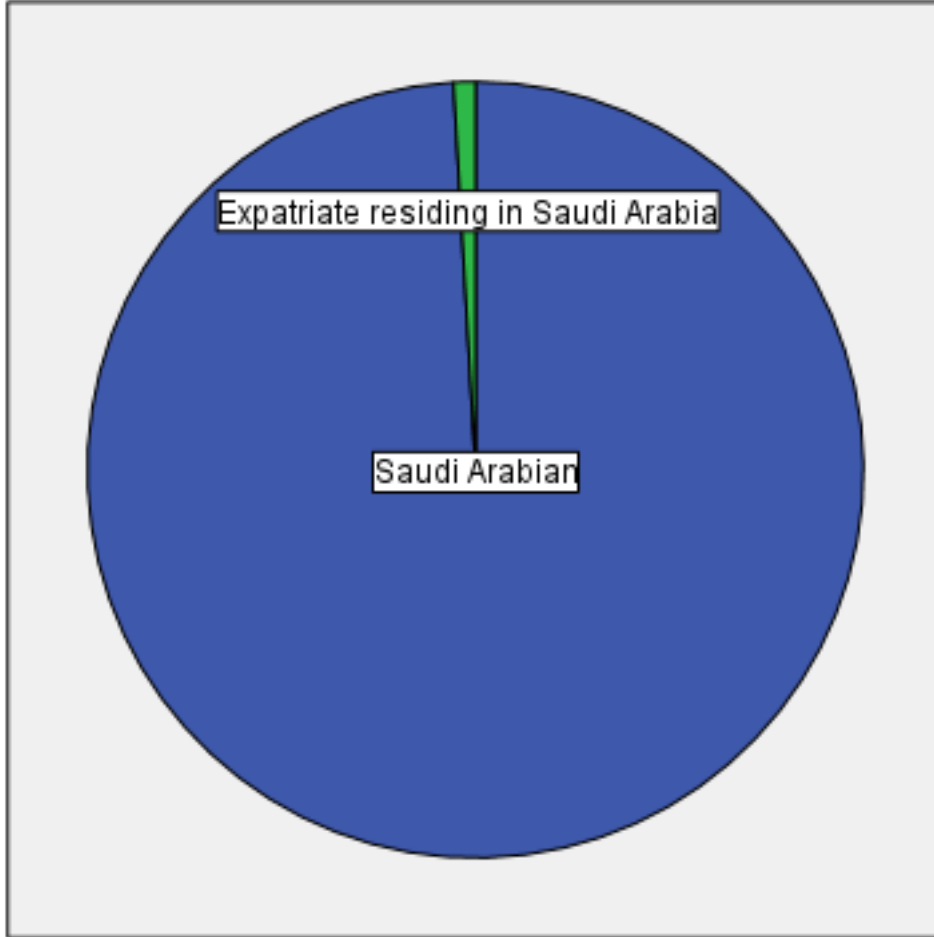


The second question was based on the gender of the participants who took part in this study. This question was asked primarily to find out how the various genders felt about the adoption of e-commerce in the Saudi Arabian Food Retail Industry. Besides, this question was posed to the respondents to examine the potential gender-related differences in e-brand experiences and consumer-based e-service brand equity within the Saudi Arabian digital food retail projects. Gender is crucial in shaping consumer preferences, behaviors, and perceptions. By understanding the gender distribution among participants, we can explore whether there are any notable variations in how males and females engage with digital food retail platforms, perceive e-brands, or assess e-service brand equity. The diagram below shows how many Females and Males participated in our study. Out of the 442 respondents, 391 participants, representing 88.5%, were Females. Only 51 (11.5%) of the total participants were Male.

Gender of the Research Participants



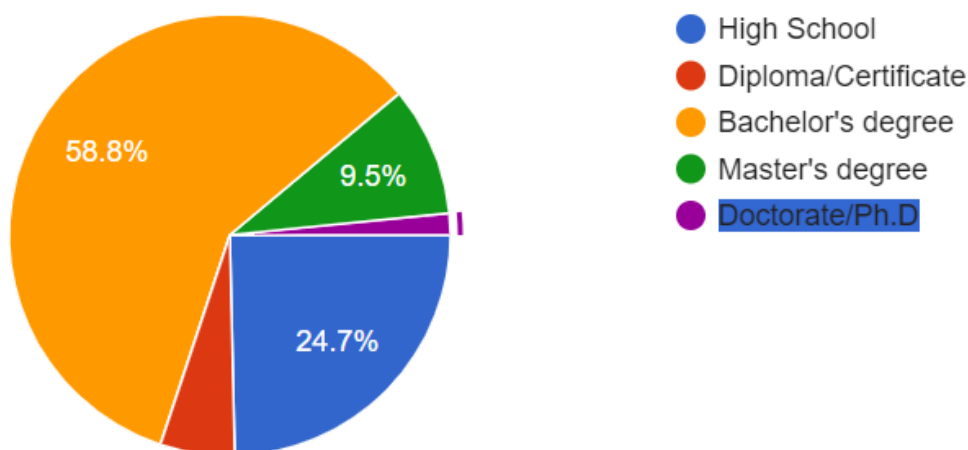
The third question we asked the respondents was about their Nationality. This question was asked to gain insights into the diversity within our sample group, specifically within the context of Saudi Arabian digital food retail projects. Understanding the nationalities of participants allows us to explore potential variations in e-brand experiences and consumer-based e-service brand equity across different cultural backgrounds. Given the multicultural nature of Saudi Arabia, examining the nationality distribution provides valuable context for understanding how various consumer segments perceive and interact with digital food retail platforms. This information enhances the depth of our analysis, enabling us to identify potential cross-cultural differences and tailor strategies accordingly to optimize e-service brand equity within the Saudi Arabian market. A total of 438 respondents, representing 99.1 percent, reported being of Saudi Arabian Origin. Only 4 of the respondents, representing 0.9 percent of the entire sample space, were expatriates residing in Saudi Arabia. The Pie Chart below shows how our research participants responded to the question of nationality.



The last question we asked the research participants was about their level of education. We included a question about respondents' level of education to investigate potential correlations between educational attainment and perceptions of e-brand experiences and consumer-based e-service brand equity within the Saudi Arabian digital food retail projects. Education level significantly influences individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes. Therefore, our aim of why we captured the educational backgrounds of participants was to explore whether there are any discernible patterns or differences in how individuals with varying levels of education engage with digital food retail platforms, perceive e-brands, and evaluate e-service brand equity. The Pie chart below shows the level of education of all the respondents who participated in our study. A total of 260 (58.8%) respondents indicated that they possess a Bachelor's Degree. They were followed by High Schoolers, who were 109, representing 24.7 percent of the entire population. 42 (9.5%) of the respondents had a Master's Degree, while 24 respondents, representing 5.4 percent of the entire sample, have a Diploma/Certificate. Only 7 (1.6%) have a PhD or a Doctorate Degree.

Education:

442 responses



Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis section was focused more on the core or the primary questions of the questionnaire. The section was divided into five primary parts: E-Trust, E-Loyalty, E-Satisfaction, Brand Popularity, and Online Food Purchase behavior.

E-Trust

A total of six statements on E-Trust were put to the respondents to state their level of agreement. The general motive was to ascertain whether e-commerce can be trusted or not. Out of the 442 respondents, 190 (43%) agreed that social media platforms are generally trustworthy for shopping. 175 (39.6%) strongly agreed with this statement, while 54, representing 12.2 percent, were neutral. The level of disagreement with this statement was quite low, with only 14 (3.2%) respondents strongly disagreeing and 9 (2%) disagreeing with the statement.

A huge number of respondents, 233, representing 52.7 percent of the total respondents, strongly agreed with the statement, "I trust the information on social media platforms to be true." Agree were 133 (30.1%), 41 (9.3%) were neutral, 21 (4.8%) disagreed with the statement, while 14, representing 3.2% strongly disagreed with the statement.

Furthermore, 211 (47.7%) strongly believed that social media platform stores would not take advantage of their customers, 158 (35.7%) agreed, and 35 (7.9%) were neutral. However, 22 (5%) and 16 (3.6%) disagreed and strongly disagreed with this statement, respectively. This trend was similar across the remaining three statements as most respondents strongly agreed with statements such as I feel comfortable making purchases from social media platforms stores (56.1%), I trust the food brands or retailers I follow on social media (50.2%), and I trust most of my contacts in my friends list in the social networks I am a member of (53.6%).

The following table represents the summary of the descriptive statistics for E-Trust.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Social media platforms are generally trustworthy for shopping.	442	1	5	4.14	.931

3. I believe that social media platforms stores will not take advantage of their customers.	442	1	5	4.19	1.024
2. I trust information on social media platforms to be true.	442	1	5	4.24	1.019
4. I feel comfortable making purchases from social media platforms stores.	442	1	5	4.38	.896
5. I trust the food brands or retailers I follow on social media.	442	1	5	4.31	.907
6. I trust most of my contacts in my friends list in the social networks I am a member of.	442	1	5	4.36	.898
Valid N (listwise)	442				

Social media platforms are generally trustworthy for shopping: On average, respondents rated their trust in social media platforms for shopping quite high, with a mean score of 4.14 out of 5. The standard deviation indicates relatively low variability in responses, suggesting that most respondents view social media platforms as trustworthy for shopping.

I trust information on social media platforms to be true: Respondents expressed a high level of trust in the truthfulness of information on social media platforms, with a mean score of 4.24 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests that responses are moderately spread out, indicating some variability in perceptions regarding the truthfulness of information.

I believe that social media platforms stores will not take advantage of their customers: The mean score for this statement is 4.19 out of 5, indicating a high level of belief among respondents that social media platform stores will not take advantage of their customers. The standard deviation suggests moderate variability in responses.

I feel comfortable making purchases from social media platform stores: Respondents generally feel comfortable making purchases from social media platform stores, as indicated by the high mean score of 4.38 out of 5. The low standard deviation suggests that responses are relatively consistent, with minimal variability.

I trust the food brands or retailers I follow on social media: Respondents exhibit a high level of trust in the food brands or retailers they follow on social media, with a mean score of 4.31 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent level of trust among respondents.

I trust most of my contacts in my friends list in the social networks I am a member of: On average, respondents trust most of their contacts in their friends list on social networks, as indicated by a mean score of 4.36 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent level of trust in social network contacts.

E-Loyalty

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	442	1	5	2.07	.600
1. I continue purchasing food products from the same online brand or retailer.	442	1	5	4.34	.888
2. I feel a sense of loyalty to the food brand or retailer I prefer when engaging with them on social media.	442	1	5	4.42	.883

3. I would recommend using the food brand to my friends.	442	1	5	4.41	.851
4. I visit the website or app of my preferred food brand more frequently than others in the same category.	442	1	5	4.39	.895
5. I find it difficult to switch to another website or app for purchasing food products.	442	1	5	4.36	.906
6. My beliefs about the reliability of my preferred food brand are well-established.	442	1	5	4.41	.887
Valid N (listwise)	442				

I continue purchasing food products from the same online brand or retailer: Respondents generally exhibit a high level of loyalty towards their preferred online food brand or retailer, with a mean score of 4.34 out of 5. The relatively low standard deviation suggests that responses are consistent, indicating a widespread tendency among respondents to continue purchasing from the same brand or retailer.

I feel a sense of loyalty to the food brand or retailer I prefer when engaging with them on social media: The mean score for this statement is 4.42 out of 5, indicating a strong sense of loyalty among respondents towards their preferred food brand or retailer when engaging with them on social media. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent level of loyalty among respondents.

I would recommend using the food brand to my friends: Respondents express a high likelihood of recommending their preferred food brand to friends, with a mean score of 4.41 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent tendency among respondents to recommend the brand to others.

I visit the website or app of my preferred food brand more frequently than others in the same category: On average, respondents visit the website or app of their preferred food brand more frequently than others in the same category, as indicated by a mean score of 4.39 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent behavior among respondents.

I find it difficult to switch to another website or app for purchasing food products: Respondents generally find it difficult to switch to another website or app for purchasing food products, as indicated by a mean score of 4.36 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent perception among respondents regarding the difficulty of switching.

My beliefs about the reliability of my preferred food brand are well-established: Respondents' beliefs about the reliability of their preferred food brand are well-established, with a mean score of 4.41 out of 5. The standard deviation suggests relatively low variability in responses, indicating a consistent perception among respondents regarding the reliability of their preferred brand.

E-Satisfaction

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I feel satisfied with the online shopping experience provided by the food brands or retailers I follow on social media.	442	1	5	4.34	.915
2. I am delighted with my experience of purchasing food products online.	442	1	5	4.42	.867

3. The food brand meets my expectations in terms of quality and service.	442	1	5	4.39	.897
4. The food brand is the only one I prefer to buy from and use.	442	1	5	4.36	.933
5. I consider the food products of my preferred brand to be reliable.	442	1	5	4.40	.870
6. The food brand offers products with excellent features.	442	1	5	4.43	.833
Valid N (listwise)	442				

I feel satisfied with the online shopping experience provided by the food brands or retailers I follow on social media: Respondents generally express satisfaction with their online shopping experience provided by the food brands or retailers they follow on social media, with a mean score of 4.34 out of 5.

I am delighted with my experience of purchasing food products online: Respondents generally report being delighted with their experience of purchasing food products online, with a mean score of 4.42 out of 5.

The food brand meets my expectations in terms of quality and service: Respondents feel that the food brand meets their expectations in terms of quality and service, with a mean score of 4.39 out of 5.

The food brand is the only one I prefer to buy from and use: Respondents indicate a strong preference for the food brand, as it is the only one they prefer to buy from and use, with a mean score of 4.36 out of 5.

I consider the food products of my preferred brand to be reliable: Respondents perceive the food products of their preferred brand to be reliable, with a mean score of 4.40 out of 5.

The food brand offers products with excellent features: Respondents believe that the food brand offers products with excellent features, with a mean score of 4.43 out of 5.

Brand Popularity

In this section, we wanted to compare the means of Male and Females based on several statements about brand popularity.

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1. I am more likely to purchase food products after reading reviews or posts on social media.	Male	51	3.84	.925	.129
	Female	391	4.42	.852	.043
2. The popularity of a food brand on social media influences my decision to make a purchase.	Male	51	3.96	.747	.105
	Female	391	4.51	.819	.041
3. I believe the popularity of a food brand on social media plays a role in building trust with the brand.	Male	51	3.88	.864	.121
	Female	391	4.48	.831	.042
4. The popularity of a food brand on social media contributes to my overall satisfaction with the brand.	Male	51	3.84	.903	.126
	Female	391	4.48	.850	.043

5. I am more likely to engage in online food shopping if the brand is popular on social media.	Male	51	3.73	.896	.125
	Female	391	4.45	.872	.044
6. The popularity of a food brand on social media contributes to my overall loyalty with the brand.	Male	51	3.75	.868	.122
	Female	391	4.40	.909	.046

Based on the provided group statistics, which are separated by gender, we can observe the mean scores and standard deviations for each statement on brand popularity:

1. Statement 1 - Purchase Intent after Reading Reviews on Social Media:

- Male: Mean = 3.84, Std. Deviation = 0.925
- Female: Mean = 4.42, Std. Deviation = 0.852

2. Statement 2 - Influence of Brand Popularity on Purchase Decision:

- Male: Mean = 3.96, Std. Deviation = 0.747
- Female: Mean = 4.51, Std. Deviation = 0.819

3. Statement 3 - Role of Brand Popularity in Building Trust:

- Male: Mean = 3.88, Std. Deviation = 0.864
- Female: Mean = 4.48, Std. Deviation = 0.831

4. Statement 4 - Contribution of Brand Popularity to Overall Satisfaction:

- Male: Mean = 3.84, Std. Deviation = 0.903
- Female: Mean = 4.48, Std. Deviation = 0.850

5. Statement 5 - Influence of Brand Popularity on Online Food Shopping:

- Male: Mean = 3.73, Std. Deviation = 0.896
- Female: Mean = 4.45, Std. Deviation = 0.872

6. Statement 6 - Contribution of Brand Popularity to Overall Loyalty:

- Male: Mean = 3.75, Std. Deviation = 0.868
- Female: Mean = 4.40, Std. Deviation = 0.909

Independent t-tests

The table below shows the results of independent samples t-tests conducted to compare the mean scores between male and female respondents for each statement on brand popularity

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
1. I am more likely to purchase food products after reading reviews or posts on social media.	Equal variances assumed	.776	.379	-4.516	440	<.001	-.579	.128	-.831	-.327
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.242	61.603	<.001	-.579	.136	-.852	-.306
2. The popularity of a food brand on social media influences my decision to make a purchase.	Equal variances assumed	3.882	.049	-4.581	440	<.001	-.553	.121	-.791	-.316
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.916	66.690	<.001	-.553	.113	-.778	-.329
3. I believe the popularity of a food brand on social media plays a role in building trust with the brand.	Equal variances assumed	1.745	.187	-4.833	440	<.001	-.601	.124	-.845	-.357
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.694	62.704	<.001	-.601	.128	-.857	-.346
4. The popularity of a food brand on social media contributes to my overall satisfaction with the brand.	Equal variances assumed	.266	.607	-5.004	440	<.001	-.638	.127	-.888	-.387
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.776	62.119	<.001	-.638	.134	-.905	-.376
5. I am more likely to engage in online food shopping if the brand is popular on social media.	Equal variances assumed	.036	.849	-5.581	440	<.001	-.727	.130	-.983	-.477
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.467	63.003	<.001	-.727	.133	-.993	-.466
6. The popularity of a food brand on social media contributes to my overall loyalty with the brand.	Equal variances assumed	1.017	.314	-4.895	440	<.001	-.659	.135	-.924	-.399
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.070	65.146	<.001	-.659	.130	-.919	-.399

On the first statement, the Levene's test indicates that the assumption of equal variances is met ($p = .379$). The t-test reveals a significant difference in mean scores between male and female respondents ($p < .001$), indicating that there is a significant difference in the likelihood of purchasing food products after reading reviews or posts on social media between male and female respondents.

For statement 2, the assumption of equal variances is violated based on the Levene's test ($p = .049$). Therefore, the t-test indicates a significant difference in mean scores between male and female respondents ($p < .001$), suggesting that there is a significant difference in the influence of brand popularity on purchase decisions between male and female respondents.

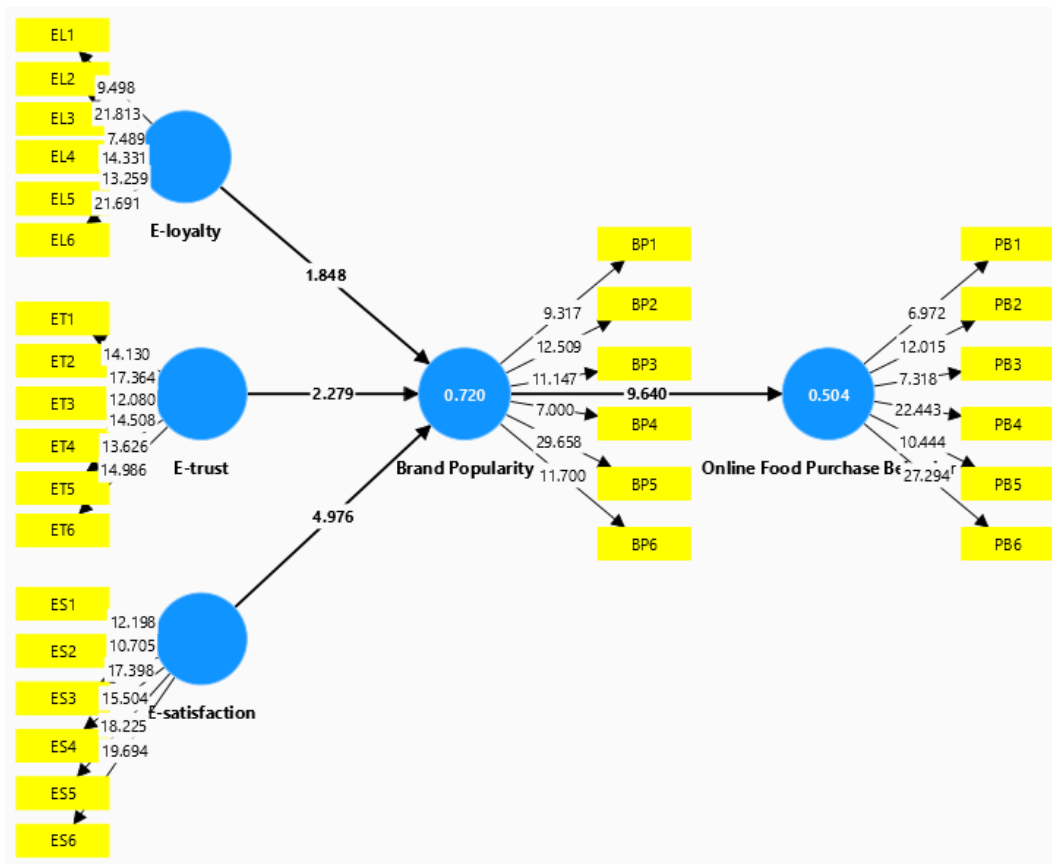
Similar to Statement 2, the assumption of equal variances for statement 3 is violated ($p = .187$). The t-test reveals a significant difference in mean scores between male and female respondents ($p < .001$), indicating a significant difference in the belief regarding the role of brand popularity in building trust between male and female respondents.

Direct Effects or Sample1 and Sample 2

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Relationship		Sample		Sample		Group differences(p -Value)	
			Estimate	Accepted/Rejected`	Estimate	Accepted/Rejected`		
H1	BID	→	OCE	0.18	Accepted	0.16	Accepted	0.85
H2	BID	→	ORPI	0.21	Accepted	0.19	Accepted	0.97
H3	BIM	→	OCE	0.19	Accepted	0.15	Accepted	0.88
H4	BIM	→	ORPI	0.19	Accepted	0.18	Accepted	0.94
H4	BIN	→	OCE	0.35	Accepted	0.22	Accepted	0.15
H5	BIN	→	ORPI	0.09	Accepted	0.04	Rejected	0.66
H6	BINT	→	OCE	0.18	Accepted	0.16	Accepted	0.04
H7	BINT	→	ORPI	0.28	Accepted	0.22	Accepted	0.99

Indirect Effects or Sample1 and Sample 2

Hypothesis	Hypothesized Relationship			Original Sample	t-statistics	P Value	Accepted/Rejected		
H5	Consumer Loyalty	→	Brand Popularity	→	Online Food Purchase Behavior	0.157	1.729	0.084	Accepted
H6	Consumer Trust	→	Brand Popularity	→	Online Food Purchase Behavior	0.147	2.109	0.035	Accepted
H7	Consumer Satisfaction	→	Brand Popularity	→	Online Food Purchase Behavior	0.340	4.740	0.000	Accepted



Discussion

This study aimed to establish the factors that may affect the consumers in the online food industry in Saudi Arabia among the pilot sample of 391 Saudi Arabian women working and actively participating in the online food industry. The results of the SEM analysis highlighted the existence of e-trust e-satisfaction and brand popularity towards social media behavior. The research employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis with the help of the AMOS statistical tool. SEM is a statistical method that studies the connection between the construct variables and the manifest variables (Hair et al., 2021). Single-headed arrows represented the hypothesized direct effects of one variable on another. For instance, the directional arrow from E-loyalty toward Online Food Purchase Behavior indicates that high E-loyalty influences the former.

Double-headed arrows explain relationships between variables other than causing them without implying the act of causing. The fact that E-trust and E-satisfaction are positively related to each other through a double-headed arrow does not necessarily mean that one determines the other or affects the other. The numbers adjacent to the arrows show the signs and magnitude of the connections. If the value is more than zero, the person has positive relationships; otherwise, if it is less than zero, it means the person has negative relationships. It can range from -1 to +1, though the more the result has an absolute value of 1, the more related the two variables are.

The analysis indicated that based on the theory of the Structural Equation Model (SEM), there are several relationships between the latent variables and the Online Food Purchase Behavior. More sharply, it aligns with Alghamdi, (2023) assertions that E-loyalty and E-satisfaction affect the tendencies relating to online food buying. Also, E-trust (customer trust in an online environment) is postulated to influence E-loyalty and E-satisfaction. Furthermore, it theorizes that Brand Popularity has a direct positive relationship with Online Food Purchase Behavior. The model also considers possible relationships like the one between E-trust and E-satisfaction. This further indicates that each measured variable is an error in the model, representing the measurement errors. Some of the various coefficients on these paths represent the mean values of the relationships, and if these values are statistically significant, they prove the accuracy of the hypothesized links. In addition, the model was tested in terms of the goodness of fit to estimate the fitness level of the model with the observed data, which increases the model's reliability when applied to practical problems.

Besides the hypothesis testing, the combination of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis empowers the study of the factors affecting online food purchase behavior. Overall, the values from the hypothesis tests mostly support the relationships outlined in the SEM model, which increases confidence in the model's accuracy (Al-Maliki, 2021). A difference is established by comparing the two samples regarding the correlation between brand image and online purchase intention. This suggests that consumers from these groups may differ, which drops a note for further research. Also, the present research results identify the strong moderation of brand image on consumers' loyalty and trust, satisfaction, and purchase intentions through the mediating role of brand popularity. These outcomes firmly underscore the need to pay much attention to customer loyalty, trust, and satisfaction, as well as the formation of the brand about web food purchases.

Regarding the mediated effects of consumer opinion, this study supports Amornkitvikai et al.'s (2021) concept that popularity is an important variable that links consumer attitudes and behaviors within the online food environment. Finally, based on H5, the research confirmed that while consumer loyalty influences online food purchase behavior, brand popularity mediates the extent of the association. This implies that the recurrent buyers create publicity for the brand under question and, hence, more purchases on the internet. In the same way, consumer trust affects brand popularity, influencing online food purchase behavior (H6). This suggests that when consumer trust is created in a brand, it improves its popularity, which translates to more internet sales.

In addition, results reveal a highly mediated effect of brand popularity on the link between satisfaction and purchasing behavior of quality Foods ordered online (H7). That means that the satisfied customers who directly do not buy food online also help to increase gross by increasing brand popularity. In conclusion, brand popularity significantly influences consumers' behaviors in the context of the online food industry. This way, by raising consumers' loyalty, trust, and satisfaction, businesses improve the popularity of their brands and, thus, stimulate the demand for food delivered online.

The presented findings can be useful for various companies engaged in the online food delivery business. They emphasize the significance of gaining customers' confidence, loyalty, and satisfaction and the impact of brand image on Internet purchases. The distinctions between the different customer groups (as shown in the sample differences) could allow for a more detailed analysis of improving marketing and customer relations

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of demographics, consumer perceptions, and brand behaviors within the digital food retail sector of Saudi Arabia provides a deep understanding of the complex interconnection of market forces and consumer dynamics. Through the diligent investigation into demographic leans, it is evident that the teenage populations, especially those aged between 25-34 years, are perfect adopters of e-commerce platforms for food retail; this signifies a fundamental change in consumer behavior in response to technological advancements. Moreover, a high proportion of females were involved in the survey sample, constituting 88% of the sample population. 5% of respondents indicate that they are essential to household purchasing decisions and their growing role in shaping digital consumption patterns. The fact that this

representation of gender suggests that the market should seek gender-sensitive strategies as well as personalized consumer experiences which cater to the different choices of female and male consumers within the digital food retail market.

Moreover, the overwhelming number of discussants are Saudi nationals, 99.1% representation shows the localized nature of the study and the necessity of contextualizing the findings within the socio-cultural and economic realities of the Saudi market. Although the statistical purpose of this similarity is a narrow concentration of the analysis, the presentation of expatriates in an undue proportion of 0.9% shows snapshots of how cultural varieties and perspectives can be a source for enriching the understanding and as a base for the development of strategies of balancing cultural segment of people. The educational background analysis shows that the group is relatively educated, with a large part having bachelor's degrees, which means they have a higher level of digital literacy and sophistication in online platforms for food retail purposes. In addition to determining consumers' perceptions and generating their expectations concerning digital brand experiences, quality of the product, and value-added services, there is a need for a strategy based on educational attainment and the elaboration of brand credibility.

Recommendations

The strategic recommendations based on the detailed analysis of the digital food retail sector in Saudi Arabia are action-oriented insights that help understand how to optimize the market presence and nurture long-lasting consumer relationships. Firstly, as digital addiction is notable in younger age groups, digital food retailers should focus on delivering unique digital marketing techniques that will rock the generation that is up-to-date with technology. Examples are using social media platforms for advertising and personalized content creation, cooperating with influencers, and creating gamified experiences that keep young consumers linked to the brand. The use of immersive online experiences like virtual shopping environments or product recommendations based on browsing history can increase user satisfaction and thus increase conversion rates. However, it is also essential that these platforms are linked seamlessly so that the customer can do so with ease. This will lead to brand consistency and meeting shopper's changing demands.

Secondly, recognizing that women are leading consumers who form opinions and purchase decisions, it should be crystal clear that digital food retailers should introduce gender-responsible marketing campaigns that are not just buzzwords but mean something of value to women. Cohorting with women influencers who align with the brand's values can extend the scope and credibility of the brand among the female audience. Community-building initiatives like women-oriented events or forums on health and wellness might be the best strategy to build stronger relationships among women followers. To further increase brand relevance and interaction, we can personalize the products and their related promotions to match female preferences by using, for example, the packaging, flavor, or convenience, among other things.

Thirdly, recognizing the Saudi market as a regional one, the food retailers in the digital sector need to integrate the region's cultural norms with the content into their strategies. The language translation and the population's culture, traditions, and sensitivities must be understood and incorporated into the marketing messages and product offerings. Constructing sincere relations with customers through the valuation of ethnic traditions and consumer culture creates mutual trust and devotion. Activity in community initiatives, standing up for local causes, and participating in cultural evenings show their draw with the local community and can increase the brand's reputation.

Moreover, the application of diversity in consumer segments through inclusive marketing practices is an essential step for the expansion of the market and the creation of inclusivity. Targeted marketing that meets the needs and desires of different groups of consumers, expatriates, and multicultural communists is an indication of the understanding of the challenges and preferences, which enable the brand to connect better with the customers, thus increasing loyalty. Spending on heavy data analytics and AI-based valuable advice helps the business generate personal recommendations and offerings tailored for different consumer groups, which, as a result, attracts clients and builds brand loyalty.

The constant observation of market tendencies, competitor strategies, and technological advancements is the key to remaining competitive and innovative. Partnering with local influencers with deep knowledge of the market scenario and aligning with prominent players such as suppliers and delivery services could help the brand with issues such as visibility, trust, and relevance in the digital food retail ecosystem, which is evolving. People participate in community activities not only because these activities help strengthen brand image but also because, due to such initiatives, the circle of trust and the sense of social responsibility grow, strengthening the market positioning and consumers' feelings.

Future Research

The consideration of future research fields is essential for an organization to be ahead of the trend, to understand the changing behaviors of the consumers, as well as to take advantage of emerging technologies for sustainable growth. Tracking longitudinal studies that record consumer choice, digital adoption phenomenon, and market trends over long intervals will lead to a more profound knowledge of changing consumer psychographics and digital consumption patterns. Comparative studies across different regions, cultures and market segments can reveal subtle differences in consumer behaviors, preferences and brand interactions, which can guide targeted marketing strategies and market expansion initiatives.

Moreover, investigating how the emergence of new technologies such as block chain, IoT, and AI affect supply chain management, customer experiences, and business sustainability within the digital food retail sector opens a wide field for increasing performance, customer engagement, and innovation. Considering consumer attitudes toward sustainability, ethical sourcing, and corporate social responsibility within the digital food retail space will help create eco-friendly marketing strategies, grow the brand reputation, and attract green-minded consumers. Apart from that, studying the convergence of offline and online retail experiences, the role of virtual reality in enhancing digital shopping experiences, and the influence of social commerce trends on consumer behaviors can lead to new ways of differentiation, competitive advantage, and market leadership in the digital food retail domain.

References:

- Algamash, F. A., Mash, M. S., & Alam, M. N. (2022). Understanding the antecedents of use of E-Commerce and consumers' E-Loyalty in Saudi Arabia amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, 14(22), 14894. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142214894>
- Alghamdi, F. S. (2023). Evaluating E-Commerce engagement factors in Saudi Arabia: financial loss, identity theft and privacy policies. *Dialnet*. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=9221587>
- Al-Maliki, S. Q. A. (2021). Increasing non-oil revenue potentiality through digital commerce: the case study in KSA. *Journal of Money and Business*, 1(2), 65–83. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jmb-07-2021-0022>
- Alotaibi, H. G., & Aloud, M. (2023). Investigating behavior intention toward S-Commerce adoption by small businesses in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of E-business Research*, 19(1), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijebr.322094>
- Amornkitvikai, Y., Tham, S. Y., & Tangpoolcharoen, J. (2021). Barriers and factors affecting e-commerce Utilization of Thai Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Food and Beverage and Retail services. *Global Business Review*, 097215092110362. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509211036294>
- Buñler, S., Rawel, H. M., & Schlüter, O. (2020). Impact of plasma processed air (PPA) on phenolic model systems: Suggested mechanisms and relevance for food applications. *Innovative Food Science and Emerging Technologies/Innovative Food Science & Emerging Technologies*, 64, 102432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ifset.2020.102432>
- Dissanayake, S., Gunaratne, L., Sivanathewerl, T., & Ginigaddara, G. (2021, December 1). Impact of adoption of sustainable agricultural practices on household food security in small-scale Paddy-Cattle farming systems in Anuradhapura District, Sri Lanka. <http://repository.rjt.ac.lk/handle/123456789/4956>
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2021). An introduction to structural equation modeling. *Classroom Companion: Business*, 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80519-7_1
- Hamli, S. S. A., & Sobaih, A. E. E. (2023). Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior towards Online Shopping in Saudi Arabia Amid COVID-19: Implications for E-Businesses Post Pandemic. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 16(1), 36. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm16010036>
- Hassen, H., Rahim, N. H. B. A., Othman, A. H. A., & Shah, A. (2021). A model for E-Commerce adoption by SMEs in developing countries. In *Lecture notes in networks and systems* (pp. 516–529). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69221-6_39
- Islam, M. M., & Alharthi, M. (2022). Impact of COVID-19 on the quality of life of households in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health/International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1538. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031538>
- Khalednejad, M., Salehi, L., Pashang, S., Moghimbeigi, A., & Nameghi, A. N. (2022). Prediction of the factors influencing cervical cancer screening using the extended protection motivation model: A path analysis. *Journal of Shahrekord University of Medical Sciences*, 24(4), 174–181. <https://doi.org/10.34172/jsums.2022.29>
- Klingmann, A. (2022). Rescripting Riyadh: how the capital of Saudi Arabia employs urban megaprojects as catalysts to enhance the quality of life within the city's neighborhoods. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 16(1), 45–72. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jpmd-06-2021-0062>
- Macias-Alonso, I., Kim, H., & González, A. L. (2023). Self-driven women: gendered mobility, employment, and the lift of the driving ban in Saudi Arabia. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 30(11), 1574–1593. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369x.2023.2189570>
- Melikian, L. H. (2020). Arab Socio-political Impact on Gulf Life-styles. In *article* (pp. 112–128). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003070641-8>
- Nasri, B. M., Collazzo, P., & Welsh, D. H. (2020). Home-grown middle eastern franchises: prospects for the future. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 17(4), 1657–1671. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-020-00677-8>
- Pilotti, M. a. E., Abdulhadi, E. J. Y., Algouhi, T. A., & Salameh, M. H. (n.d.). *The New and the Old: Responses to change in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Virtual Commons - Bridgewater State University. <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol22/iss1/20/>

Strouji, J. (2020). Digital payments, the cashless economy, and financial inclusion in the United Arab Emirates: Why is everyone still transacting in cash? *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 13(11), 260. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm13110260>

Zaheer, M. A., Anwar, T. M., Khan, Z., Raza, M. A., & Hafeez, H. (2024). How do strategic attributes of electronic commerce impel the perceived value and electronic loyalty of online food delivery applications (OFDAs). *Deleted Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jidt-10-2023-0025>

"سلوك المستهلك واعتماد التجارة الإلكترونية في صناعة المواد الغذائية في المملكة العربية السعودية"

إعداد الباحثة:

أحلام سلطان ثويبت المطيري

الملخص:

يعد سلوك المستهلك واعتماد التجارة الإلكترونية من قبل صناعة المواد الغذائية أمرًا بالغ الأهمية خلال الثورة الرقمية في المملكة العربية السعودية. مع تبني المملكة للتكنولوجيا ونمو منصات الطعام عبر الإنترنت، يجب على الشركات فهم تفضيلات المستهلكين حتى تتمكن من المنافسة. أصبح التسوق رقميًا بفضل الهواتف الذكية والإنترنت. وهذا يتطلب إجراء بحث تجريبي حول العوامل الدافعة لاعتماد التجارة الإلكترونية في قطاع الأغذية، والاتجاهات، والحوجز. يجب أن يأخذ التحليل الاستراتيجي في الاعتبار النسيج الاجتماعي والثقافي للمملكة العربية السعودية وتفضيلات المستهلكين، لكن اتجاهات التجارة الإلكترونية العالمية مفيدة. تناول هذا البحث الدوافع والعوائق التي تحول دون اعتماد التجارة الإلكترونية لمساعدة الشركات على تحسين التسويق وإشراك المستهلكين، ويستهدف صناعات السياسات التدخلات اللازمة للحفاظ على النمو والابتكار في النظام البيئي المتنامي للتجارة الإلكترونية في صناعة الأغذية في المملكة العربية السعودية. استخدمت الدراسة تصميم البحث الكمي لدراسة سلوك المستهلك واعتماد التجارة الإلكترونية في صناعة الأغذية في المملكة العربية السعودية. علاوة على ذلك، فإن دمج الاستدامة والمصادر الأخلاقية والمسؤولية الاجتماعية للشركات في الاستراتيجيات الرقمية يمكن أن يعزز سمعة العلامة التجارية ويجذب المستهلكين المهتمين بالبيئة. إن استكشاف التقارب بين تجارة التجزئة عبر الإنترنت وخارجها، وتجارب التسوق في الواقع الافتراضي، وتأثير اتجاهات التجارة الاجتماعية قد يؤدي إلى التمايز والميزة التنافسية والقيادة داخل مساحة بيع المواد الغذائية الرقمية بالتجزئة. لكلمات المفتاحية: سلوك المستهلك، تبني التجارة الإلكترونية، المملكة العربية السعودية، صناعة الأغذية، التحول الرقمي، الاستدامة، الابتكار.