



Online Grocery Shopping and Covid-19 Indonesian Consumers' Behavior Changes in the New Normal

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Abstract. Online grocery shopping was intended to ease busy consumers who could not go to the store due to tight schedules. However, when the Covid-19 hit, this shopping channel saw a surge in Indonesian consumers' interest in its lesser contact factor. There were also business entities specifically built up to cater Indonesian consumers on this platform. This paper aims to describe the Indonesian consumers' behavior changes towards online grocery shopping through a literature review. The results show that Indonesian consumers had adjusted to changes after the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, online grocery shopping will likely stay in the Indonesian consumer's preference for shopping. The paper also provides substantial managerial implications.

Keywords: Consumer behavior · behavior change · online grocery shopping · theory of planned behavior

1 introduction

Online grocery shopping activities are globally increasing from year to year [1]. Especially with the Covid-19 pandemic, which has begun to limit the scope of society [2, 3], and food insecurity is vulnerable [4]. The pandemic has also accelerated the trend of shopping for groceries online, significantly limiting access to meet sellers and buyers of groceries [5]. It is proven by a significant increase in sales in online grocery applications in Indonesia. The names of applications such as Segari, Sayurbox, TaniHub, and Happy Fresh are a few online grocery shopping applications well known in consumers' ears in big cities in Indonesia [6]. The main buyers of this online application are consumers from big cities [7]. This is because the need for convenience in shopping and time efficiency [8] is needed by residents of big cities in Indonesia, which is synonymous with a hectic and busy work rhythm.

1.1 Consumer Behavior Change

Many studies on changes in consumer behavior have been carried out [9, 11]. Indonesian consumers' shopping behavior initially requires social closeness, which brings together sellers and buyers in the market and, over time, often manages to build close relationships across generations. Then this behavior slowly shifts to a transactional relationship, where

buyers feel it is enough to get the food they want to buy and make payments as soon as possible using the instant payment method through the banking system [6, 12].

The current digital era also changes consumer shopping arrangements. When recipes can be easily accessed via the internet, consumers are increasingly aware of new types of cuisine and can quickly try to make them in their kitchens [5]. Major events such as the Covid-19 pandemic have also become a turning point for consumer behavior [13]. Consumers' food and beverage consumption behavior change the physical activities consumers do, how they interact on social media, and their shopping behavior [10]. In the early days of the pandemic, consumers did panic buying as a form of their fear so they would not interact with the crowd [14, 15]. Then shopping behavior also changes to buying excess stock, so that people can use food ingredients longer without leaving the house often to shop at the supermarket or market. Over time, consumer shopping behavior then changes channels. The channels used are not only offline, such as in markets or supermarkets, but also online, namely ordering through websites or applications [9, 13]. In addition, consumer behavior changes are related to the budget. Consumers do this because Covid-19 has caused many employee layoffs in several industries. So consumer spending behavior is also affected by this [9].

1.2 Online Grocery Shopping

Grocery shopping behavior is actually something that is done repeatedly. So that consumers will learn and adapt every time they do this shopping activity from previous shopping activities [1]. There is a division of consumer segments in online grocery shopping in it. This differentiates consumers based on their shopping motives [1]. Consumers from middle to upper economic levels mostly do online grocery shopping, where an understanding of technology and ownership of supporting technological facilities such as smartphones and personal computers at home are readily available [16]. The prices charged to consumers compared to direct grocery shopping are indeed relatively higher, considering that there are convenience and time-saving factors [8] that are emphasized by this online grocery shopping system [16].

Consumers who shop for groceries online actually do not really consider the amount of energy spent in their shopping activities. This is due to relatively the exact transportation costs compared to direct food purchases [16]. Shopping for groceries online actually takes various forms. Online here can be through websites or applications, and there are also social media messengers [5]. Social media messengers such as WhatsApp are communication channels commonly used by Indonesian people [17]. Hence, grocery sellers provide an alternative to ordering more convenient goods by allowing buyers to contact them beforehand to prepare the goods, which will later be sent directly to the buyer's house [17, 18]. This is inseparable from the level of technology adoption that the Indonesian people can accept. Hence, innovation in online grocery shopping can be in the form of a business model, only distribution channels, or if there is a new infrastructure in it [7, 17].

1.3 Theory of Planned Behavior in Online Grocery Shopping and the Covid-19 Pandemic

In fact, consumers will always look for ways to get the maximum profit in their shopping activities and spend a minimum of energy, time, and money on themselves [19]. Based on the health benefits expected to be obtained by consumers, consumers' attitudes toward switching shopping channels can be understood [20]. The need for good quality food is a prerequisite for obtaining good health [21]. In the Theory of Planned Behavior, there are three determining factors in consumer behavior; attitudes towards these behaviors, consumer normative beliefs, and control beliefs [21, 22]. This is considered important given the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic that has concerned many people regarding the large number of casualties caused by this virus [23]. With a healthy body and good immunity, health experts have shown that the Covid-19 virus can be passed like the common cold [24].

This utilitarian value owned by consumers is what ultimately becomes the biggest driver of consumers for channel switching to online grocery shopping channels [19]. The need to eat healthy foods and live a healthy lifestyle in order to increase the body's immune power, protect oneself from COVID-19, reduce contact and behave hygienically has been recommended by the World Health Organization [25]. The shopping behavior for healthy groceries through channels that have minimal physical interaction to protect oneself from the Covid-19 disease can be explained through this Theory of Planned Behavior.

2 Research Method

This study was based on a literature review using the descriptive qualitative method.

3 Results

3.1 Sustainability of Online Grocery Shopping Behavior

Although the development of digital technology has proven to have a positive influence on the sustainability of food consumption [5], changes in online grocery shopping behavior caused by the fear of the Covid-19 pandemic cannot actually guarantee the sustainability of this business model. This is because consumers realize that direct shopping behavior in stores creates feelings of pleasure, recreation, and social interaction [16]. Older people also find pleasure in shopping in stores, as a way to fill their spare time [8]. Residents from developing countries also tend to continue shopping in stores, even though they have made purchases online [26].

In addition, the development of health technology post-Covid-19 era, where many vaccinations have been carried out, has been vastly developed. Medical equipment has become increasingly sophisticated and focused on handling the dangers of this virus [27].

This online grocery shopping behavior can be continued if positive consumer experiences can be maintained. The time efficiency [8], guarantees good quality of food

Table 1. E-Grocery Startups in Indonesia

E-Grocery Startups	Platform	Year of Establishment
Tante Sayur	Instagram, Marketplace	2015
Happy Fresh	Website, Android, iOS	2015
Kecipir	Website, iOS, Android	2015
GoMart	Android, iOS	2015
TaniHub	Website, Android, iOS, e-commerce	2016
Carisayur	Website, Android	2016
TukangSayur.id	Android, iOS	2016
Sayur Box	Website, Android, iOS	2016
Brambang	Website, Android	2017
Freshbox	Marketplace, Offline store, Android, iOS	2018
Baqoel	Website, Android, iOS	2019
Gosarbu	Website, Marketplace	2020
Segari	Website, Android	2020

ingredients, and relatively affordable prices are the pointers that need to be highlighted. The consumers who have adopted this shopping behavior and have the potential to continue are consumers who are less than 45 years old, with an above-average income level, and live in big cities [7, 28] (Table 1).

Having a gadget that can connect consumers to the internet is not a rare thing anymore. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced citizens of the world to set aside their household budgets to buy a smart phone or computer gadget to connect with information out there without having to leave their homes [31].

All the complete information obtained from internet access and the presence of gadgets whose prices are relatively affordable will make it easier for consumers to use online services. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Indonesian consumers love to increase their online gameplay activities [32], learn more learning digital apps [33] and do work online [34].

4 Conclusion

After the Covid-19 pandemic, online grocery shopping behavior in Indonesian society has become a permanent habit. Given the long duration of the pandemic and the limitations faced by consumers in shopping. This is also supported by the increasing number of choices of online grocery shopping sources, which can be in the form of applications, websites, or the marketplace.

The availability of supporting facilities in the form of technology that supports smooth online shopping experiences, such as a strong internet signal and the affordable price of devices by the public, makes this online grocery shopping behavior the new norm among Indonesia’s young internet literate generation.

The demand for online grocery shopping services is indeed increasing. Many startups feel the benefits of this consumer need. The existence of an e-grocery startup that is stable and strong in funding also plays a role in it. The startups which are not strong in capital, and do not have a special strategy, will be easily removed from the competition in this online grocery shopping business. The ability to innovate quickly is needed to win the attention of consumers, as well as to survive in the minds of consumers.

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