



The Shift from Physical to Digital: Consumer Experience in Grocery Shopping in Vijayawada and Guntur

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Abstract. The rapid shift from physical to digital grocery shopping has resulted in a transformation in consumer behavior, prompting a comparative analysis of experiences that consumers have with online grocery apps compared to those in offline retail stores. This research examines the consumer experiences in Vijayawada and Guntur, two rapidly evolving cities that are witnessing a notable increase in digital technology usage. The consumer experience is evaluated across two important factors: Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. Functional Value included sub-factors such as Convenience & Accessibility, Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience, and Product/Service Quality, while Emotional Trust-Based Value was assessed through Trust & Security and Shopping Experience & Satisfaction. Data was gathered using a well-organized questionnaire, which guarantees high reliability, reflected in a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.7. A sample of 384 respondents was selected from each city using a convenience sampling technique, enabling a thorough evaluation. Descriptive statistics, including percentages and mean values, are utilized to analyze consumer preferences. At the same time, MANOVA is employed to compare the mean differences between experiences in online and offline grocery shopping. The findings show that significant differences exist in consumer experience. Online grocery apps are found to excel in convenience and pricing benefits, while offline retail stores are noted for better performance in product quality and trust factors. This research provides important perspectives that can assist retailers and online platforms in improving customer experiences and closing the divide between in-store and online grocery shopping.

Keywords: Consumer Experience, Functional Value, Emotional Trust-Based Value, Online Grocery Apps, Offline Retail Stores.

1 Introduction

In today's rapidly changing and interconnected world, shopping habits have changed significantly. Consumers are now free to shop beyond the traditional retail store environment; they can seamlessly choose between online and offline shopping based

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on their personal preferences, needs, and situations. The emergence of e-commerce sites and mobile shopping applications has made it exceptionally easy for individuals to explore, compare, and buy products at any time and from any location (Chung, S., & Park, C) [1]. From groceries to gadgets, consumers can now get almost anything delivered to their doorstep with just a few taps on their smartphones. This digital transformation has especially appealed to those who value time, comfort, and efficiency working professionals, students, or even senior citizens who prefer to avoid crowds or travel time (Pantano et al.) [2]. At the same time, offline retail stores continue to play a vital role in the shopping journey. Many customers still appreciate the tangible experience of physically seeing, touching, or trying out products before making a purchase decision. Local grocery stores, supermarkets, and retail chains provide immediate access to essentials and offer the benefit of human interaction, which can be reassuring for many (Verhoef et al.) [3]. The ability to personally inspect the quality of fruits and vegetables, ask questions to store staff, or simply enjoy the ambience of a physical store adds emotional and sensory value that online platforms often struggle to replicate (Lemon & Verhoef) [4].

Interestingly, a growing number of consumers are blending both experiences what is commonly known as “phygital” shopping. For example, someone might check reviews and prices of a product online but walk into a store to finalize the purchase, or vice versa (Alexander & Cano) [5]. This hybrid behavior reflects a shift in consumer expectations; today’s shoppers seek convenience, speed, trust, and a personalized experience regardless of the channel (Homburg et al.) [6].

Ultimately, both online and offline shopping modes have carved out their unique advantages, and rather than one replacing the other, they now complement each other. Retailers, both digital and traditional, are increasingly integrating technology to provide seamless customer experiences. As technology continues to advance and consumer lifestyles evolve, the future of shopping will likely be an even more balanced blend of the digital and physical worlds.

Consumer Experience

Consumer experience encompasses the full range of feelings and reactions that a customer experiences when engaging with a brand, product, or service during their entire buying process. It encompasses every touchpoint a consumer encounters, from awareness and consideration to purchase and post-purchase support (Lemon & Verhoef) [4]. Unlike customer satisfaction, which assesses a single transaction, consumer experience is a holistic concept that evaluates the cumulative impact of multiple interactions with a brand (Brakus et al.) [7].

Consumer experience is often described as the emotional, cognitive, and sensory response elicited during these interactions (Schmitt) [8]. It is influenced by various factors such as product quality, customer service, convenience, and personalization. Companies that prioritize creating positive consumer experiences tend to enjoy stronger customer loyalty, increased retention rates, and enhanced brand reputation (Verhoef et al.) [9].

The Evolution of Customer Experience

The concept of customer experience has deep historical roots in marketing theory, evolving over decades by building on foundational research in consumer behavior and service design. While it is now recognized as a distinct and strategic focus, its emergence has been shaped by numerous well-established concepts.

The groundwork for customer experience began in the 1960s with early marketing theories introduced by scholars such as Philip Kotler [10] and Howard and Sheth 1969. These foundational theories laid the base for understanding consumer needs, motivations, and behaviors.

From the 1970s onward, academic focus shifted toward customer satisfaction and

loyalty, recognizing that consumer perceptions of value and experience directly impacted repeat business (Oliver) [11]. In the 1980s, the idea of service quality gained prominence, particularly through models like SERVQUAL, which helped businesses evaluate and improve service-based interactions (Zeithaml et al.) [12].

The 1990s introduced the relational approach to marketing, emphasizing long-term engagement and emotional bonds with customers (Morgan & Hunt) [13]. This evolved further in the 2000s with the rise of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools, allowing businesses to tailor and monitor customer journeys (Payne & Frow) [14].

As companies sought to align organizational structures with customer expectations, the 2000s and 2010s highlighted the importance of customer-centricity and internal process alignment (Shah et al.) [15]. Finally, the 2010s brought customer engagement to the forefront, reflecting the active and participatory role of consumers in shaping their own experiences (Brodie et al.) [16]. Understanding these roots is crucial, as customer experience today is not merely a buzzword but a synthesis of decades of marketing evolution.

Components of Consumer Experience

According to Lemon and Verhoef [4], consumer experience can be broken down into the following components:

1. **Cognitive Experience:** This relates to the consumer's thought processes when evaluating a product or service. It includes factors such as brand perception, product knowledge, and problem-solving abilities (Oliver) [11].
2. **Emotional Experience:** Emotional ties are crucial in influencing the experiences of consumers. Positive emotional experiences, such as delight or satisfaction, foster brand loyalty, while negative emotions can result in dissatisfaction and complaints (Babin & Darden) [17].
3. **Sensory Experience:** Brands often use sensory stimuli like visuals, sounds, scents, and textures to create memorable experiences. Retail stores, for instance, often use pleasant fragrances and engaging displays to influence consumer perceptions (Krishna) [18].
4. **Behavioral Experience:** This component focuses on the consumer's actions and reactions throughout the customer journey. Efficient customer service, seamless navigation, and user-friendly interfaces encourage positive behavioral experiences (Pine & Gilmore) [19].
5. **Social Experience:** Consumers often rely on social interactions, such as peer recommendations, reviews, and social media engagements, to shape their perceptions of brands (Kumar et al.) [20].

Consumer experience has become a crucial determinant of business success in today's competitive marketplace. It includes all the interactions a customer experiences with a brand, starting from their initial contact right through to after the purchase, significantly influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Lemon & Verhoef) [4]. Positive consumer experiences can lead to increased customer retention, advocacy, and higher lifetime value (Rawson, Duncan, & Jones) [21]. In contrast, negative experiences often result in brand switching and damage to reputation (Kranzbuhler et al.) [22]. Companies that prioritize consumer experience are more likely to outperform their competitors financially and gain a sustainable competitive edge (Homburg, Jozic, & Kuehn) [7]. With the growing use of digital technologies, enhancing consumer experience across multiple touchpoints both online and offline has become more important than ever (Rose, Clark, Samouel, & Hair) [23]. Thus, organizations are investing heavily in customer experience strategies to build emotional connections and long-term relationships with consumers (Verhoef et al.) [24].

Stages of Consumer experience

The consumer journey is a multi-stage process that encompasses various touchpoints from initial awareness to post-purchase advocacy. Understanding these stages awareness, consideration, purchase/decision, loyalty, and advocacy is critical for businesses, particularly in the grocery sector, where both online and offline channels play a significant role (Lemon & Verhoef) [4]. This framework enables retailers to customize their marketing approaches to address consumer requirements at every stage, thereby boosting engagement and fostering lasting customer relationships. Below, we explore these stages in detail, linking them to both online and offline grocery purchases.



Figure 1: Stage of Consumer Experience

Awareness: The awareness stage marks the consumer's first interaction with a brand or product. In offline grocery shopping, this could occur through in-store displays, word-of-mouth recommendations, or traditional advertising (Kotler et al.) [25]. Online, awareness is often generated through digital ads, social media promotions, or search engine results (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick) [26]. For example, a consumer might notice a new organic snack brand via a Facebook ad (online) or a supermarket shelf display (offline).

Consideration: At this stage, consumers evaluate different options before making a purchase. In offline grocery stores, they may compare products by reading labels or seeking staff recommendations (Grewal et al.) [27]. Online, consumers rely on product descriptions, customer reviews, and price comparisons (Bhatnagar & Ghose) [28]. For instance, a shopper might compare two brands of olive oil by checking online reviews (digital) or by examining product quality in-store (physical).

Purchase/Decision: The purchase stage involves the final transaction. Offline, this occurs at the checkout counter, where impulse buys or last-minute discounts may influence decisions (Inman et al.) [29]. Online, the purchase is completed via a digital cart, with factors like delivery options and promo codes affecting the choice (Verhoef et al.) [3]. For example, a consumer may choose an online grocery platform over a physical store due to same-day delivery convenience.

Loyalty: Loyalty is built through positive post-purchase experiences. Offline, this could involve loyalty programs (e.g., reward points at a supermarket), while online, personalized recommendations and subscription services enhance retention (Rust et al., 2020). A shopper who consistently receives high-quality fresh produce from an online grocer is more likely to remain loyal.

Advocacy: Advocacy occurs when satisfied customers promote a brand voluntarily. Offline, this may include word-of-mouth referrals, while online, it manifests as social media endorsements or positive reviews (Kumar et al.) [20]. For example, a customer sharing their positive Instacart experience on Twitter contributes to brand advocacy. The consumer journey in grocery shopping whether online or offline follows a structured path from awareness to advocacy. Retailers must optimize strategies for each stage to enhance customer satisfaction and drive repeat purchases. By leveraging both digital and physical touchpoints, businesses can create a seamless and engaging shopping experience.

Theoretical Foundations of Customer Experience

The study of customer experience has evolved significantly over the decades, shaped by changing consumer behaviours, technological advancements, and shifting business

priorities. The following table (Table 1) presents a historical overview of key contributions to customer experience research, highlighting how different eras have expanded our understanding of this critical marketing concept. From early process models in the 1960s–1970s to modern engagement frameworks in the 2010s, each phase has introduced new dimensions whether through service quality, relationship marketing, or data-driven customer relationship management. This progression reflects the growing recognition of customer experience as a holistic, multi-stage journey rather than a single transactional event. By examining these foundational contributions, we gain valuable insights into how businesses can design more meaningful and effective customer interactions in both digital and physical retail environments.

Table 1: Historical Perspective – Contributions to Customer Experience

Time Frame	Topic Area	Key Contributors	Contribution to Customer Experience
1960s–1970s	Customer buying behavior: process models	Lavidge and Steiner (1961); Howard and Sheth (1969)	➤ Comprehensive journey to purchasing ➤ Wide-ranging and immersive approach ➤ Frameworks highlighting conceptual relationships
	Customer satisfaction and loyalty	Oliver (1980); Zeithaml (1988); Bolton and Drew (1991); Gupta and Zeithaml (2006)	➤ Analyzed customer experiences and decision-making as an ongoing process. ➤ Established crucial metrics for evaluating the overall customer experience. ➤ Utilized empirical linkage models to pinpoint significant drivers. ➤ Analyzed and appraised customer perceptions and attitudes toward their experiences.
1980s	Service quality	Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988); Bitner (1990, 1992); Rust and Chung (2006); Bitner et al. (2008)	➤ Integrated atmospheric elements and environmental factors ➤ Conducted initial journey mapping via blueprinting ➤ Connected marketing efforts with operational quality ➤ Pinpointed the exact context and components that shape the customer experience
1990s	Relationship marketing	Dwyer, Schurr and Oh (1987); Morgan and Hunt (1994); Berry (1995)	➤ Recognized crucial factors influencing attitudes ➤ Expanded the range of customer feedback evaluated in the customer experience
2000s	Customer relationship management	Reinartz and Kumar (2000); Verhoef (2003); Bolton, Lemon, and Hoyer (2004); Reinartz, Krafft, and Hoyer (2004); Payne and Frow (2005); Kumar and Reinartz (2006); Neslin et al. (2006); Kumar and Shah (2009)	➤ Conducted an evaluation of return on investment ➤ Recognized essential touchpoints and influencing factors ➤ Based on data analysis ➤ Integrated various channels ➤ Analyzed the interrelations between different components of the customer experience and their impact on business results.
	Customer-centricity and customer focus	Sheth, Sisodia, and Sharma (2000); Gulati and Oldroyd (2005); Shuh et al. (2006)	➤ Conducted an assessment of return on investment. ➤ Identified important touchpoints and key drivers. ➤ Utilized data analysis; integrated multichannel components. ➤ Analyzed the interrelation between specific elements of the customer experience and their impact on business results.
2010s	Customer engagement	Libai et al. (2010); Van Doorn et al. (2010); Brodie et al. (2011); Kumar, Peterson, and Leone (2010); Kumar et al. (2013); Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014)	➤ Understanding the significance of interactions that do not involve a purchase: ➤ Acknowledged both constructive and detrimental attitudes, feelings, and actions. ➤ Developed a conceptual framework that includes social media elements. ➤ Enhanced clarity on the customer's involvement in the overall experience.

Source: Katherine N. Lemon and Peter C. Verhoef, 2016 [4]

2 Review of Literature

Holbrook & Hirschman This groundbreaking paper challenged traditional views of consumer behavior. Instead of seeing shoppers as purely logical decision-makers, the authors showed that consumption is deeply emotional. People don't just buy products - they seek fun, fantasies, and feelings. The study introduced a new way to understand shopping by focusing on the symbolic and enjoyable aspects rather than just practical features [30].

Fournier The author proves that people form real relationships with brands, just like with other people. Through detailed case studies, she identifies different types of brand relationships and creates a "brand relationship quality" measure to assess their strength. This work legitimizes studying emotional brand connections and provides tools for future research on brand loyalty and personality [31].

Ramaswamy Despite more product choices than ever, customers remain unsatisfied. This paper explains why: value creation has shifted from what companies make to what customers experience. Today's informed consumers actively co-create value through interactions with companies and other users. The new "experience economy" requires open dialogue and collaboration rather than traditional product-focused strategies [32].

Oh, Fiore & Jeoung The researchers developed the first measurement tool for Pine and Gilmore's "experience economy" theory in tourism. Testing with B&B guests, they confirmed experiences have four key dimensions that affect satisfaction. Their validated scale helps hotels and destinations design better guest experiences and track their effectiveness [33].

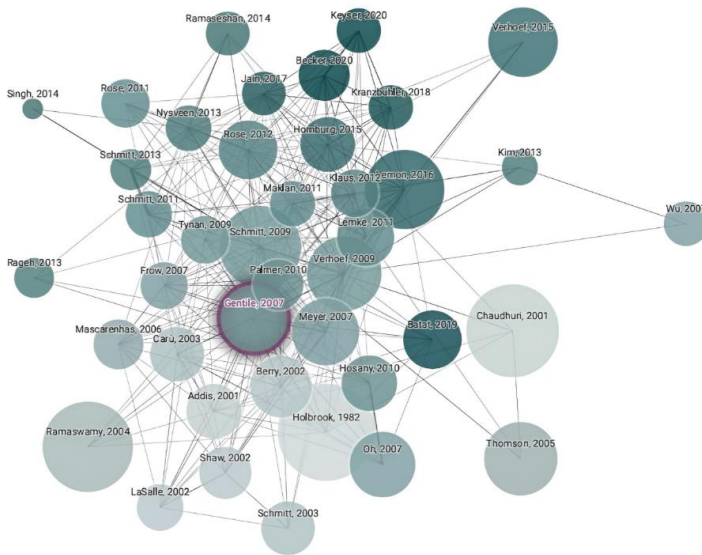
Schmitt, Zarantonello & Brakus This influential study created a reliable way to measure brand experiences across four dimensions: sensory (how brands engage our senses), affective (emotional connections), intellectual (thought-provoking aspects), and behavioral (actions inspired by brands). The research proved these experiential factors directly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty beyond traditional brand measures [7].

Kim & Choi The study reveals how different service qualities combine to shape customer experiences. Service outcomes, staff interactions, and even fellow customers all contribute. Notably, gender affects which factors matter most - proving customer experience isn't one-size-fits-all. Ultimately, superior experiences drive greater customer loyalty [34].

Lemon & Verhoef In our multi-channel world, customer experience has become complex. This comprehensive review shows how experiences now unfold across countless touchpoints over time. The authors trace the evolution of experience research, synthesize current knowledge, and outline future priorities - emphasizing the need for cross-functional coordination to deliver seamless experiences [4].

Rana, N. P., Begum, N., Faisal, Mohd. N., & Mishra, A. This study reviews 42 articles on hotel customer experiences with service robots using the USUS Framework. It highlights variations in embodiment, emotion, safety, and co-experience, emphasizing that long-term satisfaction depends more on functionality than novelty. The findings offer guidance for hotels on thoughtful SR integration and suggest future research to develop stronger theoretical foundations for customer experience [35].

Gleim, M. R., McCullough, H., Gabler, C., Ferrell, L., & Ferrell, O. C. measured how the metaverse enables businesses to create personalized customer experiences beyond traditional retail. It identifies research opportunities across the customer journey, **pre-purchase** (self-expression, social influence), **purchase** (hyper-personalization, NFTs), and **post-purchase** (unboxing, advocacy). A three-pronged framework is proposed to help retailers adapt to the evolving metaverse landscape [36].



Source: Connected Papers

Figure 2 Bibliometric Graph

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the concept of consumer experience in grocery shopping and its significance in both online grocery apps and offline retail stores.
- 2) To evaluate the role of Functional value and Emotional Trust-Based value in shaping consumer preferences for online and offline grocery shopping in Vijayawada and Guntur.
- 3) To provide suggestions for grocery apps and offline stores to enhance consumer experience, improve service quality, and foster long-term customer loyalty

Hypothesis of the study

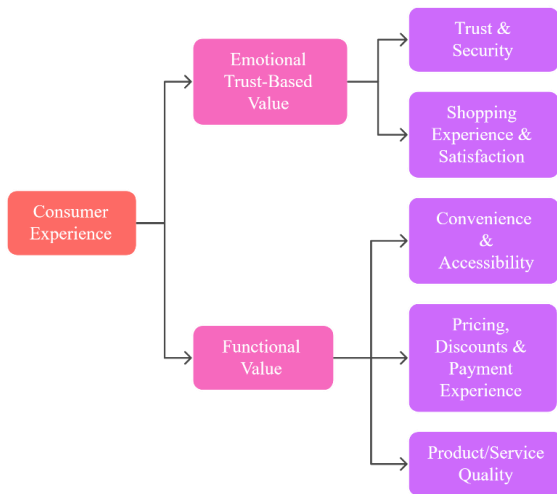
H₀₁: *There is no significant difference in Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value between consumers of online and offline grocery stores in Vijayawada and Guntur.*

H₁₁: *There is a significant difference in Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value between consumers of online and offline grocery stores in Vijayawada and Guntur.*

3 Research Methodology

Research Design: The present study adopts a mixed research design combining both exploratory and descriptive approaches to thoroughly understand the consumer experience in grocery shopping, with a specific focus on online grocery apps and offline retail stores in Vijayawada and Guntur.

Variables of the Study: To comprehensively measure the consumer experience in grocery shopping, this study is structured around two key constructs: Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. Each of these constructs is broken down into specific variables that reflect different aspects of the shopping journey ranging from ease of use and pricing benefits to emotional satisfaction and trust in the shopping platform.



Source: Created by Author

Figure 3: Factors of Consumer Experience

1) Functional Value

Functional value refers to the practical and utilitarian aspects of grocery shopping that directly influence a consumer's decision-making process. It is measured through three critical dimensions:

a) Convenience & Accessibility: This variable captures how easy and efficient it is for consumers to interact with the shopping platform. For online apps, it includes app navigation, product availability, delivery scheduling, and ease of checkout. For offline stores, it includes store location, ease of finding products, availability of stock, and quick checkout experience. These factors are essential in determining whether the shopping process saves time and effort for the consumer.

b) Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience: This dimension evaluates how consumers perceive value in terms of cost-saving benefits and payment ease. Online shoppers may benefit from exclusive app discounts, digital cashback, and seamless payment gateways. Offline shoppers, on the other hand, may value in-store discounts, loyalty programs, and the flexibility of payment options like cash or card. This variable sheds light on how monetary incentives and convenience shape customer satisfaction.

c) Product/Service Quality: This variable assesses whether customers receive high-quality, fresh, and accurately delivered products. In both online and offline scenarios, the perception of product variety, freshness, reliability of services, and responsiveness to customer issues plays a significant role in shaping overall experience. For example, a responsive customer support team in an app or helpful in-store staff greatly enhances the consumer's journey.

2) Emotional Trust-Based Value

While functional factors drive efficiency, emotional trust-based value addresses how consumers feel about their shopping experience. It captures emotional connection, safety, and satisfaction, and is assessed through:

a) Trust & Security: This variable explores the consumer's confidence in the platform whether digital or physical. Online shoppers are more concerned with data privacy, secure transactions, and the authenticity of products and sellers. Offline shoppers may trust the brand reputation, product authenticity, and store ethics. These

elements build or break the foundation of long-term customer loyalty.

b) Shopping Experience & Satisfaction: This variable reflects a customer's overall emotional fulfilment from their shopping journey. It includes satisfaction with recommendations, sustainability efforts, customer reviews, and the general ambience (in offline stores). Emotional connection with the brand or platform significantly impacts repeat purchases and word-of-mouth referrals.

Together, Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value offer a balanced lens to assess both the efficiency and emotional depth of consumer experiences in grocery shopping. By analysing these constructs across online grocery app users and offline retail store shoppers in Vijayawada and Guntur, this study enables a meaningful comparison of how each channel meets the practical needs and emotional expectations of consumers. These insights are crucial for retailers both digital and physical to adapt and thrive in an evolving retail landscape where experience defines loyalty.

Area of the Study: The present study has been conducted in the twin cities of Vijayawada and Guntur, located in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. These two urban centres have been selected due to their rapidly evolving retail landscape, with the coexistence of traditional offline retail stores and a growing adoption of online grocery shopping platforms. Vijayawada and Guntur represent a unique blend of modern consumer behaviour influenced by increasing digital penetration and sustained attachment to conventional shopping formats. This mix makes the region an ideal setting to compare and analyse consumer experiences between online grocery app users and offline retail store shoppers. The diversity in consumer preferences, purchasing power, and technological familiarity in this area provides valuable insights into the changing dynamics of grocery shopping in emerging urban markets.

Sampling Technique & Sample Size: For this study, a convenience sampling technique was adopted to collect responses efficiently while ensuring a balanced perspective from both types of grocery shoppers. A total of 768 respondents participated 384 from Vijayawada and 384 from Guntur. Within each city, an equal split was maintained: 192 respondents who shop using online grocery apps and 192 who prefer offline retail stores.

Data Collection Techniques: The research incorporated a combination of primary and secondary data collection methods to gain a thorough insight into consumer experiences.

Primary data was gathered using a structured questionnaire, designed to capture detailed responses from consumers of both online grocery apps and offline retail stores by using a separate questionnaire. A total of 780 responses were collected, out of which 776 were found to be usable after thorough data cleaning. From this, a final sample size of 768 respondents was selected for analysis, evenly distributed between Vijayawada and Guntur.

Secondary data was obtained from relevant research papers, academic journals and textbooks which helped build the conceptual foundation and validate the constructs used in the study.

Data Analysis tools: The research utilized various descriptive and inferential statistical methods to effectively analyze the data.

Descriptive statistics such as percentages and mean scores were used to summarize consumer responses and understand general trends.

For inferential analysis, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was applied to test the hypothesis. MANOVA is particularly appropriate for this study as it allows the simultaneous comparison of multiple dependent variables Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value across two groups: online and offline grocery shoppers. This technique helps determine whether consumer experiences differ significantly between the two modes of grocery shopping.

Test of Reliability

Table 2 presents the results of the Reliability Test conducted to assess the internal consistency of the various constructs used in the study. The reliability of the scales was measured using Cronbach’s Alpha, a widely accepted statistical tool that indicates how closely related a set of items are as a group.

Table 2: Reliability Test

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Cronbach's Coefficient</i>
Convience & Accessibility	4	3.243	1-5	0.879
Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience	4	2.962	1-5	0.852
Product/Service Quality	4	3.019	1-5	0.868
Trust & Security	4	3.267	1-5	0.890
Shopping Experience & Satisfaction	4	3.019	1-5	0.854
Overall Reliability	20	3.102	1-5	0.731

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

From the table, we observe that all the individual constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.70, showcasing strong internal consistency:

Convenience & Accessibility, consisting of 4 items, had a mean score of 3.243 and a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.879, indicating excellent reliability. This suggests that consumers consistently responded to aspects related to the ease of shopping and access to products. Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience also included 4 items, with a mean score of 2.962 and a reliability score of 0.852, reflecting good internal consistency in measuring the economic value and ease of payment processes.

Product/Service Quality recorded a mean of 3.019 with an alpha of 0.868, confirming that the items effectively measure consumer perceptions of the quality and consistency of products and services. Trust & Security scored the highest mean at 3.267, with a robust reliability coefficient of 0.890, showing that consumers responded reliably to questions around the safety and credibility of the shopping platform.

Shopping Experience & Satisfaction also showed strong consistency, with a mean of 3.019 and an alpha value of 0.854, indicating dependable responses to emotional and satisfaction-related experiences.

The overall reliability of all 20 items used in the questionnaire was 0.731, which falls within an acceptable range, demonstrating that the instrument as a whole is reliable. These results confirm that the constructs used in the study are statistically sound and can be confidently used to assess and compare consumer experience across online and offline grocery platforms.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of respondents from Vijayawada and Guntur, offering insights into their background.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Variable		N	Percentage
<i>City</i>			
	Vijayawada	384	50.0
	Guntur	384	50.0
<i>Gender</i>			
	Male	404	52.6
	Female	364	47.4
<i>Age</i>			
	18-27	228	29.7
	28-43	294	38.3
	44-59	164	21.4
	Above 60	82	10.7
<i>Employment Status</i>			
	Self Employed	118	15.4
	Government Employee	154	20.1
	Private Employee	262	34.1
	Retired Employee	76	9.9
	Not Employed	64	8.3
	Student	94	12.2
<i>Educational Qualification</i>			
	SSC	160	20.8
	12 th Class/Diploma	142	18.5
	Graduate	249	32.4
	Post Graduate	136	17.7
	PhD	81	10.5
<i>Family income</i>			
	Less than 2 Lakhs	122	15.9
	2-3 Lakhs	153	19.9
	3-5 Lakhs	272	35.4
	5-10 Lakhs	159	20.7
	Greater than 10 Lakhs	62	8.1
<i>Family Size</i>			
	Joint Family	373	48.6
	Individual Family	395	51.4
<i>Marital Status</i>			
	Married	430	56.0
	Unmarried	338	44.0

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

The sample was evenly split between Vijayawada and Guntur, with each contributing 384 respondents (50%). Gender distribution was fairly balanced, with 52.6% male and 47.4% female. The largest age group was 28–43 years (38.3%), followed by 18–27 years (29.7%). In terms of employment, private employees made up the largest group (34.1%), while students (12.2%) and government employees (20.1%) also had significant representation. Education-wise, graduates (32.4%) were the majority. Most families earned between ₹3–5 lakhs annually (35.4%), with family types almost evenly split between joint (48.6%) and nuclear (51.4%). Finally, a majority (56%) of respondents were married.

Perception of the Respondents

Table 4 presents the responses of online and offline users regarding their perceptions of functional and emotional trust-based values.

Table 4: Respondents' Perceptions (Both Online & Offline Users)

<i>Variables</i>			<i>SDA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
<i>FUNCTIONAL VALUE</i>	<i>Convenience & Accessibility</i>	CA_1	03 (0.4)	72 (9.4)	435 (56.6)	238 (31.0)	20 (2.6)
		CA_2	01 (0.1)	86 (11.2)	438 (57.0)	222 (28.6)	23 (3.0)
		CA_3	03 (0.4)	87 (11.3)	427 (55.6)	232 (30.2)	19 (2.5)
		CA_4	03 (0.4)	87 (11.3)	414 (53.9)	242 (31.5)	22 (2.9)
	<i>Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience</i>	PPE_1	08 (1.0)	143 (18.6)	491 (63.9)	124 (16.1)	02 (0.3)
		PPE_2	06 (0.8)	164 (21.4)	449 (58.5)	147 (19.1)	2 (0.3)
		PPE_3	03 (0.4)	182 (23.7)	438 (57.0)	142 (18.5)	03 (0.4)
		PPE_4	05 (0.7)	162 (21.1)	454 (59.1)	144 (18.8)	03 (0.4)
	<i>Product/Service Quality</i>	PS_1	08 (1.0)	128 (16.8)	473 (61.6)	154 (20.1)	4 (0.5)
		PS_2	06 (0.8)	132 (17.2)	474 (61.7)	153 (19.9)	03 (0.4)
		PS_3	02 (0.3)	138 (18.0)	487 (63.4)	138 (18.0)	03 (0.4)
		PS_4	07 (0.9)	127 (16.5)	477 (62.1)	149 (19.4)	08 (1.0)
<i>EMOTIONAL TRUST BASED VALUE</i>	<i>Trust & Security</i>	TP_1	04 (0.5)	90 (11.7)	400 (52.1)	252 (32.8)	21 (2.7)
		TP_2	02 (0.3)	91 (11.8)	383 (49.9)	268 (34.9)	24 (3.1)
		TP_3	02 (0.3)	88 (11.5)	422 (54.9)	225 (29.3)	31 (4.0)
		TP_4	09 (1.1)	80 (10.4)	403 (52.5)	252 (32.8)	23 (3.0)
	<i>Shopping Experience & Satisfaction</i>	SS_1	04 (0.5)	135 (17.6)	480 (62.5)	142 (18.5)	07 (0.9)
		SS_2	03 (0.4)	144 (18.8)	452 (58.9)	163 (21.2)	06 (0.8)
		SS_3	05 (0.7)	142 (18.5)	463 (60.3)	153 (19.9)	05 (0.7)
		SS_4	05 (0.7)	144 (18.8)	458 (59.6)	159 (20.7)	02 (0.3)

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements related to Convenience & Accessibility, with over 85% consistently expressing positive views, reflecting satisfaction with ease of use and access. In Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience, around 75–78% agreed, indicating appreciation for affordability and smooth payment options. Product/Service Quality showed similar positivity, with over 80% of users satisfied. For Trust & Security, more than 85% agreed or strongly agreed, revealing high confidence in secure shopping. Lastly, Shopping Experience & Satisfaction also saw strong agreement (around 80%), confirming emotionally fulfilling and satisfactory purchase experiences.

Sample Adequacy Test

Table 5 presents the results of the sample adequacy test using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test.

Table 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.830
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7340.560
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

The KMO value of 0.830 indicates excellent sampling adequacy, suggesting that the data is well-suited for factor analysis. According to standard benchmarks, values above 0.8 are considered meritorious, meaning the patterns of correlations are relatively compact. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows a Chi-Square value of 7340.560 with 190 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000, which is highly significant. This means that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and factor analysis is appropriate. Together, these results confirm the suitability of the dataset for further factor extraction.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics for Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value across online and offline grocery shoppers.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mode of Purchase	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Functional Value	Offline	3.1463	.31530	384
	Online	3.0030	.31457	384
	Total	3.0747	.32279	768
Emotional Trust Based value	Offline	3.2923	.38376	384
	Online	2.9938	.39082	384
	Total	3.1431	.41487	768

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

From the table, it's evident that offline shoppers reported higher mean scores in both constructs. For Functional Value, offline users recorded a mean of 3.1463 with a standard deviation of 0.31530, while online users had a lower mean of 3.0030 and a similar standard deviation of 0.31457. The overall mean for all respondents stood at 3.0747. Similarly, in terms of Emotional Trust-Based Value, offline users again scored higher with a mean of 3.2923 (SD = 0.38376), compared to online users who had a mean of 2.9938 (SD = 0.39082). The total average across both groups was 3.1431.

These results indicate that offline grocery shopping tends to provide better perceived functional benefits and emotional trust-based experiences than online grocery apps, based on consumer responses.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) Results for Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value Across Online and Offline Grocery Shoppers

The multivariate tests in Table 7 assess whether there are statistically significant differences between online and offline grocery shoppers across the two dependent variables: Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. Four test statistics Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root are reported for both the Intercept and the Mode of Purchase.

Table 7: Multivariate Tests^a

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.993	57839.266 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.993
	Wilks' Lambda	.007	57839.266 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.993
	Hotelling's Trace	151.214	57839.266 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.993
	Roy's Largest Root	151.214	57839.266 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.993
Mode of Purchase	Pillai's Trace	.159	72.431 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.159
	Wilks' Lambda	.841	72.431 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.159
	Hotelling's Trace	.189	72.431 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.159
	Roy's Largest Root	.189	72.431 ^b	2.000	765.000	.000	.159

a. Design: Intercept + Mode of Purchase

b. Exact statistic

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

For the Intercept, all statistics show a highly significant result with an F-value of 57839.266, degrees of freedom (Hypothesis df = 2, Error df = 765), and a significance level of .000. The corresponding Partial Eta Squared is .993, indicating that 99.3% of the variance in the dependent variables is explained by the model intercept, thus confirming a very strong model fit. Regarding the Mode of Purchase, the results again show statistical significance across all tests: Pillai's Trace = .159, Wilks' Lambda = .841, Hotelling's Trace = .189, and Roy's Largest Root = .189, each with an F-value of 72.431, degrees of freedom (df = 2, 765), and Sig. = .000. The Partial Eta Squared value of .159 suggests that 15.9% of the variance in Functional and Emotional Trust-Based Value is attributable to the shoppers' mode of purchase. Therefore, the multivariate test results confirm that the type of shopping platform significantly influences consumer perceptions across both functional and emotional trust dimensions.

Table 8 presents the results of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances, which was conducted to assess the assumption of homogeneity of variances for the dependent variables Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value across the groups based on the Mode of Purchase (Online vs. Offline).

Table 8: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Functional Value	Based on Mean	.304	1	766	.582
	Based on Median	.315	1	766	.575
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.315	1	764.726	.575
	Based on trimmed mean	.275	1	766	.600
Emotional Trust Based value	Based on Mean	.037	1	766	.847
	Based on Median	.017	1	766	.897
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.017	1	764.611	.897
	Based on trimmed mean	.029	1	766	.865

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Mode of Purchase

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

The results presented in Table 8 from Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances confirm that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is satisfied for both dependent variables Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. For Functional Value, the significance values across all test bases (mean, median, trimmed mean, and adjusted df) range from 0.575 to 0.600, all of which are well above the threshold of 0.05. Similarly, for Emotional Trust-Based Value, the significance values range from 0.847 to 0.897. Since all these p-values exceed 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the variances between online and offline users are statistically equal. This confirms that the data meets the assumption of equal variances across groups, ensuring the reliability and validity of the MANOVA results that follow.

Table 9 presents the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects, offering a detailed look at how the mode of purchase influences both Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value among consumers.

Table 9: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	Functional Value	3.939 ^a	1	3.939	39.712	.000	.049
	Emotional Trust Based value	17.108 ^b	1	17.108	114.046	.000	.130
Intercept	Functional Value	7260.280	1	7260.280	73199.530	.000	.990
	Emotional Trust Based value	7586.969	1	7586.969	50576.705	.000	.985
Mode of Purchase	Functional Value	3.939	1	3.939	39.712	.000	.049
	Emotional Trust Based value	17.108	1	17.108	114.046	.000	.130
Error	Functional Value	75.976	766	.099			
	Emotional Trust Based value	114.907	766	.150			
Total	Functional Value	7340.194	768				
	Emotional Trust Based value	7718.984	768				
Corrected Total	Functional Value	79.914	767				
	Emotional Trust Based value	132.015	767				

a. R Squared = .049 (Adjusted R Squared = .048)
b. R Squared = .130 (Adjusted R Squared = .128)

Source: Field Survey (SPSS 27)

The corrected model for Functional Value shows a significant F-value of 39.712 with a p-value of .000, and a Partial Eta Squared of .049, indicating that about 4.9% of the variation in Functional Value can be attributed to the mode of purchase. Similarly, for Emotional Trust-Based Value, the F-value is 114.046 with a p-value of .000, and a higher Partial Eta Squared of .130, suggesting that 13.0% of the variance is explained by the mode of

purchase. These findings clearly show that the differences between online and offline shoppers are statistically significant for both values. Additionally, the R-squared values are .049 for Functional Value and .130 for Emotional Trust-Based Value, confirming that the model explains a modest but meaningful proportion of variance. Since the significance values are well below 0.05 for both dependent variables, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the mode of purchase has a significant effect on both Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value.

Hypothesis Result

Based on the results presented in Tables 7, 8, and 9 we can now make an informed decision on the stated hypothesis:

- Table 7 (Multivariate Tests) shows that the mode of purchase has a statistically significant multivariate effect on the combined dependent variables (Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value). The Wilks' Lambda is .841, with an F-value of 72.431 and a p-value of .000, indicating a significant difference between online and offline consumers across both variables.
- Table 8 (Levene's Test) confirms that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is met for both Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value (all p-values are well above 0.05). This means we can reliably interpret the results from the ANOVA.
- Table 9 (Tests of Between-Subjects Effects) clearly shows statistically significant differences in both:
 - Functional Value: F = 39.712, Sig. = .000, Partial Eta Squared = .049
 - Emotional Trust-Based Value: F = 114.046, Sig. = .000, Partial Eta Squared = .130

These results indicate that the mode of purchase (online vs. offline) significantly influences both Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. Since the p-values are less than 0.05 for both variables, we reject the null hypothesis H_{01} and accept the alternative hypothesis H_{11} .

H_{01}:	<i>There is no significant difference in Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value between consumers of online and offline grocery stores in Vijayawada and Guntur.</i>	Rejected
H_{11}:	<i>There is a significant difference in Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value between consumers of online and offline grocery stores in Vijayawada and Guntur.</i>	Accepted

4 Suggestions and Conclusion

Suggestions to Offline Retail Stores & Online Grocery Apps

Based on the findings of this study and insights drawn from the existing literature, it is evident that both Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value significantly differ between online and offline grocery shoppers in Vijayawada and Guntur. Offline stores have shown slightly higher consumer perceptions, especially in areas related to emotional trust and satisfaction, while online grocery apps have made strides in convenience and accessibility, yet still face challenges in building consistent trust and perceived value. Therefore, to bridge these gaps and enhance overall consumer experience, the following suggestions are provided in a practical.

Offline Retail Stores

- 1) **Embrace Digital Integration:** Introduce mobile-based loyalty programs, digital billing, and real-time stock availability to merge convenience with personal service.
- 2) **Strengthen Customer Relationships:** Train staff in personalized service and emotional engagement, helping customers feel valued and connected to the store.
- 3) **Enhance In-Store Experience:** Improve lighting, ambiance, cleanliness, and product

arrangement to make the store more appealing and easy to navigate.

- 4) **Promote Sustainable Practices:** Introduce eco-friendly packaging, local sourcing, and sustainability campaigns to attract environmentally-conscious shoppers.
- 5) **Introduce Click & Collect Services:** Offer online ordering with in-store pickup to cater to busy customers who prefer offline but value online ease.
- 6) **Offer Exclusive In-Store Promotions:** Launch time-bound deals or member-only discounts to increase footfall and encourage repeat visits.

Online Grocery Apps

- 1) **Improve Product Quality and Assurance:** Ensure better quality checks, accurate product descriptions, and transparent return/refund policies to build trust.
- 2) **Humanize Digital Support:** Introduce live chat or video assistance with human representatives for a more reassuring service experience.
- 3) **Enhance Delivery Timeliness:** Reduce delays and offer flexible delivery slots or real-time tracking to enhance reliability.
- 4) **Reward Loyalty and Feedback:** Create engaging reward systems for repeat purchases and honest reviews to build long-term customer relationships.
- 5) **Focus on Data Privacy and Security:** Communicate clearly about how customer data is protected to improve digital trust and credibility.
- 6) **Localize and Personalize Offers:** Use data analytics to send personalized deals based on location, purchase history, and preferences.

Implications of the Study

The present study identifies two major constructs Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value as key determinants of consumer experience in grocery shopping. These constructs and their underlying dimensions can be universally applied to evaluate consumer experience in any retail setting. Under Functional Value, three essential sub-factors Convenience & Accessibility, Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience, and Product/Service Quality collectively capture the efficiency, affordability, and service satisfaction of consumers. Meanwhile, Emotional Trust-Based Value is assessed through Trust & Security and Shopping Experience & Satisfaction, which reflect emotional assurance, comfort, and customer loyalty. These factors together provide a comprehensive framework for measuring and enhancing consumer experience across formats.

Conclusion

This study, conducted in Vijayawada and Guntur, explored consumer experiences in grocery shopping through online apps and offline retail stores. The research focused on two major aspects: Functional Value and Emotional Trust-Based Value. Functional Value was analyzed through Convenience & Accessibility, Pricing, Discounts & Payment Experience, and Product/Service Quality, while Emotional Trust-Based Value was evaluated through Trust & Security and Shopping Experience & Satisfaction.

The Study reveals that consumers shopping at offline retail stores reported a more satisfying experience compared to online platforms. Shoppers valued the physical inspection of products, personalized service, ease of access, and trust in product quality. These elements contributed to a stronger emotional connection and practical satisfaction. Conversely, while online grocery apps provided convenience, they fell short in building trust and delivering emotional fulfilment. This insight suggests that while digital platforms are growing, offline stores still hold a crucial edge in terms of consumer experience, which can serve as a benchmark for improving online grocery services. While the findings offer important implications for grocery retailers and digital platforms, future research can address broader geographic contexts and employ qualitative tools for a more holistic understanding

Limitations of the Study

- 1) The use of convenience sampling may not fully represent the broader population, especially rural or lower-income segments with limited digital access.
- 2) The study is limited to Vijayawada and Guntur, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other regions of India.

Scope for Further Research

- 1) Address broader geographic contexts and employ qualitative tools for a more holistic understanding.
- 2) Longitudinal methods and include a wider range of demographic groups to ensure broader applicability.

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