Master Degree Project in Marketing and Consumption

Expiration Date, Unknown: Reasons to Abandon E-grocery Shopping

A qualitative study

Peter Szigeti and Kristofer Börjesson

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PETER SZIGETI

MSc student in Marketing and Consumption at School of Business, Economics and Law at University of Gothenburg

KRISTOFER BÖRJESSON

MSc student in Marketing and Consumption at School of Business, Economics and Law at University of Gothenburg

ABSTRACT

Groceries online (E-grocery) is a growing market, however, many of those that have tried the service abandon it shortly thereafter. Most research surrounding e-grocery focuses on why consumer begin purchasing and why repurchases occur, however, there is a lack of studies regarding why consumers abandon purchasing. Therefore, this article examines why consumers abandon purchasing e-groceries and what factors are causing this behavior. This study uses qualitative interviews with respondents who have abandoned purchasing e-groceries. The findings suggest that price, time, convenience, quality, recovery and stress are among the factors that can be used to map out why consumer abandon e-groceries. In conclusion, the study proposes that these latter factors do not work as single entities but rather in combination. Our findings suggest that e-grocers should implement basic to premium–segmented products as well as inform customers regarding the latest policies and routines.

Keywords: *groceries, groceries online, e-grocery, e-commerce, e-satisfaction, customer satisfaction, e-loyalty, customer loyalty, repeat purchase, attitudes, stress, quality, time, price, variety, recovery, influencers, abandon.*

INTRODUCTION

Online grocery shopping (E-grocery) is in a state of growth. According to Digital Mathandel (2015) 25 percent of the Swedish population have bought groceries online. However, so far groceries sold online still only represent 1,4 percent of the total sold groceries in Sweden (Digital Mathandel, 2016). This indicates that many consumers abandon groceries online. Online grocers, (e-grocers) in Sweden offer either dinner solutions, specialty goods or fully assorted grocery stores that operate online (Digital Mathandel, 2016). These are three different concepts, however, several of the e-grocers offers more than one of these. The consumers order through the e-grocer's homepage and choose products and decide how to get it delivered. The most common delivery solutions consist of home delivery at a day and time of the customers choosing (34 percent), or at a day and time decided by the e-grocer (28 percent), collect at a store of customers choosing (14 percent) or at a store decided by the e-grocer (18 percent) (Digital Mathandel, 2015). Nevertheless, little attention has been given to the topic of electronic grocery shopping of a Swedish perspective, for exceptions see (Frostling-Henningsson, 2003; Frostling-Henningsson et al., 2010 and Hansen, 2005). In this recent wave of online grocery shopping, there is a lack of studies of why people abandon e-grocery shopping. And while widening the scope by looking outside of Sweden it becomes evident that the day-to-day activities such as the logistic and warehouse related processes as well as the delivery solutions available for e-grocers and other tools have received considerable attention, see (Kämäräinen et al., 2000; 2001; Kämäräinen & Punakivi 2002; Punakivi & Tanskanen 2002; Tanskanen et al., 2002; Desrochers et al., 1992 and Bramel & Simchi-Levi, 1996). However, previous research does not assist e-grocers to understand why

customers abandon e-grocery shopping. Hence, the problem for e-grocers is that customer uses the service once or a couple of times but then decide not to repurchase again. Therefore, additional studies of why consumers abandon e-grocery shopping is necessary as this knowledge would identify factors that hinder customers from making a repurchase. This is important as repurchase is seen as a vital factor for vendors to stay in business, see (Fang et al., 2011; Weisberg et al., 2011 and Chiu et al., 2009).

Customers can easily compare alternatives and switch to other e-commerce vendors or decide to continue purchasing from a traditional store (Fang et al., 2011). Therefore, companies within the e-commerce sector need to obtain new customers as well as retain the existing ones in order to survive, (Rao et al., 2011) since, the cost of acquiring new customers for online vendors is at least 20 to 40 percent higher in comparison to the traditional retailers (Gefen, 2002). Thus, rendering most of the relationships unprofitable during early stages, due to the high cost of attaining a new online customer (Ibid). Additionally, some of the relationships only turn profitable after three years (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000), or after four unique transactions (Mainspring and Bain & Company, 2000). As a response to this, online customer loyalty, i.e. e-loyalty, has become a key factor for online retailers (Reichheld & Schefter, 2000 and Chen et al., 2015).

Customer loyalty and customer retention are closely related to the long-term growth and profitability of a firm (Reichheld, 1995). And even a slight gain in customer retention could increase profits greatly (Huffmire, 2001). Because loyal customers spend more money and visits preferred websites more frequently than non-loyal customers (Kim et al., 2012a). The majority of e-commerce websites receive between 35 to 40 percent of revenue from repeat purchases (Rosen, 2001). Therefore, the aim of this paper is to present the motives and factors to why consumers abandon e-grocery. Hence, if a consumer abandons purchasing, the consumer does not repurchase, nor act as a loyal and satisfied customer, all of which are vital factors

for firms to stay in business in the long run. And by conducting qualitative interviews with customers that have abandoned purchasing e-grocery this paper examines why consumers abandon the service and what factors that are causing this behavior. The findings suggest that price, time, convenience, quality, recovery and stress are among the factors behind this behavior. As an evaluation of the findings, this study concludes that the discovered factors do not work as single entities but rather in coherence with each other to influence Swedish consumers to abandon e-grocery shopping.

This paper is structured in the following way, beginning with a literature review that consists of theories regarding beginning and repurchase factors. Followed by a method section that describes the data collection process and the interviewees. The third section is findings and analysis in which the discovered factors are presented partially by verbatim quotations. The fourth section is a discussion in which the discovered factors and the linkage to existing research within purchase and repurchase behavior are cemented. The fifth section consists out of conclusions and contribution. And finally ending the paper with a section regarding limitations and suggestions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research of why consumers abandon e-groceries is scarce, instead a great deal of research has examined the online atmosphere by focusing on purchasing behavior using factors such as repurchase, e-loyalty and e-satisfaction. This paper uses these three theoretical themes as a foundation, since there is a lack of research regarding factors that directly examines particular abandoning behavior. Hence, these factors are the neighboring research and were therefore used as guidance for the researchers to describe and examine the connections between the factors and to showcase why consumers abandon e-grocery shopping. The line of argument during the literature review will highlight how the concepts of repurchase, e-satisfaction and e-loyalty cannot be fully separated as single entities, but instead, seen as

interlinked concepts that are highly dependent on each other. Therefore, the literature will now present these concepts using attributes that have been presented in an effort to describe each concept.

Beginning factors

Factors that influence consumers to begin and to repeat purchasing have been researched by (Aren et al., 2013; Atchariyachanvanich et al., 2008; Fang et al., 2011; Ercis et al., 2012 and Devaraj et al., 2002). These findings suggest that there is an intrinsic motivation, hence, an internal reward of using a product or service. For example, people are driven by trying new things and to be challenged, which influence consumers to try for the first time as well as to develop a repeat purchase behavior. Furthermore, extrinsic factors also act as motivational factors, such as external rewards in terms of money savings are suggested to influence consumers to try for the first time and to repeat purchasing (Aren et al., 2013 and Atchariyachanvanich et al., 2008).

Moreover, Norizan and Abdullah (2010) suggest that there is a linkage between positive WOM and purchase, hence, customers are more likely to purchase a product or service that is linked to positive reviews. Chiu et al., (2009) highlights factors that influence why consumer begin using e-commerce services, where the perceived ease of use is one factor that is mentioned. Further, perceived usefulness where the customer feel that the online shopping will improve its transaction performance. Hence, being useful for them in a timely manner or from a convenience perspective (Ibid).

Repurchase factors

Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) researched the online environment, where e-satisfaction is one of the factors that influence customers purchase behavior. The research suggests that e-satisfaction is controlled by perceived value, which stems from the comparison of what is expected and the actual performance of the product or service (Ibid). Tsai and Huang (2007) study regards customer satisfaction and specifically overall satisfaction, proposes that

customers positive state resulting from an extensive evaluation of performance, which is based on the consumption experience and past purchasing of a product or service, both of which are influencing customers repurchase behavior, similar to Anderson and Srinivasan (2003).

Szymanski and Hise (2000) argues that convenience influence repeat purchase as well as satisfaction and loyalty. Hence, if it is convenient to use and to receive the services and products, and if expectations are met by the performance received, the customer will repeat purchasing, be satisfied and become loyal to the vendor. This research has similar findings of Fang et al., (2011) whom suggest that customer satisfaction is the result of the comparison between the perceived performance and expectations that are done by the customer in the online environment.

Moreover, Fang et al., (2011) suggests that net benefits influence repeat purchase, for example, the consumer weights costs versus effort to make it happen. (Burke 2002; Atchariyachanvanich et al., 2008 and Fang et al., 2014) suggest that convenience, product selection, the value provided and product quality are factors that influence customers toward repeat purchase. Product selection is emphasized by Zhang et al., (2011) who describes it as the perceived website usability, where a broad product selection offered and products that are described thoroughly are influencing customer satisfaction and repeat purchases. Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) suggest that e-satisfaction and e-loyalty affect repeat purchase behavior when the moderating factors are convenience, purchase size, trust and perceived value. Another popular topic within the area of repeat purchase is risk, which often derives from the fact that consumers cannot feel or touch the product before purchasing it within an online environment. In comparison to the traditional setting where customers are able to walk around in a physical store and see the product as well as touch them (Fang et al., 2014).

Additionally, Atchariyachanvanich et al., (2008) highlights three major influencers for customers to repeat purchasing from a specific vendor. Firstly, the convenience and efficiency aspects of using a product or service, thus, time-saving aspects. Secondly, money saving, which includes free vouchers, discounts and other means that result in money saved by using the product or service. Third, pleasure which suggests that the shopping activity has to be enjoyable and pleasant for the customer, in order for them to repurchase the product or service (Ibid). Similar to Chiu et al., (2009) study which highlights enjoyment of the shopping experience as it impacts customers repurchase behavior. Also, Weisberg et al., (2011) emphasize that past purchasing and past experiences with the vendor influence future behavior and repeat purchase.

Furthermore, Kim et al., (2012a) highlight three key points, firstly, the hedonic shopping value, where the excitement and the fun-seeking aspects in a shopping experience by a customer are affecting repeat purchases. Secondly, the utilitarian shopping value, hence, goal-oriented through shopping a product or service. Lastly, customer satisfaction, where the customer's expectations and goals are weighted against the performance and goals of the shopping, all of which are influencing the purchase behavior (Ibid). Kim et al., (2012b) study suggest that repeat purchases are positively related to perceived value, hence, the consumer compares the perceived benefits against costs. Secondly, perceived trust, lower non-monetary transaction price, thus, putting less effort in finding information regarding the vendor and feeling more trust, hence, customers perceive less risk connected to the purchase. Lastly, high perceived price, for example, two vendors offer the same product, one of the vendors offer the product at a higher price, the customer could perceive it as a monetary loss and ultimately have a negative impact on the repeat purchase behavior (Ibid).

Moreover, Zhang et al., (2011); Posselt and Gerstner., (2005) and Zeithaml et al., (2016) emphasize that delivery and the time aspects

associated with the product or service is highly linked with e-satisfaction, e-loyalty as well as repurchase. Hence, customers want products to be delivered in time and if not, compensation should be given that meet the expectations or even exceed it, in order for them to be satisfied. Mostafa et al., (2015) and Zeithaml et al., (2016) emphasize the importance of service recovery, where customers are likely to discuss its endeavors with others, hence, spreading positive or negative WOM. Thus, showcasing the impact recovery can have on both customer satisfaction and where Zeithaml et al., (2016) includes the impact recovery can have on repurchase behavior as the customer can abandon purchasing a product or service if the recovery does not fulfill expectations. However, if the recovery lives up to the expectations it could influence the repurchase behavior in a positive way (Ibid).

Concluding the literature review, the previous research shows that customer satisfaction is a rather broad term and where individuals create own factors that are working as influencers toward satisfaction. For example, one individual might be influenced by price, thus, perceived price might be perceived as high for one individual whereas another regards it as a fair price for the product or service. As well as time, hence, delivery time might be equal to the expectations for one individual whereas for another it is outside acceptable limits. Hence, what is acceptable and satisfactory may differ from customer to customer.

METHOD

For this study, a qualitative approach was chosen as the paper is set out to answer a specific set of questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The emphasis lied on gaining knowledge on the research subject out of the interviewees unique perspective (Bryman & Bell, 2015). And by using qualitative interviews, the researcher had the possibility to avert from the guide, hence, asked follow-up questions and even change the order and wording of the questions, resulting in rich and detailed answers (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). As e-grocery is a growing phenomenon it

is interesting for the e-grocers to get clarity in why people choose to abandon the service as it is expensive to gain new customers. And by gaining knowledge of the factors behind this behavior e-grocers can increase the possibility for a repurchase instead of an abandoned relationship.

With this purpose in mind, it was elected to use a semi-structured interview method. The researchers asked a list of questions (interview guide) see appendix A, that covered the e-grocer topic, the questions gave the interviewee a great chance of answering with flexibility (Fylan, 2005). The questions did not follow the predetermined order and the interviewer picked up on things said by the interviewee and asked questions that were not included in the interview guide (Ibid). As the emphasis and focus of the project was to find new and unexplored factors the method used was flexible as it helped to divert from predetermined questions to explore and probe further into interesting and beforehand unknown factors.

To find suitable participants to interview and to explore unknown factors, a purposive sampling approach was used, which is a non-probability form of sampling (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). Therefore, the study sampled participants in a strategic way instead of completely random (Ibid). The sampled participants were relevant in order to provide an answer to the research question by partly ensuring a variety in the sample in regards to differences in terms of key characteristics between sampled members. Clear criterions enabled the researchers to the exclusion or inclusion of interviewees and with this in mind a snowball sampling was conducted (Marshall, 1996). Hence, a small group of former adopters of e-grocery was contacted and these contacts were then used to establish contact with other people of interest.

All of the interviewees had previous experience of shopping e-grocery, but later on decided to abandon e-grocery. Hence, all respondents had reverted back to the old behavior of purchasing groceries in a physical store. Some of the interviewees had bought e-groceries by combining own baskets of produce through e-grocers that offer this possibility, such as Mat.se, MatHem or Handla24/MAXI. Whereas the remaining interviewees choose to use predetermined baskets that are accompanied by a fixed schedule of recipes for Monday to Friday. E-grocers within this category are Citygross, MatHem and Linas matkasse. Several of the interviewees had tried different e-grocers, however, the majority stayed loyal to one e-grocer before ending the relationship.

All of the interviewees had a traditional grocery store in close proximity to its home, the furthest distance where five kilometers as declared by one of the interviewees. All of the interviewees which were employed drive to and from the traditional grocery store, most of the time this occurred on the way home from work and seldom as a unique destination. Complementary purchases were also done and the distribution between e-grocery and purchases made in a traditional grocery store were roughly 50/50 in average. Hence, e-grocery did only represent half of the grocery purchases during the time as users of e-grocery. The age span of the interviewees was between 24 years to 64 years. The majority had a genuine interest in food and frequently discussed food and e-grocery with both friends and colleagues. The interviewees were in most cases the one responsible for purchasing food in the respective household and spent an average of two hours per week buying groceries in traditional stores in addition to the time spent ordering online. The majority of the interviewees was in a relationship and roughly half of them had children. For a more detailed description of the interviewees, see appendix B.

Data collection took place in March 2016. The interviewees were inhabited in several cities within the region of Västra Götaland, Sweden. These cities were Gothenburg, Jönköping, Kungälv and Halmstad. The interviews were recorded with a dictaphone and all interviews were fully transcribed verbatim. Participants inhabited outside of Gothenburg were interviewed through either telephone or skype, whereas the participants living in Gothenburg were interviewed face to face. Three of the

participants were acquaintances of the researchers and the remaining nine participants were recruited through the first three contacts in accordance with the snowball sampling technique.

The data collection ended after twelve interviewees, as the researchers started to see a pattern in the form of reoccurring themes as each additional interview did not present new groundbreaking information. This opinion was confirmed during the coding process as several reoccurring themes presented themselves. Additionally, the interviews were transcribed from Swedish to English into a document, before using NVivo. Later it was copied into NVivo where the transcriptions were coded using the analyze function inside NVivo. The analyze function helped the researchers to interpret the data and gave examples of emerging themes, more specific similarities found within the interviewed transcriptions. NVivo uses logarithms that find similarities and patterns in a text and organizes it in order for the researcher to use these similarities and patterns that otherwise has to be found manually. This approach was chosen as it gave the researchers a deeper understanding of the information to be analyzed as well as a structure that was easier to work with. The most important themes are presented in the final stage of the paper using verbatim quotations. This study uses verbatim quotations provided by the participants, as it provides the reader with a deeper understanding as well as empowering the research participants (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). By incorporating verbatim quotations in the final sections of the paper the reader is provided with a rich and describing flow of data that the reader can interpret and easily digest before drawing own conclusions. By doing so, the study argues that it is transparent in regards to the findings and give the reader the opportunity to interpret the gathered information themselves (ibid).

The researchers used participants that willingly would answer questions and made it clear for them that the possibility to withdraw at any point were possible (Kumar, 2005). Participation was on a voluntary basis and spoken consent was given by all participants. The participants were informed of the estimated time needed to complete each interview as well as a brief outline of the topic prior to giving consent. Even if e-grocery and shopping behavior online might not be perceived as a sensitive subject the interviewees were given the possibility to be anonymous, which none of the interviewees felt was necessary.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The most important and frequently discussed reasons for abandoning e-grocery among the interviewees are presented in the following sections.

Price

Price as a factor consist of four different aspects, high price, shipping cost, initial discount disappear and lack of options. These aspects together highlight the complexity of the price factor.

Several of the interviewees consider e-grocery more expensive than the traditional grocery stores and therefore did not repurchase due to the higher price:

> *"The price was higher compared to the stores that I usually buy my groceries from and therefore I could not really justify to continue using the service"* Fredrik, 29.

> *"I felt that the price was higher compared to my local Lidl store"* Anders, 35.

Shipping costs was mentioned by one of the participants who hesitated due to costs associated with e-grocery:

> *"Just the shipping to get it to my home was 99 SEK which I could not justify just because I am too lazy to walk back and forth to the store"* Elin, 24.

In the case below the study shows the complexity of perceived costs as well as the impact of shipping fees:

"We have ICA Nära across the street but it is very expensive, using the online service we can get the prices from an ICA Maxi which is cheaper and therefore save money, however, there is a 99 SEK shipping fee" Elin, 24.

The price of using e-grocery was frequently discussed by the participants and served as one of the incitements to start using the service. In situations when price served as an influencer to start, there was a voucher or a direct price discount connected to it, and without the discount these participants did not see the value of continue using the service.

"I tried it because I got a discount, after a couple of times I realized that it was not worth the price I paid" Fredrik, 29.

"I got a discount the first and only time I used the service. If I would buy again I would probably feel that is it expensive, that's why I choose not to buy again" Anders, 35.

Price segments were also revealed, in a traditional grocery store products are offered from a basic to a premium assortment where price ranges from low to high depending on quality. One of the interviewees reflected on this as he searched for different options within this ladder of quality and price. He was disappointed since e-grocers offer a limited amount of choices out of this perspective:

"When I buy groceries I like to try different price segments to see if the premium versions are worth the extra money and the e-grocers do not offer the different price segments" Kristian, 40.

It becomes obvious that there are divided camps in terms of how the interviewees perceive e-grocery and the costs related to it. Some of the participants argued that the direct price of e-grocery and services related to it are perceived as higher compared to the traditional alternatives, whereas others instead perceive it as cheaper. Some of the interviewees made the comparison between price and time and stated that the conversion rate between price and time benefitted time as respondents valued free time higher than the actual cost difference between e-grocery and traditional grocery. These interviewees opted to buy e-grocery even though it was perceived as a slightly more expensive alternative. However, the cost of getting the goods delivered acted as a determinant in some cases and made these participants abandon e-groceries.

The importance of price and the role it plays when acting as an influence to either start or abandon the service could arguably be connected to each respondent's financial situation. As Interviewees with low income, being either a student or unemployed with tight financial constraints, the hefty discount for the first purchase served as an incitement to start using the service. However, for interviewees with steady income the discount also acted as an influence to try the service, but for them in most cases other influencing factors such as curiosity and convenience were equally important. The participants were asked about the costs associated to e-grocery and if it was justified and the general opinion regarding the price level. Even though price served as a specific question, it was discussed in other stages of the interviews frequently and is therefore considered as a main topic and as a reason to abandon e-grocery.

Quality

The quality of products was discussed amongst the interviewees, referring to the lack of quality in fruits and vegetables as a factor that made them abandon e-groceries. Several respondents' abandoned e-groceries due to the lack of quality and this factor could work on its own. Hence, respondents revert back to traditional grocery shopping and do the quality test themselves in the physical store instead of relying on the e-grocer. To highlight the importance of quality and the outcome of lacking in this area, this study present these quotations made by interviewees:

"The fruits and vegetables were not always fresh and sometimes a bit damaged, I would not have chosen these products myself, I guess I like to touch and feel them myself" Ulrika, 31.

"When we received our fresh fruits and vegetables they were totally frozen and we had to discard them and it was one of the reasons building up to our abandonment" Alex, 30.

"Sometimes I liked all the fruits and vegetables I got and maybe even I would have chosen them myself in a traditional store, but of course sometimes I was a bit disappointed and getting new ones would take time unless I went to buy them myself" Elin, 24.

The area of quality has similar camps of opinion similarly to price. Quality is a theme that was frequently discussed by the interviewees even though the interview questions did not consider this area to a large extent, instead was brought up by the interviewees themselves. The opinions about fruits and vegetables were diverse as some did not like the quality at all and even abandoned purchasing because of it, whereas other seemed satisfied by the quality. Furthermore, some were hesitant before ordering and felt worried if the e-grocers would deliver according to expectations and where in most cases positively surprised by the outcome. All in all, quality is an important factor due to the unique nature of e-grocery where the sensory element of quality control is forfeited by the consumers who relies completely on the e-grocers for this part. Hence, extremely important to not disappoint the consumer as it could terminate the relationship

Variety

Several interviewees stated that curiosity influenced them to try e-grocery, which was perceived to be fun for a while. But in the end, the curiosity once felt got replaced with a lack of variety and in combination with other influencers made the respondents abandon the service.

"We wanted to try something new and when ordering through e-grocers we could get new types of dishes, however after a couple of times we felt that it was basically the same type of dishes as well" Fredrik, 29.

"I was curious to see if they could deliver new dishes and getting some new inspiration, sometimes I would be surprised but after a couple of times I could even see the pattern" Emma, 38.

When the lack of variety had presented itself the interviewees soon after found other reasons to abandon the service. Reasons that were dormant before the sense of lack in variety presented itself, soon stepped into the limelight and together influenced the respondents to abandon e-grocery:

"There was basically no variety, I felt that it was basically the same grocery bag all the time more or less" Per, 64.

"The food became boring after a while, I felt that it was the same things over again" Sandra, 36.

One respondent implied that the e-grocer failed to keep the curiosity and creativity alive when using the service, which acted as an incentive to abandon e-grocery:

"For Citygross the variety was really bad, it was too much pasta and such, they definitely lacked in creativity" Peter, 53.

All in all, several of the interviewees was disappointed in the variety of products and recipes offered by the e-grocers, hence, the lack of variety goes hand in hand with the creativity aspect. Both of which acted as an influencer to abandon e-grocery. Lack of variety applies to both e-grocers that determine what the basket will be combined of as well as e-grocers that allow customers to decide for themselves.

Customers that choose themselves would have appreciated more variety in regards to quality and price within single product categories. In cases when e-grocers decided the content instead of the customers the interviewees felt that it was the same grocery bag over and over again, which also influence the creativity aspect that the respondents mentioned. This lesson benefits all e-grocers, no matter business model as variety seems to be expected and would encourage repurchase if it was improved.

Time

From the aspect of time, e-grocery was not as convenient as the interviewees would have hoped for, some declared that expectations were set higher than the experienced level of convenience and expectations of saving time. This was due to the delivery window and precision of the e-grocers which needs improvement, e.g. shortening the delivery window and giving more precise information regarding when the time of delivery will occur.

The interviewees declared themselves unsatisfied with these aspects of e-grocery and asked for shorter time spans and more specific delivery times in order to make it more convenient out of a time perspective:

"The delivery precision of a three-hour span made it not as convenient as we were looking for, we would at least need a precision of +- 15 minutes from a set time, we are living in a society where things are to be convenient and people want to plan and schedule the time" Alex, 30.

"We were not really happy about the delivery times as we had to put in a delivery time of 2-3 hours span without knowing exactly what time to be at home" Emma, 38.

The sense of being forced to be home during a certain timeframe in order to receive the groceries removes the sense of convenience. Also, the possibility to plan days according to desires was hindered and ultimately led to the abandonment of the relationship with the e-grocer.

An additional finding was that people seem to buy groceries out of old habits even if the possibility to benefit from buying the groceries elsewhere, people become familiar with certain stores:

"I do not really find it like a hassle to go grocery shopping, I take it on the way home from the gym, or when I was a student I just did it after classes, you call your girlfriend and ask what should be bought and since I feel good about having routines in life" Fredrik, 29.

E-grocers have until today successfully reduced delivery times as well as frames to respond to these expectations. These recent developments and how information is provided to the customers are changing rapidly, however, several of the interviewees were unaware of the recent changes and mentioned outdated policies. Timeframes that have been replaced by policies and promises from the e-grocers in a way to respond to these expectations. Customers using e-grocery service today are aware of these policies but the former customers are unaware of these changes and still believe that the service is done according to former experiences and hesitate to start again. Hence, e-grocers could benefit greatly by informing former customers of recent changes in order to turn former customers to customers once again.

Stress

Stress was discussed by only two of the interviewees who highlighted stress as one of the most important factors behind abandoning e-grocery. The interviewees felt forced to do things in a particular order due to recipes and in a predetermined order which removed all possibilities of flexibility. Both of these respondents used fixed baskets of groceries that were constructed by the e-grocer and accompanied by a recipe scheme for the entire week.

"I was stressed by the recipe, and I was stressed by the fact that everything had to be done in a certain order, some produce does not last as long as other" Per, 64.

"I had to follow recipes and prepare specific meals each day and sometimes I did not have time and had to give some of the meat to my father so that it did not get spoiled, and that stressed me" Sandra, 36.

Hence, following strict recipe guides for an entire week presented these interviewees with a habit of cooking that was not comfortable. Abandoning the relationship was the only way out of this stressful situation, which was the case for these two respondents. This aspect is more applicable for e-grocers that have predetermined baskets compared to e-grocers that primarily focus on baskets that are combined by the customers themselves. These interviewees wanted to simplify the daily routines in order to remove stress and gain more free time, however, to the respondents' astonishment it was found that the old familiar stress got replaced with a new kind of stress which in the end led to abandoning e-grocery.

Recovery
Another topic discovered were recovery which stems from faulty products or damaged goods that the interviewees wanted to be compensated for. The recovery factor is similar to product quality, however, this factor focuses more on the response and how the respondents got treated in these specific situations. Recovery consists of the following two aspects, compensation by product and compensation by voucher. Receiving the correct and undamaged goods quickly, in the form of a recovery is preferred by one of the respondents. However, this solution might not be the optimal out of the e-grocers' perspective even though it would

most likely generate the most goodwill from the customer.

"It has to be easy to get compensated, we got a check for the money we spent on the fruits and vegetables, however, I would rather see that they offered to give me the same groceries within a couple of hours, otherwise I might not be able to make the dish I was planning to do and therefore I had to go to the local traditional store anyway, hence, the purpose of using this service disappear" Alex, 30.

On the other hand, one respondent is more willing to accept the most standardized solution which is a voucher that can be redeemed during your next purchase.

"We only had problems once or twice with some fruits and vegetables that were not fresh, but we got compensated with a check for our next purchase which worked rather well" Kristian, 40.

These two interviewees might have different views of what a proper recovery should consist of, but in general faulty products were not mentioned as the main incentive to abandon e-groceries as most of the interviewees never had any faulty products. However, e-grocers should continue to work within this area to ensure delivering correct and undamaged products and if recovery were to happen, the customer should be compensated generously and quickly. Hence, e-grocers logistic and picking solutions are not the main features responsible for the abandoning relationship.

Relationships between factors
In the table below, you find the discovered factors for abandoning e-grocery. The table consists of the six factors: Price, Quality, Variety and Time, Stress and Recovery. The table is the summary of all the interviewees negative experience regarding e-grocery.

	Price	Quality	Variety	Time	Stress	Recovery
Elin	√	√				√
Fredrik	√		√			
Mari			√			
Alex		√		√		√
Ulrika		√				
Anders	√					
Sandra			√		√	
Emma			√	√		
Kristian			√	√		
Peter			√	√		
Lars			√			
Per			√		√	

Table 1: Reasons consumers abandon e-grocery

Several interesting observations were made, such as the fact that it seems that customers who perceived the quality to be less than expected also found that the recovery outcome was not of satisfaction. Also, one participant did not give the e-grocers a chance at recovery and instead abandoned the service because the perceived quality was lower than in the traditional stores. Whereas others required other influencers in addition to quality, before making the same decision. The same goes for price, which was the sole reason for only one participant to abandon e-grocery.

However, price could also be accompanied by other factors, such as quality, variety or recovery before resulting in a terminated relationship. Variety had a similar relationship as both price and quality, out of the perspective that it could act as a single entity, but in most cases were one of the several reasons to why the respondents decided to abandon e-grocery. Also, variety was the most frequently discussed factor, hence, important when trying to portray this phenomenon. Furthermore, time was accompanied by at least one other factor, hence, never acted as the single entity as to why the interviewees abandon e-grocery. Stress seemed to share a bond with variety and acted as a factor that in coherence, resulted in abandoning e-grocery.

A final reflection regarding the collected data is that respondents encouraged other individuals to try e-grocery for themselves even though the interviewees were unsatisfied with the experience. Thus, spreading positive WOM, at the same time being honest about the aspects that were unsatisfying to them. Additionally,

this study shed light on an interesting observation regarding the distribution between time spent on e-grocery and traditional grocery shopping. The interviewees mentioned spending an average of two hours of shopping grocery in a traditional store in addition to the time spent ordering online. Hence, raising the question whether e-grocery can replace traditional stores fully and if e-grocery is even necessary.

DISCUSSION

When analyzing price connected to the service this study suggests that income influence how the customer perceive the price of the service and products offered by e-grocers. Interviewees who have a job are more likely to justify the price and does not find it as a factor to abandon e-grocery. Further, price is perceived as an important factor as it dictates how each interviewee might behave and use the service given the respondent's financial situation. The above is similar to what Fang et al., (2011) research suggests regarding net benefits and also in line with Kim et al., (2012b) regarding perceived value and high perceived price. Both studies suggest that consumers weigh price versus benefits, where individuals have different mindsets to what attributes has to be fulfilled in order for them to be satisfied. Thus, customers decide if it is worth to sacrifice one thing and gaining another and this consequently is suggested to influence the repeat purchase behavior.

Further, time is another aspect to why the interviewees abandon e-grocery. Consumers want to save time and for the service to be convenient, hence, see advantages in e-grocery compared to the traditional stores. However, the interviewees perceived that e-grocery did not save them enough time and that the service was not convenient enough to repeat the purchase. Much like Atchariyachanvanich et al., (2008) research which emphasizes the time savings aspects to be of importance for repeat purchasing behavior, the research states that convenience and efficiency are important factors as the customers who do not feel that the service saved them enough time decided to abandon e-grocery.

Additionally, some of the interviewees expressed that the delivery window was not up to the requirements, hence, time saved using the service was not enough to continue to repeat purchasing. The later coincide with Chiu et al., (2009) which emphasize perceived usefulness where transaction performance is important for customers to repeat the purchase and since the customer did not feel that it is as useful and efficient as hoped for, resulted in them abandoning the service. Zeithaml et al., (2016) agree with Chiu et al (2009) out of the perspective that the delivery is allied with the time aspects of how a service is perceived, hence, affects the overall satisfaction as well as the repeat purchasing behavior.

Variety is an important factor to why people begin buying groceries online and one of the factors that e-grocers should use as an attraction in order to get the consumers to continue using the service, hence, keep the curiosity alive by providing a rich variety. These findings synchronize with Aren et al., (2013); Atchariyachanvanich et al., (2008); Fang et al., (2011); Ercis et al., (2012) and Devaraj et al., (2002) whom all discuss the importance of intrinsic motivation, thus, trying new things and challenges are what drives people to begin and to repeat purchases. Additionally, Kim et al., (2012a) suggests that hedonic shopping value, such as, excitement and fun-seeking aspects of the shopping to influence the repeat purchasing behavior, which harmonizes with the statement above. In contrast to beginning purchasing, variety was also discovered as a factor for abandoning e-grocery and were the most frequent reoccurring factor for abandoning. The individuals that decided to terminate the ongoing relationship with the e-grocer often had other factors as well. However, variety could also act as the single factor and resulted in abandoning the service. Given the frequency and importance of variety as a reoccurring factor, this study emphasize that e-grocers would benefit greatly by solving how variety is perceived. Similarities can be found in the term perceived website usability and having a broad product selection as suggested by Zhang et al., (2011); Burke (2002); Atchariyachanvanich et

al., (2008) and Fang et al., (2014) whom all state that product selection is important in order for customers to repeat the purchase.

Quality is another important factor that affects the interviewees behavior in terms of repeat purchase. This study suggests that fruits and vegetables are the most prominent product categories within e-grocery out of a quality aspect. Service and product quality within e-commerce are frequently researched, see (Burke, 2002; Atchariyachanvanich et al., 2008 and Fang et al., 2014) whom all suggest that quality is influencing repeat purchase and that the achieved performance should live up to the customers' expectations.

Stress was discussed by two interviewees, who found e-grocery to be stressful due to the planning and execution of the recipes according to the e-grocers schedule. This schedule forced them to behave in a new and unfamiliar way by following a strict plan that resulted in food expiring if it was not executed according to the schedule. Because of this, the two interviewees felt stressed and felt the need to give away some of the produce to avoid it being wasted. This behavior was unfamiliar for them and together with the variety factor resulted in abandoning the service. Stress can be linked with Atchariyachanvanich et al., (2008) whom emphasizes time-saving aspects, also incoherence with Kim et al., (2012a) who showcase utilitarian shopping, i.e. goal-oriented shopping. The interviewees started using the service to save time and by doing so would remove one stressful activity. However, the effect was the total opposite, in the sense that the extrinsic motivational factors and the reward of getting more time to spend on other activities became the opposite, hence, less free time by being tied to a strict plan and therefore perceived as stressful.

Recovery was another factor experienced by few of the interviewees. And the findings suggest that if compensation is needed the customer expect the e-grocers to handle it in a manner that is of satisfaction to the consumer. However, the consumer often feels worried prior

to purchasing from e-grocers as the consumer cannot see or touch the products for themselves before receiving the product, mostly fruits and vegetables are the product category that is discussed amongst the interviewees. The later cohere with Fang et al., (2014) whom emphasize the risk of not being able to feel or touch the products before purchasing it and most likely affect the customer satisfaction. Recovery did not act as the factor working on its own but rather allied with quality, whom together made the interviewees abandon the relationship.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The objective of this study was to understand and describe the factors to why Swedish consumers abandon e-grocery. Thus, did not repeat the purchase but instead went back to buying groceries in a traditional grocery store. Previous research focuses on why consumers begin and repeat purchasing, hence, lack the ability to showcase why consumers chose to abandon purchasing e-groceries online. One of the major problems for e-grocers today is that many customers begin but only try the service once or a few times. Therefore, it is important to gain knowledge of the factors that affect the consumer to abandon e-grocery and how it is related to beginning and repurchasing. The findings indicate that the quality, variety, price, time, stress and recovery are factors that affect the satisfaction a customer feel toward the e-grocers as well as repurchase. The factors help portray the Swedish e-grocer consumer and describe the reasons for not only beginning, but most importantly why consumers abandon it. Each factor consists out of different aspects that describe the complexity of each factor. Hence, individuals see factors differently and the aspects associated with them are multifaceted.

Furthermore, quality is a common topic within e-commerce in general, as well as e-grocery in particular. This study contributes and adds to this field of research by highlighting the importance of quality within the product category of fruits and vegetables within e-

grocery. This product category was perceived as the single most important category for customers purchasing e-grocery. These findings suggest that other e-commerce sectors should do a similar investigation, hence, do a cross-comparison between different product categories and how the product are perceived in connection to how each product category influences the repeat purchase behavior. Recovery was also a factor that never acted on its own a reason to abandon, but rather in coherence with quality. Thus, if quality fails a majority of consumers give e-grocers a chance at recovery.

Additionally, a pattern between the different factors has been observed, which suggests that several factors are interconnected in an intricate way, in which the factors affect each other and ultimately the outcome of the relationship. The connection between different factors are an addition to the collective knowledge of e-grocery as these links have not received the attention it deserves as it holds the key to unlocking the knowledge behind why consumers abandon e-grocery. Quality, variety, price and time are the key selling points for using the service, however, as observed during the research these key point could backfire if it is not perceived as suggested by the e-grocers.

Hence, e-grocers are responsible for creating realistic expectations of the service so that the perceived experience harmonize with the expected experience. Additional research of stress and the linkage to consumption should be more thoroughly investigated. Consumers want to remove stress from the daily routines and not replace it with another form of stress.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Consumer find price to affect purchasing habits, however, if the e-grocers can find a way to lower the price by for example offering different segments of products, for example, basic to premium, it would increase the possibility of a repeat purchasing behavior. Furthermore, several of the interviewees mentioned old information in regards of delivery time, therefore, e-grocers would benefit greatly by

informing former customers of the new and improved ordering and delivering schemes as it could encourage them to use the service once again.

As Swedish e-grocers are improving service at a fast pace, former customers are not knowledgeable about current policies and routines, indicates that e-grocers have failed in communicating these aspects. Additionally, a majority of the interviewees still spread positive word of mouth in regards of e-grocery even though the respondents mentioned a negative history related to the service, however still encouraging others to try for themselves. The interviewees were in general rather optimistic and positive regarding the future of e-grocery and will likely give it a second chance

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study is of qualitative nature and cannot be confirmed in any statistical way, but rather work as a foundation for future research within e-grocery. Therefore, this study suggests that future researchers look at the findings and test the themes in a quantitative study as the next step in depicting this theoretical landscape. Due to only having a limited number of interview objects the researchers have to be cautious when drawing generalizable conclusions from the constructed data. However, as the semi-constructed interview method provided in-depth data regarding the interviewees perspective of the subject, it can be argued that even having a small number of participants can generate enough substantial data. Having a large number of participants would undeniably provide the researchers with a database that gives a fuller picture of the reality, however, as we discovered patterns and recurring themes it became clear that the small number of participants had generated enough information for the researchers to draw several strong conclusions and the possibility to probe into other areas of interest for future studies. This paper serves to lay the theoretical foundation for further investigations of why consumers abandon e-grocery and it is the researchers' strong belief that this study achieved enough for the next researchers in line to pick up the baton and confirm some of the findings and additional ones using a quantitative approach in a not so distant future. Another interesting area of research to dig deeper into is why people do not start buying e-groceries, as it would benefit the industry.

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Appendix A – Semi-structured interview guide translated from Swedish

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself – what you do in life and who you are?
2. How often do you shop online? Clothes? Food? Shoes? Electronics?
3. Do friends shop groceries online? Something you talk about with friends and colleges?
4. How far from a grocery store do you live? Are there many nearby? And how do you go there? By bus? Car? Bicycle?
5. What do the purchases look like? Who in the family buys most frequent food and about how often?
6. How many hours would you think you spend on buying groceries in a week?
7. How did you go about starting to buy food on the Internet? Was there any specific reason or situation that caused you to test the e-food instead of going to a physical store?
8. Which e-grocery providers did you choose amongst and why did you choose the ones you did? Several options?
9. Can you tell us about your first purchase, and what was it that caused you to test for the first time?
10. How much did you buy for and what products and quantities did the basket consist of?
11. How much have you spent on e-grocery? how many times? during what time span? X months - X years?
12. Was there any specific time of year that you tried? And was there a specific day of the week or time of the day?
13. Which shipping method did you choose?
14. Can you tell us about your first purchase?
15. What was good, or less good with the website?
16. How did you perceive the delivery time?
17. How did you experience the quality of the products? Meet the expectations?
18. How do you think the food is in regards of price?
19. How did you experience the product offering? Was it a wide range? Or you lacked certain products?
20. If you ever had a problem with anything - how was the support?
21. Did e-grocery work as a complementary role or did you use it as a solution for all food purchasing?
22. Did the e-grocery live up to the expectations you had prior to it? Better or worse?
23. Can you tell us about the reasons why you chose to end buying groceries online?
24. What would you recommend the e-grocery store you bought from to add that services?   What was missing? Where could the focus be directed?
25. Finally, we wonder if there is anything you would like to add concerning the e-groceries or anything else that you find to be interesting regarding the topic?

Appendix B – Description of the interviewees

Name	Age	Gender	Marital status	Children	Profession	Vendor	City
Elin	24	Female	Cohabitant	0	Student	Handla24 / Maxi	Jönköping
Fredrik	29	Male	Cohabitant	0	Unemployed	Mat.se & Linasmatkasse	Gothenburg
Mari	30	Female	Single	0	White-collar worker	Mathem.se	Gothenburg
Alex	30	Male	Cohabitant	0	White-collar worker	Mat.se & Linasmatkasse	Gothenburg
Ulrika	31	Female	Single	0	White-collar worker	Mat.se	Gothenburg
Anders	35	Male	Cohabitant	0	White-collar worker	Mat.se	Gothenburg
Sandra	36	Female	Married	2	Blue-collar worker	Citygross & Linasmatkasse	Halmstad
Emma	38	Female	Cohabitant	2	White-collar worker	Mat.se	Gothenburg
Kristian	40	Male	Cohabitant	1	White-collar worker	Mat.se	Gothenburg
Peter	53	Male	Single	2	White-collar worker	Mathem.se & Citygross	Kungälv
Lars	62	Male	Married	1	White-collar worker	Citygross	Kungälv
Per	64	Male	Married	3	Blue-collar worker	Citygross	Halmstad