

# FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS' ONLINE SHOPPING WILLINGNESS IN CHINA'S PREFABRICATED DISHES INDUSTRY: ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES AND CORRELATIONS \*

AiLong Wu<sup>1</sup> and Jun Jiang<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>International College, National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand

<sup>2</sup>ZhanJiang Preschool Education College, China

Corresponding Author's Email: thanadolpolpan@gmail.com

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## Abstract

In recent years, the superposition of multiple factors, such as the home economy and fast-paced life as well as the maturity of the industrial chain, has opened up the rapid development of China's consumption of prefabricated dishes. However, while the rapid development of the prefabricated dishes industry, many problems have gradually appeared, which makes the factors of consumers' willingness to purchase prefabricated dishes online have also changed.

In this study, in addition to the independent samples t-test for gender, one-way ANOVA analysis of variance was conducted across age, occupation, monthly income, and whether or not they had experience, which showed that there were significant differences in effort expectations, e-commerce platform quality, product quality, logistics service quality, brand image, consumer

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innovativeness, online purchase intention, and online purchase behaviour across age, monthly income, and whether or not they had experience.

This study also used SPSS 22.0 to analyse the correlation. The results show that effort expectation, social influence, performance expectation, e-commerce platform quality, product quality, logistics service quality, and brand image and consumers' online purchase of pre-prepared Effort expectation, social influence, performance expectation, e-commerce platform quality, product quality, logistics service quality, brand image and consumers' willingness to purchase prefabricated dishes online showed a positive correlation, consumer innovativeness and consumers' willingness to purchase prefabricated dishes online showed a negative correlation, and willingness to purchase online showed a positive correlation with consumers' online purchasing behaviour. This study can provide empirical support for China's prefabricated dishes industry market, thus providing a theoretical basis for the formulation of related policies and marketing strategies by prefabricated dishes producers, e-commerce platforms, and the government.

**Keywords:** Prefabricated dishes, Online shopping intention, China, Difference analysis;correlation analysis

## Introduction

Online shopping has become a popular way for customers to shop due to the widespread use of smartphones and the ongoing advancement and development of Internet technology (Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2008; Al-Debei, Akroush, & Ashouri, 2015), and prefabricated dishes can enable people to enjoy fast and convenient, nutritionally comprehensive, in line with the tastes of the catering food, which can not only enable people to be liberated from domestic activities, but also help farmers to improve their incomes. Therefore, as a hot field of investment in recent years, prefabricated dishes have

attracted a large amount of capital and technology to enter. The key for prefabricated dishes enterprises to win consumers' trust and increase their stickiness lies in whether they can provide consumers with satisfactory services and enhance their online shopping willingness. Although prefabricated dishes have appeared in the 1990s in China's American-style fast food restaurant chains, but due to the early stage of China's consumer awareness is not high, the catering specialization division of labor is low, the freezing and refrigeration technology is not developed and other issues, the development of slow, until the emergence of the takeaway industry in 2014, the development of prefabricated dishes to enter the stage of high-speed growth, and the emergence of the epidemic in 2020, the catering enterprises can not dine-in or restrict the Dine-in, which has a melting effect on the residents' travel catering, on the one hand, the catering more closed, people can only cook at home by themselves, and the prefabricated dishes become a convenient and fast choice, on the other hand, people who live at home idly have an interest in cooking, and the prefabricated dishes are free of the complicated preparatory work in the early stage of cooking, and they are able to enjoy the results of the cooking, so that the demand for the prefabricated dishes is growing rapidly(Oliveira et al., 2021;Pu, 2022).

More academics are becoming interested in the prefabricated dishes business due to its rapid growth. Current research in the prefabricated dishes industry focuses on industrial production techniques for prefabricated dishes, especially for specific regions and types of prefabricated dishes(Wang et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2022),The development of safety and security systems(Xie et al., 2021),The development trend of the industry(Zhang, 2021; Zhao, 2021)),Problems and Suggestions for Development(Cai, 2021; Wei, 2022; Yang, 2022).The research on consumers' willingness is less concerned with the aspects of prefabricated dishes.And the research on shopping willingness for

the food industry also mainly focuses on organic foods(Yang, 2015),genetically modified food(Luo, Zhang, & Wang, 2021; Zhang & Xu, 2022) and traceable food (Wei, 2021) etc.

Therefore, this paper applies the new framework of consumers' online shopping willingness based on ELM theory to the analysis of consumers' demand for prefabricated dishes products, analyses the influencing factors of consumers' online shopping willingness and online shopping behaviour of prefabricated dishes products and their differences, and empirically examines them using questionnaire survey data of Chinese consumers, so as to provide a theoretical foundation.

## 2. Theory and influencing factors

### 2.1 The Elaboration Likelihood Model theory(ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model(ELM) was originally proposed by American psychologists Petty and Cacioppo to study the change in consumers' persuasion attitudes during the purchasing process, and It is extensively utilized in the domains of social media, advertising, and consumer behavior management(Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).Prior research has demonstrated the dependence of highly motivated customers on high-quality information due to increased access to it(Angst & Agarwal, 2009). When consumers are unwilling to spend energy thinking about a piece of information, They typically choose side or secondary routes. In this case, They frequently look for heuristic cues when making decisions. For example, Customers may consent to receive news or material if the source is reputable, knowledgeable, or appealing. To understand persuasion in an online environment, it is important to understand the "central route" and "peripheral route" as they can influence consumer attitudes (Cyr, Head, Lim,&Stibe, 2018). When individuals carefully consider the presented information, persuasion is achieved through a "central route", and when using a "peripheral route", consumers are more likely to rely on "peripheral clues" (such as images, website formats, etc.) (Gunden, Morosan, &

DeFranco, 2020). The ELM model is not only widely used in the fields of social psychology, advertising, and marketing, but also in the field of e-commerce.

## 2.2 Effort Expectation

Consumers' effort expectation of purchasing prefabricated dishes online is the degree of ease of use of the prefabricated dishes online purchasing system as perceived by the individual. If consumers perceive that the process of purchasing prefabricated dishes online is simple and the platform is easy to use, then the higher their willingness to purchase prefabricated dishes online, i.e., the higher the consumer's effort expectation of purchasing prefabricated dishes online, the stronger their willingness to purchase. In the process of purchasing a certain product, the ease of operating the technology affects the subsequent psychology and behaviour of consumers (Wan, et al., 2015).

## 2.3 social influence

Social influence is the extent to which a consumer perceives that people who are important to him think that he should buy prefabricated dishes products online, i.e., it includes relevant groups of people such as relatives, friends, people around him, and Internet users from the consumer's side, and also media influences such as publicity on the Internet, online purchase reviews, and other media influences, so social influence has a great impact on consumers' online purchases of prefabricated dishes (Bhattacherjee, 2001 ;Zhong and Zhang , 2013) .

## 2.4 Performance Expectations

The performance expectation of consumers' online shopping for prefabricated dishes refers to the extent to which consumers' online shopping for prefabricated dishes can help them achieve better shopping results and shopping experience. The more consumers feel that online grocery shopping is time-efficient, convenient and affordable, and rich in variety, the stronger their

willingness to choose online grocery shopping (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2012).

### 2.5 e-commerce platform quality

The e-commerce platform quality is a key factor influencing consumers' shopping willingness, if the e-commerce platform can give positive and positive responses and try to help consumers when they are dissatisfied with the product they are purchasing, then consumers' shopping willingness will be high. By selecting e-commerce platforms to evaluate friendly web design, easier to navigate and access, and secure and convenient payment can enhance consumers' positive perceptions and evaluations of the website (Deng, Tao, & Ma, 2014).

### 2.6 Product Quality

Product quality is an important part of consumer value, and improving product quality plays an important role in enhancing consumer satisfaction. This is because product quality is related to the safety of the product in the process of use or consumption, and it is also the focus of consumers' general concern(Liu, 2016).

### 2.7 Logistics Service Quality

Logistics service quality is an important factor affecting customer satisfaction, the higher the service quality to promote customer satisfaction index increases, logistics service quality and customer satisfaction between the existence of a significant positive correlation. During this period, customers are most concerned about whether their purchases have been shipped or not, where they have arrived after shipment, and whether the information provided to them about the current location of the goods is accurate(Zhao, Liu, & Liu, 2013 ).

### 2.8 Brand Image

The brand distinguishes itself from competitors' logos, advertisements and other intangible assets of the company's unique market image, specifically including the company's name, products and services, etc. It refers to the personality characteristics of an enterprise or a brand in people's minds, which reflects the degree of recognition of the public, especially consumers, of the enterprise or the brand. It has a very important role (Liu, 2016; Mao, 2019; Hu, 2021).

#### 2.9 consumer innate innovativeness

Consumers' innate innovativeness is a personality trait of an individual, reflecting consumers' cognitive style and psychological tendency to adopt and accept new things, which belongs to the highest level of individual innovation. Some scholars also define innate innovativeness from the perspective of motivation as a trait and tendency of individuals to seek new stimuli, new information and new experiences(Hirunyawipada & Paswan, 2006). Wang & Liu (2018) define consumer innovativeness as a trait of willingness to accept new things in the study of brand extension. In short, most of the literature generally considers that innate innovativeness is a reflection of the innovative personality, cognitive style and behavioral tendency of individual consumers.

#### 2.10 Online Shopping Willingness

Online shopping willingness refers to the tendency or willingness of consumers to be willing to purchase prefabricated dishes behaviors through the Internet, which is the subjective probability of consumers purchasing prefabricated dishes products online. Consumers' Online shopping willingness regarding prefabricated dishes products will directly lead to the implementation of the action of purchasing prefabricated dishes products online (Indrawati et al., 2022).

#### 2.11 online shopping Behavior

online shopping behaviour means that consumers make actual shopping behaviour of prefabricated dishes or have a strong need to purchase prefabricated dishes after determining that they have a need to purchase prefabricated dishes, searching for information about prefabricated dishes, and making a comparison of prefabricated dishes choices..According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, an individual's actual behavior is largely determined by his or her willingness, and the influence of consumers' shopping willingness on their purchasing behavior has been confirmed by numerous empirical studies, and shopping willingness is the most important explanatory variable of purchasing behavior (Tian, 2021) .

## Objectives

1. Aim to analyze consumer' online shopping willingness in China's prefabricated dishes industry from the perspective of synergistic influence, and to test the relationship between seven different types of influencing factors and consumers' online shopping willingness.
2. To understand the moderating role of consumer innate innovativeness in the relationship between three influencing factors, namely performance expectation, effort expectation and social influence, and consumers' shopping willingness online.
3. Confirm the relationship between all major constructs grounding on Elaboration Likelihood Model(ELM), Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and Diffusion of innovation theory (DOI).

## Literature Review

The growth of online shopping in China has significantly transformed the food industry, particularly in the emerging sector of prefabricated dishes (also known as ready-to-cook or ready-to-heat meals). Understanding the

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factors influencing consumer willingness to purchase such products online is critical for both academia and industry.

### **1. Consumer Behavior in Online Food Shopping**

Several studies have addressed the evolution of consumer behavior in the context of e-commerce. According to Liang and Lim (2020), perceived convenience, time-saving, and price comparison are major drivers of online food purchases. In the Chinese context, digital platforms such as JD.com, Taobao, and Meituan have redefined how urban consumers engage with food retail (Zhang & Zhao, 2022).

### **2. Rise of Prefabricated Dishes in China**

The prefabricated dishes market in China is experiencing rapid growth, driven by changing lifestyles, urbanization, and dual-income households (Liu et al., 2021). These dishes provide a solution to the growing demand for quick and nutritious meals. Government support, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, has further stimulated this sector (Wang, 2023).

### **3. Key Factors Influencing Online Purchase Willingness**

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) are commonly used to explain consumer willingness in digital contexts. In particular, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and trust in platform are significant predictors of online purchase intentions (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003).

In the case of prefabricated dishes, product quality perception, brand trust, logistics efficiency, and online reviews also play critical roles (Chen & Zhang, 2022). A study by Fang and Chen (2022) found that food safety concerns, nutritional labeling, and price sensitivity strongly affect the decision-making process for online food buyers in China.

#### **4. Sociodemographic and Regional Differences**

There are notable demographic differences in willingness to purchase prefabricated dishes online. Younger consumers (aged 25–40), particularly in first- and second-tier cities, show greater inclination due to higher digital literacy and busy work schedules (Yang & Liu, 2022). Moreover, income level, education, and family size also correlate with purchase behavior (Gao et al., 2023).

#### **5. Correlation Between Perceptions and Willingness**

Research indicates a positive correlation between perceived product reliability and purchase intention. Lin and Huang (2021) found that customer satisfaction with logistics and past purchase experience significantly predicts repeat purchases. Trust in sellers and platforms acts as a mediating variable between product expectations and consumer loyalty (Xie & Yu, 2021).

#### **6. Gaps in the Literature**

While many studies focus on general e-commerce or fresh food delivery, there is still a limited body of empirical work focused specifically on prefabricated dishes. Most existing studies are descriptive or exploratory, highlighting a need for quantitative analyses exploring correlations between consumer demographics, perception variables, and shopping willingness in this specific segment.

### **Methodology**

#### **1. Questionnaire design**

As a novelty, prefabricated dishes have the characteristics of agricultural products, while prefabricated dishes are unique in terms of convenience, support, taste and other factors, and the measurement of the above variables lacks a scale that can be used directly. In order to better get the purchase intention of consumers to buy prefabricated dishes, in which the



analysis of the results of the questionnaire survey and the quality of the sample are very important, and the determination of the scale is an important part. In the design of this paper, the mature scale Likert scale was applied and appropriate modifications were made to take into account the characteristics of prefabricated dishes.

In order to ensure that each item in the questionnaire can be measured effectively, this study firstly sent the preliminary designed questionnaire to the population who had the experience of purchasing prefabricated dishes on the e-commerce platform through social software (e.g., QQ, circle of friends, WeChat, and other online channels) to fill in the questionnaire, collected people's opinions on the questionnaire, and modified the questionnaire according to the questions and suggestions raised by people. After the questionnaire was initially modified, a small-scale pre-test was conducted to ensure the high reliability and validity of the designed questionnaire. Based on the results of this test, the questionnaire was further refined and expanded upon, and ultimately the official version was created.

## **2. Data collection and sampling**

The data of this thesis comes from the questionnaire research, and Consumers with experience of online shopping for prefabricated dishes on e-commerce platforms were selected for the research. Before the formal research, according to the minimum sample size formula (Chen, et al., 2023) ,Considering the questionnaire response rate, omission of answers, and the presence of obvious illogicality, the ultimate sample size for distribution was found to be 540. Meanwhile, The sample size for the data was determined based on the guidelines presented by Ahmed et al. (2021), which state that a sample size of 50 is regarded as inadequate, 300 as good, 500 as very good, and 1000 as an excellent sample for factor analysis. Therefore, the sample size of this study is satisfactory for performing estimations.

### **3. Data analysis and results**

## **Results**

### **1. Analysis of Gender Differences in Different Dimensions**

By analyzing the independent samples t-test for different genders on various dimensions, it is known from Tables 5 that there is a significant difference between males and females on consumer innate innovativeness,  $t=2.345$ ,  $p<0.05$ , and males ( $16.353\pm2.171$ ) are significantly higher than females ( $15.808\pm2.629$ ).

### **2. Analysis of differences in age across dimensions**

By conducting one-way ANOVA on different ages on each dimension, it is learned from Tables 6 that there is a significant difference between different ages in terms of effort expectation ( $F=2.686$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), e-commerce platform quality ( $F=15.854$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), product quality ( $F=23.614$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), logistics service quality ( $F=13.657$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), brand image ( $F=8.897$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), consumer innate innovativeness ( $F=5.447$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), online shopping willingness ( $F=11.298$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and online shopping behavior ( $F=17.786$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) are significantly different, and in all dimensions, it is the age of 30-39 years old that scores the highest.

### **3. Analysis of differences in educational qualifications in different dimensions**

By conducting one-way ANOVA on different Educational on each dimension, it is learned from Table 7 that there are significant differences in social influence ( $F=2.516$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), product quality ( $F=6.867$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), logistics service quality ( $F=4.757$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), brand image ( $F=2.518$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and online shopping behavior ( $F=4.913$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between different educational levels were significantly different, with middle school and graduate students and above scoring higher on both social influence and online shopping behavior, and graduate students and above scoring highest on product quality, logistics



service quality, and brand image.

#### 4. Analysis of differences between occupations in different dimensions

By conducting one-way ANOVA on different Occupational on each dimension, it is learned from Table 8 that different occupations were found to have a significant difference in effort expectation ( $F=2.249$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), performance expectation ( $F=3.180$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), e-commerce platform quality ( $F=10.526$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), product quality ( $F=8.506$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), logistics service quality ( $F = 5.231$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), brand image ( $F = 8.188$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), online shopping willingness ( $F= 8.092$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), online shopping behavior ( $F= 11.564$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) are significantly different, in which the company staff scored the highest in the effort expectation, performance expectation, online shopping willingness, online shopping behavior, the quality of the platform, product quality , logistics service quality, and brand image are all scored highest by individual households.

#### 5. Analysis of differences in monthly income across dimensions

By conducting one-way ANOVA on different income variances on each dimension, it is learned from Table 9 that different monthly incomes are more important in effort expectation ( $F=3.187$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), performance expectation ( $F=3.046$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), e-commerce platform quality ( $F=15.762$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), product quality ( $F=19.274$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), logistic service quality ( $F=13.164$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), brand image ( $F=13.708$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), Online shopping willingness( $F=10.943$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and online shopping behavior ( $F=21.129$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) are all significantly different from each other, with effort expectations, e-commerce platform quality, product quality, logistics service quality, brand image, and Online shopping willingness all being 5000-6999 yuan and above scored the highest, in performance expectation, online shopping behavior is 7000-8999 yuan scored the highest, basically the higher the income, the higher the score.

## 6. Analysis of differences in different dimensions of the presence or absence of experience

By conducting one-way ANOVA on different in the Presence or Absence of Experience on each dimension, it was learned from Table 10 that different experiences were found to be significant in terms of effort expectation ( $F=11.520$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), social influence ( $F=9.797$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), performance expectation ( $F=13.519$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), e-commerce platform quality ( $F=25.317$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), product quality ( $F=49.339$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), logistics service quality ( $F=31.051$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), brand image ( $F=25.367$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), online shopping willingness ( $F=42.480$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and online shopping behaviors ( $t=111.487$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) are all significantly different from each other, with all of them scored by those who are experienced and frequent highest.

### Correlation analysis

In this study, SPSS 22.0 was used to conduct correlation analysis on the 10 variables of effort expectation, social influence, performance expectation, e-commerce platform quality, product quality, logistics service quality, brand image, consumer innate innovativeness, online shopping willingness, and online shopping behavior, and the obtained results.

Through the data shown in Table 11, it can be seen that: at the significance level of 0.05, the following conclusions can be drawn: effort expectation and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online present a positive correlation ( $r=0.398$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); social influence and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online present a positive correlation ( $r=0.152$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); performance expectations and consumers' online shop prefabricated dishes willingness to show a positive relationship ( $r = 0.411$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); e-commerce platform quality and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online shows a positive relationship ( $r = 0.430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); product quality and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online shows a positive relationship ( $r =$

0.431,  $p < 0.05$ ); logistics service quality and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online shows a positive relationship ( $r = 0.431$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); logistics service quality and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online shows a positive relationship ( $r = 0.431$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). ( $r=0.488$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); brand image and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online showed a positive relationship ( $r=0.465$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); consumer innate innovativeness and consumers' shopping willingness of prefabricated dishes online showed a negative relationship ( $r=-0.116$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); and consumers' online shopping willingness and consumers' online behavior of shopping prefabricated dishes online showed a positive relationship ( $r = 0.537$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); These are consistent with the theoretical model expectations and provide initial support for the modelling assumptions.

## Discussion

### 1. Gender Differences in Consumer Innovativeness

results indicate that male consumers exhibit significantly higher consumer innovativeness than females ( $t=2.345$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This is consistent with previous research suggesting that men tend to exhibit greater risk-taking behavior and openness to technology-based innovations in online retail environments (Zhou, Dai, & Zhang, 2007). In the context of China's prefabricated dish industry, this finding implies that marketing strategies targeting men may benefit from emphasizing novelty, convenience, and technological innovation.

### 2. Age-Based Differences Across Dimensions

Age was found to significantly influence a wide range of factors including effort expectation, platform quality, product quality, logistics service, brand image, innovativeness, shopping willingness, and behavior. Notably, consumers aged 30–39 consistently scored highest across all dimensions. This

demographic is typically more financially stable, tech-savvy, and time-conscious, making them the prime target for online prefabricated food services (Liu et al., 2021). This supports prior findings that middle-aged consumers are both competent in using digital platforms and motivated by time-saving meal solutions (Chen & Zhang, 2022).

### **3. Educational Background Differences**

The study shows that educational attainment significantly affects consumer responses to social influence, product quality, logistics service, brand image, and shopping behavior. Specifically, those with graduate education levels scored highest in most dimensions. Education often correlates with higher digital literacy and information processing capacity, enabling consumers to better assess product quality and logistics reliability (Dholakia & Uusitalo, 2002). Educated consumers are also more likely to be influenced by brand image and online reviews.

### **4. Occupational Differences**

Occupational status influences multiple dimensions, with company employees scoring highest in performance and effort expectations, willingness, and behavior, while individual household consumers scored highest in terms of perceptions of platform quality, product quality, logistics, and brand image. These distinctions reflect different consumer roles and routines: office workers tend to seek convenience and performance, while small business owners may prioritize quality and value (Yang & Liu, 2022).

### **5. Monthly Income Differences**

The analysis shows that higher-income consumers (>¥5,000/month) consistently report higher expectations and satisfaction across most variables. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior and Technology Acceptance Model, which suggest that income can moderate the relationship between perceived value and behavioral intention (Ajzen, 1991; Davis, 1989). Income

provides more choices and confidence in trying prefabricated dishes that are often perceived as premium or time-saving products.

### **6. Impact of Experience**

significantly impacts all measured variables, with experienced users reporting significantly higher scores in effort, performance, social influence, and shopping behavior. This reinforces the idea that past online purchase behavior is a strong predictor of future behavior (Gefen, 2000). Trust and familiarity with e-commerce platforms, along with positive prior experiences, enhance willingness and reduce perceived risk (Kim et al., 2008).

### **7. Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between most factors (effort expectation, platform quality, product quality, logistics quality, brand image) and online shopping willingness. Among these, logistics service quality ( $r=0.488$ ) and brand image ( $r=0.465$ ) showed the strongest associations, underlining the importance of reliable delivery and brand perception in consumer decision-making (Liang & Lim, 2020).

Interestingly, consumer innovativeness was negatively correlated with shopping willingness ( $r=-0.116$ ). This may suggest that in the specific case of prefabricated dishes, which are seen as mainstream convenience products, highly innovative consumers may seek more experimental or niche food alternatives (Fang & Chen, 2022).

Lastly, willingness and actual online shopping behavior are strongly correlated ( $r=0.537$ ), confirming that intention is a good predictor of action, as supported by behavioral models like UTAUT and TAM (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

## **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study on Factors Influencing Consumers' Online Shopping Willingness in China's Prefabricated Dishes Industry: Analysis

of Differences and Correlations, the following recommendations are proposed for stakeholders in the industry, including e-commerce platforms, food manufacturers, and policymakers:

#### **1. Personalize Marketing by Demographic Segments**

- **Age:** Target consumers aged **30–39** with time-saving, health-conscious messaging, as this group shows the highest online shopping willingness.
- **Gender:** Since **males demonstrate higher innate innovativeness**, advertisements for new or tech-enabled product features can be tailored toward male consumers.
- **Income:** Consumers with higher income (>¥5000/month) value **platform quality, logistics, and premium product attributes**, suggesting an opportunity for **premium segmentation** and differentiated pricing strategies.

#### **2. Improve Platform and Product Experience**

- Emphasize **e-commerce platform usability**, visual design, and **mobile responsiveness**, which are highly correlated with consumer willingness.
- Maintain **product freshness**, **transparent labeling**, and **safe packaging**, especially since **product quality** and **logistics service quality** are critical drivers of trust and satisfaction.

#### **3. Strengthen Brand Image and Social Influence**

- Develop **branding strategies** that highlight authenticity, health benefits, and food safety.
- Leverage **social media influencers**, customer reviews, and user-generated content to enhance **social influence**, particularly among consumers with higher education levels who are more influenced by peer recommendations.

#### **4. Build Consumer Trust Through Logistics Excellence**



- Invest in **efficient cold chain logistics**, real-time tracking, and flexible delivery options to boost perceived **logistics service quality**, which showed strong positive correlations with purchase willingness.

#### 5. Educate and Onboard New Users

- Since **experience is a major differentiator**, create onboarding programs (e.g., free trials, video tutorials, loyalty points) to convert **first-time users** into repeat customers.

#### 6. Promote Innovation While Retaining Accessibility

- Although innovativeness was negatively correlated with purchase willingness in this case, this may suggest that **highly innovative consumers seek unique alternatives**. Thus, offer both **standard prefabricated dishes** and **experimental or niche variants** to meet varied preferences.

#### 7. Policy and Industry Support

- Encourage government and industry cooperation to **certify quality standards** for prefabricated meals, reducing health concerns and increasing consumer trust in online platforms.

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