

This project aims to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected people's food shopping tendencies, specifically focusing on the use of online grocers. It uses data collected by a team of researchers led out of Portland State University. This data consists of roughly 8000 surveys distributed starting in September of 2020. The survey asks respondents to discuss their demographics, household resources, and shopping tendencies.

In particular, this project wants to understand how inclined a respondent is to use online grocers based on their personal experience with COVID-19. To do this, the project uses a Latent Class Model (LCM) to classify respondents as financially impacted, medically impacted, or minimally impacted by COVID-19. Conclusions are then drawn across these created classes.

There is also a focus on the potential “stickiness” of online grocery shopping for each respondent. The respondent is said to be “sticky” if they began to shop more online during the pandemic *and* they anticipate continuing this after the pandemic is over. The idea of stickiness is critical in understanding the lasting impacts of COVID-19 on our shopping landscape.

Many conclusions drawn from this study supported initial hypotheses. It was observed that the medically affected class had the highest chance of continuing to use online grocers in the future, after the end of the pandemic. Further research may be done, upon the completion of the next wave of data, expected to be completed in Fall of 2021.