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## A Review of Psychological Factors Contributing to University Students' Usage of Online Food Delivery Services During Covid-19 Pandemic

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### ABSTRACT

Online food delivery (OFD) services are increasingly common in Malaysia. Many people are drawn to use OFD in their daily lives because of its benefits for customers. Consumers have the option of ordering food online and using a delivery service rather than doing so in person. People from all walks of life are able to order food with just one click from their gadgets in the information technology (IT) era. A developing new trend in Malaysia's food and beverage business is online food delivery (OFD). Online food ordering has replaced eating out, which is no longer solely limited to takeout and dining out. The development of online food delivery services may be ascribed to the evolving urban customer. Even though OFD services are significant and Malaysian consumers' attitudes toward them are changing, research on the factors that influence university students' attitudes toward OFD services is scarce. There was little use of online food delivery services during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Hence, customers' constantly shifting demographics have necessitated adjustments in marketing strategies, particularly in the area of food ordering and delivery. The way customers interact with merchants has changed significantly, notably in the area of ready food. However, some restaurants have been compelled to change their business models to adopt creative strategies for Online Food Delivery (OFD) services as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. This paper seeks to study the factors contributing to university students' usage towards online food delivery service during Covid-19 pandemic. A quantitative approach was used in this study. Questionnaires used to collect the data from all respondents via Google Form. The respondents were university students aged 18 to 24 who used online food delivery services during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with the number of samples as many as 360 people. Therefore, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) will be used to evaluate the research data. Finally, this study can be applied and extended to determine factors contributing to university students' usage towards OFDS during the new normal of COVID-19 in other countries. Moreover, the results found how online food delivery services had an impact on service providers in giving excellent service and fulfil their customers' desires.

**Keywords:** Online food delivery (OFD), perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, social influence

### 1.0 Introduction

E-commerce is a platform for customers to purchase online. A previous study by Yeo et al. (2007) indicates that customers may simply browse, compare goods, pricing, and organize product delivery with the availability of e-commerce apps. Moreover, due to the high usage, online food delivery was the most prominent retail e-commerce in the market sector (Tatarusanu, 2020). The online food delivery industry has become a trend in the food and beverage industry. This unique marketing channel seeks to increase revenue through collaborations with foodservice enterprises and a more extensive food and beverage industry share. Customers can order food in a restaurant setting by using the restaurant's website or online food ordering services such as Food Panda, Grab Food, Tapau Food and Lalamove. The availability of online distribution service technology in the catering sector enables the competitive industry to improve order quality, dependability, and customer relationships while expanding its market (See-Kwong et al., 2017).

Nowadays, customers have become increasingly aware of food delivery services. Buyers have been using food delivery services for a long time since they provide benefits such as ease of use, numerous payment choices, better customer service, tracking orders, receiving expected orders, and providing information. Despite the benefits, customers are concerned about risks such as losing financial and personal information (Richa Goel, 2019). Users of OFD are also concerned about the lack of security around their login credentials, which include their email address, password, home address, hand phone number, and credit card information. This raises the possibility of third-party advertising purchasing their online behaviour data (Prabowo, 2019). Besides that, the majority of those who use digital meal delivery applications are young people. Customers are increasingly using delivery apps to

purchase food. It could be also noted that customers prefer to pay for goods and services online through digital wallets (Bhat, 2019). Most people especially the university students in particular, prefer to spend their free time browsing the internet. Due to the fact that they don't have enough time to complete all of their academic obligations. Simply put, they will stuff themselves by buying food from vending machines, getting food whenever it is conveniently available, or order online food delivery as an alternative (Hooi et al., 2021). This shows that online food delivery is becoming a trend in younger generation due to their business in daily activities.

Another important variable being debated in the mainstream research issue is the theoretical gap. Generally, TAM model is used to study the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. However, there has been scant research in Malaysia that applies perceived value as mediator in determining m-commerce in Malaysia. According to Sheth et al., (1991), the theoretical basis of the present research is thus based on the theory of consumption values, a powerful predictive theory for characterising human behaviours in the context of the environment. Apart from that, research has developed that conceptualises customer perceived value as a multidimensional construct, consisting of a number of (related) traits or dimensions that represent customers' comprehensive or multiple value views (Babin et al., 1994 & Sheth et al., 1991). By introducing the "theory of consumption values," the innovative approach of Sheth et al., (1991) goes beyond the purely functional or economic propositions described in stage 1 and explicitly takes five customer value dimensions into account: (1) functional value, (2) epistemic value, (3) conditional value, (4) social value, and (5) emotional value. A consumption decision may be influenced by any or all of these dimensions depending on the situation and the product or service being considered because these dimensions are conceived as independent of one another. These factors play a variety of roles in how customers evaluate value. In this regard, the current study examines the integrated theory from TAM and Theory of Consumption Value towards online food delivery service. Therefore, the findings may provide a good context for further studies. Given the above review, this study attempts to fill several gaps from the previous studies as follows: 1) There is a need for additional tests on perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust and social influence in examining users' usage towards online food delivery services. 2) There is a need to further test the perceived value as a mediating factor using the integrated TAM theory.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)**

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a model that was developed to predict consumer intentions and behaviour fairly. It also offers a relatively straightforward basis for determining where and how people seek to change their behaviour (Sheppard et al., 1988). TRA assumes that consumer behavioural intentions drive consumer behaviour (Chang, 1998). TRA is an essential theory for forecasting consumer expectations and the likelihood that they will purchase any given product (Tuu & Olsen, 2012). Behavioural intention can be defined as the desire to act in a particular way, such as the consumer's desire to order food using an online food delivery service. Consumer behaviour when ordering food online can be used to explain actual behaviour. The main goal of the TRA is to comprehend a person's voluntary conduct by looking at the fundamental driving force behind their behaviour.

### **2.2 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

An information systems theory called the technology acceptance model (TAM) analyses how people come to accept and employ technology. In general, end-users indicate when people utilize a system, and it could be noted that behavioural intention is one of the elements influencing people's decision to use technology. The attitude (A), or general opinion of the technology, impacts the behavioural intention (BI). Meanwhile, one of the most popular technology acceptance models is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), which focuses on the two main elements that affect a person's intention to utilize new technology: perceived usefulness and perceived usefulness ease of use.

### **2.3 Behavioural Usage**

According to Novita et al. (2020), consumer behaviour has been dramatically influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing, and self-quarantine. Most activities have shifted to online activities, and consumers prefer online transactions to ensure safety. This policy has resulted in numerous changes in people's habits and activities; most activities have shifted to online activities, and people prefer to conduct business online. The shift can be seen during the pandemic, in which online transactions are rising. Previous studies revealed that attitude is the most crucial concept in consumer behaviour and social psychology research (Sheth et al., 1999). The main reason is that attitudes can be considered stable predispositions to subsequent behaviours (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Numerous studies also suggested that individuals can use attitude to predict or anticipate such behaviours (Mazaheri et al., 2012; Fu et al., 2015; Richard & Chebat, 2016).

## **2.4 Perceived Usefulness**

According to Davis (1989), perceived usefulness (PU) is the degree to which users believe using a particular system will improve their job performance. Perceived usefulness is defined as the consumer's perception that shopping via websites will improve the performance of the shopping process (Kim et al., 2004). On the other hand, the utility perceived by users and the benefits of purchasing food and beverages through an online food delivery application is referred to as perceived usefulness (Droogenbroeck, 2021). In this modern age of technological advancement, there are surrounded by high- tech devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops. To keep up with the times, some restaurants have begun to develop their company website or mobile application, allowing people to order food online and use the delivery service rather than relying solely on offline store service (Hooi et al., 2021). According to Monsuwe et al. (2004), the degree to which consumers believe using the Internet as a medium will improve their performance or productivity, thereby improving the outcome of their shopping experience, which is the usefulness in the context of online shopping. Hence, the outcome of the shopping experience is related to perceived usefulness (Monsuwe et al., 2004).

## **2.5 Perceived Ease of Use**

According to Davis (1989), the degree to which a user believes using a system is simple is known as perceived ease of use (PEOU). Past studies revealed that the perception of ease of use is a powerful motivator for someone to use a technology (Lee et al., 2019). Moreover, Chen (2015) stated that people prefer to purchase food and beverages through the online food delivery services (OFDS) apps because they can do so anytime and anywhere. The subjective assessment of the effort required to adopt technology is perceived ease of use (Zhang & Mao, 2008; Ko et al., 2009). Furthermore, in this modern era, people have discovered that using OFDS is simple and quick (Prasetyo et al., 2021). A similar study by Davis (1989) also stated that the ease of use of an IT system refers to how easy it is to learn to use it, and it is determined by how much mental and physical effort the user spends while using the system. According to Gefen and Straub (2000), a website's perceived ease of use heavily influences an individual's willingness to use it. Consumers who use mobile applications and online food purchasing platforms showed a similar effect on perceived ease of use (Bonn et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2016; Wu & Cheng, 2018; Huang et al., 2019; Kang & Namkung, 2019).

## **2.6 Social Influence**

The willingness to use certain technologies results from social influence. Meanwhile, the social influence construct is defined by an increased willingness of others, such as family, friends, and colleagues, to use a specific technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Certain technologies appear to impact social inclusion (Hill et al., 2015). Other studies show that social influence appears to influence app retention (Lai & Shi, 2015; Chopdar & Sivakumar, 2019; Zhao & Bacao, 2020). Concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic have grown among families, friends, and loved ones (Fame-RN, 2020), putting pressure on the government to take action. Because the use of FDAs minimizes interpersonal interaction, this construct must significantly impact the to continue during this time (Wen et al., 2020; Gavilan et al., 2021). According to Xiang et al. (2016), other people's beliefs can influence one's behaviour, which is also true in the case of online shopping. The findings indicate why through relational benefit and site commitment, the social influence of online shopping can be exploited in terms of consumers and attitudes (Chen et al., 2017; Leong et al., 2018; Gao et al., 2020; Zafar et al., 2020). For example, a person may believe that making a purchase decision is highly important. They will frequently purchase a specific good or service to impress others in their social circle. Secondly, consumers make purchasing decisions based on their knowledge or expert advice (Ling et al., 2010).

## **2.7 Trust**

Trust can be defined as a person's state of mind and faith in their intentions (Trivedi, 2021). According to a study by Gefen (2000), which focuses on food delivery applications during the COVID-19 pandemic, the trust factor can drive customer expectations and convince them of the service's reliability. The findings are in line with past studies that highlighted the higher the trust, the greater the willingness to use food delivery applications indefinitely (Cho et al., 2019; Bhatt, 2021). On the other hand, Pavlou (2003) defined trust as the belief that allows consumers to willingly become vulnerable to Web retailers after considering the retailers' characteristics.

Meanwhile, common misconceptions about conducting business over the internet significantly impact consumers' attitudes toward online purchasing (Gefen & Straub, 2003). Murat and Hekimoglu (2012) also stated that trust is the foundation of consumers' beliefs about online shopping safety. In summary, building trust is another important aspect of encouraging users of new technology such as applications.

Based on discussion of the above literatures, this paper posits four variables that can be included in the conceptual framework that would influence behavioural usage. They are perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, social influence and trust. This paper also consists of mediating variable which is perceived value that mediate the relationship between perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, social influence and behavioural usage to adopt online food delivery service.

### **3.0 Methodology**

According to Sekaran (2003), population refers to the total collection of individuals, occasions, or objects that have data that a researcher needs to examine. University students in the Northern Region are the study's target group. A sample describes a portion of a population (VanderStoep & Johnson, 2009). Additionally, the target population influences the sample size. In addition to lowering the likelihood of sampling bias, this form of sampling encourages the sample's population representativeness. This method will ensure that each component of the population has an equal chance of being represented in the sample. The questionnaire was given out to each respondent at random.

### **3.1 Instruments and Measurements**

The questionnaire in this study has three sections. Sections A, B and C. The respondent will be required to complete a variety of demographic questions in sections A that examine the background details of the sample, including gender, age, educational history and others. Meanwhile, section B consists of information about online food delivery services. The following instruments are used for section C in particular. Therefore, a Likert scale is utilized in this study to gauge respondents' opinions about the measurement statement (Sudha & Baboo, 2011). Typically, a 5-point Likert scale is used in most studies across disciplines. However, the 7-point Likert scale is used in this study rather than the 5-point Likert scale because it is assumed that responders have more possibilities, allowing for a more thorough analysis (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). The study's instrument is divided into three parts. The study's title, a brief introduction to online food delivery services, a few examples, and a confidentiality statement make up part one. The second section lists items connected to factors influencing university students' usage to use an online food delivery service during the COVID-19 pandemic. This section also includes background information on the students. Studies from the past were initially conducted in English. The questionnaire's translation into Malay was appropriate because it was the respondents' primary language. The accuracy of the two translations was compared (Brislin, 1970).

### **3.2 Data Collection Procedure**

An online questionnaire was distributed via Google Form. This study targeted university students aged 18 to 24 who used online food delivery services during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. To start with, respondents will receive a questionnaire and have a specified amount of time to respond. Respondents will be informed of the study's goals and objectives before they begin to complete the questionnaire. Responses and related information are kept completely private.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The information gathered through surveys will be coded and processed to create an analysis so that the research results may be produced accurately, quickly, and simply using statistical analysis. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) will be used to evaluate the research data. The data obtained must meet all presumptions, including normality, linearity, and outliers, and the validity and reliability of the measurement tools. The degree to which a measure is error-free and produces consistent results is referred to as its reliability. A measure is reliable when consistent results are produced throughout time and in many situations (Zikmund, 2007). The reliability test value that is generally recognized is 0.7 and above. Zikmund (2007) defined frequency distribution as data collection arranged by summing the frequency of each variable's value. It is done to gather a court of responses according to various variable values and express these courts in percentage items. Additionally, it is utilized to count the instances of different phenomena subcategories so that percentages and cumulative percentages of each occurrence can be derived. The data may be represented using a pie chart.

Information about a population or sample is described or summed up using descriptive statistics (Zikmund, 2007). For the interval-scaled independent and dependent variables, means were found. The most common or most frequent numbers are referred to as the mode. In other words, the mean is the result of dividing a group of scores by their totals. The data are centred on it. The medium is where the statistics are scored in the middle. Next,

correlation analysis will be utilized to determine the link between the variables in this study. The degree of the link between two or more variables, taking into account the measures without the experimenter's limitations, is measured using correlation analysis. For interval and ratio scale variables, the Pearson correlation coefficients are suitable. Finally, multiple regression analysis will investigate the concurrent influences of numerous independent variables with interval scales. In other words, multiple regression analysis helps to determine the extent to which a given collection of predictors can account for the variance in the independent variables. Multiple regression analysis can assess the mediating link between the variables (Coakes, 2005). Therefore, this study employed Baron and Kenny's four-step methodology and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

The literature on online food delivery services is enriched by the work in this paper. The conceptual framework takes into account the four variables and one mediating variable as elements that might have an impact on behavioural usage, which would give future study some direction. Once the framework is complete, an appropriate research strategy and methodology will be established to ascertain the causal relationships among the variables. The outcome is anticipated to offer indications of online food delivery service providers and significantly advance studies on the effectiveness of the online food delivery service. Last but not least, this study also provides the merchant with useful details on the various factors that have influenced the customers' usage of online food delivery services.

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