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Sustaining the Click: Explaining Continuance Use of Online Food Delivery Services by Malaysian University Students in the Post-COVID-19 Era

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ABSTRACT

Online ordering and home delivery of food prepared away from home are made easier by online food delivery services (OFDS). This study investigates factors affecting Malaysian university students' continuance intentions to use OFDS. With the rising dependence on digital solutions for daily needs, understanding the behavioral intents concerning OFDS provides valuable insights for businesses and educational institutions alike. The data was collected from a sample of 385 university students in Malaysia. The findings showed that attitude toward use was significantly affected by perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU). Besides, PEOU and PU were found to have indirect effects on the continuance intention to use OFDS through attitude toward use. This research extends the digital consumer behavior discourse and provides actionable insights for service providers to enhance their marketing strategies and service delivery in the burgeoning online food delivery industry, catering more effectively to the needs of a young, tech-savvy demographic.

Keywords: Online Food Delivery, COVID-19 Pandemic, Continuance Intention, New Normal, Consumer Behavior
JEL Classifications: J28, J63, M12, M51, D23

1. INTRODUCTION

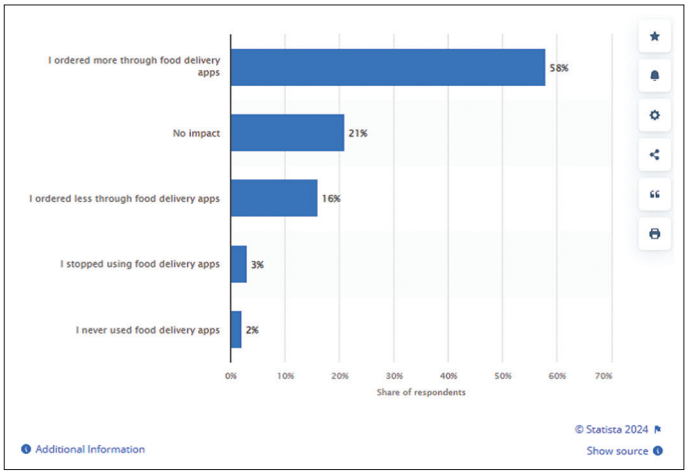
As the world moves beyond the 5G era, the popularity of OFDS has over the past years been on the rise worldwide (Poon and Tung, 2022; Murad et al., 2025). This is expected to increase with the anticipated deployment of Sixth Generation (6G) mobile technology by 2030 (Murad et al., 2026). Governments around the world are legislating new citizen-oriented policies boosting technological innovation in public service delivery (Barakat et al., 2026). Technological evolution has changed the entire setting of the restaurant industry altogether (Das and Ghose, 2019). In Malaysia, the food delivery market features a variety of companies that offer dedicated apps for ordering food (Hooi et al., 2021). Among these, Airasia Food, ShopeeFood, Delivereat, Dahmakan, Tapau, GrabFood, and Ubereat are notable competitors, actively striving to provide delivery services to customers. With the growth of modern technology, many restaurants have changed their way of business from offline delivery services to OFDS in order to stay competitive and relevant to the market. This has increased the use of OFDS, enabling customers to order food at home's convenience, compare costs, and access these services conveniently. With only a simple click on a mobile device, these OFDS enhance the selection of meals from a variety of restaurants. Restaurant owners are more and more open to being a part of online delivery service and one of the main reasons is they want to stay competitive in the market.

OFDS means people can order food conveniently online via applications for food delivery such as FoodPanda, GrabFood, and Hungry (Hooi et al., 2021). Gera et al. (2018) specify that platform-to-consumer delivery and restaurant-to-consumer delivery operations are the two categories under which OFDS falls. Restaurant-to-Consumer Delivery provides the meals and delivers

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them by themselves, such as KFC and McDonald's (Gera et al., 2018). There is no middleman involved—orders are placed straight through the restaurant's website. OFDS can either hire or train skilled delivery people. Most of the restaurants collaborate with food delivery apps to put their menus into the application (Huang and Siao, 2023). Restaurants may use current employees for self-delivery. Conversely, other well-known food chains, like KFC and McDonald's, use experienced delivery operators who are hired with training tailored to delivery services. Platform-to-consumer delivery refers to the provision of services using platforms controlled by third parties (Gera et al., 2018). This platform provides online delivery services, which they do not need to provide delivery services themselves from their partner restaurants. With this, the restaurants can focus on the dine in's customers and prepare the orders placed by the online customers. Associated with the Internet and mobile technology advancements, OFDS could easily be accessed via mobile devices or computers, encouraging consumers to use OFDS in their daily food consumption (Hooi et al., 2021). Online food ordering has increased 3 times more than dine-in since 2014, according to Engelhardt (2022), and it currently generates roughly 40% of restaurant revenue. Elsewhere in Malaysia, Rakuten Insight conducted food delivery research in April 2023, and the results showed that approximately 58% (Figure 1) said they frequently ordered meals from food delivery services during the COVID-19 pandemic (Statista, 2023).Whether it is breakfast, lunch, or dinner, the majority would likely choose to order it online and get it delivered when people have no time to cook or simply when they like to have a hassle-free meal. The targeted group in this study is university students in Malaysia who have busy school schedules and study abroad. The younger generation tend to be more tech-savvy and is most likely to explore the latest technologies. With the busy school schedules, they often miss meals and have limited time to cook; hence, ordering food online becomes a viable option for them. The convenience it offers is saving them time and effort, since ordering food online can be done with just a few clicks on their mobile phones (Nasir et al., 2022). Depending on the area, some areas provide a wide range of food choices, which makes students continue using the service as they find it useful to their daily life (Hu, 2022).

Figure 1: Malaysians' use of food delivery apps during the covid-19 pandemic



Source: (Statista, 2024)

Online food delivery services have grown in popularity post-Covid as it was considered an essential service that must keep running even if a pandemic occurs (Murad et al., 2024), and consumers are getting used to adopting this service increasingly (Engelhardt, 2022). However, inaccurate deliveries or missing orders have always been one of the trigger points for users' disappointment and can erode dinner loyalty. The reason being, not all restaurants are technology equipped, nor do they have relevant knowledge for execution, such as checking the orders received or fulfilling the orders, etc. With that being said, restaurant owners need to set up and invest in system integration, which is an essential process to begin with (Huang and Siao, 2023). Another reason would be too many orders received at the same time and restaurants lacking human resources for execution; hence, this leads to missing orders (Mansour et al., 2024). According to Al-Ghalib and Aidone (2023), some riders accepted the orders and confirmed that they had delivered the food, but the food was still yet to be picked up by the riders. Customers who paid for the food but received nothing were unsatisfied with the service offered, although restaurant owners have reported to the delivery company. According to Wiener-Bronner (2022), restaurants are always the ones who take the blame when deliveries go wrong, even if it's not their fault.

When orders are overwhelming during peak hours, food riders are occupied with other food deliveries, hence delaying the delivery time. Another common reason is also because of heavy traffic or heavy rain, which is out of raiders' control, and not forgetting about festive seasons congestion, like Ramadan Month fasting season and backlog (Liu et al., 2020). This prolongs the delivery time, and existing orders will have trouble finding available riders even when the food is ready to be delivered, let alone highlighting the food's nutrients or vitamins may stray during the delivery. And so, food orders take longer to get to customers' hands, the food quality drops, which is disappointing to customers (Al-Ghalib and Aidone, 2023).

Baiomy et al. (2019) reported that menu variety will increase users' satisfaction, as it provides diversity in flavor, texture, shape, color, and temperature. It was reported that almost 50% of adults in Malaysia are overweight or obese, 20% suffer from diabetes, and 30% have hypertension (Mohamed, 2023; National Health and Morbidity Survey, 2019). The diversity of healthy food options available on online delivery platforms and how it matches consumer preferences is an area worth exploring, as young people are becoming more and more health-conscious (Alghamdi et al., 2025).

Likewise, the general accessibility to OFDS is significantly influenced by delivery coverage, as highlighted by Hanif et al. (2021). Students residing in urban areas or near major universities typically enjoy a wider array of restaurants and delivery options, which positively influences their attitude towards using (ATU) these services. Additionally, the distance between popular dining establishments and university campuses influences the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of food delivery, impacting students' attitudes and the continuance intentions to use such services. Lastly, geographical constraints, as discussed by Ibrahim et al. (2020), encompass factors such as traffic congestion, transportation

infrastructure, and proximity to food outlets, which influence students' attitudes and the continuance intentions to use OFDS. These factors can significantly affect the efficiency and timeliness of food delivery, ultimately shaping students' ATU and the continuance intentions to use these platforms. Few studies have examined customers' experiences with OFDS, especially among students that were forced to use technology in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic (Oraibi & Nizam, 2024; Tan et al., 2026; Hong et al., 2021), while most previous research concentrating on consumers' attitudes regarding online services in general (Vinish et al., 2021; Yeo et al., 2017). Although online food delivery is still relatively new, most research in this field has looked at customers' continuance intentions and early adoption of OFDS (Alalwan, 2020; Shankar et al., 2022; Ray et al., 2019). The aim of OFDS to continue after the extraordinary pandemic circumstances, which might spike consumption, however, has not been thoroughly studied (Al Amin et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2026; Zhao and Bacao, 2020). In an effort to close this knowledge gap, this study attempts to learn more about the key aspects that consumers perceive motivating them to use OFDS in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, recent research has identified several key factors that shape university students' decisions regarding OFDS within the Malaysian context. For instance, studies conducted by Ibrahim et al. (2020) have highlighted the importance of factors such as convenience, perceived risk, and service quality in influencing students' behavioral intentions. Hooi et al. (2021) have provided insights into the determinants of intention to use OFDS among university students nationwide, emphasizing the role of factors such as perceived convenience and accessibility. Given the dynamic nature of consumer behavior and the evolving landscape of the food delivery industry, there is a pressing need for further exploration into the factors influencing the use of OFDS, especially in the Malaysian university students' context. By examining the multifaceted dimensions of consumer behavior, preferences, and decision-making processes, with a focus on online food delivery services, this study seeks to offer actionable insights that could guide prudent decisions and foster innovation. Ultimately, by learning more about the variables affecting university students' continuance intentions to use OFDS, stakeholders can work towards creating more tailored and effective solutions that enhance the dining experience and meet the evolving needs of this population in society.

2. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1. PU and Attitude towards Using Online Food Delivery Services

Another variable of interest for this study is PU. PU is the degree to which a person believes his or her performance will increase by using a specific system. PU is a new system and application that helps consumers get what they want and need more easily and conveniently (Petcharat and Leelasantitham 2021). Customers seem to respond favorably and anticipate using the new system going forward if they believe it will save them time and effort. An individual's attitude towards using a given service is influenced by their initial perception of it, including its usefulness (Sallam and Algammash, 2016). Subjective assessments shaped by personal experiences, wants, beliefs, and preferences are known as attitudes (Oraibi et al., 2022). According to Davis (1989, p. 984), it is "the degree of a person's positive or negative feelings about performing a target behavior." According to technology continuance theory, technology-related criteria significantly influence attitudes about a system, such as PU. People will typically have a favorable attitude toward making a purchase if they think the goods or service offers great value and notable benefits. Several post-adoption theories of technology hold that attitude plays a major role in influencing behavioral intentions (Ahn, 2022).

Applying these findings to the context of OFDS among university students in Malaysia, it becomes evident that PU, encompassing aspects like convenience, timesaving, and access to a diverse range of food options, holds considerable sway over their adoption behavior. If students perceive OFDS as a valuable tool that enhances their food-ordering experience by offering convenience, saving time, and providing an array of food choices, they are more likely to adopt these services. Studies found in the literature collectively reinforce the pivotal role of PU in shaping users' attitudes and intentions toward adopting various technological services. According to the TAM model, the PU of technology (i.e., OFDS) significantly influences university students' attitude towards the use of that technology, highlighting the importance of this perception in determining their willingness to integrate these services into their daily lives in Malaysia. According to Bai et al. (2024), a model that incorporates individual attitude enhances users' emotional and symbolic value. Featuring OFDS as an example, Francioni et al. (2022) demonstrate how a customer's opinion regarding online delivery services can have a significant impact on their intentions to continue using them. Consequently, we postulated that:

- H_1. PU directly affects ATU

2.2. Perceived Ease of Use and Attitude toward Using Online Food Delivery Services

PEOU emphasizes the ease and simplicity users perceive when interacting with a particular technology. It is a degree to which a person believes that using a specific system will be easy. In the context of OFDS, the user-friendliness of the platform, intuitive features, and its hassle-free navigation significantly impact users' perceptions of ease. The provision of a straightforward interface, clear layout, and easy-to-understand processes all contribute to enhancing PEOU. For instance, if users find it effortless to place orders, compare prices, and comprehend delivery times, it enhances their perception of ease of use. PEOU, a significant predictor of user attitude, assesses if users think using a specific app would be easy (Ozturk et al., 2016; Radner and Rothschild, 1975). Specifically, among students, Hooi (2021) revealed that PEOU significantly influenced students' attitudes and intentions to use e-platforms, indicating its importance in educational technology adoption. In a similar vein, Shabbat and Elsayed (2024) confirmed that students' attitudes are impacted by their proficiency with online technological tools. According to Juraković et al. (2022), students' attitudes are influenced by their digital skills and competencies. This implies that students are more likely to accept online resources if they are easy to use.

According to the technology acceptance model (TAM), which was developed by Davis in 1989, consumers' views about a particular technology are influenced by how easy and beneficial they believe it to be. Along with the TAM, the features that are created may impact users' PU and PEOU, which may influence their attitudes and intention to use and purchase technologies (Martín-García et al., 2022; Al Amin et al., 2021; Troise et al., 2021). As per Davis (1989), users' behavioral intentions to embrace and continue using the technology are subsequently influenced by these sentiments. PEOU, in the context of OFDS, refers to the degree of ease with which customers perceive online food ordering. A high degree of PEOU is influenced by an app's intuitive design, simple navigation, and a user interface that is simple to use. Customers are more inclined to have favorable attitudes regarding the service and intend to use it if they think it to be user-friendly. When a customer uses a particular gadget or technology, their whole reaction may be characterized as their attitude towards it (Ajzen, 1991). It describes a person's response to a certain thing, whether favorable or unfavorable (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977). These days, OFDS structures have been well-developed, allowing customers to order food online whenever they want and from wherever, saving them the hassle of needing to leave their houses. Customers may enjoy a lot of convenience since food is available quickly with just a click while using a cashless payment method. Hence, we propose the following relationships:

- H_2. PEOU directly influences ATU

2.3. Mediation of Attitude toward Using Online Food Delivery Services

OFDS have become integral in meeting the culinary needs of busy university students. The technology acceptance model, introduced by Davis in 1989, highlights the significant roles of PEOU and PU in influencing users' attitudes and their intentions to use technology. Customer attitudes have been shown in a number of studies to be a strong predictor of their intention to use a product or service continuously (Birkmeyer et al., 2021; Mo et al., 2021). Within the realm of OFDS literature, elements such as perceived convenience, reliability, and the usability of the interface are key in forming user attitudes and their intentions to adopt these services (Chiu et al., 2024; Venkatesh et al., 2003). The TAM model has been used in multiple studies to understand consumer behavior in various technological contexts, highlighting the model's applicability in predicting and explaining people's use and acceptance of technology (Venkatesh et al., 2012).

Drawing on the TAM model, it is anticipated that PEOU and PU will positively influence the ATU and adopting OFDS among university students in Malaysia, leading to OFDS usage. A positive attitude is expected to enhance adoption intentions (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Chiu et al., 2024). Al-Somali et al. (2009), Mohammadi (2015), Suh and Han (2002), and Wessels and Drennan (2010) all argue that attitudes and beliefs regarding the choice of using an information system—in our case, OFDS—can be influenced by PU and PEOU. Regarding OFDS, customers' attitude is mostly influenced by two important aspects: (1) how they see the advantages (Oraibi et al., 2022), which include issues such as time savings, cost efficiency; and (2) how easy they think the service is to use (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Customers who have favorable opinions towards those aspects are more likely to acquire positive attitudes, which subsequently increases the probability that they will have a positive intention of engaging in and keep using OFDS. Benefits received or happy experiences in the past may have an impact on this favorable assessment. Essentially, attitude plays a crucial role in influencing the choices consumers make when it comes to adopting and using OFDS. A good attitude typically influences purchasing decisions; however, it does not guarantee that a person is going to buy (Debora Indriani et al., 2019). Given that a positive attitude develops an impulse to possess or use products or services (Johari and Keni, 2022). Accordingly, the following hypotheses are postulated (Figure 2):

- H_3. ATU influences the use of OFDS
- H_4. PU influences the use of OFDS through ATU
- H_5. PEOU influences the use of OFDS through ATU.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This study follows a quantitative approach. This methodology is chosen to examine the relationships between independent, mediating, and dependent variables, which are constructive for understanding the factors affecting the use of OFDS among students. The design incorporates the collection and analysis of data to determine how PEOU, PU, and attitude towards using OFDS impact the continuance intention to use OFDS. This quantitative research design is instrumental in providing statistical validation of the hypotheses posed in the study.

3.2. Data Collection

The primary tool for quantitative data collection in this study is a structured survey, designed to assess various factors such as PEOU, PU and ATU. This study opts for a convenient sampling technique. The drop-off/pick-up method was chosen for data collection in this study due to its characteristics of eliciting higher response rates and reducing non-response bias issues. According to Kemp (2024), the population of Malaysia stood at 34.49 million in January 2024. For our study, out of 425 questionnaires have been sent, 385 complete questionnaires were received, yielding a response rate of 90.6%. This surpasses the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) accepted threshold of 60% for response rates. The survey comprises a questionnaire and

Figure 2: Conceptual framework

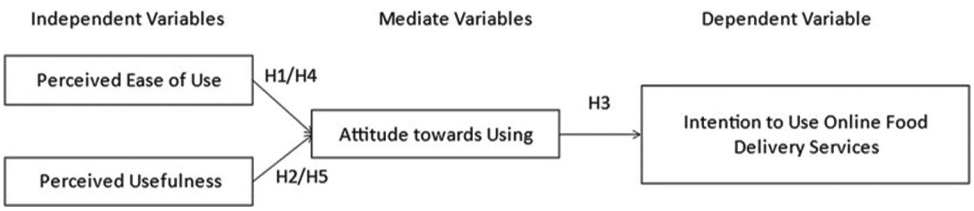


Table 1: Adapted measurement items

Variable	Adapted items	Source
Perceived ease of use	Using online food delivery services does not require much cognitive effort from me.	An et al. 2023
	I find online food delivery services straightforward to navigate.	An et al. 2023
	I can install online food delivery services without encountering any issues.	An et al. 2023
	Using online food delivery services is easy to me.	Jun et al. 2021
	Online food delivery services are transparent and easy to comprehend.	Jun et al. 2021
	Learning how to use online food delivery services to purchase food is easy to me.	Jun et al. 2021
Perceived usefulness	Online food delivery services offer a faster way for me to access meals.	An et al. 2023
	Utilizing online food delivery services appears to be a convenient option for meal consumption.	An et al. 2023
	I find online food delivery service useful when ordering food.	Jun et al. 2021
	Online food delivery services improve my efficiency when ordering food.	Jun et al. 2021
	My food ordering becomes more efficient through the online food delivery services.	Jun et al. 2021
	Using online food delivery services enhances my ability to achieve important goals.	An et al. 2023
Attitude toward using	Online food delivery services provide a wide variety of food choices.	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
	I find online food delivery services are beneficial for individuals with time constraints.	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
	Utilizing online food delivery services can help me save time	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
	I find that online food delivery services are fitting for my needs.	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
	I find online food delivery services very helpful when making purchases.	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
	Employing food delivery apps expedites my tasks during the purchasing process.	Shafiee and Abdul Wahab 2021
Intention to use online food delivery services	I will always use online food delivery services in my daily life	An et al. 2023
	I intend to engage online food delivery services in my daily life.	An et al. 2023
	It's probable that I'll opt for online food delivery services when dining.	An et al. 2023
	I have decided to use online food delivery services to purchase food next time.	Jun et al. 2021
	I plan to use online food delivery services more frequently.	Jun et al. 2021
	I intend to continue using online food delivery services.	Jun et al. 2021

Likert-scale items that measure the intensity of students' opinions or attitudes towards OFDS. The target population for the survey is university students within Malaysia, focusing on those who have access to and use online food delivery platforms. A pilot study is conducted prior to the main survey to test the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. In order to ensure that the survey questions are clear and successful in gathering the required data, revisions are made in response to feedback. Quantitative data is subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.3. Measures

In this survey, all constructs are examined using 5 Point Likert Scales (Chi, 2018). Participants were asked to rate how much they agree with the given statements that most closely resembled their stance on a scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." PEOU and PU were measured using 6 statements each adopted from Davis (1985). As for ATU and the continuance intention to use OFDS were measured with 5 and 4 items respectively (Table 1), adopted from Suh and Han (2002).

4. RESULTS

Descriptive statistics are used to depict the demographic profile of the respondents through frequency and percentages, accompanied by tables. Inferential statistics are employed to address research objectives and hypotheses. According to Kemp (2024), the population of Malaysia stood at 34.49 million in January 2024. For our study, out of 425 questionnaires have been sent, 380 complete questionnaires were received, yielding a response rate of 89.4%. This surpasses the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) accepted threshold of 60% for response rates. In all, 210 (55.3%) female respondents and 170 (44.7%) male respondents took part in the survey. According to this analysis, the percentage of female respondents who participated was greater than that of male respondents. The four ethnic groupings are Indian, Chinese, Malay and others (Sikh and Bidahyuh). The highest was Chinese, with a total of 178, 46.8%, followed by 133 (35%) Indian respondents. Another 66 (17.4%) Malay respondents and three (0.8%) respondents participated in this study. The highest scores were 222 (58.4%) for those below 20-29 years old, followed by 82 (21.6%) for those between the ages of 30 and 39 years old. 76 (20%) were those below 20 years old. Most of the respondents were degree holders, 158 (40.3%), followed by diploma qualification, 107 (28.2%). This is followed by 60 (15.8%) respondents with a Foundation, followed by 53 (7%) respondents with a Master's and 7 (1.8%) with a Doctorate/PhD. Of the OFDS frequency, most of the respondents, 157 (41.3%) were 1-3 times, followed by 149 (39.2%) were from 4 to 7 times. In addition, another 69 (18.2%) were above 8 times, and a minority, that is 5 (1.3%), had no experience of using OFDS (Table 2).

4.1. Reliability Test for Actual Data Collection

A reliability test was carried out, and the results for the independent and dependent variables are presented (Table 3). Cronbach's alpha values reported in the study for various motivation factors are as follows: PEOU at 0.870, PU at 0.909, and attitude at 0.900. The alpha for intention is 0.947. These values, ranging from 0.870 to 0.947, detail the reliability of all the variables assessed in the research. This test demonstrated that the results were consistently free from random errors, as described by Hair et al. (2017).

4.2. Measures of Central Tendency

The mean and standard deviation for the variables PEOU, PU, attitude, and intention were displayed, and analyzed using measures of central tendency (Table 4). The table reveals that the standard deviations for all these variables exceed 0.70, indicating a consensus among respondents in agreement with the statements associated with each variable (Pallant, 2018).

4.3. Normality Test by Q-Q Plot

In this research, the Q-Q Plot was used as a method for testing normality to assess whether there were significant outliers in the PEOU, PU, and ATU. For data that follows a normal distribution, the points should largely align with the straight line on the plot. Deviations from this line, where points visibly curve away from the line, indicate that the data is not normally distributed (Allen, 2018).

Based on the overall findings, it was determined that all the variables tested showed a normal distribution (Figures 3-6). Given their conformity to a normal distribution, the Pearson Correlation Product-Moment Coefficient was utilized to assess the relationships between PEOU, PU, and ATU.

4.4. Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis looks at how strongly the independent variables for PEOU, PU, and ATU relate to the dependent variable, which is intention. Two variables were compared using the correlation coefficient, which had values between −1 and +1 (Schober et al., 2018).

Table 2: Demographic profile of the respondents (n=380)

Variables	n=380	Percentage
Gender		
Male	170	44.7
Female	210	55.3
Race		
Malay	66	17.4
Chinese	178	46.8
Indian	133	35.0
Others	3	0.8
Age		
Below 20 years old	76	20.0
20-29 years old	222	58.4
30-39 years old	82	21.6
Highest education		
Foundation	60	15.8
Diploma	107	28.2
Bachelor's degree	153	40.3
Master's degree	53	13.9
Doctorate/PhD	7	1.8
OFDS frequency		
None	5	1.3
1-3 times	157	41.3
4-7 times	149	39.2
Above 8 times	69	18.2

Figure 3: Normal Q-Q plot for perceived ease of use

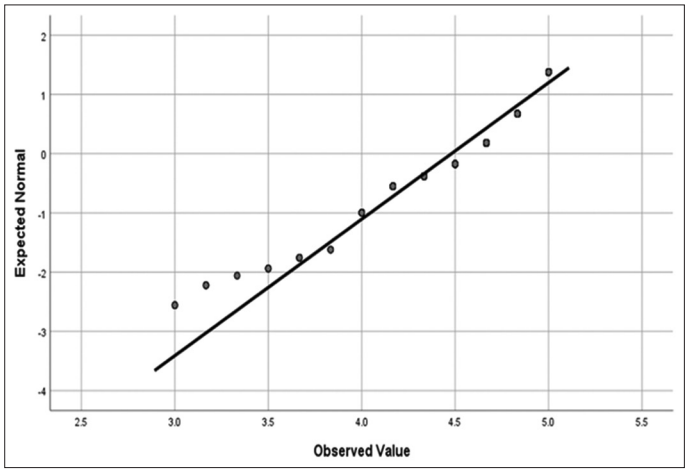


Figure 4: Normal Q-Q plot for perceived usefulness

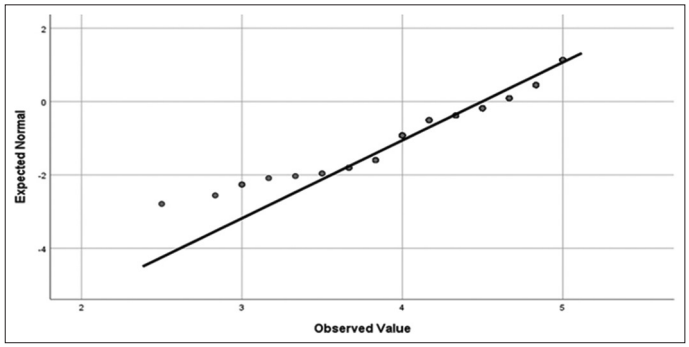


Figure 5: Normal Q-Q plot for attitude

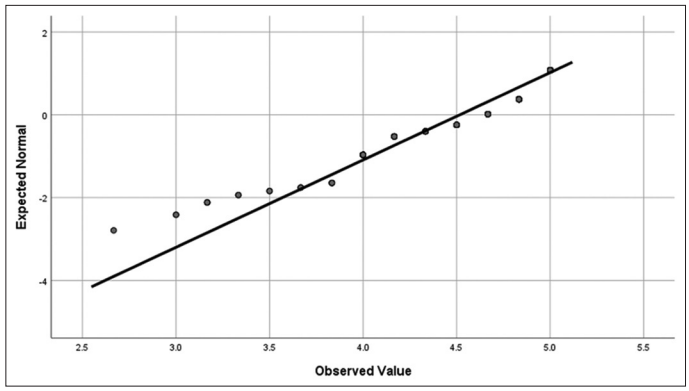


Table 3: Coefficient for actual data collection

Variables	Case processing summary	n	Percentage	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of statements
Independent variable					
Perceived ease of use	Valid	380	100		
	Excluded	0	0	0.870	6
	Total	380	100		
Perceived usefulness	Valid	380	100		
	Excluded	0	0	0.909	6
	Total	380	100		
Attitude	Valid	380	100		
	Excluded	0	0	0.900	5
	Total	380	100		
Dependent variable					
Intention	Valid	380	100		
	Excluded	0	0	0.947	4
	Total	380	100		

Figure 6: Normal Q-Q plot for intention

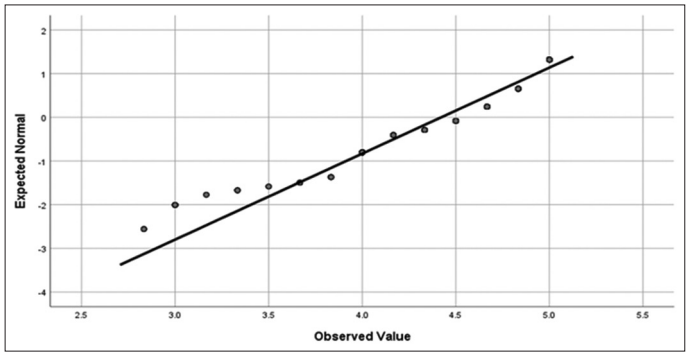


Table 4: Mean score

Variables	n	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean
PEOU	380	4.4578	0.48796	0.02493
PU	380	4.4799	0.51589	0.02640
ATU	380	4.5126	0.47957	0.02450
INT	380	4.4230	0.51016	0.02607

Table 5: Correlation analysis

PEOU	PEOU	PU	ATT	INT
Pearson correlation	1	0.794**	0.763**	0.646**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0
N	380	380	380	380
PU				
Pearson correlation	0.794**	1	0.830**	0.719**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0
N	380	380	380	380
ATT				
Pearson correlation	0.763**	0.830**	1	0.719**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0
N	380	380	380	380
INT				
Pearson correlation	0.646**	0.719**	0.719**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	
N	380	380	380	380

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Regarding the direct relationships that were hypothesized in this study, the correlation analysis indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between all the independent and the dependent variables, and the results were as follows: PEOU and ATU, where r = 0.763; PU and ATU, where r = 0.830; ATU and intention, where r = 0.719 at a significant level 0.01 (P < 0.01) (Table 5). Since the significant level is <0.01, we can conclude that the relationships between PEOU and ATU, PU and ATU, ATU OFDS and the continuance intention to use OFDS are significant. Thus, H_1, H_2, and H_3 are accepted (Schober et al., 2018).

4.5. Regression Analysis

The application of regression analysis is to examine the mediating effect in the relationship between PEOU and PU with intention. We found that ATU of OFDS significantly mediated the PEOU-intention to use OFDS relationship (Table 6). The analysis shows that PEOU significantly predicts the continuance intention to use OFDS, b = 0.748, 95% CI [0.658, 0.837], t = 16.442, P < 0.000. As PEOU increases, the continuance intention to use OFDS increases. The analysis also showed that PEOU predicts ATU OFDS, b = 0.824, 95% CI [0.753, 0.894], t = 22.948, P < 0.000. Since PEOU predicts ATU OFDS, then the latter could be part of a causal path from PEOU to ATU OFDS. Output shows that ATU significantly predicts intention, b = 0.58, 95% CI [0.466, 0.694], t = 9.99, P < 0.000 in a multiple regression wherein PEOU is also included as a predictor. It is important that ATU OFDS predict the continuance intention to use OFDS, or ATU OFDS cannot be part of a causal path from PEOU to intention to use OFDS. It is worth noting that the original significant prediction by PEOU remains significant but is weaker (as shown by a drop in its standardized regression coefficient) when ATU OFDS is included as a predictor of the continuance intention to use OFDS, this result is usually described as ATU OFDS "partially mediating" the effect of PEOU on the continuance intention to use OFDS. It means that ATU OFDS explains some, but not all, of the effect of PEOU on the continuance intention to use OFDS. Accordingly, H_4 is accepted (Tables 6-9).

Table 6: Regression analysis (PEU-Intention to use OFDS)

Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% Confidence interval for B
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound / Upper bound
1						
(Constant)	1.075	0.205		5.256	0	0.673 / 1.478
PEOU	0.748	0.045	0.646	16.442	0	0.658 / 1.478

[a]Dependent variable: INT

Table 7: Regression analysis (PEU - ATU OFDS)

Coefficients						
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% confidence interval for B
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound / Upper bound
1						
(Constant)	0.83	0.161		5.143	0	0.513 / 1.148
PU	0.824	0.036	0.763	22.948	0	0.753 / 0.894

[a]Dependent variable: INT

Furthermore, the analysis shows that PU significantly predicts intention b = 0.776, 95% CI [0.700, 0.852], t = 20.093, P < 0.000. As PU increases, the continuance intention to use OFDS increases. Output also showed that PU significantly predicts attitude, b = 0.836, 95% CI [0.779, 0.893], t = 28.847, P < 0.000. As PU increases, the attitude increases. Thus, ATU OFDS could be part of a causal path from PU to intention to use OFDS. The analysis shows that attitude significantly predicts intention, b = 0.421, 95% CI [0.293, 0.549], t = 6.450, P < 0.000 in a multiple regression in which PU is also included as a predictor. Thus, H_5 is supported (Tables 10 and 11).

5. DISCUSSION

This study was set to investigate the factors influencing consumer continuance intention to use OFDS among university students in Malaysia. Ultimately, the survey results prove that the OFDS is a successful and in-demand scope of service, where users find it easy to use, useful to use, while having a positive attitude towards using it. Our analysis showed that all five hypotheses (H_1-H_5) were supported. This is consistent with Raksadigiri and Wahyuni (2020) and Tsai et al. (2022) who have shown that the perception of service technology being user-friendly or easy-to-use increases users' willingness to use it. The degree to which an individual feels that using a specific system would be simple is known as PEOU. Consequently, PEOU will have a substantial impact on ATU and the adoption of OFDS, both of which will impact behavioral intention to use (Raksadigiri and Wahyuni, 2020). However, our findings are contrary to Foroughi et al. (2024) who reported the insignificant influence of PEU on customer attitudes.

The analysis also showed that PU has a positive influence on ATU, OFDS. Attitude can be influenced by various factors such as past experiences, beliefs about the service and PU. Which is aligned with Neimand et al. (2019), when something makes us feel bad, we will find a reason to justify why it is wrong or avoid it, and vice versa. Our findings also run in parallel to Hooi et al. (2021), who reported that the PU of OFDS did not have a

Table 8: Regression analysis of the hypothesized mediator

Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% confidence interval for B	
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound
1							
(Constant)	0.931	0.175		5.329	0	0.587	1.274
PUOU	0.776	0.039	0.719	20.093	0	0.7	0.852

[a]Dependent variable: ATT

Table 9: Regression analysis (PU-intention to use OFDS)

Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% confidence interval for B	
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound
1							
(Constant)	0.594	0.161		5.143	0	0.223	0.964
PU	0.27	0.063	0.763	22.948	0	0.147	0.393
ATT	0.58	0.058	0.541	9.999	0	0.466	0.694

[a]Dependent variable: INT

Table 10: Regression analysis (PU- ATU OFDS)

Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% confidence interval for B	
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound
1							
(Constant)	0.757	0.131		5.78	0	0.5	1.015
PU	0.836	0.029	0.83	28.847	0	0.779	0.893

[a]Dependent variable: ATT

Table 11: Regression analysis of the mediating effect

Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance	95.0% confidence interval for B	
	B	Standard error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound
1							
(Constant)	0.612	0.173		3.535	0	0.272	0.953
PU	0.424	0.066	0.393	6.458	0	0.295	0.554
ATT	0.421	0.065	0.393	6.45	0	0.293	0.549

[a]Dependent variable: INT

significant direct effect on the intention of university students to use these services. These findings substantiate the hypothesis that PU indirectly influences customers' continued intention through attitude (Foroughi et al., 2024). The role of PU is very important to the adoption of using OFDS (Okumus et al., 2018). According to Bregashtian and Herdinata (2021), technology is considered valuable if it can minimize a person's time and effort required to understand or use it simultaneously. OFDS is convenient. Other than users getting to enjoy food without even stepping out of the house, OFDS technology is generally perceived as being easy to understand and not complicating the user experience. And this is what PU is all about (Bregashtian and Herdinata, 2021). This is particularly important for students.

In the area of consumer research, attitude has been a popular topic, as it has an important role in the decision-making process (Dave and Trivedi, 2019). In other words, people tend to have a positive attitude towards OFDS if they think it to be user-friendly. The PEOU then feeds this positive attitude, which in turn drives the development of an intention to continuously use OFDS. This mediation effect highlights the importance of user experience and ease of use in shaping consumer attitudes and the continuance intention to use OFDS. Businesses in the OFDS industry could focus on improving the user interface, simplifying the ordering process, and providing clear instructions to enhance PEOU, fostering a positive attitude and increasing the use of their services**.** The same goes if consumers perceive OFDS as useful (e.g., believing it saves time, offers a variety of food options, or provides convenience), it can lead to positive ATU OFDS. This positive attitude, in turn, can influence their continuance intention to use OFD.

6. CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This study highlights the rapidly evolving dynamics of digital consumer behavior among university students in Malaysia, specifically regarding the continued reliance on online food delivery services (OFDS). Key findings confirm the roles of "perceived ease of use" and "perceived usefulness" as fundamental drivers shaping user attitudes, which in turn indirectly influence their intention to continue using these services. The results demonstrate that seamless platform design and the delivery of real, rapid value to the consumer are the two fundamental pillars for winning the loyalty of the tech-savvy younger generation. The results also show that delivery service providers must focus on developing more flexible user interfaces and offering targeted marketing deals that enhance the perception of value, thereby supporting sustainable growth in this competitive sector.

Concerning the practical implications of our finding, it is suggested that the OFDS service providers involve in serious efforts to reduce cognitive effort for users when using their service, whether it's an online platform, application, or any other digital offering, it's crucial to prioritize simplicity, clarity, and ease of use. OFDS providers can work on product enhancement to make it effortless for users to use the service to increase usage rate, satisfaction and loyalty throughout the journey from order placing to payment to delivery status. There are several strategies that can help achieve this goal: (1) Design intuitive and user-friendly interfaces that are easy to navigate. Minimize clutter and unnecessary elements to reduce cognitive load. Use clear and concise language for instructions, labels, and prompts; (2) Maintain consistency in design elements, such as layout, color scheme, typography, and interaction patterns, across different screens and functionalities. Consistency helps users predict how to interact with the service, reducing cognitive effort; (3) Offer immediate and informative feedback to users when they perform actions or encounter errors. Clear feedback helps users understand the outcome of their actions and guides them in navigating the service more effectively; (4) Minimize the number of decisions users need to make by providing defaults, presents, or guided workflows. Present choices in a structured and organized manner and avoid overwhelming users with too many options at once; (5) Present information gradually as users interact with the service, revealing more advanced features or details only when needed. Progressive disclosure prevents information overload and allows users to focus on relevant tasks; (6) Anticipate users' needs and provide proactive assistance or suggestions based on their past behaviour, preferences, or context. Predictive assistance can streamline tasks and guide users toward their goals with minimal effort; (7) Simplify complex processes by breaking them down into smaller, manageable steps. Provide clear instructions and guidance at each step to help users progress through the workflow smoothly; (8) Offer accessible help resources, such as tooltips, inline guidance, FAQs, or contextual help, to assist users when they encounter difficulties or have questions. Effective support reduces frustration and cognitive load; (9) Continuously gather feedback from users through usability testing and iterate on the design based on their insights. Customer feedback makes a service more user-friendly by pointing out problems and suggesting areas for development. By implementing these strategies, service providers can minimize cognitive effort for users, leading to a more intuitive, efficient, and satisfying user experience, and thus, a higher tendency to use OFDS.

In terms of the limitations of this study, it is noteworthy to point out that despite the theoretical and practical value offered by this study—based on a sample of 385 university students—there is scope to expand future research to include broader demographic segments (such as employees and families) or to explore additional psychosocial factors—such as digital trust and awareness of packaging sustainability—to gain a more comprehensive picture of consumer behavior in the growing digital economy (Zhao et al. 2017). As the researchers, our background and experience in the online food delivery sector may have impacted the study's design and the choice of TAM as the theoretical framework. This perhaps resulted in a focus on attitude, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness, thereby overshadowing other characteristics that might equally influence continuance intention. Furthermore, the sample employed in this study—university students in Malaysia—may not represent the entire range of food delivery service customers. This demographic-specific sample is a limitation, considering the results might not prove applicable to other groups of users

(Oraibi et al., 2024). Later studies might seek to conduct a similar study with a larger and more varied population, strengthening the external validity of these findings (Hair et al., 2019). Because of its proven theoretical underpinning in understanding users' behavior in the adoption and continuous use of technology, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was used for this study (Davis, 1989). In the area of online platforms like food delivery services, TAM is still a commonly used model for comprehending the elements that affect the desire to utilize digital services. Other models, such as the innovation diffusion theory (IDT) (Rogers, 2003) and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003), could also be taken into consideration because of their particular emphasis on perceived usefulness and ease of use, as these are the main determinants of continuance intention in the context of online food delivery.

While the study's findings may not directly apply to all regions or demographics, the theoretical framework used in this study—the technology acceptance model (TAM)—has been widely applied across various industries and contexts, implying that the factors identified (attitude toward use, perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness) might be relevant beyond this particular sample. Prior research has shown that TAM has been successful in explaining technology adoption in a number of industries, such as e-commerce (Lai, 2017) as well as mobile applications (Venkatesh and Bala, 2008), implying that the constructs investigated in the present research could be similarly relevant to other settings in which technology adoption and continuance intention are relevant.

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