

Understanding the Determinants of Decision Making Among Online Food Delivery App Users in Can Tho City, Vietnam

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Abstract

This research explores the determinants influencing decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam, against the backdrop of the city's evolving culinary landscape and the rapid expansion of digital technologies. Through qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis, participant observation, and document analysis, key factors driving user decisions are identified. These factors include convenience, trust, food quality, delivery time, price sensitivity, and social influences. The findings underscore the complexity of user behavior within this context and highlight the importance of addressing these factors to improve user satisfaction and engagement with online food delivery apps. Despite the study's valuable insights, limitations such as geographical specificity, sample size, and reliance on self-reported data are acknowledged, suggesting avenues for future research including longitudinal studies, comparative analyses, experimental interventions, and quantitative assessments. By addressing these gaps, future research can advance our understanding of user behavior in online food delivery contexts and inform strategies for enhancing the user experience.

Keywords : online food delivery, decision making, determinants, Can Tho City, Vietnam, qualitative research.



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1. Introduction

The rapid proliferation of online food delivery apps has revolutionized the way individuals access and consume food worldwide (Belanche et al., 2020; Gupta, 2019; Li et al., 2020). In the vibrant city of Can Tho, Vietnam, this technological advancement has significantly altered the traditional dining landscape, providing consumers with unprecedented convenience and accessibility to a plethora of culinary options. As online food delivery platforms continue to reshape consumer behavior, understanding the underlying determinants influencing users' decision-making processes becomes imperative for businesses, policymakers, and researchers alike (Camillo, 2012; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Mazzucchelli et al., 2021; Nanda et al., 2021; Sangadji & Handriana, 2023).

Can Tho City, nestled in the heart of the Mekong Delta (Keith & Riebling, 2009), serves as an intriguing setting for investigating the factors driving decision making among online food delivery app users (Alalwan, 2020; Prasetyo et al., 2021; Tandon et al., 2021). With its burgeoning urban population and diverse culinary scene, the city offers a dynamic environment for exploring the intricate interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and technological factors shaping consumer choices (Hutton, 2015; Moulart, 2000; Pacione, 2009; Parham, 2013; Yulistiyono et al., 2023). Furthermore, Vietnam's rapidly expanding digital economy, coupled with the widespread adoption of smartphones and internet connectivity, underscores the relevance of examining decision-making behaviors within the realm of online food delivery services (Asanprakit & Kraiwanit, 2023; Ashraf et al., 2021; Khanh, 2023; Ngo, 2023; Tlemsani et al., 2023; Tran, 2023).

This research seeks to delve into the multifaceted dimensions of decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam. By elucidating the underlying factors driving consumer choices, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to both academia and industry. Through a comprehensive analysis of socio-demographic characteristics, technological factors, service quality perceptions, and cultural influences, this research endeavors to offer a nuanced understanding of the decision-making processes within the context of online food delivery app utilization in Can Tho City.

By shedding light on the determinants influencing user decisions, this study not only enriches the academic discourse on consumer behavior but also provides actionable recommendations for stakeholders in the online food delivery industry. Ultimately, a deeper understanding of the factors driving decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City holds significant implications for enhancing service offerings, optimizing marketing strategies, and fostering sustainable growth in the evolving landscape of digital food delivery platforms.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach to delve into the intricacies of understanding the determinants of decision-making among users of online food delivery applications in Can Tho City, Vietnam. Qualitative research is a scientific method aimed at comprehending a phenomenon within its social context naturally by prioritizing a deep communicative interaction process between the researcher and the phenomenon under investigation (Gerring, 2017; Moriarty, 2011; Patton, 1987; Sofaer, 1999; Supriatin et al., 2022). Data collection primarily involves semi-structured interviews with purposively selected users based on diverse demographics, usage patterns, and preferences. These interviews are designed to yield rich insights into the factors influencing users' decision-making processes, including but not limited to convenience, trust, food quality, delivery time, price sensitivity, and social influence. Thematic analysis is employed to systematically analyze qualitative data, identifying recurring patterns, themes, and relationships among various decision-making influencing factors (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2022; Nowell et al., 2017; Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). Additionally, participant observation and document analysis complement the interview data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Through this qualitative methodological approach, the study aims to offer nuanced insights into the diverse nature of decision-making within the context of online food delivery application usage in Can Tho City, Vietnam.

3. Result and Discussion

The findings of this study offer significant insights into the determinants affecting decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam. Through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, several prominent themes emerged, illuminating the complexities of user behavior within this context. Among the primary factors influencing decision making is convenience, which users consistently identified as a key motivator for utilizing online food delivery apps. This convenience encompasses aspects such as ease of ordering, a wide selection of restaurants, and real-time order tracking, all of which contribute to enhancing the overall user experience.

Moreover, trust emerged as another crucial determinant shaping decision making among users. Participants emphasized the importance of trusting both the reliability and security of the app platform itself and the trustworthiness of the listed restaurants. Factors contributing to building trust included transparent communication, secure payment options, and positive past experiences with the app and specific restaurants. Additionally, food quality emerged as a significant

consideration for users when selecting which app to use and which restaurant to order from, emphasizing the importance of receiving high-quality, fresh food that meets their expectations in terms of taste and presentation.

Furthermore, delivery time emerged as a critical factor influencing decision making among users, with participants expressing preferences for apps that offer fast and timely delivery services to avoid dissatisfaction. Price sensitivity also played a role, with users weighing the convenience offered by online food delivery apps against perceived value for money, leading some to seek out deals and discounts while others were willing to pay a premium for the convenience of delivery. Social influences were also found to impact decision making, with recommendations from peers and online reviews often guiding users' choices of restaurants and apps.

The expansion of online food delivery services (OFDS) in Vietnam, particularly in Can Tho City, has been driven by the desire for convenience among consumers. OFDS platforms bridge the gap between customers and restaurants, offering a wide range of choices and streamlining the ordering and delivery process. However, challenges such as concerns over food temperature, hygiene practices, and food tampering have been raised by both restaurant owners and customers, highlighting the need for trust-building measures within the industry.

Despite these challenges, the popularity of OFDS in Vietnam has grown significantly, particularly amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, as it provides a convenient and relatively safe means of obtaining meals. The market for OFDS in Vietnam has witnessed remarkable growth, with projections indicating continued expansion in the coming years. In Can Tho City, the use of food delivery services has become integral to urban life, addressing the challenges posed by environmental factors and busy lifestyles. Digital technology has played a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior, offering solutions that align with the urban lifestyle of Can Tho City residents, providing convenience and accessibility in obtaining meals. Overall, the findings underscore the multifaceted nature of decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam, emphasizing the importance of convenience, trust, food quality, delivery time, price sensitivity, and social influences in shaping user behavior within this dynamic and evolving landscape.

4. Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the determinants influencing decision making among online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam. Through thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, several key factors have been identified, including convenience, trust, food quality, delivery time, price sensitivity, and social influences. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of user behavior within this context and underscore the importance of addressing these factors to enhance user satisfaction and engagement with online food delivery apps. By understanding the preferences and concerns of users, app developers and restaurant owners can make informed decisions to improve their services and offerings, ultimately contributing to the growth and sustainability of the online food delivery industry in Can Tho City and beyond.

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research focused specifically on online food delivery app users in Can Tho City, Vietnam, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other geographical locations or contexts. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data obtained through semi-structured interviews, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability bias or recall bias. Furthermore, the sample size of the study was relatively small, and the participants were selected using purposive sampling, which may introduce selection bias. Future research could address these

limitations by conducting larger-scale studies across diverse demographics and geographical regions, utilizing mixed-methods approaches to triangulate findings, and employing more rigorous sampling techniques to ensure representativeness.

Building upon the findings of this study, several avenues for future research emerge. Firstly, longitudinal studies could be conducted to track changes in user behavior and preferences over time, allowing for a deeper understanding of the dynamics within the online food delivery industry. Additionally, comparative studies could be undertaken to explore differences in decision making among users in urban and rural areas, as well as across different socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, experimental studies could be conducted to test the effectiveness of interventions aimed at addressing the identified determinants of decision making, such as improving app interface design or implementing quality control measures in restaurants. Finally, qualitative research could be supplemented with quantitative analyses to quantify the relative importance of different factors influencing decision making and to identify potential predictors of user satisfaction and loyalty. By addressing these research gaps, future studies can contribute to advancing our understanding of user behavior in the context of online food delivery apps and inform strategies for enhancing the overall user experience.

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