Predicting Adoption of Online Food Delivery Applications

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Abstract

This study investigates the key determinants influencing consumer adoption of Online Food Delivery Applications (OFDAs) in the context of a rapidly digitizing Indian society. Drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research examines the roles of perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEU), and social norms (SN) as predictors of user intention. Data analysis reveals that both PEU and PU significantly and positively impact consumers' intention to use OFDAs, reaffirming the robustness of TAM in the Indian digital ecosystem. In contrast, social norms exhibit no significant influence, suggesting a paradigm shift wherein individuals prioritize personal utility and convenience over societal expectations when making digital service choices.

These findings highlight evolving consumer attitudes, emphasizing the growing importance of individual needs in decision-making processes within digitally native environments. The study offers practical implications for marketers and developers of digital platforms, suggesting a need to focus on enhancing the usability and perceived benefits of their services to increase adoption rates. Theoretical contributions include the refinement of TAM in the context of India's online food delivery sector.

Keywords: Online Food Delivery Applications, Technology Acceptance Model, Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, Social Norms, Consumer Adoption

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Introduction

Online Food Delivery applications (OFDAs) emerged as a new service delivery system because digital technology adoption increased prompting changes in customer interactions with goods and services. New online applications that combine grocery shopping apps with delivery services and e-commerce courier services experienced quick growth during the last few years to modify global consumer behavior (DSouza and Sharma 2021). Rapid growth in Indian applications occurs because consumers choose new shopping preferences and more people use smartphones and internet access expands. Online food delivery services serve as basic requirements of modern life because they provide food delivery and domestic service organization capabilities(Ali et al. 2021).

Research on consumer adoption and platform retention matters since applications continue their expansion to new business domains. Stores that previously offered shopping experiences now lose customers to digital applications which provide users with speed and convenience together with personalized service(Gupta and Duggal 2021). The expanding service

trend does not translate into equivalent customer excitement combined with readiness for usage. A detailed analysis of core behavioral factors among digital service consumers should be conducted due to different adoption rates stemming from psychological and social processes along with technological elements.

Researchers depend on tested theoretical frameworks from consumer psychology and information systems which enable methodical analysis of this behavior. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) maintains high productivity for clarifying how users embrace technology. The two core beliefs of perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) directly affect how users plan to adopt technology

according to the Technology Acceptance Model(Davis 1989). A person's system task performance assessment forms the basis of PU but PEU describes their conviction about a system's effortlessness. The components of PU and PEU help customers manifest their understanding about accepting new technological developments.

Research has established TAM as a reliable tool for analyzing different technological settings but new variables help enhance its applicability by integrating unique characteristics across various applications and customers. The component of social norms proves essential for India's economic structure where people belong to tightly knit social networks and maintain strong cultural awareness(Khan, Hameed, and Akram 2023)variables have been extracted from well-established theories, i.e. self-determination theory (SDT. Social norms which describe the perceived pressure from others about specific behaviors apply to customers on online delivery services because their peer and social networks provide behavioral examples and assessments which might shape their decisions. The combination of direct friend recommendations with social acceptability perception of the food delivery service makes customers more likely to experiment with the platform.

Social Norms strengthens TAM's effectiveness because it integrates consumer decision-making social norms into the analysis of this research project. Collective societies such as India prioritize social norms as a key factor which influences technology acceptance because family and community beliefs guide most individual choices. Prior research has confirmed that customers show greater platform/service usage inclination when their close associates expect them to adopt those applications/services. The prediction of OFDA adoption requires complete understanding of both social influences and user judgment about system utility and simplicity(Kim, Kim, and Park 2010).

Online food delivery systems hold increasing importance in daily life while research about specific behavioral determinants of their use remains limited especially within India and other developing countries. Most modern research tackles either generic consumer adoption without OFDA considerations or it approaches organizational digital technology adoption. Digital service applications operate through time constraints while providing services for customer convenience thus having customers who behave differently from users of other digital service networks(Wu et al. 2022)integrates the concept of face consciousness and examines how personal norms (PN.

This research addresses the neglected area by exploring how social norm influences consumer online delivery system adoption together with perceived usefulness and ease of use. The study aims to (1) determine how PEU affects consumers' intentions to use OFDAs, (2) determine how PU influences consumers' perceptions and adoption choices, and (3) investigate the degree to which social norms influence consumers' intentions to use such apWplications. The study aims to offer a thorough grasp of the factors of OFDA adoption by creating and evaluating a conceptual model based on these three variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

OFDs in India

The online delivery market in India has grown rapidly in the last several years. Online food and goods delivery services have gained popularity due to factors like growing middle class, rising disposable incomes, fast urbanization, and the widespread use of smartphones (Pandey, Chawla, and Puri 2022). The way Indian consumers obtain food and necessities has been completely redesigned by major players like Zomato, Swiggy, Blinkit, and Big Basket. The Indian internet meal delivery business was estimated to be worth over $5 billion in 2023 by RedSeer Consulting, and it is still expanding at a double-digit compound annual growth rate(Patgiri 2022).

This change was hastened by the COVID-19 epidemic, which made customers depend on contactless delivery methods. Widespread adoption has been facilitated by elements including ease of use, special offers, real-time tracking, and the availability of several items or cuisines. Understanding what motivates adoption from a consumer psychology perspective is crucial because these applications continue to face significant issues with user retention and ongoing engagement due to increased competition (Ramesh et al. 2023).

Consumers of Uttar Pradesh

The most populous state in India, Uttar Pradesh (UP), offers a distinct and important customer base for digital applications. UP serves as a testing ground for digital market analysis because it contains combination of urban nomic areas including cities like Varanasi together with rural territories. Although most metropolitan centers in Uttar Pradesh have embraced OFDAs, smaller villages and cities operate with varying levels of adoption. The digital landscape of India finds its perfect reflection in UP because different educational statuses

and socioeconomic tiers as well as cultural backgrounds exist among its users. Research of digital service penetration across India's socioeconomic spectrum can be effectively analyzed through exploring adoption patterns of OFDAs in this area.

Theoretical Framework

The research theory in this study depends on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989). Information systems research continues to use TAM as one of its most frequently checked and referenced models. The model serves effectively to explore new technologies including digital consumer applications because it maintains both simplicity and empirical stability. Pu and Peu stand as the two critical fundamental beliefs which drive consumer acceptance based on the presented idea. The beliefs of system users eventually determine their intention to use the system after considering these notions.

Social Norms outside of background play a crucial role in consumer acceptance yet they remain not included from the original model of TAM. The research applies Social Norms to the Theory of Planned Behaviour framework established by Ajzen (1991). The integration process enables whole-system adoption approaches in cultures that value social relationships(Ajzen 1991).

PEU, PU, and SN serve as independent variables that impact the behavior of users regarding their adoption of online delivery applications. The compiled approach demonstrates a full grasp of adoption behavior by evaluating internal cognitive evaluations along with societal impact.

Hypothesis Development

OFDA adoption by consumers is a complex process impacted by social, psychological, and technological elements. This study suggests three main factors impacting the intention to adopt OFDAs: perceived ease of use (PEU), perceived usefulness (PU), and social norms (SN). These factors build upon the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and incorporate social norms as an extension. Every one of these concepts makes a distinct contribution to the comprehension of consumer behaviour in the digital realm.

Researchers have studied perceived ease of use (PEU) because it stands as a key determinant for new technology adoption. Davis (1989) defines PEU as the level to which someone evaluates using technology as effortless. Many studies demonstrate that consumers will embrace a platform more when they discover this platform straightforward to utilize (Boateng et al. 2016)

perceived ease of use (PEOU(Shen, Education, and 2009 n.d.). PEU defines the straightforwardness of customers using the app to order along with their simple payment process when ordering through online delivery services. PEU drives behavioural intention by multiple paths including perceived usefulness according to Venkatesh & Davis (2000) as well as studies throughout the years. OFDAs must emphasize PEU because it acts as a critical element towards success within digital marketplaces that vary in levels of digital literacy such as India(Venkatesh and Davis 2000).

Hypothesis 1 (H1)

Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) positively influences consumers' intention to adopt online food delivery applications.

The measurement of how customers view a platform improving their daily performance through their tasks is termed perceived usefulness or PU. OFDAs provide customers with time efficiency along with easy use and various choices and attractive promotions or price reductions through PU(Boateng et al. 2016)perceived ease of use (PEOU(Nguyen 2022)this research adopts structural equation modelling (SEM. The PU factor consistently proves to be the vital determinant of user intent in systems serving practical goals according to research published by Davis (1989) and Gefen et al. (2003). The time-saving benefits of PU enable customers to switch their buying habits from conventional methods to app-based services in India even though urban lifestyles have become more demanding(Al-Rahmi et al. 2022).

Hypothesis 2 (H2)

Perceived Usefulness (PU) positively influences consumers' intention to adopt online food delivery applications.

Social Norms enhance the explanation power of Theory of Reasoned Action through their analysis of external social factors(Jung, Choi, and Oh 2020)a shift to more sustainable consumption behaviors is required in China. Although public interests in sustainability have increased and consumers' attitudes are positive, their behavioral intentions are not consistent with attitudes. This study aims to uncover psychological drivers and barriers (consumption values, social norms, and attitudes to sustainable apparel products. A social norm describes the expected behavior in accordance with the opinions of important people in someone's life who include friends and family members along with societal members (Vermeir and Verbeke

the northern Indian cities of Lucknow and Varanasi. After removing the incomplete questionnaires, 247 of the 219 responses that were collected were deemed suitable for the study. With 15 measurement items, the study's sample size exceeded the 150 required for structural equation modelling (following Kline's 2011 10:1 rule). The sample demographics are shown in Table 2.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done using AMOS and SPSS software. Skewness and kurtosis indices were computed to verify that the data was normal. The skewness and kurtosis indices were both within the permissible range (±3 and ±10, respectively), indicating that the data was normal (Kline, 2011).

Measurement model

The measurement model was found to have an excellent fit as per Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as shown by the following values: CMIN/df=1.229; CFI=0.985; SRMR=0.042; RMSEA=0.032. The reliability and validity estimates for the constructs were well above the acceptable threshold. (Table 3) The composite reliability values were above 0.7 for all the sub scales. The AVE values were above 0.5 demonstrating good convergent validity. The discriminant validity was assessed by comparing square root of AVE with factor correlations and the values for the former were greater than that of latter for all the constructs (see Table 3) which satisfied the criterion suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Structural Model and Path Analysis

CFA was carried out on the structural model which provided the following fit statistics: CMIN/df=1.229 CFI=0.985; SRMR=0.042; RMSEA=0.032. These measures suggest that the model fit is excellent. The model explained 64% variance in BI.

Path analysis revealed that all the factors significantly impacted behavioural intention. The effect of PU (β = 0.323, p<0.001), PEU (β = 0.169, p<0.001) and SN (β = 0.114, p<0.001) on BI was statistically significant. Thus, two out of the three suggested hypotheses (H1-H2) were supported and H3 was not supported. The results are shown in Table 4.

Discussion

The results of this study provide insightful information on the variables affecting Online Delivery Platform (ODP) adoption by consumers in India. The findings demonstrate the crucial roles that perceived usefulness (PU) and ease of use (PEU) play in influencing consumer

intention, and they offer compelling evidence in favour of two of the three hypotheses that were put out. Contrary to predictions, however, there was no evidence of the impact of Social Norms (SN) on customer intention, indicating significant subtleties in digital consumer behaviour.

Customers' desire to adopt ODPs is significantly influenced by perceived ease of use, as demonstrated by the substantial support for Hypothesis 1. As expected, users are more likely to interact with platforms that are easy to use, intuitive, and take little effort. These results are in line with earlier research using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which highlights how simplifying digital platforms and making them easier to use can significantly promote technology adoption. Ease of use becomes a crucial differentiation in the diverse and quickly digitising Indian market, particularly for consumers from regions with varying degrees of digital literacy and first-time users.

Likewise, there was substantial evidence for Hypothesis 2 on Perceived Usefulness. ODPs are seen favorably by consumers, who point to advantages like ease of use, time savings, improved product accessibility, and alluring deals. This supports Davis's (1989) claim that a key factor influencing the adoption of technology is perceived utility. Platforms that provide genuine, measurable value are more likely to be adopted in a socioeconomic setting where juggling work, school, and personal obligations is a never-ending struggle. The outcome emphasises how crucial it is for online delivery services to keep coming up with new ideas and offering useful solutions that raise customer satisfaction and productivity.

However, the lack of support for Hypothesis 3 indicates that social norms had no discernible effect on consumers' intentions to adopt ODPs in this study. In collectivist countries like India, where social influence frequently plays a significant role in influencing consumer behaviour, this conclusion deviates from expectations based on earlier studies. The increasing
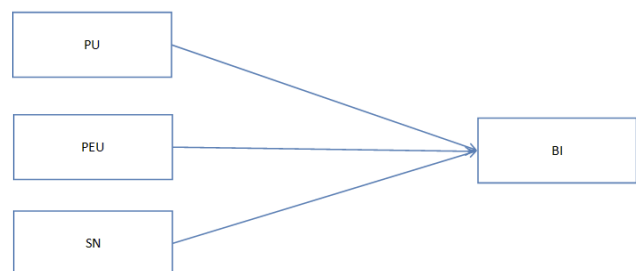

Figure : 1 The conceptual model is shown in Fig.

Table 1: Constructs and their items

Constructs	Measurement items	Source
PEU1	It is easy to use OFD	(Muñoz-Leiva, Climent-Climent, and Liébana-Cabanillas 2017)many customers remain uncertain due to its security. This study develops a technology acceptance model that integrates the innovation diffusion theory, perceived risk and trust in the classic TAM model in order to shed light on what factors determine user acceptance of mobile banking applications. The participants had to examine a mobile application of the largest European bank. In the proposed model, an approach to external influences was included, theoretically and originally stated by Davis et al. (1989
PEU2	OFD is understandable and clear	
PEU3	Using OFD requires minimum effort	
PEU4	Learning to use OFD is easy	
PU1	I think that using OFD services would enable me to buy food more quickly	(Lee 2009)
PU2	I think that using the OFD services would make it easier for me to buy food.	
PU3	I think the OFD services are useful	
PU4	Overall, I think that using the OFD is advantageous	
SN1	People who are important to me would think that I should use OFD	Lee (2009)
SN2	People who influence me would think that I should use OFD	
SN3	People whose opinions are valued to me would prefer that I should use OFD	

BI1	I intend to use the food delivery app	(Choe, Jinkyung Jenny, and and Hwang 2022)
BI2	If I have an opportunity, I will order food through the delivery app	
BI3	I intend to keep ordering food through the delivery app	
BI4	If I have access to online food delivery apps for food delivery I predict that I would use it	

Table 2 : Sample Demographics

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage
Age	18-27	64	29.2
	28-37	78	35.6
	38-47	43	19.6
	48 and above	34	15.5
Education	No formal Education	15	6.8
	Below Matriculation	36	16.4
	Matriculation/Higher Secondary	87	39.7
	Other Technical Course	25	11.4
	Graduation and above	56	25.6
Family Income	Below 100000	22	10.0
	100000-500000	113	51.6
	500000-1000000	72	32.9
	1000000 and above	12	5.5

2006). Purchasing choices in Indian society tend to be influenced strongly by social norms because this country demonstrates strong family and community cultural influence. Social norms achieve their influence on behavior intentions through the work of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) and its successful adaptations. When digital customers who are new or young receive endorsements from their peers it helps build confidence as well as decreases uncertainties in the purchasing process(de Leeuw et al. 2015). New technologies adoption by emerging economies is substantially enhanced through SN as Bhatti (2020) demonstrates in their recent research study.

Hypothesis 3 (H3)
Social Norms positively influence consumers' intention

Table 3 : Reliability and Validity

	CR	AVE	PU	INT	PEU	SN
PU	0.869	0.624	0.79			
INT	0.855	0.599	0.379	0.774		
PEU	0.831	0.552	0.213	0.255	0.743	
SN	0.757	0.511	0.173	0.194	0.145	0.715

Table 4 : Summary of Hypothesis Outcomes

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Interpretation
H1	PEU positively influences consumers' intention to adopt online food delivery apps.	Supported	PEU significantly encourages consumers to adopt OFDAs.
H2	PU positively influences consumers' intention to adopt online food delivery apps.	Supported	Functional benefits like convenience and efficiency drive adoption.
H3	Social Norms positively influence consumers' intention to adopt online food delivery apps.	Not Supported	Peer and societal influence does not significantly impact adoption decisions.

to adopt online food delivery applications.

The conceptual model framework (Fig. 1) depends on these hypotheses as its key elements to explain Indian consumers who intend to use OFDAs. Digital service adoption decision processes become more comprehensible when these constructs connect and interact in cultural and ethnically diverse territories.

Research Model

Methodology

Questionnaire Development

A structured questionnaire has been developed based on validated constructs from prior studies on the TAM and Social Norms. (Table 1) The items measuring Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Social Norms (SN), and Behavioral Intention to Adopt were adapted using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire was pre-tested for clarity and reliability with a small pilot group before full-scale distribution.

Data Analysis Methodology

With the use of SPSS and AMOS software, the data was gathered via an online survey and subjected to structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis. Respondents were profiled using descriptive statistics, and the validity and reliability of the measurement model were examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To investigate the proposed connections between PEU, PU, SN, and Behavioural Intention, the structural model was evaluated. Overall model adequacy was confirmed using model fit indices like χ^2/df, RMSEA, and CFI.

Data Collection

This study focuses on Online Food Delivery Application users in India. To ensure internal consistency and intelligibility of the questionnaire, a pilot study with thirty users was conducted. After that, 300 users in all were contacted using a convenience sampling method, and after getting their informed consent, their answers were gathered using a self-administered questionnaire. Between January to March 2024 data was gathered in

personalization of decision-making in the digital sphere is one argument. Customers may base their decisions to accept technology more on their own convenience and usefulness than on social approval as internet services grow more and more ingrained in daily life.

Furthermore, the fact that ODPs are so widely accessible and available may indicate that peer pressure is no longer a significant factor in their use because it has become so commonplace. This is indicative of a developing consumer market where personal opinions about practicality and usability prevail over social influences from the outside world. Overall, the findings support the extended TAM framework to some extent. The absence of significance of social norms implies that models of technology adoption may need to be modified when examining contemporary digital consumer behaviour in India, even though PEU and PU are still strong predictors of behavioural intention. The results highlight that instead of significantly depending on peer influence or social marketing tactics, practitioners should concentrate on improving platform functionality and user experience. Thus, the study makes a theoretical and practical contribution by demonstrating that the adoption of online food delivery systems is mostly driven by individual cognitive assessments rather than social conformity.

Implications of the study

The study's conclusions have significant theoretical and practical ramifications. Theoretically, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is relevant in forecasting consumer behaviour towards online food delivery applications in the Indian context because of the substantial influence of perceived usefulness and ease of use. The lack of significance of social norms points to a move in digital adoption towards more individualistic decision-making, indicating the need to improve on current models when researching contemporary consumers.

In order to encourage adoption, the report recommends that online food delivery applications give priority to improving user experience and highlighting functional advantages. Campaigns that emphasize peer pressure or social endorsement will not be as successful as those that concentrate on app design, smooth navigation, and offering genuine, concrete conveniences. In order to effectively address customer needs, marketing techniques should emphasize effectiveness, dependability, and utility rather than mainly depending on peer pressure or social norms.

Conclusion

This study examined the elements that influence customers' adoption of Online Food Delivery Applications (OFDAs) by using social norms (SN), perceived usefulness (PU), and perceived ease of use (PEU) as predictors. The results show that PEU and PU have a significant and beneficial impact on consumers' intention to use OFDAs, demonstrating the TAM's resilience in the Indian digital environment. Social norms, however, were shown to have no discernible effect, indicating that customers are increasingly basing their choices not on social norms but on perceived value and personal convenience. This illustrates how consumer attitudes are shifting in a society that is digitizing quickly and where personal wants are becoming more important than social demands.

The study makes a theoretical and practical contribution by providing insights for marketers and producers of digital platforms who want to maximize user experiences and emphasize the value of their platforms. The model could be expanded in future studies by adding more elements including pricing methods, perceived risk, service quality, and trust. Comparative research between states, urban and rural areas, or age groups could improve comprehension even more. Furthermore, longitudinal research might examine how user loyalty and satisfaction change over time, offering a more thorough understanding of customer behaviour in the online food delivery service.

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