

**DETERMINANTS OF CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO USE ONLINE FOOD ORDERING SYSTEMS IN ABIA STATE NIGERIA**AHAIWE Emmanuel O.<sup>1</sup>NWODO Sylvanus Ikechukwu<sup>2</sup>UWAOMA Ugochukwu G. A<sup>3</sup>NWACHUKWU Chima Peter<sup>4</sup>

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**Abstract**

This study examined factors that determine consumers' intention to use online food ordering (OFO) systems in Abia State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised staff of selected manufacturing companies in Aba, Abia State. A total of 320 respondents participated in the study. Online survey (Google Form) was used to collect data. Convenience and snowball sampling were employed in the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 and Microsoft Excel were used for data analysis. Individual item reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were confirmed in the study. The study found that perceived ease of use (PEoU) positively affects intention to use OFO system, perceived usefulness (PU) positively affects intention to use OFO system, social influence (SI) positively affects intention to use OFO system, and delivery time (DT) positively affects intention to use OFO system. The study concludes that (PEoU), PU, SI and DT are factors that determine intention to use OFO system in Abia State, Nigeria. The study recommends that OFO service providers should prioritize clear communication and demonstration of how OFO system improves user convenience, saves time, offers diverse food options, and simplifies transactions.

**Keywords:** Delivery time, intention to use, online food ordering, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, social influence

**Introduction**

Advances in Internet and information and communication technology (ICT) and widespread use of mobile applications as standard business tools have enhanced worldwide economic growth. Also affected by the increasing use of the Internet and ICT in business (e-commerce) is consumer expectations (Al-Okaily et al., 2022; Goldstein et al., 2019; Hu et al., 2019). About 92.6% of the 4 billion internet users worldwide access the internet using smart mobile devices (Nielsen, 2018). Online shopping is a trend today, as it makes searching the Internet for products and product information simple and easy for consumers (Ahaiwe et al., 2025; Chung & Muk, 2017). It is also easier to access, when compared to the traditional brick and mortar shopping (Bauerova & Klepek, 2018).

Online food ordering (OFO) activities have emerged as a result of expanding trends and advantages of online shopping (Chai & Yat, 2019). Nowadays, tech-savvy eateries are using online food services to meet customers' need for meals-on-the-go (Nikita & Nimbrain, 2022). OFO and online food delivery (OFD) have thus become popular forward-thinking model in the fast-food industry.

OFO is conceptually distinct from conventional fast-food service that involve customers visiting a restaurant, placing orders, and then picking them up by paying (Nikita & Nimbrain, 2022). Customers' habits have changed as a result of OFO services (Chai & Yat, 2019). With a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.05%, the OFO market in Nigeria is predicted to reach \$3.07b in 2025 and reach \$4.95b by 2030, indicating the sector's ongoing transformation

(Statista, 2025). Increased internet and smartphone usage, a growing need for convenience, and a move to online meal ordering platforms are some of the factors driving this expansion.

OFO service is growing rapidly among the working-class people in Abia State that have hectic schedules, and need online food service to save time and avoid the trouble of cooking. OFO is also favoured by those who appreciate authenticity and local recipes. The challenge for food service providers however, is to provide effective delivery services that satisfy urban lifestyle demand for convenience, the different dietary choices of individuals, and the changing competitive landscape (Statista, 2025). Notable food restaurants offering OFO services in Abia State include Kilimanjaro, Domino, Crunchies Fried Chicken, Chicken Republic, etc.

OFO system provides customers with convenience, time savings and access to a variety of menu (Das, 2018; Novita & Husna, 2020; Peemanee & Wongsahai, 2021; Prabowo & Nugroho, 2019; Yeo et al., 2017). And to compete effectively, most OFO service providers offer incentives like discounts and free delivery (Chung et al., 2022). However, as research on OFO service develops with the introduction of OFO services, academics are looking for ways to explain how market dynamics, technological developments and consumer behaviour affects its adoption (Chew et al., 2023; Wyse et al., 2021; Yeo et al., 2017).

In order to provide insight into factors that influence consumers' intention to adopt new technologies, researchers focused on unravelling how consumers view and interact with such technologies. In the context of OFO services, value of food takeaway, effort savings, and convenience have been examined in recent studies (Keeble et al., 2022). Additional studies focus on pricing strategies, menu design, and significance of reviews and ratings in shaping customer choices (Shankar et al., 2022; Yeo et al., 2017).

The technology acceptance model (TAM) was used by Jun et al. (2022) to evaluate variables that influence consumers' intention to use OFO services. They found that perceived usefulness influence usage of OFO services both directly and indirectly. Also, social influence, trust and enjoyment are important factors that affect the adoption of OFO services.

Furthermore, Cho et al. (2019) found that customers' intention to consistently use food delivery apps is predicted by system trust, convenience, design and different food options. For Ray and Bala (2021), price benefits, trust and app-interaction were found to affect OFO adoption. However, these studies do not consider the possible effect of delivery time or associated time-saving can have on consumers' intention to use OFO system. Hence, their results do not properly and comprehensively define the key predictors of intention to use OFO services.

Thus, based on existing research on technology acceptance model (TAM) and OFO (Cho, Bonn, & Li, 2019; Gunden et al., 2020; Ray & Bala, 2021; Ray et al., 2019; Roh & Park, 2019; Suhartanto et al., 2019; Zhao & Bacao, 2020), and the peculiarities of ordering food online rather than dining out, this study uses four variables (perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, social influence and delivery time) to predict customer intention to use OFO services in Abia State of Nigeria.

### **Concept of Online Food Ordering**

OFO is the process of requesting for food to be prepared and delivered to one, using Internet-enabled platforms (Li et al., 2020). According to Abhishek et al. (2018), online food ordering system is a technological architecture that enables a business to design an electronic interface that explains their service offerings, menu and reservations, so that a potential customer can make selections with pick-up or door service delivery options.

OFO services have developed into platforms that allow customers to easily place orders from a variety of listed restaurants as fast as possible with a single tap on their computers or cell-phones (Kitsikoglou et al., 2014). For this ordering system, some companies create dedicated mobile applications; others use social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram; instant messaging platforms like WhatsApp or rely on phone call-ins, and interactive websites; still others use a combination of these platforms to reach their target audience. The service provider receives and prepares the meal after a consumer uses an OFO service platform to make an order. The customer then receives the order from a dispatch rider, even as customers can communicate with the dispatch rider and check the status of their orders through different platforms.

Among the main benefits of using electronic meal order applications are the ability to connect in real time and convenience for busy people (Lee et al., 2017). Customers who use OFO services eliminate waiting, travel for pick-up, order misunderstandings that commonly occur in restaurants or over the phone, and daily offer discounts. OFO services give customers the ability to order from many restaurants, compare menus, scan and exchange food reviews.

### **Theoretical Underpinning and Hypotheses Development**

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

TAM was created to explain why people adopt new technologies for their activities. According to TAM, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEoU) are two important factors that influence individuals' intention to use a new technology (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Davis (1989) posits that PEoU is the degree of confidence individuals have, that utilizing a new system will not need a lot of effort to accomplish desired results; while PU is designated as the extent to which an individual thinks that using the new system would improve their productivity at work.

Numerous studies have expanded TAM by incorporating variables from different models, including self-efficacy (Joo et al., 2018), motivational factors (Siegel et al., 2017), diffusion of innovation theory variables (Lee et al., 2011), online shopping (Ahaiwe et al., 2024a; Ahaiwe et al., 2024b), and Fintech adoption (Ahaiwe et al., 2024c). These studies used TAM to address particular problems with theoretical support in settings where participants had access to technology. In this study, we incorporated social influence and delivery time into our model to show that OFO service adoption is determined by more factors than the TAM model provides.

#### **Perceived Ease of Use (PEoU)**

PEoU is the degree of personal confidence that utilizing a technology to accomplish tasks will not require substantial effort (Davis, 1989). Venkatesh and Davis (2000) stated that a system that is seen as user-friendly is likely to have higher ease of use and greater acceptability among users. Earlier studies suggest that digital technology adoption is influenced by PEoU (Ahaiwe et al., 2024; Kar, 2020). In regards to OFO, PEoU has been found to have a positive correlation with intention to use (Ray et al., 2019; Roh & Park, 2019).

According to Roh and Park (2019), a customer's propensity to use OFO services increases with their PEoU, which in turn increases the likelihood that OFO service would be successful. Troise et al. (2021) report that behavioural intention toward OFO services relates positively to PEoU; and Francioni et al. (2022) established that intention to continue using OFO services is positively impacted by PEoU. However, Lau and Ng (2019) found no significant link between PEoU and intention to use OFO system. Based on this, we hypothesize that:

H1: PEoU positively influences intention to use OFO system.

**Perceived Usefulness (PU)**

PU is the extent to which an individual thinks that utilizing a new technology would improve their productivity at work (Davis, 1989). People are more inclined to adopt new technology if they think it will help them meet a particular need (Shankar & Datta, 2018). A key factor that affects consumers' adoption of new technology is PU (Ahaiwe et al., 2024; Lin et al., 2020; Kalinic et al., 2019; Puspita & Kusumawati, 2019; Safari et al., 2020; Riza, 2019; Shrestha et al., 2020).

In the context of OFO services, PU stands for people's perception of how helpful it would be to use OFO services. Studies on OFD and OFO have shown that PU significantly influences intention to use. According to Yeo et al. (2017), PU has strong impact on intention to continue using OFO services. Similarly, Roh and Park (2019) found that PU is the most significant factor influencing intention to use OFO service. Based on this, we hypothesize that:

H2: PU positively relates to intention to use OFO system.

**Social Influence (SI)**

SI describes how other people's presence or behaviour affects a person's attitudes, beliefs or behaviours (Tran, 2021; Koksai, 2016; Du et al., 2012). The notion of SI is that people are influenced by the information they obtain from others and their social networks, particularly when it comes to embracing novel and disruptive technology (Singh et al., 2020). Individuals frequently look to their environment for direction, which might have a direct impact on their readiness to adopt new technologies (Giovanis et al., 2019). SI has been demonstrated to have a positive effect on both intention to use and actual adoption of new technologies in the case of smartphone diet apps (Okumus et al., 2018), online shopping (Ahaiwe et al., 2024), Fintech adoption (Ahaiwe et al., 2024) and mobile food ordering applications (Lee et al., 2019).

Alaimo et al. (2020) and Lee et al. (2019) found positive association between SI and intention to use OFO service. Customers' experiences and peer ratings are two elements that influenced their decision to utilize food delivery apps (Lee et al., 2019). Additionally, social impact and availability of food delivery application networks increase number of users of food delivery applications (Alaimo et al., 2020). Since there are limited findings in the context of OFO services, we hypothesize that:

H3: SI positively relates to intention to use OFO system.

**Delivery Time (DT)**

Kedah et al. (2015) assert that DT is a crucial component of customer happiness and retention in e-commerce. Sultan and Uddin (2011) found that many customers think online shopping saves time because they do not have to waste their time traveling, as opposed to traditional offline shopping. Regardless of traffic or weather conditions, every delivery delay lowers customer satisfaction. OFO services enable working-class customers consume the meal they prefer, and at the time they want it, while managing working on assigned tasks (Sethu & Saini, 2016).

The impact of DT on intention to utilize OFO services has not been extensively studied. It is thought that one of the reasons customers pick OFO services is DT (Das, 2018; Kanteti, 2018; Gawande et al., 2019). Hong et al. (2021) showed that intention to use online food ordering is strongly influenced by delivery time benefits. In line with the few studies on DT as a predictor of intention to use OFO service, we hypothesize that:

H4: DT is positively related to intention to use OFO system

### Intention to use (IU)

The dependent variable in this study is IU. Intention is frequently linked to motivation, objectives or goals, and entails the preparation and dedication to act in a particular manner (Njoku et al., 2024). Jogiyanto (2008) asserted that a person's IU is a measure of their desire to carry out a behaviour. The desire to continue using a specific technology (Raza et al., 2017; Chang et al., 2016) and, in this study, intention to use OFO service, can be considered a behavioural intention that predicts actual behaviour. TAM explains that behavioural intention is an antecedent to the adoption of new technology. IU and actual adoption have also been linked in prior studies (Senyo & Osabutey, 2020; Alwi et al., 2019; Lee, 2018).

### Methodology

This was a cross-sectional study that adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised staff of selected manufacturing firms in Aba, Abia State. For the purpose of this study, a total of 320 respondents were used. The method used for data collection was an online survey (Google Form). The online questionnaire contained items on a 5-point Likert scale rating. The questionnaire items were adapted from previous works on the same or similar subjects. Care was taken to design the online questionnaire, and the researchers ensured that the questionnaire captured all the aspects of the study variables. The online questionnaire was emailed to some respondents, while others were reached through WhatsApp platforms. Convenience and snowball sampling were employed in this study as participants were urged to share the questionnaire with their friends and coworkers. This sample strategy is consistent with the works of Berson et al. (2002) and Coomber (1997). Data collection was done within one month (May, 2025).

### Measurement Model Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel were used in the study. The study looked at the measurement model from three angles: individual item reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hulland, 1999). Individual item reliability evaluates the factor loadings of measurable variables on latent variables. According to Hulland (1999), factor loadings of measured variables should be more than 0.7 because a low factor loading indicates that the model's explanatory ability is inadequate. Table 1 shows that all the factors loading in the latent variables were over 0.7, indicating overall strong reliability.

**Table 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Cronbach Alpha (CA), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Construct Reliability (CR)**

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	CA	AVE	CR
Perceived Usefulness	PU1	0.827	0.872	0.632	0.855
	PU2	0.784			
	PU3	0.716			
	PU4	0.846			
Perceived ease-of-use	PEoU2	0.868	0.927	0.762	0.912
	PEoU3	0.937			
	PEoU4	0.846			
	PEoU5	0.837			
Social Influence	SI1	0.943	0.911	0.718	0.904
	SI2	0.879			
	SI3	0.780			
	SI4	0.779			
Delivery Time	DT1	0.966	0.827	0.616	0.840
	DT2	0.926			
	DT3	0.820			
Intention to use	IU1	0.933	0.901	0.697	0.889

IU2	0.886
IU3	0.748
IU5	0.757

Source: SPSS output of data analysis on determinants of consumers' intention to adopt online food ordering service (2025).

AVE, Cronbach Alpha and CR were the reliability indices taken into consideration for assessing the study's reliability (Hair et al., 2014; Chin 1998; Fornell & Larcker 1981). Table 1 shows that the AVE for every latent variable in the investigation was more than 0.6. The internal consistency of a latent variable increases with its composite reliability and a CR score of 0.7 is considered acceptable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 1 displays a high level of internal consistency because every latent variable in the sample was over 0.6. The AVE should be higher than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Convergent validity increases as AVE increases. From Table 1, convergent validity for the study's latent variables seems to be very strong.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established by looking at the correlation coefficient between latent variables and the square root of the AVE of each latent variable. Discriminant validity exists when the AVE square root value is greater than the correlation of the variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). From the results in Table 2, there is discriminant validity in this study since the AVE root square is greater than the correlation coefficient between the latent variable and the other latent variables.

**Table 2: Discriminant Validity**

Construct	PU	PEoU	SI	DT	IU
<b>PU</b>	<b>0.794</b>				
<b>PEoU</b>	0.613	<b>0.873</b>			
<b>SI</b>	0.508	0.621	<b>0.847</b>		
<b>DT</b>	0.421	0.433	0.562	<b>0.785</b>	
<b>IU</b>	0.521	0.352	0.574	0.508	<b>0.835</b>

Source: SPSS output of data analysis on determinants of consumers' intention to adopt online food ordering service (2025).

**Note:** Numbers outside the bold diagonal lines show correlation coefficient between each latent variable and the others, while bold numbers along the diagonal lines show the square root of the AVE for each latent variable.

The analysis of the indicators showed that the latent variables in the model showed strong validity and reliability, which qualified them for hypothesis testing on the relationships between the variables in the model.

**Table 3: Regression analysis**

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	1.101	.133		8.288	.000
PEoU	.289	.067	.737	4.321	.000
PU	.331	.088	.527	3.768	.000
SI	.167	.037	.681	4.522	.000
DT	.303	.019	.786	7.768	.000
R	.679				
R <sup>2</sup>	.668				
F-Statistic	69.403				

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to use

Source: SPSS output of data analysis on determinants of consumers' intention to adopt online food ordering service (2025).

Table 3 reports the test results of Hypotheses 1 to 4, which were all significant. The results are: PEOU positively affects intention to use OFO system ( $\beta=0.289$ ,  $t = 4.321$ ,  $p<0.001$ ); PU positively affects intention to use OFO system ( $\beta=0.331$ ,  $t = 3.768$ ,  $p<0.001$ ); SI positively affects intention to use OFO system ( $\beta=0.167$ ,  $t = 4.522$ ,  $p<0.001$ ); and DT positively affects intention to use OFO system ( $\beta=0.303$ ,  $t = 7.768$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The resulting R-square value of 0.668 to explain the intention to use OFO shows that the constituent variables of PEOU, PU, SI, and DT explain 67% of variance in intention to use OFO service.

### Discussion of Findings

PEOU was shown to positively influence intention to use OFO service. This supports earlier studies (Ray et al., 2019; Roh & Park, 2019). This implies that consumers will use OFO system if they find it easy to understand, navigate and use. Conversely, a complicated or intuitive interface can be a significant deterrent, even if the service offer great benefits. Thus, PEOU makes initial adoption process seamless, encouraging more people to give the system a chance. Also, when a system is easy to use, users do not have to spend a lot of mental energy figuring how it works, which reduces frustration and stress, leading to a more positive overall experience. For OFO systems, this means users can quickly find restaurants, customize orders, and complete transactions without getting stuck or giving up.

The study also found that PU has positive impact on intention to use OFO system. This means that when users perceive an OFO system as useful, it positively influences their intention to use the system. This finding aligns with TAM and the results of previous studies (Yeo et al., 2017; Roh & Park, 2019). When users perceive that the system simplifies food ordering, they will be more inclined to use it and, consequently, actually use it.

In addition, the study found that SI positively affects intention to use OFO system. This is in agreement with reports of previous studies (Alaimo et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). This means that people are more likely to adopt OFO systems if their social circle (friends, family, and colleagues) uses them or encourages their use. As more people in a social group use OFO system, it can become a social norm or "trendy" behaviour. People may feel a subtle pressure to conform or to be part of the latest convenient way of doing things.

Furthermore, the study found that DT positively influences intention to use OFO system. This supports the reports of Gawande et al. (2019) and Hong et al. (2021). This signifies that faster and more reliable delivery strongly encourages users to adopt and repeatedly use OFO system. The primary reason people use OFO service is convenience. Swift DT directly fulfils this core expectation, and slow delivery significantly diminishes PU and convenience of OFO system, and erodes its value proposition. Consumers in fast-paced urban centers like Aba expect quick service. Thus, short DT provides instant gratification and makes OFO service more appealing.

### Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that consumers' intention to use OFO systems in Abia State is shaped by a complex interplay of technological, psychological and contextual factors, most notably PU, PEOU, SI, and DT. These findings offer critical insights not only for OFO service providers and marketers but also for policymakers who aim to promote equitable and secure digital ecosystems. The study concludes that a multi-faceted approach, focusing on enhancing the utility, simplicity, social acceptance and operational efficiency of OFO platforms is essential for successfully driving consumer intention and subsequent adoption and sustained usage of OFO services.

### Managerial and Policy Implications

Businesses offering OFO service should clearly communicate the benefits or usefulness of their platform to potential users. Developers of OFO systems should prioritize clear communication and demonstration of how OFO systems improve user convenience, save time, offer diverse food options, and simplify transactions. This makes the study variables strategic levers for design, marketing and long-term business success. Marketing efforts should emphasize how OFO systems can simplify consumers' lives, offer convenience or provide access to a wide range of options. OFO platforms can strategically target social networks by incentivizing existing users to invite friends and family members. They can also encourage users to share their ordering experiences or favourite restaurants on social platforms.

Additionally, a balanced regulatory framework that boost digital adoption, ensure consumer trust, protect dispatch workers, and promote sustainable growth should be created by the government. As OFO service grows, there is increased need for regulation and oversight of food preparation, handling and delivery. This demands that bodies like NAFDAC and local health authorities should ensure that only registered and hygiene-conscious food providers operate on OFO platforms. Also, government should develop strong cybersecurity policies to protect user payments and prevent abuse.

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