



Original Research Report

Online Food Service Awareness and Perspective of Tertiary Institution Students: The Case of Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study assessed tertiary students' awareness of the emergence of the online food delivery (OFD) services could be attributed to the changing nature of urban consumers. These consumers use food delivery services for a variety of reasons but, unsurprisingly, the most common reason seems to be the need for quick and convenient meals during or after a busy day. The study used the cross-sectional survey conducted in Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria, using random sampling technique. A total of 245 undergraduate students at the university were assessed with a structured online questionnaire. The data collected data was analyzed using Microsoft excel and GraphPad. Results showed that a majority of the students use online food services for their food service needs, hence the study concluded that the majority of the students at the University are aware of online food service. It was recommended that the quality of service of the online food service system needs improvement by enhancing the efficiency of service as well as accessibility, which will enable more students to opt for the food service and delivery system.

Keywords: Convenient foods, food service, institution catering, online food delivery, school feeding

1. Introduction

The food service industry includes the businesses, institutions, and companies which prepare meals outside the home. It includes restaurants, school and hospital cafeterias, catering operations, and many other formats (Zeballos & Sinclair, 2023). Suppliers to food service operators are food service distributors, who provide small wares (kitchen utensils) and foods. Some companies manufacture products in both consumer and food service versions. The consumer version usually comes in individual-sized packages with elaborate label design for retail sale. The food service version is packaged in a much larger industrial size and often lacks the colorful label designs of the consumer version (Zeballos & Sinclair, 2023). The emergence of the online food delivery (OFD) services could be attributed to the changing nature of urban consumers. These consumers use food delivery services for a variety of reasons but, unsurprisingly, the most common reason seems to be the need for quick and convenient meals during or after a busy workday. The various food delivery services that are readily available take the hassle away from consumers to think about and plan meals, regardless of whether the consumer is preparing the meal themselves, going to the restaurant and dining in or going to the restaurant and buying food to bring back to the office or home. Food delivery services have changed consumer behaviour to some extent, especially urban consumers, such that using the OFD services have become routine.

More people are turning to food delivery in recent years because of the current pace of life as well as the opportunity to discover more restaurants that food delivery offers. For many busy urbanites, OFD services are a convenient option during a busy workday in the city. Many prefer this option of food delivery as this allows them to have fresh and healthy food at their offices or homes while they have the freedom to continue to work (Chai & Yat, 2020). Online food delivery services like Just Eat and Grubhub facilitate online ordering and home delivery of food prepared away from home. It is poorly understood how these services are used and by whom (Keeble et al., 2020). Food prepared away from home is typically served ready to consume and has become a major contributor to overall dietary intake (Burgoine et al., 2017; Popkin et al., 2012). In the USA, for example, food prepared away from home accounted for over 50% of total food expenditure in 2018 (USDA, 2020). Traditionally, this food may have been purchased through 'conventional' modes of order whereby customers would visit food outlets in-person or contact food outlets directly to place orders before collection or delivery. Third party platforms that facilitate online ordering and delivery, referred to as 'online food delivery services' provide an alternative mode of order that appears to have grown in popularity (Maimaiti et al., 2018).

1.1. Statement of Problem

Entrepreneurship is about problem solving, satisfying the needs and wants of people in exchange for money. Online food service is a problem-solving venture, this will enable the entrepreneurs to venture into the business to provide the needs of the people. Online food service is a highly profitable business. Online food service is one of the methods of getting food items delivered to consumers without subjecting them to physical visits to the restaurant. However, it has some setbacks concerning the awareness and perspective of students in the Federal University Oye-Ekiti

(FUOYE). Majority of the students at the Federal University Oye- Ekiti are not aware of online food service as they opt for walk in cafeterias. Out of the lack of awareness of FUOYE students on online food service, usage rate of this method is reduced drastically. The method of online food service is fast spreading and there is need to assess the consumer's perspective about the food service system. Students at FUOYE are finding ways to save time, reduce stress and one such way is online ordering of food.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to assess the awareness and perspectives of students at FUOYE on using online food services. The specific objectives are to:

- (a) Determining the awareness rate of students at FUOYE on online food service
- (b) assess the usage rate of online food service by FUOYE students and reasons
- (c) evaluate the benefits of online food service compared to visiting restaurants
- (d) establish the challenges faced by FUOYE students in using online food service.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- (a) What percentage of students at FUOYE is aware of online food service?
- (b) How often do students make use of online food services and why?
- (c) How beneficial is online food service compared to visiting restaurants?
- (d) What are the challenges FUOYE students face in using online food service?

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study contains important information for food service providers, to improve their business and for the benefit of consumers. The second goal of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) seek to end hunger in all forms by 2030, making sure everyone has access to secure food (United Nations, 2015). To achieve this goal, better and convenient access to food service is required. Hence, this research is contributing to the process of achieving SDG goals and the development of the nation. The research study will be of benefit to researchers as they will get to know the perspective of students on online food service, the importance of online food service to the safety and security of the people. The research study will be of great benefit to students as they will get to know the significance and benefits of online food service and tend to opt for it. This research will benefit the food service personnel as it will expose them to the importance of adopting online food service as a method of satisfying consumer needs. Adopting online food delivery service will not only increase their revenue generation but also expand their business. The investors will be highly benefited as investing in this venture will give them a huge return on investment (ROI) within a short period of time.

2. Materials and Methods

1.1. Design for the Study

This study is designed as a cross-sectional survey using random sampling technique. A structured online questionnaire was designed to access the students of the University. The survey is

compiled using Google form and the link was shared to the students using social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. The survey assesses their socio-demographic features, and their awareness and perspective of online food service at the University.

2.1.1. Ethics Statement

The approval for this research was issued by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria. The students provided informed consent.

2.2. Area of the Study

The study area is Ikole-Ekiti and Oye-Ekiti campuses of Federal University Oye-Ekiti, in Ekiti State, Southwestern Nigeria. The University is located at coordinates 7.7991⁰ N, 5.3430⁰ E, with elevation of about 230 m above sea level (Google, 2021). The Institution is a government owned and operated as a Nigerian University. The university's two campuses are in the ancient city of Oye-Ekiti and Ikole-Ekiti. The university was founded in 2011 by the Federal Government of Nigeria, led by former President Goodluck Jonathan (Jointlearn, 2020).

2.3. Population and Sample

The target population is made up of the undergraduate students of the FUYOE of 16 years and above, living within and outside the campus. Inclusion criteria are: males, females, students, age of 16 and above, and currently attend the Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State. Exclusion criteria include non-students, post graduate students, University staff, less than 16 years of age, graduated or no longer attending the Institution.

A total of 255 volunteers selected through simple random sampling technique from the 25000 students' population participated in the study. The Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample of the study as stated below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \quad N = \text{population size} \quad e = \text{margin of error} \quad n = \text{sample size}$$

$$N = 25000 \quad e = 0.063$$

$$n = \frac{25,000}{1 + (25,000 * 0.063^2)} \quad n = \frac{25,000}{1 + 99.225} \quad n = \frac{25,000}{100.225} \quad n = 249.43 \quad n \approx 255$$

2.4. Instrument for Data Collection and Study Procedure

A total of two hundred and fifty-five (255) volunteers (males and females) selected by random sampling technique participated in the study. They are all undergraduate students of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The participants are selected using random sampling method. The random selection cuts across the majority of the departments and all faculties of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti in both Ikole-Ekiti and Oye-Ekiti. The survey questionnaire is sectioned into two, the first section asks about their sociodemographic features which asks about the participants, their age, sex, department, faculty, etc. The second section enquires about the students' awareness of online food service, the kind of food service they use and how often they use them as well as their perception on online food service, advantages, disadvantages and how it has impacted their studies and lifestyle on and off campus.

2.5. Data Collection Technique

The data was collected with the use of online survey questionnaires. The questions were prepared online using google form and were shared through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, etc. The stakeholders of the student body, the departments and faculties were contacted to make sure the survey link reached the majority of the departments in FUYOYE. The data collection was a daily collection of data with reminder, sharing the link to the survey on students' platforms and groups online. The entire process was explained to them in order to get accurate information from them and the survey was made short and simple so as to avoid refusal from some students and to avoid untruthful answers. The questionnaire addressed how the awareness and perspective of the FUYOYE students can be assessed. The questionnaire was designed in a structured form and made of 36 questions.

2.6. Data Analysis Technique

Collected data was extracted from the Google form and entered into Microsoft Excel and then imported into GraphPad for analysis. The data was processed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Due to the nature and number of the variables involved in this study, quantitative data analysis was used to process the data. For the quantitative analysis, GraphPad was used to process the data. This means that the analysis was done on the content of the data which were collected.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Socio-demographic Characteristics

The study group was made up of two hundred and fifty-five (255) volunteers [135 females (52.9%) and 120 males (47.1%)]. Figure. 1a shows the age ranges of participants. 56.5 % of the participants are Muslims, 43.1% are Christians and 0.4% are traditionalists. The data also showed that 92.5 % of the participants live off campus while 7.5% of them stay on campus (Figure. 1b). There participants spread across all the departments and faculties of the University.

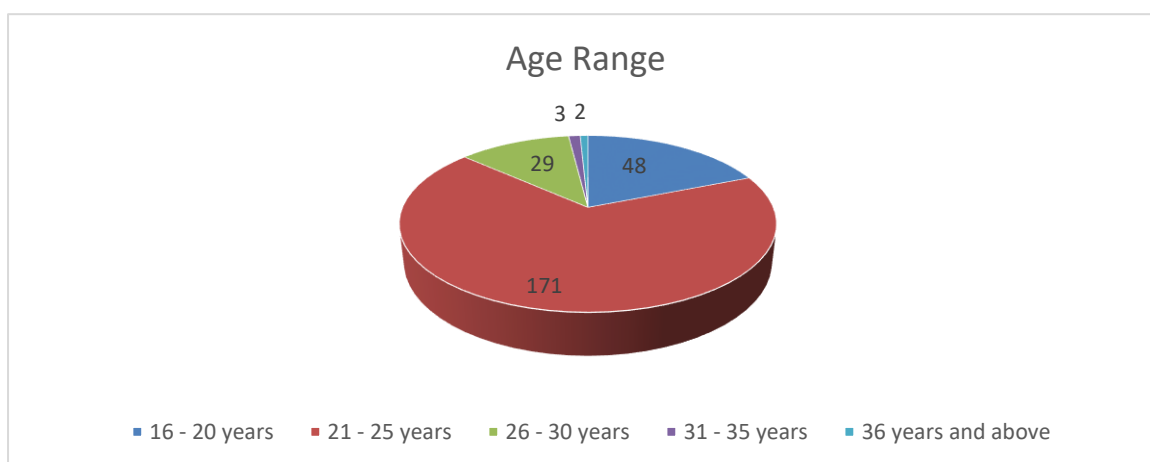


Figure. 1a: Age ranges of the participants. 19 % have their ages between 16 – 20 years, 67.6 % between 21 – 25 years, 11.5 % between 26 – 30 years, 1.2 % between 31 – 35 years, and 0.8 % above 36 years of age.

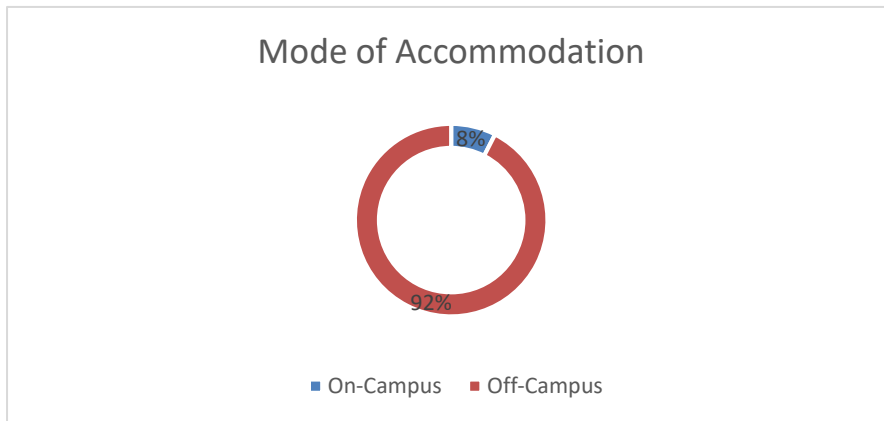


Figure. 1b: Mode of accommodation of the participants. 92.5 % of the participants live off campus and 7.5% of them stay on campus. This shows that the majority of the students at the Federal University live off campus.

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	120	47.1
	Female	135	52.9
	Total	255	100
Age Range	16 – 20 years	48	19
	21 – 25 years	171	67.6
	26 – 30 years	29	11.5
	31 – 35 years	3	1.2
	above 36 years of age	2	0.8
	Total	255	100
Religion	Muslim	144	56.5
	Christian	110	43.1
	Traditional	1	0.4
	Total	255	100
Accommodation	On Campus	22	8
	Off Campus	233	92
	Total	255	100

Table 1: Socio-demographic features of the participants

Table 1 shows the presentation and analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The result from this study shows that the male respondents are 120 (47.1%) and female 135 (52.9), this shows that a large number of the respondents are females. With respect to age range, 48 of the respondents age is between sixteen to twenty years contributing to 19% of the total participants, 171 of the respondents age fall in between twenty-one to twenty-five years contributing to 67.6% of the total participants, 29 of the respondents age is in between twenty-six to thirty years which contributes to 11.5% of the total respondents, 3 of the participants are between age thirty-one

to thirty-five years contributing to 1.2% of the entire participants, 2 participants are above the age of thirty-six (0.8%), this reveals that majority of the respondents age fall in between twenty-one to twenty-five years. Assessing the religion of the respondents, 144 of the participants are Muslims (56.5%), 110 of the participants are Christians (43.1%) and 1 of the respondents is a traditionalist contributing 0.4% of the total participants, this shows that a large number of the participants are Muslims. 22 of the respondents live on campus contributing to 8% of the total respondents while 233 of the respondents live off campus which contributes 92% to the total participants, this explains that most of the respondents live off campus that is they live outside the campus premises.

3.2. Awareness of the Participants on Online Food Service

In accessing the participants' awareness of online food service, a series of questions were asked in order to demonstrate how well they know about this method of food service and how they sort out their daily meals. About 48.6% of the participants cook all their foods themselves, 0.8 % solely depend on ready-made foods, while 50.6 % combine both methods. Figure. 2a below shows how often the participants buy food from restaurants. When asked about the period of the day they get food most from the restaurant, about 35.8 % gets it mostly during lectures or while on campus, 23.8% while off campus, and 40.4% anytime. Moving on, 56.7% of the participants are aware of online food services in the study area and its environment, and Figure. 2b shows the number of restaurants the participants recognize around them. Among all the restaurants, only a few numbers of them offer online food service. Figure. 2c shows the number restaurants the participants think offer online food service in combination with their regular physical restaurant, while Figure. 2d shows the number of vendors the participants think they solely offer online food service without a physical restaurant. Regarding their format or medium of ordering food, the most popular is social media (72.6%), followed by phone call (55.2%), while about 9.1% selected mobile app and 5.2% chose online website. Furthermore, they use several means of delivery, which includes self-delivery, delivery by staff, dispatch riders, bolt, etc. Figure 2e shows the time estimate from ordering to delivery according to the participants.

Table 2: Frequency of buying food from Restaurants

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Never	18	7.1
Rarely	108	42.7
Sometime	95	37.5
Often	31	12.3
Always	1	0.4
Total	253	100

Assessing the frequency of food purchase from the restaurants by the respondents, 18 (7.1%) of the respondents never purchased food from the restaurant, 108 Of the participants confirmed they rarely buy food from the restaurant contributing to 42.7% the total respondents, 95 respondents sometimes buy food from the restaurant which contributes to 37.5% of the total participants, 31

(12.3%) of the respondents often buy food from the restaurant and 1 of the respondents always buy food from the restaurant which contributes 0.4% of the total participants. This reveals that majority of the students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti purchase food from the restaurants.

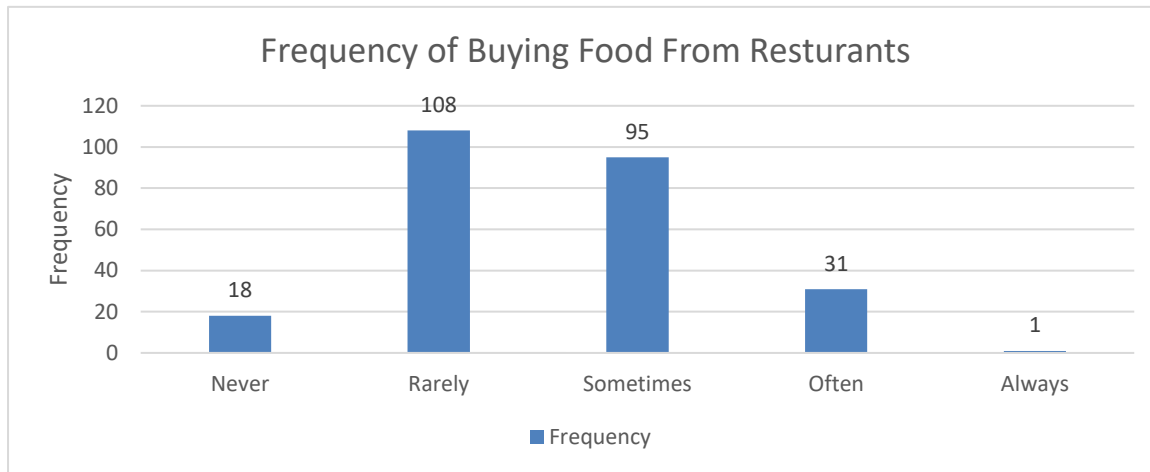


Figure 2a: How often the participants buy food from restaurants.

The presentation of how frequently the participants purchase food from restaurants is shown in Figure 2a. 18 of the participants never purchase food from the restaurants, 108 of the participants rarely purchase food from the restaurant, 95 of them sometimes purchase food from the restaurants, 31 participants often buy their meals from the restaurant and 1 participant always purchase food from the restaurant. This shows that the majority of the students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti purchase food from the restaurants.

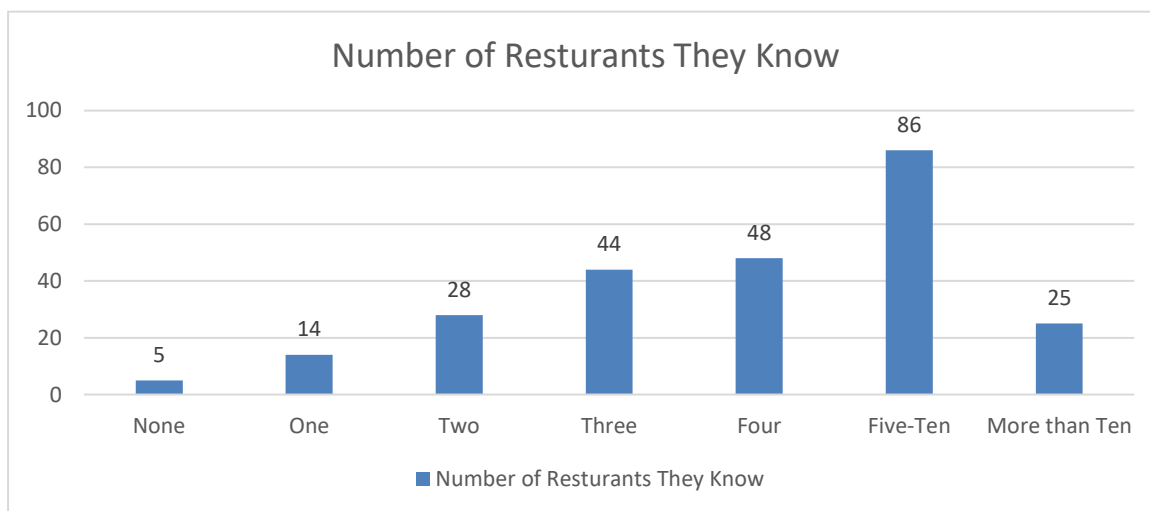


Figure 2b: Responses about the number of restaurants they are aware of in their environment.

The number of restaurants the participants are aware of is shown in Figure. 2b. 5 of the participants are not aware of any restaurant within the campuses, 14 of the participants are aware of one restaurant, 28 are aware of two restaurants, 44 respondents are aware of three restaurants, 48 are aware of 4, 86 are aware of five to ten and 25 respondents are aware more than ten restaurants. This explains that the majority of the students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti are aware of restaurants in their environment.

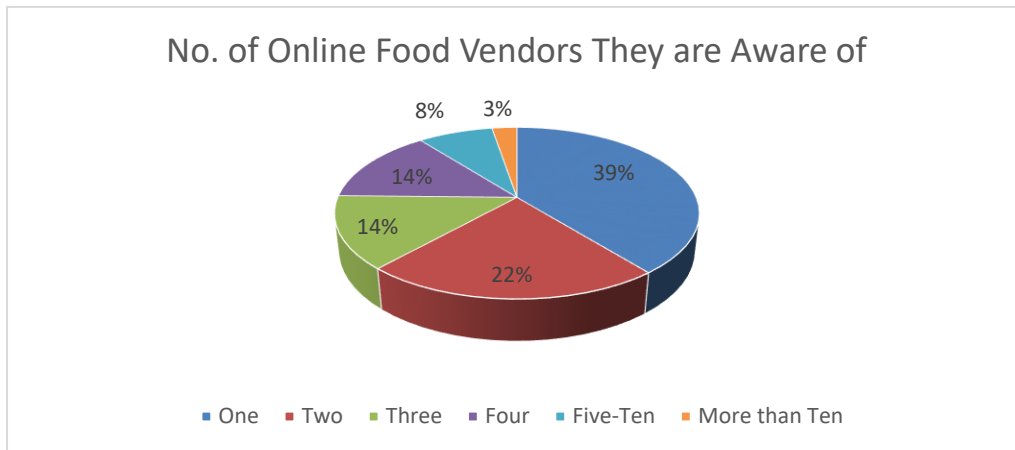


Figure 2c: the number of restaurants the participants think offer online food service in combination with their regular physical restaurant.

A large percentage of the participants 39% think at least one restaurant that offers online food service in combination with their regular physical restaurant, 22% are aware of two, 14% are aware of three, 14% are aware of four, 8% are aware of five to ten and 3% are aware of more than ten restaurants. This shows that many of the students at the Federal university Oye-Ekiti are aware of restaurants that offer online food service and also run a restaurant for walk-in customers.

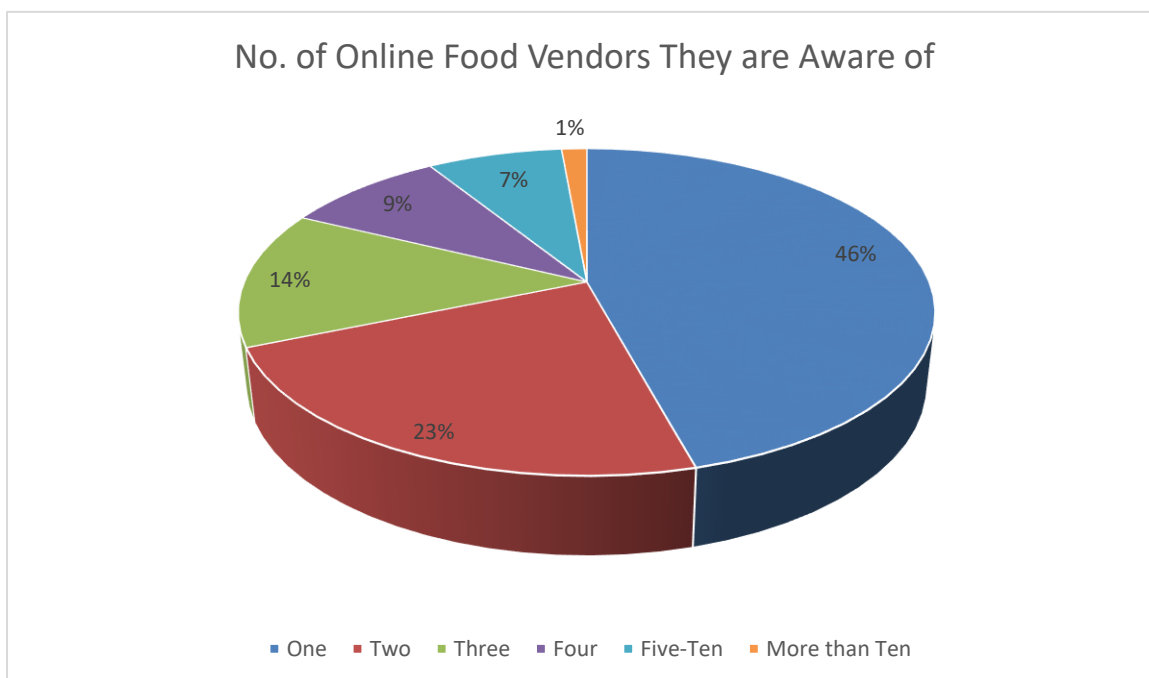


Figure 2d: The number of vendors the participants think they solely offer online food service without a physical restaurant.

In Figure 2d, 23% respondents think that two vendors solely offer online food service without a walk-in restaurant, 45% think of one vendor, 13% thinks of three vendors, 9% think of four vendors, 7% think of five to ten vendors, and 3% think of more than ten vendors that offer only online food delivery service. This reveals that the majority of the students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti are aware of online food service.

Table 3: Time estimate from ordering to delivery according to the participants.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 15 mins	30	13.5
15 to 30 mins	106	47.8
30 mins to 1 hour	65	29.2
1 to 2 hours	11	5
2 to 5 hours	10	4.5
Total	222	100

Assessing the time and time range the respondents think it takes online food vendors to get their meals delivered to them, 30 respondents (13.5%) think their foods get delivered in less than fifteen minutes after ordering of food, 106 (47.8%) responded that the time is between fifteen to thirty minutes, 65 (29.2%) of them responded that the time is between thirty minutes and one hour, 11 (5%) of the participants responded that the time estimate is between one to two hours and 10 (4.5%) said the time estimate is between two to five hours. This reveals that the majority of students at the FUYOE are not only aware of online food service but also use it.

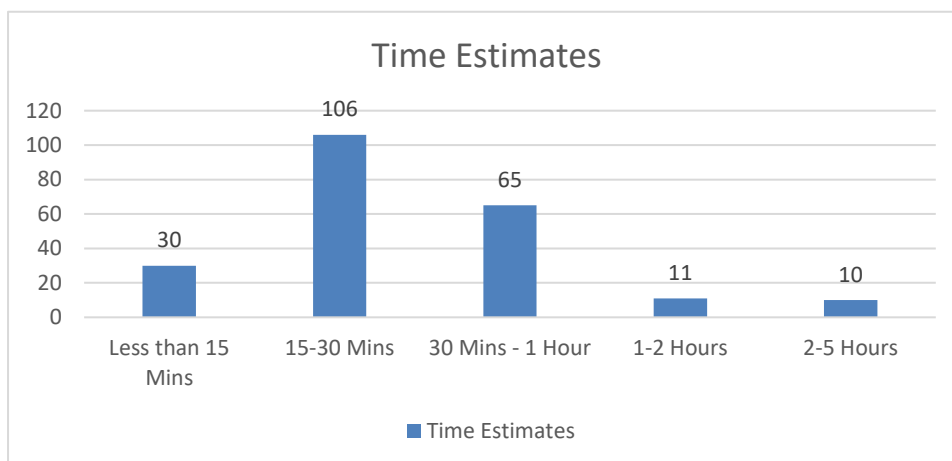


Figure 2e: the time estimate from ordering to delivery according to the participants.

Figure. 2e shows the time and time range the respondents think it takes online food vendors to get their meals delivered to them. 30 respondents think their foods get delivered in less than fifteen minutes after ordering of food, 106 responded that the time is between fifteen to thirty minutes, 65 of them responded that the time is between thirty minutes and one hour, 11 of the participants responded that the time estimate is between one to two hours and 10 said the time estimate is between two to five hours. This reveals that many students at the FUYOE are not only aware of online food service but also use it.

3.3. Perspectives of the Participants on Online Food Service

This section assessed the perspective of the participants on online food service, what they consider it as, the benefits and challenges they faced using the service. Approximately 47.2% of participants make use of online food service and about 41.2% have never used online food service. Figure 3a shows the period of the semester the participants use online food service. 70.1% of the participants

use it anytime, depending on their present situation, about 10.2% use it most at the beginning of the semester, and 8.1% use it during tests or exams. Regarding the situation that makes student use online food service, most of the participants use it when they are very busy, such as assignment test or exam (25.3 %), followed by those that use it when they are tired of eating self-cooked food (17.5%), then students that use it when they have enough money to enjoy (14%), sickness, and exhausted foodstuff are also factors with few percentage of selection. Figure. 3b shows the affordability of online food service compared to restaurants. A higher percentage (52.6 %) find taking transport to a restaurant more expensive than paying for delivery (47.6%). Also, 66.2% of the participants find online food delivery more convenient than going to the restaurant. When asked if online food delivery is better than visiting the restaurant, 28% responded yes, 30.2% no, while majority (41.8 %) feel indifferent (Maybe). Figure. 3c shows a representation of reason why people would go for online food service while Figure. 3d shows why they would not. Figure 3d shows the challenges facing online food services in the study area and Figure. 3e shows the general rating of the participants regarding their experience using online food services.

Table 4: Period of the semester the participants use online food service.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
At the beginning of the semester	20	10.2
Middle of the semester	13	6.6
During lecture-free weeks	2	1
During tests/exams	16	8.1
When I receive allowance from home	8	4.1
Anytime, depending on situation	138	70
Total	197	100

Analyzing the period of the semester, the participants use online food service. 20 of the respondents (10.2%) use online food service most at the beginning of the semester when they still have spare cash, 13 of the respondents (6.6%) use online food service in the middle of the semester, 2 of the respondents (1%) use online food service during lecture free weeks, 16 of the participants (8.1%) use online food service during exams to save time and reduce cooking stress, 8 of the respondents (4.1%) of the respondents use online food service when they receive allowance from home to enjoy themselves and 138 contributing to 70% of the respondents use online food service anytime depending on the situation they find themselves.

a

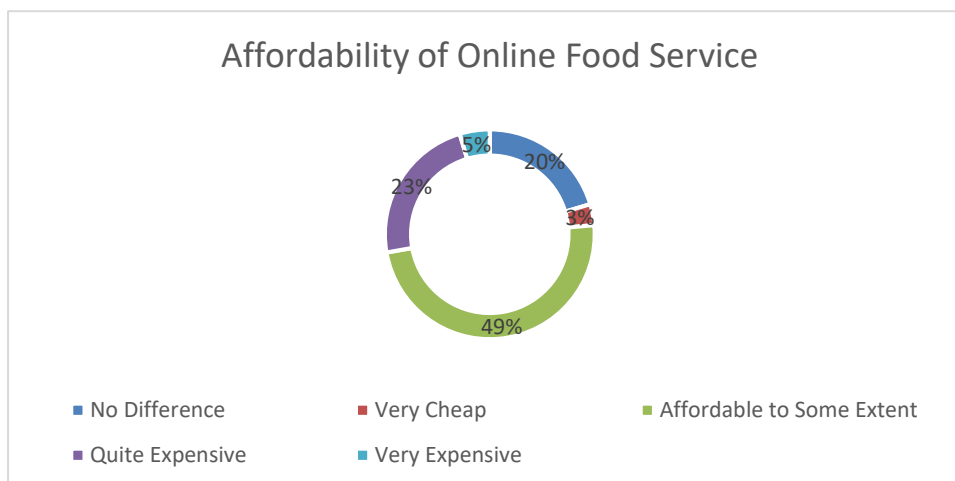
Figure 3a: the period of the semester the participants use online food service.

Figure 3a shows the period of the semester where the participants use online food service. 70.1% of the participants use it anytime, depending on their present situation, about 10.2% use it most at the beginning of the semester when they still have spare cash, and 8.1% use it during test or exam which may be due to time saving and to reduce the stress associated with shopping for groceries and cooking.

Table 5: Affordability of online food service compared to restaurants.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Difference	44	20
Very Cheap	7	3
Affordable to an Extent	105	49
Quite Expensive	50	23
Very Expensive	10	5
Total	216	100

Assessment of the respondents' perspective about the affordability of online food service. As shown in Table 5, 44 of the respondents (20%) responded that there is no difference in cost compared to physical visits to restaurants, 7 participants (3%) find it very cheap, a higher number of the respondents 105 contributing 49% of the total respondents find online food service affordable to some extent, 50 respondents (23%) find it quite expensive, and 10 participants (5%) find it very expensive. This shows the general acceptability and use of online food service as it saves cost for the consumers.

**Figure 3b:** the affordability of online food service compared to restaurants.

According to Figure 3b, majority of the respondents 49% find online food service affordable to some extent, 3% find it very cheap 20% responded that there is no difference compared to physical visits to restaurants, 5% find it very expensive and 23% find it quite expensive. This shows the general acceptability and use of online food service as it saves cost for the consumers.

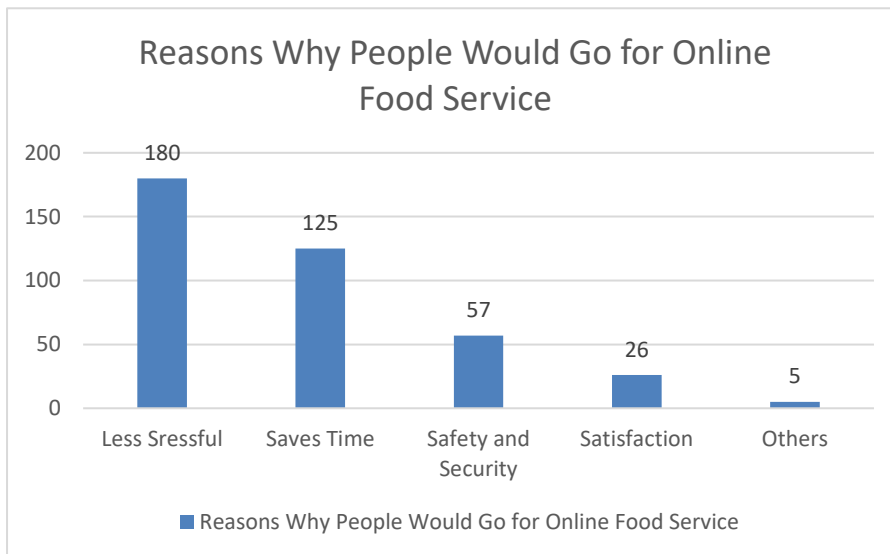


Figure 3c: a representation of reason why people would go for online food service

According to the reasons while people prefer to opt for online food service, 180 of the respondents find it less stressful, it reduces the stress of cooking, 125 responded that it saves time as it saves the time for shopping for groceries and cooking, 57 prefer it for safety and security especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, online food service is an important option to keep people safe and 26 of the respondents prefer it for satisfaction. This shows how beneficial online food service is as well as its importance.

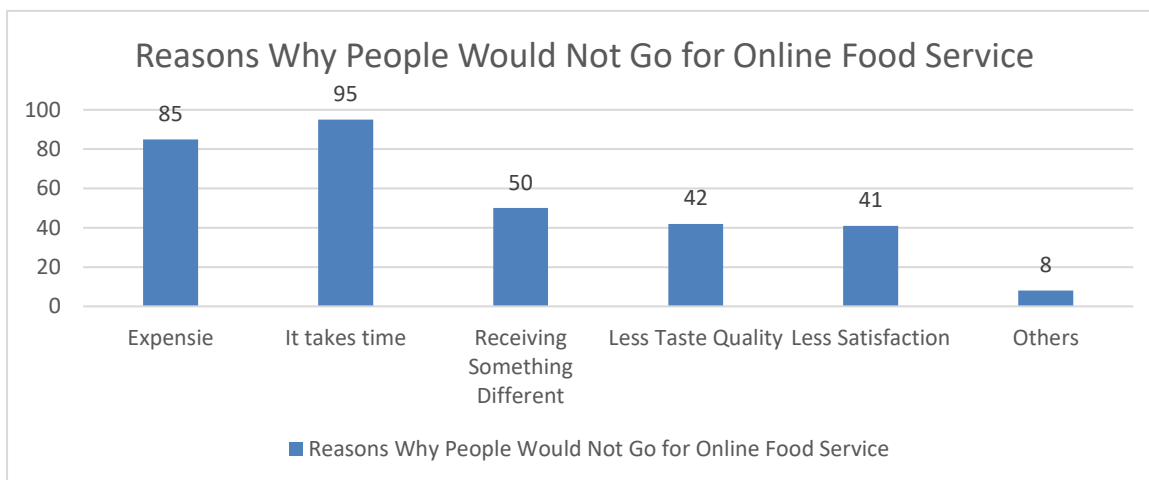


Figure 3d: a representation of reason why people would not go for online food service.

Figure 3d shows that 85 of the respondents thinks online food service is expensive, 96 perceives it takes time, 50 of the respondents have seen or experienced receiving something different from what was ordered, 42 perceives less taste quality, 41 have less satisfaction. This reveals the challenges of online food service.

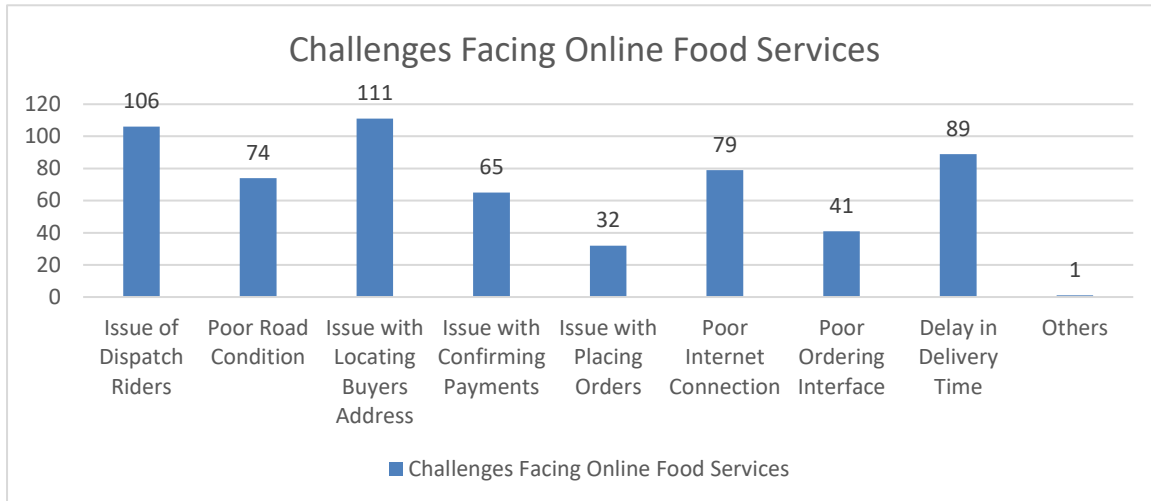


Figure 3e: challenges facing online food services in the study area

Assessing the challenges facing online food services in the study area, 106 of the participants responded that they face the issue of dispatch riders for delivery because some dispatch riders are sometimes rude and disrespectful while addressing customers also run away with food, 74 of them responded with poor road network, 111 responded with issue with locating buyer’s address, 65 of them responded with issue of confirming receipts, 32 have issues with placing orders due to the inability to give the full description of the food to be ordered due to limited and inaccessibility of online ordering platforms, 79 of them are faced with the issue of internet connection, 41 responded with poor ordering interface and 89 are faced with delay in delivery time caused by the inefficiency of the online food delivery system.

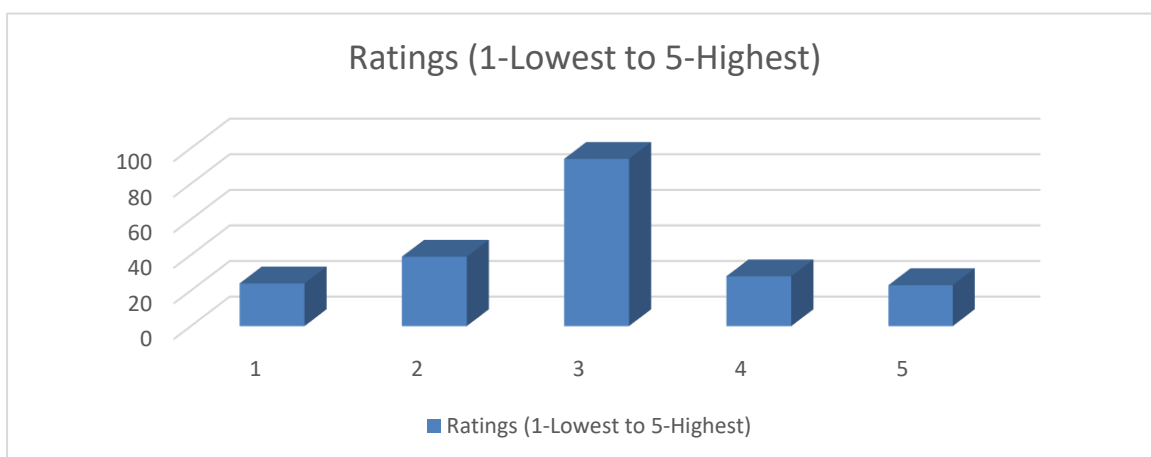


Figure 3f: the general rating of the participants regarding their experience using online food services.

Rating of online food service by the participants explains their experience with its use and how satisfied they are with the quality of service rendered by online food service. 20 respondents rated online food service poor (1) which shows a high level of dissatisfaction which may be due to low quality of service, getting something different entirely from what was ordered, 35 respondents rated

it 2 which means fair, 90 of the respondents rated it good (3) which implies they had a good experience using online food service, however there is room for improvement of the service, 25 respondents rated it very good (4) which explains a high level of satisfaction and 19 of the respondents rated it 5 which means excellent, this shows that the quality of service they experienced was perfect. A large number of the respondents rated it good, therefore, online food service personnel should improve their quality of service.

3.4. Discussion

From the results, it showed that that the majority of the participants of the survey were aware of on online food service which is in agreement with Martínez-Ruiz and Gómez-Cantó's study that emphasizes that using the Internet to seek food service information has now become a common practice among people today (Martínez-Ruiz & Gómez-Cantó, 2016). Assessing the number of restaurants the participants think offer online food service in combination with their regular physical restaurants, 22% of the participants think 2 of the restaurants offer online food service and also run a physical restaurant, 39% are aware of one, 8% are ware of five to ten, 14% are aware of four, another 14% of the participants are aware of three and 3% of the participants are aware of more than 3 restaurants that offer online food service in combination with a physical restaurant which is in agreement with Kimes,2011 that said restaurants have adopted online food ordering because it has met or exceeded expectations in several ways for restaurant operations (Kimes & Sheryl, 2011). The participants were asked about the number of food vendors they think that solely offer only online food service without a walk-in restaurant, 45% thinks one food vendor offers only online food service, 23% are aware of two, 3% are aware of more than ten, 7% are aware of five to ten, 9% are aware of four and 13% are aware of three. This might be as a result of the fact that majority of the students are used to the internet and can easily come across online advertisements of online food service vendors

Assessing the time estimate of ordering to delivery of food according to the participants, 30 of the participants responded that the estimate time from ordering to delivery of food is fifteen minutes, 106 responded that the time is between fifteen to thirty minutes, 65 of them responded that the time is between thirty minutes and one hour, 11 of the participants responded that the time estimate is between one to two hours and 10 said the time estimate is between two to five hours. This reveals that the participants are not only aware of online food service but also use it. Online food service is highly beneficial compared to physical visits to restaurants. The participants were assessed about the affordability of online food service compared to physical visits to restaurants. A higher percentage, 49% find online food service affordable to some extent, 3% find it very cheap 20% responded that there is no difference compared to physical visits to restaurants, 5% find it very expensive and 23% find it quite expensive. This shows the general acceptability and use of online food service as it saves cost for the consumers which agrees with Statista, 2019 which stated that online food ordering has grown in popularity among customers and restaurants because of its benefits (Statista, 2019). According to the reasons while people prefer to opt for online food service, 180 of the respondents find it less stressful, it reduces the stress of cooking, 125 responded that it saves time as it saves the

time for shopping for groceries and cooking, 57 prefer it for safety and security especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, online food service is an important option to keep people safe and 26 of the respondents prefer it for satisfaction, this is in agreement with Gu et al, 2021 and Hwang et al, 2020 that said as COVID-19 has changed, customers prefer a contactless and online-to-delivery system to face-to-face and dine-in service. This shows how beneficial online food service is as well as its importance.

While accessing the perspective of the participants on online food service a higher percentage 47.2% make use of online food service, and 41.2% of the respondents has never used it, 70.1% of the participants use it anytime, depending on their present situation, about 10.2% use it most at the beginning of the semester because they will have enough allowance at hand and 8.1% use it during test or exam which may be due to insufficient time to cook, exam pressure associated with their emotions which could affect their appetite to eat foods made by themselves so they tend to opt for food purchase to be delivered to their doorstep, this also reduce stress. Regarding the situation that makes student use online food service, Most of the participants use it when they are very busy, such as assignment test or exam (25.3 %), followed by those that use it when they are tired of eating self-cooked food (17.5%), then students that use it when they have enough money to enjoy (14%), sickness, and exhausted foodstuff are also factors with few percentage of selection. Showing the affordability of online food service compared to restaurants. A higher percentage (52.6 %) find taking transport to a restaurant more expensive than paying for delivery (47.6%). Also, 66.2% of the participants find online food delivery more convenient than going to the restaurant. When asked if online food delivery is better than visiting the restaurant, 28% responded yes, 30.2% no, while majority (41.8 %) feel indifferent (Maybe). According to the challenges facing online food services in the study area , 106 of the participants responded that they face the issue of dispatch riders for delivery because some dispatch riders are sometimes rude and disrespectful while addressing customers, 74 of them responded with poor road network, 111 responded with issue with locating buyer's address, 65 of them responded with issue of confirming receipts, 32 have issues with placing orders due to the inability to give the full description of the food to be ordered due to limited and inaccessibility of online ordering platforms, 79 of them are faced with the issue of internet connection, 41 responded with poor ordering interface and 89 are faced with delay in delivery time caused by the inefficiency of the online food delivery system. This agrees with Li and Bautista, 2019; Sanchez-Sabate and Sabaté, 2019 and Zielińska et al., 2020 whose study emphasizes consumer preferences and attitudes toward buying food online differs in that the perceived risks and information quality influences their buying behavior negatively (Li & Bautista, 2019; Sanchez-Sabate & Sabaté, 2019; Zielińska et al., 2020).

This study was influenced by the following conditions. Getting sample volunteers across all departments of the University: coverage of majority of the departments and all the faculties at Oye and Ikole campuses was difficult. The researchers had to travel to Oye-Ekiti to contact some participants. The participants (students) were not able to fill the questionnaire truthfully. Contacting the stakeholders of all faculties was a great challenge to the researchers as they had to contact all the

faculty executives to get the contacts of the students, majority of the executives did not trust the researcher with the students' contacts. Most of the participants (students) ignored the questionnaire and did not attempt to fill it. The questionnaire was made into google form and the google form link was shared to the students, most of them did not trust the source of the link as they thought the link was going to cause them harm by hacking into their mobile phones and having access to their confidential data/information. There are variations in the total responses in the components of the statements in the questionnaire because the students might not have the answers to some questions, or they did not feel comfortable answering some questions, or they just chose to ignore them and answer the rest of the questions. It is suggested that the next researcher should emphasize on online food ordering software apps, online food service platforms the advantages of regular advertisement by online food service vendors as well as the significance of customers' satisfaction with respect to online food service business.

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that most of the students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti are aware and make use of online food service and online food service system need to be improved by increasing its awareness and efficiency of service as well as accessibility, this will enable more students to opt for this food service system. It is recommended that there should be the development of more online food service platforms as well as ordering apps: this makes ordering food more convenient and less time consuming. Also, it enhances the proper description of food ordered to prevent getting different food from what was ordered. Improvement of the delivery system of online food service: this is to enhance swift deliveries, prevent the delivery of cold foods and improve customer service. Delivery staff should be well trained in ethics and have the right attitude to work. Online food delivery service vendors should improve their quality of service: this will increase customers' satisfaction, improve revenue generation and increase the return of investment. Online food service vendors should cut production costs through bulk purchases to improve the affordability of online food service to consumers, this in turn will enhance sales and increase profit. The government should construct good roads to increase accessibility: good road networks that opens different locations enhance swift food deliveries and make it easy for dispatchers to locate buyer's locations. Online food service personnel should use only registered dispatchers for food delivery and track their movement during food delivery, this is to prevent food theft.

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Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest declared

Author Contributions

Fatimah Oyesomi carried out the research and wrote the original draft of the manuscript. Ifeanyi Osuoha supervised and edited the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

Raw data is available upon request

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