


Chapter 4

Investigating Online Food Ordering Intentions in Times of Crisis: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors influencing consumers' intentions to use online food ordering applications during a crisis, using the case of Ukraine amid wartime disruption. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the research incorporates additional constructs—trust and situational influences—to better capture behavioral dynamics in unstable environments. Data were collected from 214 respondents through a structured online questionnaire. The results reveal that attitude, perceived behavioral control, and situational influences significantly and

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positively affect users' intentions, while trust and social influence also play meaningful roles. The findings emphasize the importance of digital accessibility, trust in service reliability, and the contextual impact of crisis conditions on consumer behavior. This study extends TPB's explanatory power and offers practical insights for digital food service providers aiming to enhance resilience and adapt to user needs in times of disruption.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, individuals who were either unwilling or unable to prepare meals at home had limited alternatives, with dining out at a restaurant often representing the primary option for accessing a quality meal (Nghiem-Phú et al., 2021). However, the advent of mobile technologies has revolutionized this paradigm (Poon & Tung, 2024; Suhartanto et al., 2020). In recent years, mobile services have emerged as a vital channel through which businesses engage with their customers (Bonfanti et al., 2023; Varese et al., 2024). Companies increasingly integrate mobile technology into strategic planning, leveraging it not only to enhance customer interaction but also to achieve business objectives, streamline operations, and remain competitive in an increasingly digital marketplace (Al Maalouf et al., 2025; Bovsh et al., 2024a; Ganapathi & Abu-Shanab, 2020; Gelibolu & Mouloudj, 2025).

Online food ordering services—delivered via websites or mobile applications—have become a core part of this digital transformation (Bouarar et al., 2023; Poon & Tung, 2024; Wahid et al., 2024). These platforms allow customers to browse menus, customize orders, make electronic payments, and opt for delivery or pickup (Belanche et al., 2020; Gunden et al., 2020). For consumers, they offer unparalleled convenience, enabling food orders from virtually anywhere at any time (Arli et al., 2024; Chadha et al., 2024). For restaurants, these services expand market reach, enhance operational efficiency, and offer a digital storefront to attract new customers (Bovsh et al., 2024b).

The global increase in mobile application downloads underscores this shift in consumption behavior (Chadha et al., 2024; Mirmehdi, 2023). Monticone et al. (2024) highlight a steady rise in downloads of food and beverage apps, reflecting growing consumer reliance on digital tools for everyday tasks such as meal ordering, discovering new dining options, and accessing culinary services. This trend illustrates the deepening integration of mobile technology into modern consumer lifestyles (Al Maalouf et al., 2025; Arli et al., 2024; Mirmehdi, 2023).

The rise of large-scale food delivery platforms also signals the sector's evolution into a well-established component of the service economy (Belanche et al., 2020). With substantial revenues and robust user engagement, the industry holds consid-

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