Factors Influencing College Students’ Choice of Takeout Vendors

Study in Chengdu, China

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Abstract
In today’s increasingly fierce competition in the catering industry, the takeout industry also develops rapidly. More and more catering enterprises have begun to pay attention to catering delivery. The delivery data show that some vendors sell more takeout food than they do in brick-and-mortar stores. Takeout greatly meets college students’ needs, who have become the mainstream group in the takeout industry in China. At present, there are various forms in the takeout market, so it is particularly important to study the factors affecting college students’ choice of takeout vendors. Based on the Theory of Consumer Behavior and Technology Acceptance Model and previous research review, four factors are identified: User Review, Price, Delivery Time, and Business Service that influence college students’ consumption behavior. The target population is Chinese college students in Chengdu city, China. 384 survey questionnaires were collected via online using convenience and snowball sampling. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were utilized to describe demographic characteristics and do hypotheses testing. The results showed that user reviews, delivery time, and business service selection had significant effects. According to the research model and conclusion, suggestions are put forward to develop takeout vendors in the college students’ market.

Keywords: Takeout, User reviews, Price, Delivery time, Business Service

1. Introduction
The continued impact of the COVID-19 has led to a significant increase in registered members across the takeout market as many restaurants are unable to provide indoor dining services and are, therefore, only offering takeout services (Baidu, 2020).

According to statistics, the scale of China’s takeout market has reached 204.8 billion, and the number of urban residents is constantly increasing, which provides a broad customer base for the downstream demand of China’s takeout. However, the current takeout market pattern has been stable, so how to extend takeout to life services has become the new direction of China’s takeout development (Zhang, 2016).

The takeout ordering system was first developed in the southeastern coastal areas of China, especially in economically developed areas such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. Due to the accelerated pace of life and work, people gradually began to take out orders to save time. In the above regions, many local catering enterprises have gradually launched their takeout ordering system, mainly based on fast food. In Shandong province, the takeout ordering system is still in its infancy stage, and the takeout ordering system in Qingdao city will also face a broader market (Ni, 2015).

In 2019, the scale of China’s food and beverage delivery industry reached 653.6 billion yuan, up 39.3% from 2018. Meanwhile, the penetration rate of the food delivery industry also continued to increase. The penetration rate of the takeout industry reached 14.0% in 2019, up to three percentage points from 11.0% in 2018. By the end of 2019, there were about 460 million takeout food consumers in China, up 12.7% from 2018, accounting for about 50.7% of the country’s urban permanent residents (Baidu, 2020).