



## **Determinants of Online Food Delivery Behavior and Restaurant Preferences: Evidence Among Thai University Students**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the restaurant preferences and online food delivery systems behaviors of RSU students, focusing on the factors affecting the dining decisions of students within an increasingly digitalized food environment. As platforms like GrabFood, ShopeeFood, and Line Man become part of everyday student life, the motivation for their adoption needs to be understood to be able to improve the quality of service and increase consumer satisfaction. The research applies a quantitative cross-sectional design. A structured online questionnaire was distributed to RSU students in the 2025 academic year over a period of two weeks. The survey covers demographic data, frequency of online food ordering, preferred cuisines, the usage of platforms, and the key drivers shaping their choices, including convenience, price sensitivity, delivery speed, diversity of menu items, and promotional offers. For the most relevant patterns and relationships, statistical analyses were carried out: descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, and regression analysis (when appropriate).

**Keywords:** *Online Food Delivery, Consumer Behavior, Restaurant Preference, Rangsit University, Price Sensitivity*

### **1. Introduction**

Over the past few years, the food service industry has been undergoing a rapid change, mainly through the revolution of technology and evolving customer behaviors. The development of online food delivery services has been one of the most remarkable changes as they recognized the new meaning of the way individuals access and consume food. These platforms are convenient, have a great variety of opportunities, and provide quick services that allow a user to view menus, order, and get delivered to their place with minimal effort. This trend has gained popularity among university students, especially because they have hectic schedules, and they are also required to fulfill their academic tasks and other social obligations, which may not give them time to go to a dining hall. (Yang, 2025).

Rangsit University (RSU), a higher educational institution located in Pathum Thani, Thailand, has a large range of students with access to a wide variety of food and restaurants. The restaurants around the campus offer local Thai food, as well as international fare such as Burmese, Korean, Japanese, and Chinese food. Among RSU students, the variation of restaurants and the availability of online food delivery have highly impacted their eating habits. In addition to convenience, the services have been integrated into the social and cultural lives of students who discuss them with friends and colleagues, provide reviews, suggestions, and even promotional offers.

Online food delivery systems like GrabFood, ShopeeFood, and Line Man have become common among the students at RSU. Such applications are appealing because they are easy to use, they offer a variety of food, they deliver fast, and they are priced competitively. Special offers, loyalty programs, and marketing campaigns make them even more attractive, and sometimes, online ordering is more comfortable than going out to the restaurant. Though the popularity of these services is obvious, the research on the particular preferences, motivations, and decision-making of university students in terms of restaurants and delivery services is still lacking.

There are a number of reasons why it is important to explore these preferences. The restaurants will be able to modify their menu, pricing, and marketing plans to suit the needs of the student population, whereas



the food delivery platforms will be able to improve usability and streamline service processes. Moreover, the knowledge of food preferences of students can also be useful in generalizing about consumer behavior, technology adoption, and lifestyle trends of young adult consumers in Thailand.

The study investigates online food delivery services and preferred restaurants among Rangsit University students. It aims to find out which aspects influence their decisions, such as prices, ease of delivery, menu variety, speed of delivery, and promotional offers. The aim of the study is to provide a close perspective on contemporary student food consumption habits and how they interrelate with online food delivery services by examining the food consumption habits of RSU students. It is hoped that the findings will provide useful advice to the restaurants, delivery service providers, and policymakers to improve the quality of their services, fulfill customer expectations, and adapt to the changing trends in student preferences regarding dining.

## 2. Objectives

The key purpose of the research is to investigate the aspects that affect the usage of online food delivery services among university students, especially their preferences, behaviors, and decision-making processes. The targeted goals of this research are as follows:

- 1) To investigate how the use of online food delivery services affect the eating behavior of university students in terms of frequency of use, choice of restaurants, and expenditure.
- 2) To determine the connection between demographic factors of students and their decisions on online food delivery services and restaurants.
- 3) To determine the major factors that determine the adoption and satisfaction levels of online food delivery services among students such as technological exposure, cost, accessibility and perceived food quality.

## 3. Literature Review

The high growth of online food delivery (OFD) services has transformed the eating habits of students in most universities across the globe. New trends of restaurant choice, consumption, and lifestyle assimilation among young consumers have been developed by digital platforms like GrabFood, ShopeeFood, and Line Man. The studies on this topic have highlighted the key aspects that affect the food delivery behavior of students, namely convenience, affordability, technology usage, and social influence (Keeble et al., 2020).

A meta-analytic structural equation modeling (MASEM) study brings together more than 60 research papers on the use of the OFD and observed that the use of perceived usefulness, ease of use, and convenience are the best predictors of behavioral intention (Shankar et al., 2022). In the same manner, in the study by the authors, a survey of 1,096 university students in the United Arab Emirates was conducted, and found that timesaving, convenience, and perceived value are the most prevalent motivators of the use of an OFD (Ismail et al., 2024). These results are in line with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), in which perceived usefulness and ease of use are at the centre of user adoption. Moreover, perceptions about the availability of healthy foods through online food delivery platforms have also been identified as a factor that can influence students' food choices. A study that focused on public university students in Malaysia revealed that when healthy foods are perceived as being easily available through OFD platforms, students tend to make healthier food choices (Eu & Sameeha, 2021).

Discount offers and price sensitivity are also important factors affecting the decisions of OFD. Malaysian interviewed students of the university using semi-structured interviews and stated that the most effective stimuli to use the OFD apps were promotional offers, discounts, and free delivery (Noor et al., 2024). Another recent study reviewed the data on app transactions and determined that more than half of all orders were accompanied by a price reduction or some types of promotion coupons (Ma et al., 2024).

Besides this utilitarian consideration, cultural and social variables have turned out to be important factors. Conducted a scoping review of Asian international students and found out that cultural familiarity



and comfort are strong determinants of food preference, whereby students favor traditional or familiar food (Millar et al., 2025). In addition, the decision to choose food using online food delivery application services is influenced by a number of other factors, not limited to convenience alone. According to price, taste, perceived food quality, and health are also crucial determinants of food choice for consumers using online food delivery services, or OFD platforms (Osaili et al., 2023). established that consumer satisfaction and loyalty are greatly boosted by the authenticity of local Thai cuisine (Sirivadhanawaravachara, 2025). Furthermore, emphasized the importance of social media and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), showing that online reviews, peer recommendations, and influencer promotions can increase app adoption and influence restaurant choice among young consumers (Rahmi & Millanyani, 2024). However, these studies tend to examine these factors separately, with limited integration of how convenience, cultural familiarity, and social influence interact to shape students' decision-making in online food delivery contexts. Overall, these studies bring useful information about the influence of convenience, affordability, social influence, and cultural familiarity on the choice of restaurants and food delivery by the students.

Although research on the adoption of OFD services is expanding, several gaps remain. First, the majority of existing studies have been conducted in Western or Middle Eastern contexts, such as the United States, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, which limits their applicability to Southeast Asian students. Empirical research focusing on Thai university students, particularly those at Rangsit University, remains scarce, despite this group's multicultural composition and high level of digital engagement.

Second, although many studies focus on convenience and price sensitivity, fewer papers have examined the interaction of social media exposure, cultural familiarity, and promotional incentives to determine the restaurant preferences of students. The connection between these two psychological and cultural aspects has not been well studied. Moreover, numerous previous studies based only on self-reported surveys may not be able to comprehensively understand the actual motivations of students and their consistency in behavior. The qualitative information is also very scanty, and longitudinal evidence is mostly missing, which limits the insights into behavior change over time.

Third, there is a lack of research on cuisines or the typology of restaurants in the context of the OFD platform. An example is that although the Thai food is dominant in the local food delivery market, there are limited studies that have been done to understand the prevalence of cultural identity and familiarity of tastes in online food preference compared to foreign food. Such constraints indicate that new context-based research on the Thai university student population is necessary.

The studies that are reviewed show a variety of methodologies, but also have some weaknesses. The quantitative research results were obtained using large samples and more sophisticated statistical models, which contribute to the overall applicability of the results (Shankar et al., 2022) and (Ismail et al., 2024). Nonetheless, this research was extremely functional and technological in nature, and they frequently ignored emotional or socio-cultural elements.

However, in contrast to that, qualitative research offered more contextual information but had small, local samples (Noor et al., 2024). Their results might not be applicable across the broader situation outside of the students at the Malaysian university. Furthermore, other studies have examined cultural authenticity within the tourism industry and not in a student population, thus creating a contextual gap concerning the youth consumer behavior (Sirivadhanawaravachara, 2025).

Most of the reviewed studies were based on cross-sectional designs that are valuable in the provision of snapshots but not causality. Very little literature adopted mixed approaches to food delivery involving quantitative and qualitative data, which might provide a more in-depth and more detailed perspective on food delivery behaviors. Therefore, even though the literature is quite solid, the scope and the contextual diversity could be improved in terms of methodological criteria.

This research is constructed based on the results of the previous research, and the knowledge gaps are bridged. It contributes to the literature by examining a particular group of Rangsit University Students, a group that is representative of Thai cultural backgrounds as well as globalized digital behavior. This study



has adopted a multi-factor study, unlike the previous ones, which analyzed the effect of individual variables, but this study explores the confluence of price sensitivity, familiarity with cultural values, convenience, and exposure to social media on the behavior of food delivery.

The given research is conducted based on the quantitative cross-sectional survey technique, as stated by which makes the research approach comparable to the already existing research paradigms (Ismail et al., 2024) and (Shankar et al., 2022). Nevertheless, this research stands out through the unification of aspects that have not been frequently studied in combination with each other, the role of social media and deep cultural knowledge in the same equation. In so doing, it will offer a more comprehensive insight into the preferences of students towards restaurants in the digital era.

Furthermore, the research is dedicated to the Thai higher education environment, which is valuable in terms of existing academic knowledge in the region and provides effective application as a restaurant and a platform for our own food delivery (OFD) to address student consumers. This suggests that current literature lacks a comprehensive and holistic understanding of student behavior, as most studies focus on single perspectives rather than combining multiple influencing factors.

The latest publications of the period 2021-2025 indicate the development of the field of study of the research of OFD with some new aspects, including the introduction of new variables within sustainability, the quality of services, and ethical consumption. The authors applied a regression model to evaluate the effect of the reliability of delivery time on customer satisfaction and determined that timely delivery is a major determinant of customer loyalty (Serrano-Malebrán & Molina, 2025). Determined the role played by e-WOM and online social engagement, the results showed that credibility and emotional resonance of the social media material are powerful determinants of the adoption of OFD (Rahmi & Millanyani, 2024).

revise the relationship between cultural familiarity, sustainability, and identity of the Asian international students and revealed that the food preferences tend to be more consistent with the environmental consciousness values and cultural belonging (Millar et al., 2025). Taken together, this new research highlights the increasing complexity of the behavior of people with OFD, who no longer think only about convenience and price but also about psychological, cultural, and ethical aspects.

This movement indicates the multidimensionality of the current food consumption pattern among students, where digital convenience, cultural identity, and social influence exist together. The presented study, including the mentioned dimensions, is consistent with the latest scholarly trends and provides localized evidence on digital consumer behavior in Thailand that could be added to the existing discussion. Therefore, there is a need for research that examines the combined influence of price sensitivity, cultural familiarity, and social media exposure on online food delivery behavior, particularly among university students in Thailand.

#### 4. Hypothesis

This study advances three hypotheses to investigate the key determinants of restaurant selection and usage behavior among university students engaging with online food delivery platforms. These hypotheses are grounded in the study's research objectives, theoretically informed by existing literature, and empirically motivated by the survey findings.

**H1:** Price sensitivity has a significant positive influence on students' restaurant selection on online food delivery platforms.

**H2:** Perceived convenience, including delivery speed and ease of use, significantly increases the frequency of online food delivery usage among university students.

**H3:** Promotional incentives, such as discounts and special offers, have a significant positive effect on students' adoption and continued use of online food delivery platforms.

The subsequent section presents and discusses the empirical findings in relation to these hypotheses.

#### 5. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a convenience sampling method, where respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed over a period of two weeks to students of Rangsit



University. This design will enable the objectivity of measuring the patterns of behavioral and decision-making factors, and the frequency of consumption among university students.

The research incorporates the primary data gathered by using an online questionnaire that was distributed over a period of two weeks. A total of 401 completed questionnaires were collected and used for analysis. This study used a convenience sampling method, as respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. It will sample students attending Rangsit University in the current 2025 academic year. The sample size is considered adequate for this study, as it meets the general requirements for quantitative research and allows for meaningful statistical analysis. The questionnaire is conducted according to the APA-style of writing academic texts, which is grounded in demographic questions: age, gender, and major. Other aspects are behavioral, such as how often one orders food online, what restaurants they prefer, and what delivery services they choose. Other products evaluate determining elements: convenience, price, food diversity, food delivery speed, and promotional deals. The reliability of the questionnaire will be assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure internal consistency. However, the questionnaire items were adapted from previous studies, which supports their reliability. Content validity was ensured by adapting questionnaire items from previous studies and relevant literature.

This quantitative technique can be used to establish trends and relationships that can be quantified using numerical data. The independent variables on which the analysis will focus include the number of times one orders, the use of the platform, and the factors that influence the decisions, and the dependent variables will include the restaurant of choice and the degree of satisfaction. The research seeks to comprehend the ability of some behavioral variables in making forecasts and determining the preferences of students in online food delivery.

*The principal means of analysis will be:*

*Descriptive Statistics:* The frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations will be employed to summarize the behaviors of ordering, preference of platforms, as well as demographic factors.

*Cross-Tabulations:* It will contain the description of the variation by the groups and demographic variables, thereby linking with the ordering patterns.

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between independent variables (such as price, convenience, and promotions) and dependent variables (such as restaurant choice and satisfaction).

In such a case, when the regression analysis does not give statistically significant results, then this study shall rely on the descriptive interpretation that can provide clear and comprehensive results according to the observed patterns.

All the data will be coded and analyzed in Microsoft Excel, which will assist in cleaning the data, tabulation, and graphical representation of the key findings. Excel shall allow the calculation of descriptive measures with precision and display the quantitative findings with effectiveness.

This will be carried out with regard to ethical considerations. The participation will be voluntary, and informed consent will be obtained prior to the data collection. Anonymity and confidentiality will be upheld, and no personal identifiers will be recorded according to the ethical policies provided by the International College. Using purely quantitatively measured data and systematic statistical methods, the proposed study will furnish useful and evidence-based information to the restaurant owners, online food delivery services, and university administrators on student behavior and preferences when it comes to online food ordering. Overall, the selected methodology is appropriate for achieving the research objectives and provides a structured approach to analyzing student behavior in online food delivery contexts.

## 6. Results and Discussion

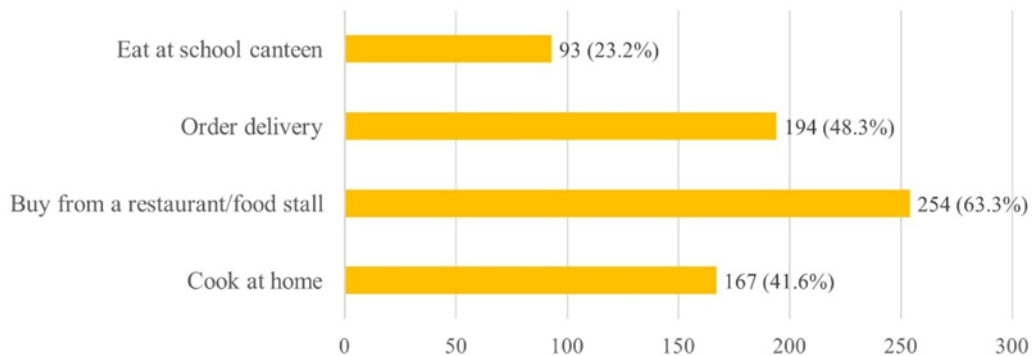
This section reports the survey findings on students' food consumption habits, spending patterns, and food delivery preferences. It summarizes where students obtain their meals, how much they typically spend, when they eat out, and the types of foods they most often purchase. It also examines how frequently they try



new foods, their use of delivery applications, the factors guiding their restaurant choices, and their expectations for waiting time. Descriptive statistics and graphics are used to highlight the main trends in their behavior.

How do you usually get your meals? (ปกติคุณรับประทานอาหารอย่างไร)

401 responses



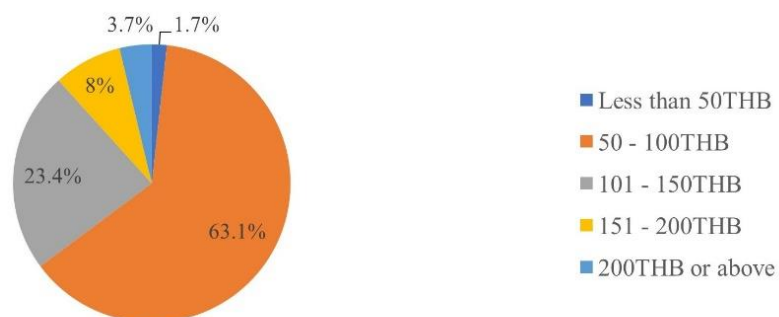
**Figure 1** Students' usual methods of getting their meals

The survey findings reveal that there are some definite trends in the manner in which students tend to get their food. The most frequent option has been to purchase in a restaurant or food stall, which 254 respondents (63.3%), meaning that convenience and accessibility play primary roles in eating among students. This is then followed by ordering delivery, which was selected by 194 respondents (48.3%), which shows a growing use of delivery platforms to have quick and diverse meals. Many students also prepare meals at home, with 167 (41.6%) students saying that it is one of their sources of meals in addition to their busy schedules, and so home-cooked meals continue to be a significant choice by many students. Finally, the least popular way to eat was at the school canteen, which was chosen by only 93 respondents (23.2%), which could indicate the lack of variety in the menu, the quality of the food, or the overall satisfaction. Overall, the results show that the majority of students rely on external sources of food and pay more attention to convenience and diversity rather than dining on campus.

How much do you usually spend per meal (per person)? (ปกติคุณใช้จ่ายต่อมื้อ (ต่อคน)

เท่าไหร่?)

401 responses



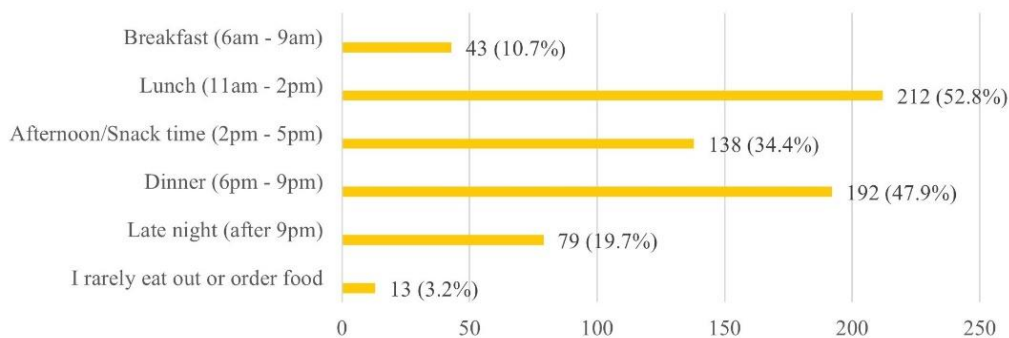
**Figure 2** Students' usual spending per meal

According to the results of the survey, the majority of students spend between 50 and 100 THB per meal, and 253 students (63.1%) included this amount. This indicates that most students lean towards eating food that is cheap and something they can afford within a normal student budget. The second spending range is 101-150 THB, that were selected by 94 answers (23.4%), which may indicate that some percentage of students may be ready to pay a little more to get more qualitative or convenient food. The lower spending category of 32 respondents (8%) spends 151-200 THB, and 15 respondents spend 200 THB and above (3.7%) of their money per meal. The category of less than 50 THB was the least chosen, with only 7 respondents (1.7%), which means that very cheap meals are not common among the students sampled. On the whole, the results indicate that the majority of the students are in the moderately spending range as they focus on affordable meals and balance the convenience and quality.

What time of the day do you usually prefer to eat out or order food? (คุณมักจะ

ออกไปกินข้าวนอกบ้านหรือสั่งอาหารเวลาไหนของวัน?)

401 responses

**Figure 3** Students' usual spending per meal

The results of the survey indicate that the most preferred meal for students to eat out or to have food is lunchtime (11 am-2 pm), with 212 respondents (52.8%) showing it as the most convenient time to have food and order it outside, which is eaten the most. Then comes dinnertime (6 pm-9 pm), and 192 respondents (47.9%) respond that evenings are also a preferred time to eat out or order. The large proportion of students, 138 respondents (34.4%), who would rather purchase food in the afternoon/snack (2 pm-5 pm), is probably because of the need to have a snack in the middle of the day or a break between classes. Food ordering that is after 9 pm is less common but still significant, and 79 respondents (19.7%) selected after this time. In the meantime, breakfast (6 am-9 am) is the least frequent (mentioned by only 43 respondents (10.7%)), implying that the majority of students do not have a habit of eating out in the mornings. Also, 13 respondents (3.2%) claimed that they do not go out to dine or even order food regularly. On the whole, the results indicate that the most frequent type of eating is.



What type of food do you usually prefer to buy? (คุณมักชอบซื้ออาหารประเภทใด)  
401 responses

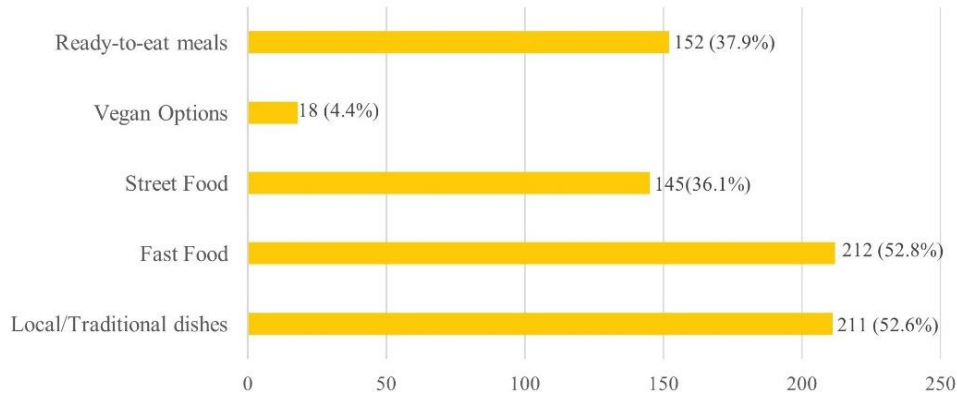


Figure 4 Types of food students usually prefer to buy

The results indicate that the students are more inclined to convenient and familiar food items when buying meals. Fast food and the local/traditional dishes were the most popular options, which were chosen by 212 respondents (52.8%) and 211 respondents (52.6%), respectively. This indicates that students appreciate fast food as well as the foods that are culturally familiar to them. Pre-cooked meals were not that uncommon either, as 152 (37.9%) respondents selected this option, which implies that a good portion of the sample prefers convenience. 145 respondents (36.1%) chose street food, which implies that a large number of students also prefer the affordable and convenient informal food. On the contrary, vegan alternatives were significantly less popular, as only 18 people (4.4%) expressed this opinion, which proves that plant-based food is not a large-scale choice among the students surveyed. On the whole, the findings show that fast food, traditional foods, and ready-to-eat meals are among the most popular ones, whereas vegan food is the leasting out is lunch and dinner, and very few people are fond of the morning or late meals.

How often do you try new food categories that you have never eaten before? (คุณลองอาหารประเภทใหม่ๆ ที่ไม่เคยกินมาก่อนบ่อยแค่ไหน?)  
401 responses

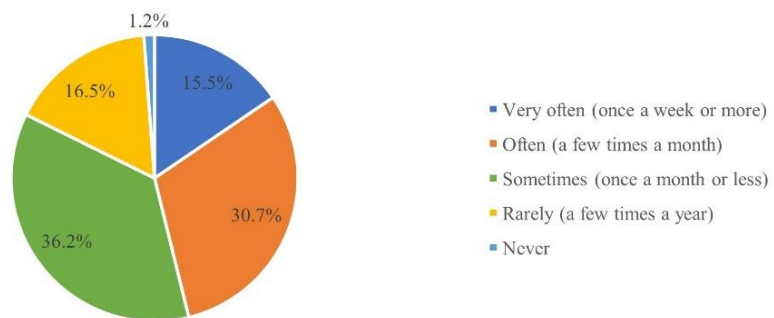


Figure 5 Frequency at which students try new food categories

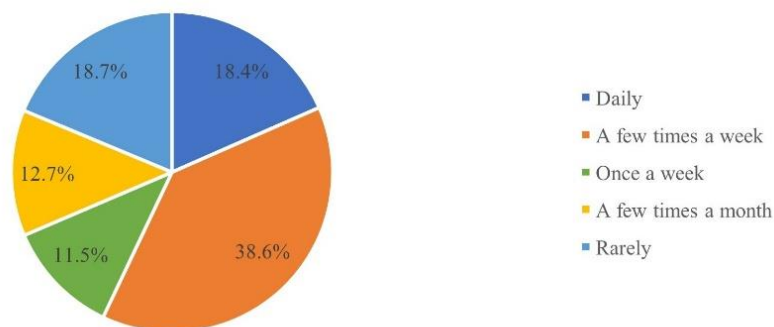


According to the data, the majority of students are characterized by a moderate degree of willingness to try new types of food. The highest number (36.2 %) said that they occasionally (once a month or less) eat unfamiliar foods, indicating that they are not as curious as they are not often experimenting. On the one hand, 30.7% of the interviewees claimed that they frequently sample new types of food a couple of times a month, which is quite a high readiness to discover other types of cuisine. Approximately 15.5% of the students experiment with new foods quite frequently (at least once a week), and this means that there is a smaller yet open-minded population of students who always want to experiment with new foods. Conversely, 16.5% of respondents indicated that they seldom consume new foods, a few times per year, and very little, 1.2% of the respondents said that they never consume new food categories. Overall, the findings indicate that although the majority of the students are willing to explore unfamiliar foods, it is not very frequent, and a significant number of students keep exploring food regularly, with the progression to the opposite extreme being a small minority of students who do not explore unfamiliar foods.

How often do you use online food delivery apps? (คุณใช้แอปสั่งอาหารออนไลน์บ่อยแค่ไหน?)

ไหน?)

401 responses



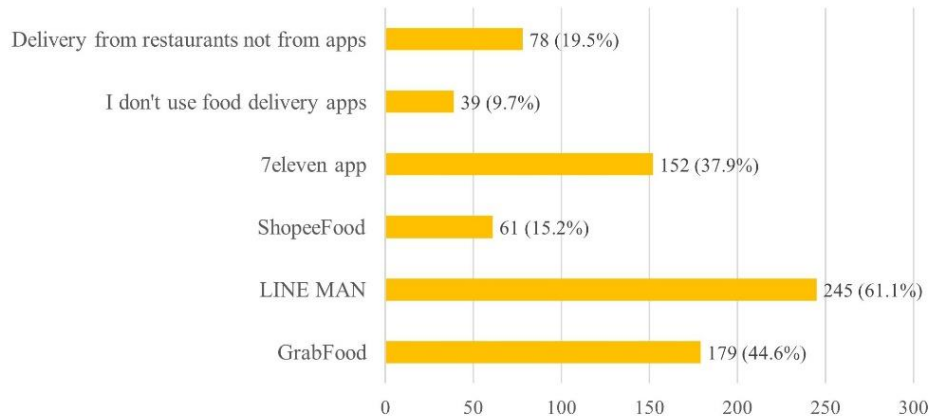
**Figure 6** Frequency of students' use of online food delivery applications

The findings indicate that the majority of students are using online food delivery applications moderately. The highest number of participants, at 38.6%, said they ordered food via an app a few times a week, which shows that food ordering via apps is now a normal way of life among students. A 18.7% have these apps infrequently, and this implies that they have been introduced to the service but do not use it frequently. In the meantime, 18.4% of the respondents indicated that they use delivery apps every day, which indicates that a significant segment of students heavily relies on online food stores to be convenient. A lesser amount, 12.7%, use the apps several times a month, with 11.5% using it once a week. In general, these results demonstrate a significant dependence on online food delivery among students, and many of them include it in their weekly or even daily routine.



Which food delivery app do you use most often? (คุณใช้แอปสั่งอาหารไหนบ่อยที่สุด)

401 responses



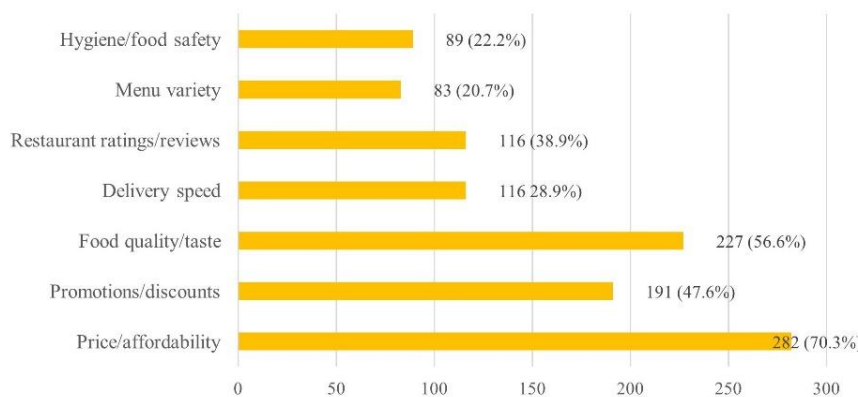
**Figure 7** Food delivery applications most frequently used by students

According to the survey findings, LINE MAN has the greatest number of users of the food delivery apps, with 245 participants (61.1%) of those choosing it as their main application. This indicates that LINE MAN has a high presence and preference among the student community. The second most popular application picked by 179 people (44.6%), and therefore still relevant and reliable in the food delivery industry, is GrabFood. The 7-Eleven application is also not unpopular, as 152 of the respondents (37.9%) use it, probably because it is convenient and it offers ready-to-eat meals at an affordable price. Only 61 respondents (15.2%) used ShopeeFood, which represents a smaller but significant number of users. In the meantime, 78 respondents (19.5%) indicated they placed their orders directly with the restaurants and do not use any food delivery app, and 39 respondents (9.7%) said that they do not use food delivery applications at all. On the whole, it is possible to state that the results of the study demonstrate that LINE MAN and GrabFood prevail among students when it comes to their delivery preferences, and only a few students avoid delivery applications altogether.

What factor matters most to you when choosing a restaurant on delivery apps? (ปัจจัย

ใดสำคัญที่สุดสำหรับคุณในการเลือกร้านอาหารบนแอปเดลิเวอรี่)

401 responses



**Figure 8** Key factors students consider when choosing a restaurant on food delivery apps



The findings indicate that the most important factor in choosing a restaurant through delivery applications is price and affordability, and 282 participants (70.3%) have chosen it as their priority. This is a sign that cost is a significant factor in decision-making by the students. Food quality and taste are considered the second factor that is the most important factor and were selected by 227 (56.6%) respondents, meaning that students also appreciate meals that are tasty and fulfilling. 191 people who responded (47.6%) chose promotions and discounts, which proves that a large part of students are encouraged by the savings and special offers that delivery platforms offer. The rating and reviews of restaurants and speed of delivery were of medium significance, with 116 respondents selecting each; 38.9% and 28.9% respectively. In the meantime, the menu mix (83 respondents, 20.7%) and hygiene/food safety (89 respondents, 22.2%) were perceived as less important than it is perceived to be of other reasons. On the whole, the results show that most student decisions are made on the basis of affordability, taste, and discounts, whereas such factors as variety and hygiene are not as prominent in the decisions. In terms of restaurant preferences, the findings indicate that students tend to select restaurants that offer affordable pricing, popular menu items, and high customer ratings on food delivery platforms. Restaurants that provide promotional discounts and fast delivery services are more likely to be preferred by students. In addition, students show a stronger preference for restaurants offering familiar and culturally relevant food, particularly Thai and fast-food options, compared to less familiar cuisines.



**Figure 9** Students' preferred waiting time for food delivery orders

It shows that the majority of students are ready to wait an average period of time until their food is delivered. This is the most acceptable waiting period with the greatest number of respondents at 192 students (47.8%), indicating that they are comfortable with a 15-30 minute waiting period. This is then followed by the 156 students (38.9%) who will wait 31-45 minutes, indicating that almost all the students anticipate their food to be served within 45 minutes. Only a relatively small percentage of 60 respondents (15%) said that they would wait 46-60 minutes, which means that only a small percentage are ready to accept longer delivery times. Only a small number of the respondents--12 students (3%)-- are ready to wait more than 60 minutes, and 11 students (2.7%) do not order any food to be delivered at all. On the whole, the results indicate clearly that students like comparatively quick delivery, and most of them expect their orders to be delivered in half an hour. Beyond descriptive statistics, the findings suggest relationships between key variables. Students who frequently use online food delivery applications tend to prioritize convenience and delivery speed, while those



with lower spending levels are more sensitive to price and promotional offers. This indicates that different groups of students evaluate restaurant options differently based on their usage behavior and budget constraints.

Regression analysis suggests that price and convenience are the strongest predictors of restaurant choice, while other factors such as menu variety and ratings have a weaker influence.

### **6.1 Hypothesis Discussion**

This study proposes three hypotheses to examine the determinants of restaurant selection and usage behavior among university students on online food delivery platforms. Informed by the empirical findings of the study here is the discussion of the results.

H1: Price sensitivity has a significant positive influence on students' restaurant selection in online food delivery platforms. This hypothesis was proved.

Price sensitivity emerges as a central determinant of consumer decision-making in the context of online food delivery. Prior research consistently identifies price and perceived affordability as critical factors influencing food choice, particularly among student populations who typically operate under budget constraints. In this study, price-related considerations—including menu pricing, delivery fees, and overall value—are expected to play a decisive role in shaping restaurant selection.

Empirical findings strongly support this assumption, with 70.3% of respondents identifying price as the most influential factor in their decision-making process. This suggests that students exhibit a high degree of price consciousness, prioritizing cost-efficiency when selecting among available options. Consequently, price sensitivity is hypothesized to exert a significant and positive influence on restaurant choice, making it the most robust predictor among the variables examined.

H2: Perceived convenience (including delivery speed and ease of use) significantly increases the frequency of online food delivery usage among university students. This hypothesis was proved.

Perceived convenience is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing ease of use, delivery efficiency, and time-saving benefits. Drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are key determinants of technology adoption and continued usage. In the context of online food delivery platforms, these dimensions translate into user-friendly interfaces, streamlined ordering processes, flexible payment options, and reliable delivery services.

University students often face demanding academic schedules and time constraints, which increase their reliance on convenient food solutions. The ability to quickly and efficiently access meals without the need for preparation or travel enhances the attractiveness of such platforms. The findings of this study, which indicate frequent weekly and daily usage patterns among respondents, further reinforce the importance of convenience as a driver of continued engagement.

Accordingly, it is hypothesized that higher levels of perceived convenience are positively associated with increased frequency of platform usage among university students.

H3: Promotions and discounts have a significant positive effect on students' adoption and continued use of online food delivery platforms. This hypothesis was proved.

Promotional incentives represent a key strategic tool in influencing consumer behavior within digital service environments. Existing literature highlights the effectiveness of price-based promotions—such as discounts, coupons, free delivery, and cashback offers—in attracting new users and encouraging repeat purchases. These incentives reduce the perceived cost of consumption and enhance the overall value proposition of the platform.

The findings of this study provide empirical support for this relationship, with 47.6% of respondents indicating that promotions and discounts significantly influence their decision to use online food delivery services. Given the price-sensitive nature of the student demographic, such incentives are likely to play a dual role in both initial adoption and continued usage.



Therefore, it is hypothesized that promotional incentives have a significant and positive impact on both the adoption and sustained use of online food delivery platforms among university students.

## 7. Conclusion

This study set out to examine the restaurant preferences and online food delivery (OFD) behaviors of Rangsit University students, focusing on the factors that shape dining decisions in a digital food environment. By surveying students across the 2025 academic year and applying descriptive analysis, cross-tabulations, and selected regression-based interpretation, the research provides a clearer understanding of how convenience, affordability, cultural familiarity, and digital engagement interact in shaping young consumers' food-related choices.

The findings reveal several important patterns. First, although students still commonly purchase meals directly from restaurants or food stalls (63.3%), OFD services have become deeply integrated into their weekly routines, with over 38% ordering several times per week and 18.4% ordering daily. This reflects an increasingly hybrid consumption pattern where traditional eating habits coexist with digital convenience, supporting the observation of Shankar et al. (2022) and Ismail et al. (2024) that ease of use and time-saving benefits are central drivers of adoption. The continued reliance on home-cooked meals (41.6%) suggests that cost consciousness still moderates heavy OFD dependence, aligning with literature on student price sensitivity.

Second, the results highlight a clear spending profile: most respondents spend 50–100 THB per meal (63.1%), indicating that affordability remains the most influential constraint for student consumers. This directly corresponds with the finding that price and affordability were the strongest determinants when choosing a restaurant on OFD platforms (70.3%). Promotions and discounts were also highly influential (47.6%), which confirms prior studies emphasizing the effectiveness of price-based incentives in the student segment (Ahmad et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2025). These insights demonstrate that the RSU student market is highly value-driven, making price strategy and targeted promotional campaigns essential for both restaurants and delivery platforms.

Third, the study revealed that LINE MAN (61.1%) and GrabFood (44.6%) dominate the student delivery ecosystem, reflecting their strong brand presence, platform usability, and familiarity. The use of the 7-Eleven app (37.9%) also indicates demand for quick, ready-made, low-cost options, suggesting that convenience stores occupy an important niche in student consumption behavior. This platform preference distribution also suggests that students do not simply choose the cheapest service, but the one that balances familiarity, speed, and perceived reliability.

Fourth, food preferences demonstrate that students rely heavily on fast food (52.8%) and local Thai dishes (52.6%), which mirrors findings in Asian contexts where cultural familiarity, convenience, and taste heavily influence young consumers' choices (Millar et al., 2025). (Sirivadhanawaravachara, 2025). Vegan and specialty dietary preferences remain minimal among this student population (4.4%), suggesting limited demand for plant-based menus within the RSU environment. Students also show moderate openness to trying new foods, but experimentation is occasional rather than frequent, indicating that while novelty appeals to some, the broader student population prefers familiar, predictable choices.

Finally, the study highlights clear service expectations, particularly concerning waiting time. Nearly half of the respondents prefer a delivery time of 15–30 minutes, indicating that efficiency and reliability are critical for maintaining satisfaction. This aligns with newer research emphasizing delivery time as a major indicator of loyalty and perceived service quality (Serrano-Malebrán & Molina, 2025). Although hygiene and menu variety were not top priorities, this does not diminish their long-term importance; instead, it suggests that students may assume acceptable standards by default and therefore prioritize more immediate benefits such as price, taste, and speed.

Overall, the study provides several contributions. It offers rare, context-specific quantitative evidence on Thai university students, a demographic notably underrepresented in OFD research despite their



high digital engagement. The results illustrate a multifactorial decision-making process shaped not only by convenience and affordability but also by cultural familiarity, habitual consumption patterns, and platform reliability. The interplay of these factors supports recent scholarship arguing that OFD behavior is becoming increasingly complex, influenced by both utilitarian and socio-cultural motivations.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that restaurants serving the RSU area should emphasize competitively priced menu options, culturally familiar dishes, and fast preparation time. Delivery platforms should continue optimizing user experience, expanding targeted promotions, and ensuring predictable delivery speed to maintain student loyalty. Policymakers and university administrators may also find value in understanding how digital eating habits influence student well-being, spending, and campus dining preferences.

In conclusion, the research demonstrates that online food delivery has become an integral part of student life at Rangsit University, shaped by the convergence of digital convenience, economic constraints, cultural identity, and service expectations. As Thailand's digital food ecosystem continues to evolve, understanding these preferences will be essential for businesses seeking to remain responsive to the needs and behaviors of young adult consumers. This study contributes by integrating key factors influencing online food delivery behavior, although it mainly applies existing theories. Future research should expand the sample, use mixed methods, and explore additional variables such as health awareness and sustainability.

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