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TEENUSEGA

THE ROLE OF E-SERVICE QUALITY AND FOOD
QUALITY IN INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS'
SATISFACTION TOWARDS ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY
SERVICE IN ESTONIA

Master's thesis

Curriculum in Agri-Food Business Management

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<p>Abstract: The current age requires that almost all human endeavors be fast-paced. This has brought about the need for food to be ordered online as customers may not have the luxury of time to cook food by themselves or the least go to restaurants to eat therein. However, it is also expected that such service be rendered in consideration of certain qualities that will adequately satisfied customers. Although there are many related studies to the current one i.e. Prabowo & Nugroho (2018) in the context of Indonesia, Dang et al (2018) focuses on Haoni, Vietnam while author as Siddiqi (2011) focuses on banking sector in Bangladesh. The current study seeks to examine the role of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers' satisfaction towards online food delivery service in Estonia. The goal is to see how both e-service quality and food quality can help to influence customers' satisfaction towards adopting OFD service. Two main types of data, primary and secondary data were used; the secondary setting a theoretical basis for the empirical work. The primary data is quantitative nature, suggesting that research adopted a survey using questionnaire to elicit data from respondents. 154 persons responded by answering the questions accordingly. The questionnaire contained 14 questions 10 close-ended and 4 open-ended questions. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive analysis attended with tabular representation of data as well as with charts followed by a correlation analysis, while the open ended was done through discussion. To this end, the finding of study reveals that both e-service quality and food quality are factors that satisfy customers' towards online food delivery service, as respondents' opinions show a direct relationship between the level of quality in the two variables and customers' behavioural pattern. This result agrees with those of Persad & Padayachee (2015) and Lee & Joshi (2007) among others, who have earlier researched in this area of study but from different contexts. Therefore, stakeholders, in restaurants and the major players in the e-service end must ensure that these qualities are present in their services in order to satisfy customers towards adopting OFD service.</p>			
Keywords: food quality, e-service quality, OFD, customers' satisfaction			

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INTRODUCTION

In this age, where activities must be carried out as quickly as possible with a measure of precision and quality as expected by consumers, buyers are finding the traditional marketplace to be confusing and complex to navigate. To this end, certain activities are no longer limited to the traditional operating system but have rather moved online or at least have assumed a hybrid status of both offline and online modes of business. This was made possible from the purview of electronic commerce, e-commerce.

E-commerce being the short form of electronic commerce is today providing opportunities for businesses to thrive all over the world. The adoption of internet-based electronic platforms has greatly imparted business activities, making the process of doing business seamless, cost-effective and fast. As e-commerce continues to grow with innovative technologies, and the high premium safety and convenience users enjoy thereon, many businesses have placed their ‘stores online besides their offline stalls (Titiloye,2009).

The development of user-friendly and relatively economical digital technologies and devices has brought about a new development in almost all human endeavors. This has indeed transformed individual lifestyles and the culture of work and business alike. Most particularly, the introduction of digital communication devices and some other state-of-the-art gadgets has conjured a plethora of activities and potentials that are internet-based. Hence, businesses have greatly benefitted from information and communication technologies (ICTs) as this has continued to provide a veritable platform for interactive business activities. Online platforms have helped in bolstering business by harnessing data from both producer/seller and customers (Ganapathi& Abu-Shanab, 2020).

Also, urbanization is fast giving rise to the culture of ordering food online as individual urban dwellers who are usually busy need food to be delivered to them at workplaces and others at their homes but for certain reasons may also need food. This is made possible by the innovative technology of the internet, which is serving as the fulcrum between the food company/restaurant and customers with a food delivery company mediating between the two major actors. The online technologies giving the customers the capability to search and order (for) food online with the information on the corresponding price as placed by a restaurant (Kitsikoglou et al., 2014).

Food quality as well as e-service quality, with regards to online food ordering and delivery system, are important factors that influence customer's purchase and/or repurchasing decisions. A restaurant in this regard is a business entity that prepares or makes food ready for the online order; whereas, online food delivery companies are the companies that mediate between restaurants and customers in ensuring that food ordered by customers are delivered to customer's location as prepared by the restaurant(s) (Ganapathi& Abu-Shanab, 2020). Although some major restaurants now have standing food delivery sections, in most cases, many independent companies are now serving as a mediating agency between restaurants and customers.

Customers are often drawn to the use of online services for the convenience it provides. Due to this, flight booking, virtual shopping and banking, and e-mailing have set off geographical barriers in transactional activities. It is no gainsaying that at the moment there are litanies of food companies separated by various levels of qualities more so that cyberspace is awash with different service providers with varying specifications and qualities. For instance, during the COVID-19 era of 2020, customers as well as restaurants in Estonia, more than ever before used online services for in-house or in-office food delivery.

In any case, one of the major factors that decide the success or otherwise of an organization/company is entrenched in the quality of its service(s). Thus, service quality according to Yang (2001), is an irresistible factor within the purview of e-commerce, and business services generally. Similarly, food quality and/or e-service quality is the consumer's perception which differentiates the expected service quality and the perceived service quality (Gronroos, 1984). It is therefore the actual measurement of the depth of the service rendered with regards to the expectation and satisfaction of the consumer.

The measurement of quality (in e-service and food) is a complex concept that consists of many variables or attributes. Thereto, one of the essential elements of food companies (i.e. restaurants) towards influencing and sustaining customer's interest is the quality the food is known for. It also includes such attributes as nutrition, presentation, menu, variety, size and taste (Suhartanto et al., 2019; Sulek& Hensley, 2004; Liu, Lee, and Hung, 2017; Ha and Jang; 2010). Thus, consumers' desire or willingness to get the best when quality comes to play is what often compels them to pay for extra (Grunert, 2005), and possibly to come back to order for the same food over and over. Given the foregoing, the present endeavor seeks to

examine the role of e-service and food quality in customers' satisfaction towards online food delivery service in Estonia.

Generally, online food delivery service is an emerging trend, a nascent aspect of the restaurant business that is still a minute fraction of the foodservice, with the food market, in totality, being measured in trillions of dollars globally (Kandasivam, 2017). It is forecasted that by the year 2022 the business of food delivery will increase to \$956 million (US Dollar) in annual revenue. Thus, considered one of the most prolific food-related businesses in recent times (EC Insider, 2018). This has therefore created an outstanding business opportunity in that regards particularly in urban centers around the world. However, presently, there appears is a gap of knowledge in respect of the benefits of online food delivery service, vis-à-vis e-service quality and food quality, in Estonia. For instance, scholars have carried out extensive research on this subject in many nations such as Al-Rousan., et al (2010) have researched on this with Jordan in focus, Albarq (2013) with Saudi Arabia in focus, Anjalika, et al (2018) in the context of Sri Lanka, Dang, et al (2018) among several other works/scholars and business contexts. Needless to mention nations as China, where Ma (2015), Cicia, et al (2016) among others have done extensive works; in America, scholars like Lewis & Boom (1983), Keshner (2020) among several others are available to attest to the abundance of work done in this regard. Thus, the motivation for this research is to fill this academic gap by examining how e-service quality and food quality can bring about customers' satisfaction in online food delivery services in Estonia.

The main goal of this study is to assess the functions of the quality of e-service as well the quality of food, and how both satisfy customers towards adopting an online food delivery service among residents of Estonia.

In achieving the above set objectives, this study will seek answers to the following questions:

1. What is the influence of e-service quality on customers' satisfaction towards online food delivery services?
2. What is the influence of food quality on customers' satisfaction towards online food delivery services in Estonia?
3. Does satisfaction influence consumer's behavioral intention towards online food delivery services in Estonia?

The relevance of this work will include the following:

- a. To the body of academics, this research extends the existing knowledge on customers on e-service and food qualities, online food delivery service as well as consumers' decision on relation to satisfaction, by adding to the existing body of knowledge on these core concepts of this research.
- b. Similarly, while serving as a Launchpad for further research works to cover whatever research gap may emanate therefrom, it also serves as a reference point for scholars who will be carrying out research work.
- c. To owners and management of restaurant and online food delivery service, the study avails an opportunity for them to understand more of the best practices in their respective businesses.

This study is structured into three major sections, preceded by an introduction and capped with a summary, as briefly outlined below. The introduction provides a general overview of the study, stating the justification of why the role of e-service and food quality in influencing customers' satisfaction towards online food delivery service is worthwhile in the context Estonia. The section also includes the goal, specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study and the structure.

The first section concerns theoretical concepts woven around the study which include, theoretical framework – the SERVQUAL and expectancy-disconfirmation theory, concept of e-commerce, e-service quality – its definitions and attributes, food quality – its definitions and attributes, online food delivery service, customer satisfaction and factors influencing consumers' decision towards online food delivery service.

The second section revolves around the methodological procedure in carrying out this research; the third section concerns the results and discussions of empirical study.

The last section is the concluding part titled summary, include the conclusion recommendation and factors that limit the generalization of the findings of the study.

1. THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE ROLE OF E-SERVICE QUALITY AND FOOD QUALITY IN INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS' DECISION TOWARDS ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY SERVICE

1.1. SERVQUAL Model

Service is a concept that is very difficult to measure because of its intangibility when compared with concrete goods (Moon, 2013). On this note, a model of evaluation was developed in 1985 by the trio of A. Parasuraman, V. A. Zeithami & L. Berry (1985) known as SERVQUAL. This has been a universally accepted model when measuring customer satisfaction about service quality (Mauri et al., 2013).

The service quality model, also known as the gaps model, was developed after a systematic research work by Parasuraman, et al. (1985). They are a group of American researchers and authors whose research work spanned between 1983 to 1988. Their effort is to help in identifying the major components or dimensions of service quality. To this end, the result of their research work suggested a measuring scale for service quality which is named SERVQUAL. Given this, they highlighted some likely factors that can lead to problems in the measurement of service quality. According to Parasuraman et al., (1988, p.5), service quality is a level of discrepancy that exists between what a customer expects in service and the perception of what he eventually gets.

SERVQUAL is one of the multidimensional approaches to the study of consumer perception of service with regards to expectation is. This model is hinged on the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, which suggests that the understanding of service quality is dependent on how consumers' expectation of quality is substantiated or debunked as a result of his perception of the service, in the final analysis (Olander, 1977).

Originally, this model was set on ten dimensions of service quality, but subsequent testing showed that some of the components are similar thus it was reduced to five components to include: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. These dimensions have been as components for measuring service quality in a different business context (Zeithaml, et al, 1985). That is, built on the expectancy-disconfirmation, SERVQUAL was originally measured on 10 dimensions of quality of service however reduced later five major dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Insofar as these

components of satisfaction can be identified, there will always be a positive result on customers' satisfaction (Minh, 2016). Thus, SERVQUAL has become a model for various researches in the field of service quality, finding its robust relevance in various cultural contexts. Thus far, SERVQUAL has continued to dominate as a robust measuring scale for service quality.

Parasuraman, et al., (1985) developed the first set of questionnaires to measure SERVQUAL to gauge quality, particularly, in the service sector, it has brought about a resounding success in the field of service quality towards the understanding of the method of measuring the quality of service. In making up with the basic components of service quality, Parasuraman, et al. (1998), say this is a multilevel and multidimensional concept, consisting of 22 pairs of expected substances of quality and 22 perceived items respectively. These items were then organized into five components of dimensions believed to be in line with the consumer's mental visualization of the dimensions of service quality.

The perception and expectation components comprise of 22 listed items, regrouped into five, viz:

- i. Tangibles: These are four items and they concern those items that can be seen and felt physically, such as facility, equipment, infrastructure and some other real shreds of evidence of the service provided.
- ii. Reliability: This has in it five items and they are dimensions that concern the reliability of a service, such as the accurate provision of service as promised by the service provided or as the company is fit, trust and consistency. It occurs when an organization undertakes its service accurately for the first time, and (possibly) consequently.
- iii. Responsiveness: These are four items and they concern the willingness of a company to promptly attend to a customer in the process of providing a service. It also entails listening in rapt attention to the requests or complaints from customers as to act on that.
- iv. Assurance: These are four items and they concern the knowledge and ability of employees to raise customers' confidence, trust and belief in the promises earlier made by the company. It also includes knowledgeability of an employee about the product, as well as how such employee comport him/herself before the

customer, in a friendly and polite manner in the course of rendering a service or otherwise.

- v. Empathy: This contains five items and they focused on employees' readiness to have empathy on customer with a deep, individualized and special concern or attention as to understand a customer.

Similarly, Avkiran (1994) set a standard for service quality but rather compressed or grouped it into four dimensions. According to him, these dimensions include:

- a. Staff conduct: This includes responsiveness, civil conduct and how branch staff help in projecting a professional image of the company to customers;
- b. Credibility: Adequate management of trust between staff and customers by correcting mistakes and errors promptly as well as keeping customers duly informed;
- c. Communication: Customers must be successfully communicated to, properly advised and served notices timely when there is a need for that; and
- d. Accessibility of staff: The number of staff that are serving customers during business hours must be adequate.

In any case, Parasuraman, et al., (1985) standard has always been most widely accepted with a unique universal appeal and acceptance.

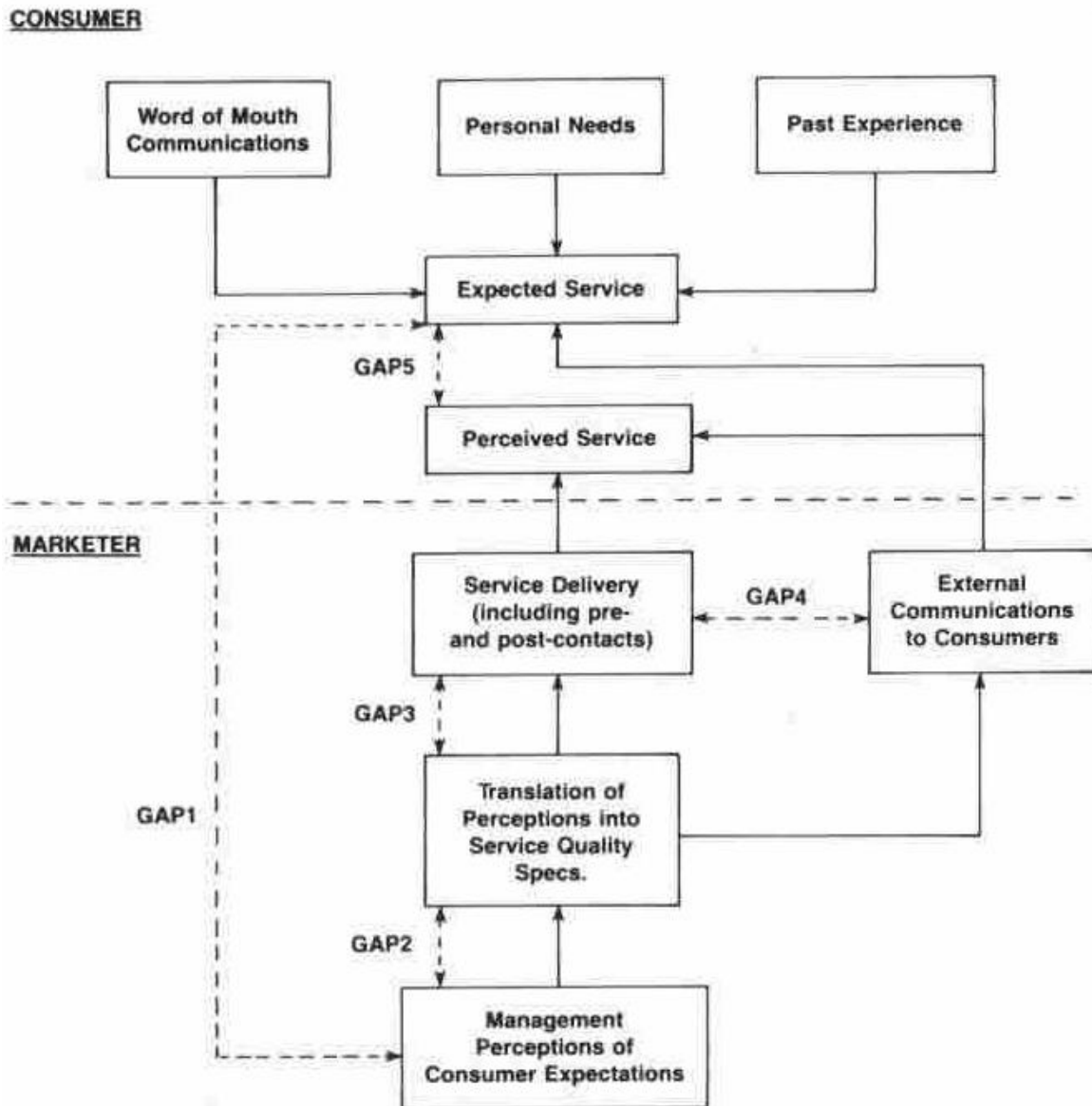


Figure 1: Service Quality Model (Parasuraman, et al, 1985).

This model highlights five distinct gaps leading to a consumer perceiving a service quality that is poor or below expectation. The only gap that can be measured adequately is Gap 1. Others, the second through to the fifth gap have only diagnostic relevance, they cannot be measured like the first gap (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Parasuraman et al., (1988) posit that:

- a. First Gap: Customer expectation - management perception gap. In this gap, an organization may not have a full grasp of consumer's needs or expectations.
- b. Second Gap: Management perception - service quality specification gap. In this case, a discrepancy occurs as an organization is able to identify the need of a customer but

there exists a gap in the delivery system or process as a result of market conditions, insufficient resources and management lapses.

- c. Third Gap: Service quality specifications – service delivery gap. This occurs when a company has a standard provision in meeting consumer's needs, but there is no assurance of the high quality of service.
- d. Fourth Gap: Service delivery – external communications gap. This happens when an organization neglects its (external) communication role with the consumers, this do have a ripple on both perceptions and expectations of the consumers.
- e. Fifth Gap: Expected Service – perceived service gap. This gap asserts that to ensure that quality is served to a consumer as expected or beyond their expectation, is a function of what a consumer got in the long run with regards to his expectation.

In a simple equation, service quality is represented as: $SQ = P - E$ (Service Quality = Performance – Expectations). This can be interpreted as follow: SQ is service quality; P is the perceptions of the individual of a given service; and, E being consumer's expectations of service. In this case, when perception is lower than expectation, service is then adjudged of lower quality. Conversely, in a scenario when consumer expectation is not as much as perception, service is considered of higher quality.

In step with SERVQUAL, Cronin & Taylor, (1992) developed the SERVPERF model. In this, they dropped consumer's expectations and the measurement of perceptions only to focus on the emotional reaction of consumers to service. They highlight four significant equation thus:

- a. $SERVQUAL = Performance - Expectations$
- b. $Weighted\ SERVQUAL = importance \times (performance - expectations)$
- c. $SERVPERF = performance$
- d. $Weighted\ SERFPERF = importance \times (performance)$.

In any case, the assessment of consumer on the scale of SERVPERF or SERVQUAL are done using the same attributes.

Although SERVQUAL has wider application and acceptance, yet it has also been buffeted by some criticisms of its weaknesses. And these are explained below:

- a. Theoretically, the following are the criticisms as posited by (Temba, 2013):

- i. Paradigmatically, SERVQUAL is not a model for psychological, statistical and economic theory as it sees service from the point of view of a disconfirmation paradigm instead of an attitudinal paradigm;
 - ii. In gaps model: pieces of evidence abound that customers rather evaluate service quality in terms of perceptions minus expectations ($p - e$) gaps;
 - iii. In view of process orientation: SERVQUAL is not concerned with the output of service encounter, it rather targets the process of service delivery; and
 - iv. In terms of dimensions: the five adopted dimensions of SERVQUAL do not have universal application, and most often than none, there is usually an overlap between the five components – reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness.
- b. Operation-wise the criticisms include the following:
- i. In terms of expectations: expectation has several meanings whereas SERVQUAL does not effectively measure service quality expectations;
 - ii. Composition of items: the five dimensions listed in the SERVQUAL cannot conveniently account for each service quality dimension variability.
 - v. Moments of truth (MOT): customers' evaluations of service quality vary from one MOT to another.
 - vi. Polarity: when items are reversed on the scale there will be a respondent's error.
 - vii. Scale points: the seven-point Likert scale is weak and unreliable.
 - viii. Expectations and perceptions as the two administrations of the instrument lead to confusion and often cause boredom (Temba, 2013).

Since quality has been generally acknowledged as a potent weapon in the business domain which organizations adopt in outsmarting others in a spiraling competitive business environment by delivering to customers service or product of superior satisfaction, and in turn, foster company's success by increasing profit margin. With the knowledgeable and discriminatory behaviors of customers and the prevailing force of competition in the market space (Duggal & Verma, 2013), making service quality a company's a marker of differentiation in order to influence customer's decision is certainly a potent motive spurning this work.

1.1.2 Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory

Since the marketing behavior of consumers is very dynamic, it has always opened it to scientific explanation with many literatures making ample suggestions positing that the satisfaction of a consumer is a relative concept, to be judged based on the standard or quality thereto (Olander, 1977). As such many theories have come up in this regard to explain consumer behaviours based on his satisfaction on product or service. These theories include the following: the Value-Precept Theory, the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP), the Equity Theory, the Attribution Theory, the Evaluation Congruity Theory, the Comparison Level Theory, the Person-Situation-Fit model, the Dissonance theory, the Performance-Importance model, and the Contrast Theory (Yüksel&Yüksel, 2008; 95). This litany of theories notwithstanding, based on its relevance and appropriateness, the present work shall adopt the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm theory (EDP).

The expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm is a postulation that provides the theoretical basis for a nexus between satisfaction of a customer and the quality inherent on a product or service (Oliver, 1981; Tse and Wilton, 1988 cited in Caruana, et al., 2000; 1343). On this note, quality is one of the major compositions of consumer's satisfaction. This is a utilitarian theory, that is suggesting an association between an inherent quality of a product or service and the value a customer derived from it. The quality is what provides value or utility to a customer who jettison whatever may appear as a disutility the price may bear (ibid, 1343). And where there is an increase in service quality this ultimately leads to an increase in satisfaction of such service.

This theory, Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP), was proposed by Oliver (1977; 1980) which was seen as the most appropriate theoretical framework in assessing the customer's satisfaction. It implies that before consumers purchase goods or services they have in them a pre-purchase expectation, best known as the anticipated value or performance. Consumers now set their standard of expectation based on this pre-purchase expectation, and when the product or service is utilised, inference is now drawn based on the outcomes in comparison with expectations. Upon this, if outcomes match or surpasses expectations 'confirmation' is said to have occurred. Conversely, one talks of 'disconfirmation' where outcomes are not the same as expectations (Yüksel&Yüksel, 2008; 99).

In any given scenario, a customer may either be satisfied or not, being the result of the difference, positive or negative, between what a customer expected and what he got at the long run. And when customer enjoys a service performance which is better than what he expected, then it is said that there is a positive 'disconfirmation' between value and expectations, resulting into higher or better satisfaction. On the opposite, when service performance is below customer expectation, a negative disconfirmation has occurred between expectations and values leading to dissatisfaction. But when service performance is exactly as expected, one talks about an outright confirmation of expectations in relations to perceptions which is still satisfaction (ibid, 99-100).

This theory has found relevance and applicability in many studies on customer satisfaction. For instance, Locke (1965) applied this theory of discrepancy methodology to assess employees' job satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). Other areas of its previous application include: perception on the treatment of flu (Oliver, 1980), in automobile space (Oliver & Swan, 1989), with regards to restaurant services (Bearden & Teel, 1983; Swan & Trawick, 1981), in stock market services (Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988), in hotel services (Barsky & Labagh, 1992; Weber, 1997). In view of the foregoing this work is underpinned by this theory as it can best be viewed upon from its theoretical prism.

1.2 Concept of E-Commerce

E-commerce has become a veritable platform for sharing information, funds, goods and services through media such as computer networks, telephones or other useful devices. It also involves the distribution of business information, sustenance through relationship building over a telecommunications network (Cruz-Cunha & Varajao 2011; Kim & Moon 1998). Similarly, it is a process that allows business activities or processes like buying and selling to be performed online with the aid of internet technology. It is therefore a business to business activity involving two major business nodes, buyers and consumers.

The history of electronic commerce is a fascinating one entrenched in a history dated back to the 1990s. It grew rapidly till years 2000s with the 'dot.com boom, bust and bomb'. From around 2000 to 2003, many people had thought that e-commerce may not survive many years thereafter. However, it witnessed much expansion and sailed on to a now mature level. In the earliest days, e-commerce was commonly found or used in businesses and among shoppers in the US but today, this has witnessed a tremendous change to such a dimension

that almost all shoppers around the globe transact business online in their mother tongue. This level of development has since assumed a global relevance and acceptance leading to a revision of approaches of the e-commerce business (Ohene-Djan, 2008).

E-commerce is often used interchangeably as an electronic business (or e-business). In any case, some widely accepted definitions of electronic commerce include that; it is the process of trading in business through the use of electronic media. Another definition sees e-commerce as a business that is concerned with key business transformation processes with the aid of internet technologies. On a general note, the definition of e-commerce incorporates among several other functions the process of transferring funds electronically as it is available in the banking system and business communications with the use of technologies such as the extranet, internet and intranet networks (Ohene-Djan, 2008).

According to Ohene-Djan (2008), e-commerce can be categorized into the following

- a. Business-to-business category: This is the largest category of e-commerce consisting of the supply chain, e-procurement, purchase negotiation, and network alliances.
- b. Business-to-consumer category: This concerns the introduction of services and products to consumers through the internet (online) technologies.
- c. Business processes category: This concerns the use of electronic commerce for internal business activities towards achieving effectiveness and efficiency.
- d. Consumer-to-consumer category: This category concerns the adoption of e-commerce to trade and/or exchange information by individuals with some other persons.
- e. Business-to-Government category: This dimension concerns the adoption of e-commerce by independent or corporate business organizations to transact business with the government.

It was estimated that there are about 5.2 billion smartphone connections across the globe in 2019, and interestingly, it is forecasted that at least half of the world human population will have access to mobile devices and (its) internet connectivity by the close of 2020 for online activities and businesses (Li, et al, 2020). The online to offline business model is one of the major developments that are a product of the high proliferation of digital devices such as mobiles (smartphones and tablets). This is also helped by the technological development and expansion that has continued to support the innovation which also brings about businesses that allow online payment and subsequent delivery offline.

The online to offline business services have their imprints in many human endeavors today, helping in the facilitation of the purchase of services and products in business environments like the banking sector, food or restaurants, hotels, real estate or automobile (Roh and Park, 2019). Under this, online food delivery service involves a process that allows for food to be ordered online packaged and be delivered to a consumer offline underpinned by online platforms, with these platforms performing a variety of purposes in an interaction between consumers and restaurants which include menu presentation, ordering and ordering relaying, payment and payment monitoring, delivery organization of the ordered food, as well as tracking (Li, et al, 2020).

According to Schneider (2011) e-commerce has to do with business activities that rely solely on internet technology to be carried out or processed with the internet technologies comprising of three components - the world wide web (WWW), and wired or wireless transmissions and any of the devices such as mobile telephone or computer. It involves the use of mobile apps or computers HTTP protocol (the World Wide Web) and a software (browser) to be running on a mobile device or computer over the internet to transact business (Laudon 2018). Also, it involves all electronically mediated business transactions between one organization and another that are in a business agreement. These transactional activities may also include non-financial aspects such as requests from the customer for detailed information (Chaffey 2011; 10).

There are two main categories of drivers in the purview of e-commerce. These are; competitive drivers and cost/efficiency drivers. While the cost-efficiency drivers concern the speed of how supplies can be accessed as well as how they can be dispatched, the competitive drivers' border on improved quality of service, customers' demand and avoidance of market loss (Chaffey 2011).

In view of the foregoing, e-commerce is of great significance to organizations. One of these benefits includes cost reduction, as organizations can easily process, store in a retrieval form and distribute information about their business and the operations thereto at a relatively low cost and with a measured speed and precision. Similarly, through e-commerce, business organizations reach prospective customers and/or suppliers even at a global plane given a reasonable cost, with a central distribution center, therefore, removing the cost associated with the need of having physical stores scatter over continents or nations around

the globe, with the associated cost. E-commerce also provides organizations with a higher speed of productivity. That is, companies that adopt e-commerce have the franchise of 24 hours operation of providing service to willing customers (Turban, et al., 2012).

At the consumers' end, e-commerce also has certain benefits. These include; the opportunity to select from several available options at the same time while shopping. It also saves customers' time when compared with traditional physical shopping. No doubt, it avails a customer the opportunity to compare prices and brands; as well as shopping (from) anywhere around the world, at any time. Thus, customer can easily find items from among other stacked items online, as a customer can search (out) a particular item by its name or peculiar bar code online, ordering for same online, and swiftly, get the item delivered to him faster than when he has to travel to where the item is available physically, say across country's border (Turban, King, Lee, Liang, & Turban 2012).

Talking about its significance to society, e-commerce allows customers in rural areas to achieve the same benefits as urban-dwelling customers. Similarly, people in developing nations can access products and/or services that are not readily available within their immediate commercial environment, hence bridging a wide commercial gap and bringing about a robust social inclusion to such people (Turban, et al., 2012, 67).

1.3 E-Service Quality: Definitions and Attributes

The technological revolution has transformed the way businesses operate all around the globe. It has also helped in defining how vendors relate with and sustain their customers' interests. That is, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have occasioned a paradigm shift in the service landscape as it has continued to enhance the sector for quality service – efficiency and effectiveness. It has always been a difficult task to satisfy customers, particularly so at the e-space, where physical contact between vendor and buyer is quite utopian. The integration and ascendancy of ICTs in business parlance, has made service delivery migrate from the traditional business platform to an online system, at this point, making quality gauging more difficult than it can be done in the traditional business setting (Firdous & Farooqi, 2019).

As e-commerce has begun to be integrated into businesses in most of the world, firms on a global plane have been opened to the benefits of placing their businesses on online platforms

for marketing and to be made relevant in the new normal of e-business as well as to gain competitive advantage in the technologically driven business regime. To these, many organizations have to increase their web presence to ensure that goods and/or services are delivered to their customers leveraging on electronic technologies and devices (Firdous&Farooqi, 2019).

Dogmatically, e-service or as corruptibly written (often) as eservice, is a term that has wider applicability, with a pointed reference to providing services as aided by the Internet. And while the prefix 'e' stands for 'electronic', intendedly attached with the concept of "service" which in this context simply implies machine or program mediated functions (Tarafdar, et al, 2010; Persad & Padayachee, 2015).

Generally speaking, service is a series processconsisting majorly ofinvisible activities which must occur as interactions between a customer and an organization, oftentimes, between a physical resource or goods and a system put in place by the service provider, towards providing solutions to problems as may be encountered by the customer (Gronroos, 2000). Service quality is very crucial in the business environment as it is always regarded as customer perceived quality which is brought about as a result of interaction with the service provision system. It is often very difficult for service companies to have an accurate measurement of service quality, as it is purely determinedwith regards expectations and perceptions of consumers (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990; Gronroos, 2000). Service quality, therefore, is the differential outcome customers made by comparing their perceptions of how service was carried out with their expectations. It is the variance between customers' perception and their normative expectations of service performance (Albarq, 2013).

The concept of e-service implies electronic service. Essentially, e-service is a service that is delivered to the consumers through the aid of information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Persad & Padayachee, 2015). Therefore, in order to influence customers' satisfaction to adopt an online platform for food delivery, customers' satisfaction must be carried through e-service quality (Kedah, Ismail, Haque, & Ahmed, 2015). E-service quality is such a field of possibility that occasions the provision of effective and efficient services to customers with the aid of electronic platforms. It is the imports of electronic platforms which bring about the convenience of effective and efficient online business interactions of products and services (Zeithaml, et al, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 2000; Santos, 2003).

In order to achieve quality e-service, the following factors – time-saving, delivery performance, website functionality, Internet popularity, financial efficiency, risk, customer support as well as variety (Persad&Padayachee, 2015; Lee & Joshi, 2007) must be rightly considered as major factors. For where issues like system failure, techno-stress, increased risks, waste, absence of e-security for confidential data exist, these could inhibit customers' decision towards online food delivery service.

In relations to the restaurant, the online platform, web or app, provides customers with a plethora of choices of food available in a restaurant and it also takes away the needless stress of preparing food by (customers) themselves or having to drive a distance to a restaurant to eat therein or make it a takeaway. This development has brought about a great competitive force in the market and this has continued to increase by the day. The competition now is a critical force that is compelling service providers to ensure satisfaction in terms of quality service for all of its customers, as it is now becoming very easy to lose both existing and potential Customers if they are not properly managed with regards to e-service quality.

In the early days of e-service, vendors had considered that price reduction, web presence and attendant technologies were enough for them to compete in the e-market. However, it had dawned on all that beyond e-presence, service quality is of major importance, as it is essential to the success of businesses on e-platforms,as the two assumed factors would not suffice in achieving a competitive advantage, rather the quality of the electronic serviceis undeniable of major importance in retaining and gaining more customers as well building a relationship with them that will stand the test of time, not minding the fact that such will be virtual and both parties may not (necessarily) see for as long as the business relationship lasts(Zeithaml et al 2005).

As e-service quality gained relevance in e-business, major actors are confronted with finding answers to certain questions. These questions are:

- a. Is the quality of service and quality of electronic service the same?
- b. Can the measuring scales and instruments used for service generally be adopted for electronic service quality?
- c. What new initiatives of dimensions should be added to bridge the gap of absence of physical contact between the two parties in an e-service business environment?
(Firdous & Farooqi, 2019).

Thus, in order to achieve a competitive edge through e-service quality, the following factors – time-saving, delivery performance, website functionality, Internet popularity, financial efficiency, risk, customer support as well as variety (Persad & Padayachee, 2015; Lee & Joshi, 2007) must be rightly considered. For where issues like system failure, techno-stress, increased risks, waste, absence of e-security for confidential data exist, these could inhibit customers' decision or choice of online food delivery system.

In admitting what can be seen as the qualities of e-service qualities, Khai, & Van (2018), suggest six website or application qualities which are factors to be considered; these are,

- a. information quality
- b. security
- c. application or website functionality
- d. customer relationship
- e. responsiveness and fulfillment, and
- f. visual appeal.

These, according to them, bring about a robust customer satisfaction as well as sustaining their interest towards consistent patronage and loyalty.

Furthermore, e-service can be adjudged in terms of the standard quality giving a situation that the speed of the network is excellent without necessarily frustrating the customers in the process of getting the needed information or service online. In the same vein, where the system is user-friendly, there is expected to be prompt online help, to assist customers or users where they may encounter a challenge (Persad & Padayachee, 2015; Eid, 2011). Also, as customers will want their data or information secure and uncompromised, thus, an excellent e-service must ensure that customer's information such as bank details are treated with utmost privacy, away from the prying eyes of cyber-fraud; as whatever trust, a customer has in a company with regards to confidential details will, in turn, increase his loyalty or otherwise. A company can also sustain customer's loyalty by being prompt and responsive to customer's challenges at any given time.

Thus, Kassim and Abdullah (2010), posit that the security, usability, and attractiveness of a website or application are the factors that easily ensure customer's loyalty to an e-service platform. Thus, excellent performance and rating of e-service do not occur in a vacuum,

rather it is dependent on certain technologies it is a function of the quality of such technologies.

In the position of Bitner et al. (2000), customer loyalty to an e-service is a function of the customer's satisfaction with his experience with an online service, surprising delight, and customization. They enthuse further that social influence also has its ways around the heart of a customer when e-service is concerned. Also, it is a common occurrence that potential customers usually have a fear for online shopping but when the trust can be established and maintained, customer's love and loyalty for e-service will become pronounced and easy to maintain resulting in increased adoption of e-service by the customer.

On the importance of e-service, Persad & Padayachee (2015), posit that it takes off the geographical or location barrier that is an associative feature of traditional shopping system. This is as e-service makes it possible for a customer to order service or item from any part of the world in 24 hours circle, by that adding value to the supply chain ecosystem as it reduces entry barriers (Javalgi, et al., 2004).

1.4 Food Quality: Definitions and Attributes

In a world filled with junk in the name of foods, there is a growing demand for quality food among consumers all over the world. What a consumer perceived as quality, safe for consumption and made free from negative environmental factors (Vindigni, Janssen, & Jager, 2002) drives this unique demand for quality. One of the essential features a food company such as a restaurant must possess is quality. This plays a very crucial role in the operation and return of such a firm as it tends to influence customers' perception and experience with the company (Suhartanto, et al., 2019).

The force of competition, especially in recent times has pushed for food quality from competing brands and producers in the market. In the restaurant business, quality has become a force to be reckoned with, even as intending consumers are being pummeled by various strands of innovations and initiatives from different competing food vendors who are daily scouting for more patronage in order to increase their clientele base. Food quality has become a prominent topic, often as a matter of public concern and debate in the academic, among food policymakers in the restaurant business (Grunert, 2005).

About 95% of the total population of the USA was said to have at least once searched online for information about food delivery service. Comparatively, about one-third of people in developing nations in Asia-Pacific have searched for food online and have practically used online food delivery service, through internet-mediated channels (BrightLocal, 2016; The Nielsen Company, 2015).

Although it varies for several reasons, food quality has become a major part of the restaurant experience and overall success. It is an evaluation of the quality inherent in a given food before as well as when it is purchased by a customer (Ha & Jang, 2012; Chamhuri, 2015; Ryu & Han, 2010). It is therefore a necessary attribute of food that stir consumers' interest to buy the food. To this end, food quality plays a very crucial role in supporting the restaurant business. Besides, food quality champions a significant influence on consumers' satisfaction with restaurant food, as consumers' choice and preference for food are subject to many sensorial factors such as texture, taste, and non-sensorial factors like religion, health and ethics. In view of this, many restaurants add some of these variables to the characteristic. For instance, the halal food indicator, on the religious ground (Chamhuri, 2015; Sjahroeddin, 2018). Researches have shown that food quality is a concept that is very complex as it has to do with many features such as variety, nutrition, menu, presentation, size, freshness and taste (Sulek & Hensley, 2004; Ha & Jang 2010; Liu, Lee, & Hung, 2017; Jang et al. 2011). The concept of food quality has both objective and subjective dimensions, as the concept is relevant to or can be related to all human endeavors. Thus, according to Grunert (2005), an objective quality has to do with all the physical features a product has. While on the subjective dimension quality is perceived by consumers. And only when consumers' wishes can be translated into a tangible product and consumers can say of a product that it has satisfied his expectation that it can be said to be of quality.

In view of Grunert's (2005) postulation, Ilbery and Kneafsey (1998) classify both objective and subjective approaches to the measurement of quality into four gross categories, thus: certification, association, specification and attraction. According to the certification is a regulated quality, of a sort, being the condition set by a constituted authority to enforce a standard in a product or service. Association presents a form of nexus existing with the cradle of origin and what is available. Whereas, specification lays bare the process of production hinged on a traditional recipe and materials. While attraction is known through the physical properties of the food in terms of taste, texture and/or appearance.

From the subjective end, there are two schools of thought, with quality in focus. The first is the holistic approach. This sees the quality of food in terms of all the desirable properties expected of a product, the second one can be viewed in the form of an excellence approach. According to this approach, food can possess desirable properties yet consumers may not see such as an embodiment of quality (Zeithaml, 1998). Thus, since this work concerns how both e-service quality and food quality can influence customers' decision towards online food delivery service, this work will take on the second approach which is the excellence approach in measuring food quality.

The measurement of quality (in e-service and food) is a complex concept that consists of many variables or attributes. Thereto, one of the essential elements of food companies (i.e. restaurants) towards influencing and sustaining customers' interest is the quality the food is known for. It also includes such attributes as nutrition, presentation, menu, variety, size and taste (Suhartanto et al., 2019; Sulek & Hensley, 2004; Liu, Lee, & Hung, 2017; Ha and Jang; 2010; Liu et al., 2017; Namkung & Jang, 2007).

Just as it is sacrosanct with the service quality, the quality of food is one of the major factors that influence customers' sustained patronage of a restaurant (Liu et al., 2017; Ha & Jang, 2010). Towards this, Liu et al (2017); Mattila (2001) conclude that the choice of a given restaurant by a customer is determined by the quality of food it offers for sale.

In the work of Vindigni, Janssen, & Jager (2002), one of the basic factors that add to food quality is that such food must possess an organic label. This suggests that such food must have been grown and/or produced with the culture and inputs of environment-friendly agricultural practice. The term organic is not necessarily "a product claim" but rather "a process claim". Thus, agricultural products of organic value are best defined as a situation where the technology and input adopted in the process of food production are in themselves latent factors (Vindigni, Janssen, & Jager, 2002). As consumers see organic products as containing intrinsic quality and features.

Further to the components as highlighted above, Atkins & Bowler (2001), the following are the dimensions or criteria that justify food as being of a justifiable quality:

- a. the food must be free from germs;
- b. The food must be low in additives;

- c. Such food must be produced basically from organic farming without ecological disturbances;
- d. Such foods must come from a trusted source;
- e. The knowledge of the constituents (salt, sugar fat etc.) and how they were prepared must be plain; and,
- f. Miscellaneous quality aspects such as exotic, fresh, highly refined, luxurious etc. must be made known.

According to Grunert (2005), there are three major perspectives of research on food quality.

These are:

- a. consumer's innate desire for quality
- b. the ideal provider of quality, and
- c. what consumers perceive as quality.

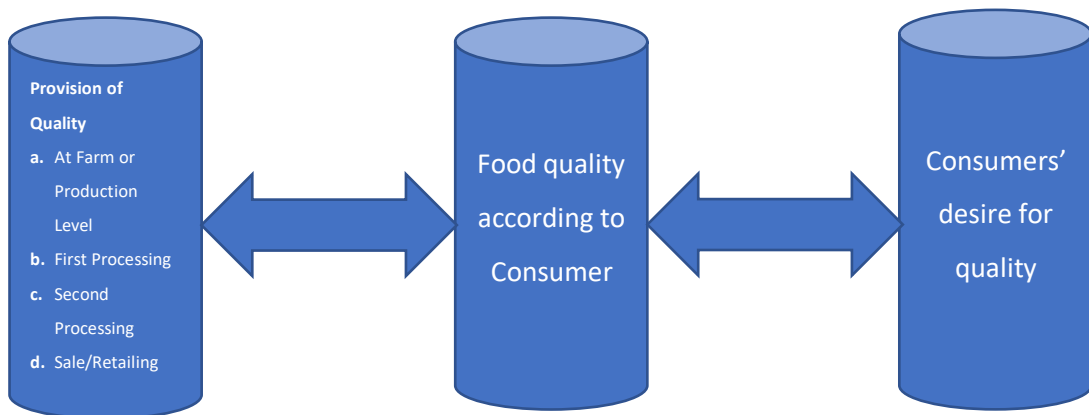


Figure 2: Research Perspective on Food Quality {Grunert (2005) with emphasis}

The first perspective concerns the demand end, the second focuses on the corresponding supply side. These two approaches serving as the rudimentary economic approach in dealing with what constitutes quality. The third approach which appeared lately looks into the weighty concern of how consumers perceived quality with a particular reference to how such perceptions help in influencing consumer's decision-making (Grunert, 2005). This been said, often, the provision of distinctive quality is likely to require tinkering with the standard and organization of the food production and agricultural means and activities, with regards to what constitute value chains.

One of the dangers associated with retail food is that the consumer lacks control over its processing, poor packaging and hazards in the process of transferring the food from restaurant to the consumer, with a food delivery company serving as the mediating system for delivery. All these can increase the chances of contamination and/or poisoning of food

retailed online (Hsiao, et al, 2016). Hence, in order to mitigate dangers that may be associated with food sold over the Internet, certain countries have put policies in place. For instance, United Kingdom constitutes a Food Standards Agency that regulates the business of selling food online. Similarly, China has food safety practices that monitor the activities of online food vendors (Ma, 2015; Online Retail, 2016).

Besides, online retailing of food also has certain disadvantages. For instance, the traditional eat-in restaurant avails a face-to-face opportunity for consumers to physically observe the quality of the food as well as the level of hygiene of the restaurant environment (Gabriela Milhassi, et al, 2014; Lee, et al, 2012; Cicia, et al, 2016). Whereas, usually available information about food on the Internet, most often are set to achieve the purpose advertisement, making it very difficult to ascertain the truth about the general information on the food (Manx Survey, 2012; World Health Organization, 2015). The foregoing notwithstanding, it is no gainsaying that food quality performs a wonderful role in the decision making of a consumer in choosing online food delivery service.

1.5 Online Food Delivery Service

As the world is witnessing a speedy, unprecedented development at all fronts, particularly in the field of information and communication technology, changes have occurred and still occurring at different facets of human society with the economy witnessing tremendous development. Thus, no doubt, digital innovations have led to a new trend in business, particularly giving rise and an undeniable impetus to e-commerce.

In view of the consistent behavioral fluctuation in (urban) consumers, the global food industry, particularly restaurants, is now witnessing an emerging trend known as online food delivery (OFD) service. The increasing growth of online food delivery service is fast setting off the traditional eating in or buying from the restaurants.

To this end, the food industry, specific restaurants have harnessed the benefits of e-commerce and platforms effectively to their greatest advantage, bringing about efficiency and seamlessness in its practices and processes, and this has led to the development of online food ordering and delivery and their associated services (Farhadi, et al, 2012; Sjahroeddin, 2018).

Until the ascendancy of online food delivery service, for a consumer to place an order for food of his choice there is a need for him to be at the restaurant personally or at least be there by proxy. This old process is a manual approach and it is time-consuming, compare to while a consumer places an order using digital devices (Moondra, 2020). And certain factors have been argued for the success and ascendancy of online food delivery services. These include: availability of smartphones at cheaper prices, availability of internet data packs, user-friendly apps. These factors have to a larger extent simplified how customers order food and also how restaurants attend to customers (Moondra, 2020).

Earlier, many chain restaurants have their distinct websites to facilitate take-out orders for food. Some restaurants followed that steps by creating their website for the purpose of food delivery (Relihan, 2017). However, on a general note, a commonly known online food delivery service is a product of recent innovations that is fast gaining currency in the restaurant business space. Online food delivery services can be viewed from two major dimensions or categories. These are: the restaurant and the intermediaries for the restaurants.

Although there are usually independent delivery service companies, popular restaurants in the western world such as KFC, McDonald's and Domino's have their online food delivery service department (Sjahroeddin, 2018). In any case, some of the major reasons while customers adopt online food delivery services include that it is fast, convenient, and accurate. But in the end, online food delivery service is adopted to increase revenue and reduce challenges in the ordering process. Thus, making it to have positive impacts on both parties as it increases effectiveness, efficiency as well as expanding the market base of the restaurant (Sjahroeddin, 2018).

In view of the categories of food delivery companies, similarly, there are two categories of such services compared with restaurant-to-consumer or platform-to-consumers. In the first case, the restaurant which makes the food also provides a service delivery platform for it. Typical examples are KFC, Domino's and McDonald's. Hence, the company in the same manner of preparing the meal also carries out the delivery service with an order being made directly via the restaurant's online platform. In the second case, the order and the delivery service are done through an independent third-party platform. These third platforms do partner with restaurants as to errand service between them and their customers (Online Food

Delivery, 2020; Li, et al, 2020). However, the current study is concerned with platform-to-consumers.

Outside the restaurant services, e-commerce is creating new opportunities for businesses generally with many traditional industries adopting e-channels in marketing their goods or services bringing about a hybrid of physical store firms and online channels, towards profit maximization (Collison, 2020). Restaurants are one of the leading sectors that have adopted the use hybrid system of servicing customers. By this, online food delivery a major forceful sector in the purview of e-commerce that is moving at the same pace as the traditional marketing system of restaurant food.

There is a significant change in an online food ordering system as a result of technological advancement, with the provision of excellent services and comfort and convenience for consumers around the world. The current trend of online food delivery has made food ordering to now become a convenient activity at the punch of a computer or a click of a button on a smartphone. Similarly, recipes and menus can be now be accessed easily and promptly online with less hassle. These not being the Eldorado, there are other fascinating options such as recommending one's favorite restaurant to friends or family members, viewing others' recommendations, recipes offering, etc. (Moondra, 2020).

Concisely, there is an understandable fact that these delivery companies operate mostly in the urban centers for this is different from all other sorts of e-commerce services, it is usually confronted with the challenge of location restriction. Also, many are the reasons why consumers adopt online food delivery services. The commonest of these reasons being the urgent need for food that will be delivered with a measured speed and convenience when the consumer may not be disposed of, basically for being busy at work or after a tiring day. Thus, one could access the service of online food delivery to step into the gap, by that relieving the consumer of the task and the associated challenges of going to eat in a restaurant, getting it as a take away personally or cooking the food by himself in his own house. Today, urban consumers using online food delivery services have by this innovation conceived the service as a new normal and this is therefore fast integrating into the society, garnering more patronage as days go by. For those that are usually busy, online food delivery services have made life convenient for them (Chai &Yat, 2019, 64), by buying more time for them.

The above accounts for why many adopt this innovation is that while they may be busy at home or in the office, the service allows a prompt delivery of healthy and fresh food to them without breaking off from their engagement(s). The advantage further includes that it allows urban dwellers to avoid the hassles of cooking after a very busy day in the office, (Chai &Yat, 2019, 64), or after a long and tiring journey, with that having the food promptly delivered to them in the comfort of their homes. It is needless to assert that online food delivery services save time and it is convenient for consumers to purchase without going out of their office or home.

Furthermore, researchers are suggesting that one of the reasons online food delivery services are gaining ground is due largely to the development of and the upward mobility of innovation in information and communication technologies (ICTs) particularly as it concerns smartphones. The use of mobile/smartphones has allowed for an increasing number of consumers to make the online ordering of food with less hassle as they do in some online shopping. This is possible on the note of an increase in online penetration by consumers using smartphones as their digital devices. Thus, that consumers can easily access e-service through their smartphones, which has therefore made food ordering easier (Chai &Yat, 2019, 65).

Another factor that fascinates consumers to adopt online food delivery services is the time-saving orientation (Chai &Yat, 2019, 65). This is usually considered as the most critical reason that generally influences the motivation of customers to adopt the technology-mediated self-service (Meuter et al., 2003), for a person that is habitually busy due to rigorous activities, will need to look for all means to save time. This accounts for why many people are no longer having the patience of waiting to cook on their own or involved in long wait in the restaurant. Thus, this has a unique effect on consumers' decision as consumers do not have to leave where they are physically to purchase food, as it takes less time to get what one needs to be delivered to them where they may be (Sultan & Uddin, 2011).

Also, many other consumers are drawn to the use of online food delivery services based on the privacy and security it provides for their personal information. Privacy concerns when one's personal information is opened only to such person (Belanger, et al, 2002). Security on the other hand is a security-related threat with regards to personal information (Kalakota& Winston, 1997).

No doubt the significance of online food delivery service is becoming noticeable in the food industry as it has continued to help in growing the business, bringing about accuracy in delivering orders, employee's higher productivity, and also ensuring a robust database for customers' (Moriarty, 2016). Particularly during the COVID-19, which occasioned lockdown and restriction of movement locally and globally, the significances of online food delivery were made obvious. The system enhanced consumers' continuous access to restaurant meals and also ensure a continuous operation of restaurants and allied companies (Li, et al., 2020).

Thus, while the COVID-19 pandemic lasted, researches show that there was a noticeable increase in the use of the online delivery system to order food by consumers who were practically docked by the restriction in movement occasioned by the pandemic. China, for instance, recorded a 20% increase in the number of people that adopt online food delivery services in January of 2020 alone (Keshner 2020). This was a base figure as the lockdown persisted for months. As COVID-19 ravaged the US, there was a higher demand for non-contact food delivery services (Collison, 2020). And having been exposed to the wonders of its benefits, patronage of online food delivery service is expected to continue to rise than ever before.

1.6 Customer Satisfaction

Jamaluddin and Ruswanti (2017), assert that satisfaction implies a feeling of content that occurs when compared with others perception from other similar products or service. The term 'satisfaction' originates from two Latin words. The first being 'satis' denoting a thing that is sufficiently good or adequate. And the second is 'facio' which is 'do or make'. As such, satisfaction can be defined as all efforts geared towards ensuring or achieving a fulfillment from something or making such adequate (Tjiptono, 2007). It is an evaluation made by customer on product or service, to ascertain whether the product or service is of adequate standard or if such falls short of expectations.

And according to Chen (2009), talking about total satisfaction means a holistic evaluation of customers with reference to a previous experience on similar goods or service. Thus, in today's business world where attracting new customer is costlier than keeping existing one, marketing strategies must be customer-centric. Customer-centricity concerns the manner of doing business with customers founded on trust and fairness, with the deep knowledge of customers' needs, striving therefore to meet those needs as well as to sustain valuable and

long-term relationship with the customers (Gee et al., 2008; Maquire et al., 2012). Dissatisfaction, hence, accounts for the major factor a customer chooses to switch from one vendor to another (Manrai & Manrai, 2007). Thus, in business parlance, concise marketing research is a product of consumers' perceptions and judgements with reference to their need and how that is met by the seller. And an accurate marketing perception can best be gotten from the category of people or customers best refers as lead users. Lead users are set of buyers who are very likely to remain true to a product or service for more than a month running to a year or years (Hippel, 1986).

Undoubtedly, service quality is a multidimensional concept that includes a series of factors ranging from either the past, through the present, transcending to future service experience. This is as customer does not necessarily buy products or services without due recourse to their experiences in view of that products. This is anchored on the full package of product and its performance, experience, access, and the cost (Zeithalm & Bitner, 2005; Titko, Lace & Kozlovskis, 2012; Abdullah et al., 2011; Kothari & Lackner, 2006). In view of this, firms that understand customers' value perception, along this path, usually utilize this opportunity to achieve competitive edge over and above others.

Kotler (in Titko & Lace, 2011) developed a list of components of perceived value of customer which affect customers' satisfaction at some level. These are twenty components of dimensions grouped into five:

- a. value of a product
- b. value of a staff
- c. imagevalue
- d. money expenses, and
- e. e. time and energy expenses (Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis, 2012).

Perceived value or perceived service quality is the customer's judgment about the overall excellence of a product or service from a company. The judgment is a product of the level of difference between what customer expects and value he derived from it at the long run (Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis, 2012). Customer satisfaction is therefore the evaluation of product or service from the angle of the customers on the gauge that if the product or service had met the needs and expectations of customers.

Researches in e-service have brought to bear that website's technology and features are factors to be given due consideration in consumers' psychological behavior with regards to

service or product, as that is a great force in influencing customers' online loyalty and online satisfaction; as human-computer interface is a great determinant of users' behavior and adoption (Shih, 2004). This is as there is a pleasure in the heart of a user when he experiences adequate and unhindered flow of e-traffic while he is shopping online thus bringing about positive response and subsequent intimation with the company and the service or products it provides. As such website success with regards to customer's satisfaction depend very largely on the effective network data (Hoffman & Novak, 1996; O'Cass & Carlson, 2010).

Bahia & Nantel, (2000) as cited in Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis, (2012) set forth some other dimensions of service quality as follow: a. effectiveness and assurance, b. access, c. price, d. tangibles, d. services portfolio, and e. reliability. As well, Karatepe et al. (2005) gauged service quality on a four-dimensional scale to include: a. service environment, b. interaction quality, c. empathy and d. reliability. Thus, if these are the in place satisfaction can be assuredly guaranteed for consumers.

To this end. customer satisfaction is a force to reckon with in a competitive environment as there exists a gulf of difference between customers that are satisfied and those that are not accurately satisfied. Customer satisfaction can be summed as a feeling, that is, the result that is derived from an evaluation process of what one received in relation to expectation (Lovelock & Wright, 2007; Ruswanti, 2012). And when a company provided a service with a quality at par or possibly higher than what the customer expected, chances abound that customer's interest is tend to be won over so as to ensure he continues to patronize the product or service.

Conversely, where value derived from the service or product falls below the standard so expected of it, customer tend to be disappointed, leading to disruption in relationship between the two parties. This situation, in short, is known as dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction occurs as a result of the following:

- a. when there is a difference between reality and expectation;
- b. where poor service occurs;
- c. where employees put up untoward behavior;
- d. poor and hostile environment;
- e. high cost and far distance; and,
- f. where what is advertised is different from what customers got (Alma, 2005).

In view of the aforementioned, it is very necessary for business owners to put into consideration customer's purchase intention, as this helps in predicting customer's behavior. Purchase intention is considered the behavioural dimension of a consumer. Its understanding helps in forecasting consumer's behavior (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman; 1996; Ullah & Khan, 2017). Bolstering this dimension of purchase intention of consumers. Hence, Boulding, Kalra, Staelin, and Zeithaml (1993) opined that the common dimension of consumer's behavior is best captured as 'purchase/re-purchase intentions' and this could grow to become 'purchase/re-purchase behavior'. Thus, purchase intention is a significant construct for this work as e-vendor is always concerned with sustaining the interest of the buyer.

Although it has been argued that satisfaction does not necessarily in itself, without other factors, developed nor maintained a robust clientele, however, it is considered a major factor that could bring back a customer for a repurchase of a particular product or service. To this end, a particular e-vendor is faced with the challenge of ensuring consumers get all needed satisfactions to his own competitive advantage, towards influencing the purchasing attitude (Evanschitzky et al., 2004; Hsu, Yen, Chiu, & Chang, 2006; Bhattacharjee, 2001; Oliver, 1999).

Consumers' satisfaction determines their repurchasing attitude and this is a function of their perception of a service they are consumed. Thus, true loyalty is however not the same as a situation repeated purchase. It is rather an innate behavior that brings about re-buying of a brand. A service or product seller is able to gain customer loyalty by consistently meeting or possibly exceeding the need of his customers over a long period of time (Albarq, 2013). Satisfaction, undoubtedly brings about the positive attitude a consumer for a product or service which leads to more purchases from one particular online firm, as there are higher chances for loyal customers to come for the same item or service from the same vendor (Srinivasan, Anderson, and Ponnavaolu, 2002; Cyr, Bonanni, Bowes, and Ilsever, 2005).

An adoption of online service therefore surpasses traditional loyalty to incorporate loyalty to an online technology which serves as the mediating platform of transaction between customers and a firm (Kim, Jin, & Swinney, 2009; Pee et al., 2018), online loyalty in the purview of online delivery service, concerns the level of commitment a customer has for an

online food delivery service which in turns leads to repurchase as well as customer developing a positive attitude towards online food delivery service.

Basically, satisfaction can be seen as an experience one garnered by using a product or service (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003). To these authors, hence, e-satisfaction is the enjoyment, pleasure or happiness that a customer derives in an online business context; a deduction and reflection of a positive purchasing experience e-vending offers. It is pertinent to posit therefore that a satisfied customer is a potential loyal customer for it is very likely that he will re-patronize an e-vendor; for as such customer enjoys a very high degree satisfaction, as opposed to those who lack same experience, they are very likely to come calling once more several other times (Evanschitzky et al., 2004; Lee, Choi, & Kang, 2009; Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003).

The major factor that explain loyalty is the satisfaction a customer derived in the product or service he paid for as well as the convenience on his path in procuring the product or service. (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003). Thus, satisfaction helps in building and maintaining long term and loyal clientele base of customers, with a rebound effect on the overall transactions as may occur online (or even offline) (Evanschitzky, Iyer, Hesse, & Ahlert, 2004; Wu & Chang, 2005). Satisfaction, therefore has been considered as an undeniable antecedent for loyalty (Chang, Wang, & Yang, 2009).

1.7 Factors that Determine Customer's Satisfaction in Online Food Delivery Service

Online food delivery service as made possible through the ascendancy of internet technology and busy life-schedules of many urban dwellers in this generation which has carved a niche for a new form of business service to ensure that foods are delivered to consumers wherever they may be, workplace or home, is an emerging global business sector, hence a recent business in many countries. The understanding of what can influence consumers' decision as to ensure continuous patronage will help in realizing the full potential of this emerging sector of the e-commerce by ensuring that the service is tailored made (Saad, 2020).

Saad (2020) in the conclusion of his research asserts that, in relation to online food delivery service, the following are primary or major factors that influence consumers' decision; service quality, speed of delivery and condition of the food. On the secondary level, he posits

that factors such as menu, number and Variety of restaurants, attitude of a delivery person and delivery tracking service indirectly influence consumers decision to patronize online food delivery service.

In a research carried out towards assessing “consumer preference and attitude regarding online food products in Hanoi and Vietnam”, Dang et al (2018) suggest that the following are factors that drive consumers adoption of online food delivery service: convenience hygiene, price, friends’ recommendations and certification by a regulatory body and the source of the food. They add further that certain information are also very necessary on the label of ready-to-eat food. These they aver are: product name, expiry date, production facilities, date of manufacture and business license. They contend that internet technology has played a significant role in consumers seeking different kinds of service information online, food related information inclusive. And most of these consumers choose online food delivery service do so for its reasonable price and the convenience it offers.

Prasetyo, et al. (2021) enthuse that new users of online food delivery service are believed to be attracted to it mainly by it’s the merits provided by the application. It is indeed interesting to note that online food delivery application presents all that a customer needs to know in buying food online through the punching of a digital device. It is more fascinating as customers do not need to go through the stress of going out neither is there any need to make a call to a restaurant before getting food. Also, that online food delivery platforms have automated the payment system, consumers are more drawn to it for this purpose as well. Also, that promotion about this service is available online serve an awareness purpose for the restaurant.

Thus, it is no gainsaying agreeing to the fact that the new normal occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic has raised the bar of online food delivery service to a wider acceptability and utilization particularly in the developing nations. During this period, certain factors such as non-cash transactions and delivery service were considered compelling factors that give online delivery service a wider acceptance, since it limited the chances of physical contacts, a major fear during COVID-19, on the process purchasing food (Prasetyo, et al., 2021).

Furthermore, past researchers have contended that certain factors as discussed below are major factors that influence consumers to adopt online the use of online food delivery service (Prabowo & Nugroho, 2018; Prasetyo, et al. (2021). These are:

- a. **Hedonic motivation:** This is an intrinsic motivating factor such as fun, happiness and pleasure, that one derives from using a new product or services. It functions as a factor that shapes customers' usefulness and convenience of adopting online food delivery service (Okumus & Bilgihan, 2014; Yeo et al., 2017; Van der Heijden, 2004; Venkatesh, et al, 2012).
- b. **Convenience motivation:** In view of this, it has been that following the urbanization era, people are now becoming unnecessarily busier with some businesses, thus, having limited time to cook what they will eat or, alternatively, eat in the restaurant. Consequently, they tend to adopt the online food delivery service in order to conserve effort and time. On this note, the convenience with regards to time and effort is a major factor that make consumers to adopt this system of ordering food (Collier, 2013; Chen & Hung, 2015).
- c. **Information quality & structure of information in mobile apps:** One more factor that influences consumer's decision in adopting online food delivery service, has to do with the quality of information and how well this information is structured on the application or website. Needless to say, that any foggy information, such that may confuse or mislead consumer, will eventually discourage them (Ji, 2006).
- d. **Security and Privacy:** These are two factors into one that have great impact on consumers choice of online food delivery service. And where these can be assured, consumers will be influenced to patronise online food delivery service (Belanger & Crossler, 2011).
- e. **Restaurant Credibility:** Another factor that influences consumer's purchasing decision in adopting online food delivery service has to do with brand awareness of the restaurant concerned. It is a common attitude for consumers to buy from brands that are popular because of the hope it provides that which comes with higher quality. This is as consumer gives a careful thought to social ratings given to a restaurant before they patronize such ((Prasetyo, et al., 2021).
- f. **Safety Packaging:** This concerns health safety. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the communicability of the virus was a matter of concern, as the spread is even possible through airstreams, droplets and physical contact. Thus, a restaurant

that can assure consumer of safety packaging will definitely carry the purchasing decision of consumers (Galbadage, 2020).

2. METHODOLOGY

The figure below describes the relationship between the keys concepts of this study. This suggest the level relationship among the main concepts of this research.



Figure 3: Conceptual Model (Created by the researcher, 2021)

Research design concerns strategies adopted in a given research towards achieving the goal of the work. Many are the types of research design, and a work only adopt a particular one based on its nature and towards achieving its goal. Research can either be experimental design study, case study or survey study (Cooper et al, 1998). The major advantage of this nature of design is that it allows for a review of conditions within the study area.

This type of method allows for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in an economical way.” In other word, survey research is aimed at collecting data on a particular problem from a sample in order to gain an estimate dimension of the problem in a large population. Moreover, it is a method targeted at either large or small population to “discover the relative incidence, distributions, and interaction of sociological and psychological variables.” It entails the collection and use of data systematically from a given population in order to describe certain features of the population. Thus, the purpose of choosing this research

The researcher employed descriptive survey method for this study. The survey research method is employed for the study because of its simplicity; as the survey method of research allows for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in an economical way (Sander, 1997). A Survey research is aimed at collecting data on a particular problem from a sample in order to gain an estimated dimension of the problem in a large population (Awotunde, et al, 2018).

Since descriptive Survey entails the collection and use of data systematically from a given population to describe certain features of the population, this method was used in order to gather qualitative data or information about the selected context. The purpose of adopting it, therefore, is to assess the role of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers' decision towards online food delivery service in Estonia.

Towards achieving the main goal of this study by producing the conceptual frame that will lead to the development of questionnaire for eliciting data for the empirical study, researcher reviewed certain critical dimensions in relations to the main concepts of the central trust of this work. Attempts were to ensure this is rightly tailored. However, for the area of behavioural intentions, this was self developed by author as the preceding review does not cover it.

For the table below, the the first three columns respresent opinions of authors, Persad&PadayacheePrasetyo, et al. (2021) (2015); Lee & Joshi (2007); Khai, & Van (2018); and Prasetyo, et al. (2021) as to what constitute the dimensions or components of e-service quality. The last column therefore was desuigned by the researcher to represent the combination of these authors perceptions of these dimensions, with the combination on the last column transposed to become the questions or statements in the questionnaire.

Table 1: Conceptual Table for E-Service Quality

Persad & Padayachee Prasetyo, et al. (2021) (2015); Lee & Joshi (2007)	Khai, & Van (2018)	Prasetyo, et al. (2021)	Combined Concepts
website functionality	application or website functionality	Information quality & structure of information in mobile apps	I easily find what I need
Variety	visual appeal		The apps are well organized and easy to use
		Safety Packaging	Orders are intact when delivered
time-saving	responsiveness		Prompt Delivery
customer support	customer relationship		Quick problem resolution
delivery performance	Fulfilment	Credibility	The right order is delivered
Risk	Security	Security and Privacy	Personal information is secured
Internet popularity	information quality		Delivery app is always available

For the table 2, the the first two columns respresent opinions of authors, Atkins & Bowler (2001), Lee, & Hung (2017); and Jang et al. (2011) as to what constitute the dimensions or components of food quality. The last column therefore was desuigned by the researcher to represent the combination of these authors perceptions of these dimensions, with the combination on the last column transposed to become the questions or statements in the questionnaire.

Table 2: Conceptual Table for Food quality

Atkins & Bowler (2001)	Lee, & Hung (2017); Jang et al. (2011)	Combined Concepts
free from germs		Healthy
low in additives	Freshness	Fresh
knowledge of the constituents	Presentation	Well packaged
Tasting nice	Taste	Tasty

Table 3, the the first two columns respresent opinions of authors, Titko, Lace, &Kozlovskis (2012) and Dang et al (2018) as to what constitute the dimensions or components of

Perceived value/satisfaction. The last column therefore was designed by the researcher to represent the combination of these authors perceptions of these dimensions, with the combination on the last column transposed to become the questions or statements in the questionnaire.

Table 3: Conceptual Table for Perceived value/satisfaction

Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis (2012)	Dang et al (2018)	Combined Concepts
money expenses	Price	Reasonable delivery cost
value of a product		I get value for my money
		Discount and freebies
	Information and convenience hygiene	General overall e-Service

A population for a study refers to the collection of persons or institutions that possess one or more distinctiveness in general that are of interest to researchers. The target populations for this study are the people in Estonia that make use of online food delivery service, particularly in the cities of Tartu and Tallinn. Thus, the population of this study people in Estonia who patronize online food delivery service.

According to Walkins (2005), sample size is the selected minute part or section that is made to represent the whole population. It is therefore a representative with respect to key variables. Although there exist various kinds of sampling techniques in research studies e.g. cluster, stratified, random etc., the present study adopted a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling technique which allows the researcher to select the participants of the study on the basis of their peculiar features as may be related to the subject of discussion. The link to the questionnaire was then hosted on whatsapp/facebook groups with the an attended message soliciting their assistance to help to answer the questions as hosted on the e-platform. Link was also forwarded to friends and colleagues who to also forward to some other groups they belong to in order to get respondents to answer the questionnaire.

In answering the main questions of this research, data for this empirical research were from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were mainly obtained through the

administered questionnaires. Questionnaire is a data collection method whereby an individual is required to answer the same set of predetermined questions (deVaus 2002). The questionnaire was constructed on the topic “the role of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers’ decision towards online food delivery service in Estonia”. The formality of the questionnaire indicated people to put a tick in the box boxes provided based on their personal opinions. The range of answers was structured to include: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) from where respondent is expected to pick accordingly.

Due to the peculiarity of this research, in order to collect data, the researcher created a google link with both English and Estonian versions of questionnaire.

English link :

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVLcZ9SiutbCDT2tJVeLY9FQF9GQihpOHyOiTJaEP6NzAY0Q/viewform?usp=pp_url

Estonian

link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1I4xeb2B5GSQiYeKBnNlpzfkM3BIwHuTHmcS6UYDekRY/edit#response=ACYDBNjSewxami3WXP_L64uc9PK4JsGS5Ibh9Aso46frp8-fBazHIkqcrEMuJIKm-LjnnOw

In total, 14 questions were generated and designed by the researcher. 10 closed ended questions and 4 open ended questions. The questionnaire was rated on a five point point scale. The questionnaire had four sections.

A section was devoted for measuring E-service quality 8 items with measurement ranging from: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree). Cronbach alpha value for E service is 0.878.

Food quality was also measured by the questionnaire (4 items). The questionnaire is rated on a five-point likert scale: : 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha value for food quality is 0.801.

Perceived value /satisfaction was measured by the questionnaire (4 items). The questionnaire is rated on a five-point likert scale: : 1= very dissatisfied, 2= dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=satisfied, 5= strongly satisfied). The Cronbach alpha value for food quality is 0.851.

Behavioral intention was assessed by the questionnaire (5 items). The questionnaire is rated on a five-point likert scale: : 1= very disapprove, 2= disapprove, 3=neutral, 4=approve, 5= strongly approve). The Cronbach alpha value for Behavioral intention is 0.805.

As demonstrated in Conceptual framework, 1.8 above, the statements for that form the questionnaire for e-service were drawn from dimensions opined by the following authors, Persad & Padayachee, (2015); Lee & Joshi (2007), Khai, & Van (2018) Prasetyo, et al. (2021), while researcher adopted the dimensions for food quality from the positions of Atkins & Bowler (2001); Lee, & Hung (2017); Jang et al. (2011) and for perceived value and satisfaction Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis (2012) and Dang et al (2018). However, statements for behavioural intentions were rather developed by the researcher.

Krippendorff (2004) concludes that the process data analysis suggests a precise procedure of data gathering that can be utilized in qualitative or subjective and unmistakable research to recognize topics and classes from data. Thus, the quantitative research data analysis takes a descriptive statistic technique and correlation. The use of SPSS was employed for analysis and interpretation of data. Upon the completion of the descriptive analysis, correlation and regression was also carried out as to determine the relationship between key variables of this study.

It is a rule that a commendable research should take into consideration adequate ethical conduct. And conduct is guided by morals, which affect individuals' decisions and associations with others (Blumberg et al., 2011). Hence, research ought to be planned so that it is neither destructive nor humiliating for any of the participants. The researcher ought to inform respondents regarding the nature and reason for the research being conducted while plotting to them their rights (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Against this background, confidentiality of source and trustworthiness was strictly adhered. Participants were assured that their privacy will be kept. Similarly, all materials gathered for the secondary data or sources were acknowledged through citation and outlined in list of references.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Respondents overview

As explained in the preceding chapter, methodology, having hosted the questionnaire online for few weeks, 154 persons responded by answering the questions accordingly. The questionnaire contained 14 questions 10 close-ended and 4 open-ended questions. Analysis of the close-ended questionnaire was done quantitatively by calculation based on the total number of respondents, 154. To this end, data were presented using table and analysis was done using percentage with this formula: $F/TN \times 100$. That is, F = the frequency, TN = Total number of respondents while 100 decides the percentage value. Similarly the open ended questionnaire was analysed qualitatively.

From the below table, 80 respondents which represent 51.9% of the total respondents are male, 73 respondents which represent 47.4% out of the total respondents are of the feminine gender and 1 respondent (0.6%) stated that they are non-binary. In view of this, the highest number of respondents is male, although with a marginal difference of seven respondents. This suggests further that the use of online food delivery service is commonly found among men according to the distribution methods.

Table 4: Gender

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	80	51.9
Female	73	47.4
Others	1	0.6
Total	154	100

From the below table, there was no respondent actually below the age of 18 years. However, 25 respondents which represent 16.2% of the total respondents are between the age of 18 and 24, 81 respondents which represent 52.6 are between the age of 24 and 34, 40 respondents which represent 26% are between the age of 35 and 44 years, 6 respondents (3.9%) are between the age of 45 and 54 years, and 1 respondent representing 0.6% is between the age 55 to 65 as well as above 64 years respectively. In view of this reality, the implication on the current study is that the majority of the people that patronize the use of online food delivery service in Estonia can be categorized as the productive age bracket, the youths.

Table 5: Age

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 18	0	0
18-24	25	16.2
25-34	81	52.6
35-44	40	26
45-54	6	3.9
55-64	1	0.6
Above 64	1	0.6
Total	154	100

Based on the below table 6, 15 respondents representing 9.7% of the total respondents have secondary or high school education as their highest qualification, 4 respondents (2,6%) have vocational education, 58 respondents representing 37.7% have bachelor degree, 70 respondents representing 45.5% have various shades of master degree, 6 respondents which represent 3.9% have doctoral or postdoctoral qualifications and 1 respondent (0.6) enthused that they are yet to finish BSc. or Mag. To this end, the majority of respondents are educated men and women with the bulk of them having either bachelor or master's degree. It further suggests that with their levels of education the overwhelming majority has the educational capacity to have a full grasp of the object of this research.

Table 6: Education

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Secondary/High school education	15	9.7
Vocational school	4	2.6
Bachelors	58	37.7
Masters	70	45.5
PhD and Post Doc	6	3.9
unfinished Bsc and Mag	1	0.6
Total	154	100

From table 7, I got a view of the official nationality of the respondents, 40 respondents representing 25.9% of the total respondents are Estonians, 71 respondents representing 46.1% of the total respondents are Nigerians, there are 5 (3.24%) Finnish and three nations – America, India and Britain registered three nationals each. Also, the following nations, Ireland, Indonesia, Germany, Pakistan and Turkey registered 2 nationals each respectively. And, these nations has one national each; Belarus, Russia, Afghanista, Sri Lanka, Ukrain, Albania, Azerbaijan, Ghana, Uganda, Australia, Vietnam, Georgia, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Morroco, Netherland and Poland.

Table 7: Nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Vietnamese	1	0.6
Ukrainian	1	0.6
Ugandan	1	0.6
Turkish	2	1.29
Russian	2	1.29
Polish	1	0.6
Pakistani	2	1.29
Nigerian	71	46.1
Moroccan	1	0.6
Irish	2	1.29
Indonesian	2	1.29
Indian	3	1.94
Ghanaian	1	0.6
German	3	1.94
Georgian	1	0.6
Finnish	5	3.24
Estonian	40	25.9
Dutch	1	0.6
Cameroonian	1	0.6
British	3	1.94
Belarusian	1	0.6
Bangladeshi	1	0.6
Azerbaijani	1	0.6
Austrian	1	0.6
American	3	1.94
Albanian	1	0.6
Afghan	1	0.6
Total	154	100

The below table 8 shows the employment distribution of the respondents. 62 respondents representing 40.3% of the total respondents are students, 11 respondents which constitute 7.1% of the total respondents affirmed they are self-employed, 68 respondents constituting 44.2% of the total respondents said they are employed for wages, 5 (3.2%) of the respondents said they are unemployed, 8 (5.2%) others said they are entrepreneur while there was no pensioner. In view of this, online food delivery service found much ground among people who are engaged for wages followed by students in Estonia.

The foregoing results suggest however that the current reflection is the certain features of the researcher age, nationality and profession, which now suggests the majority of the respondents to be within that age and professional brackets. It is definitely a reflection of his

immediate circle. This therefore impinged on the possibility of its generalization to the whole Estonian population.

Table 8: Occupation

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	62	40.3
Self-employed	11	7.1
Employed for wages	68	44.2
Unemployed	5	3.2
Entrepreneur	8	5.2
Pensionaire	0	0
Total	154	100

In lieu of the delivery companies patronized by the respondents; for Wolt, 20 respondents which represent 12.9% said they have never patronized the company, 36 (23.4%) assert they rarely use it, 49 (31.8%) said they sometimes use Wolt, 31 (20.1%) respondents said they often use it and 18 (11.6%) said they always use Wolt.

Second, Bolt Food – 30 (19.4%) of the total respondents said they had never used Bolt Food, 23 (14.9%) said they rarely used the outfit, 49 (31.8%) said they sometimes use it while 37 (24.02%) of the total respondents said they use it often and 15 (9.7%) of the total respondents said they always use Bolt Food.

Third, Tellitoit – a whopping 124 which represent 80.5% of the total respondents said they had never used Tellitoit OFD, 5 respondents which is 3.25% of the total population said they rarely use it, 4 (2.5%) said they use it sometimes, 3 (1.9%) other respondents said they often use it and only one respondents which is 0.6% affirmed it is a choice outfit for them.

Fourth, Takeout.ee – a whole lot of 139 out of the 154 respondents which constitute 90.3% said they have never used this outfit, 5 (3.25%) said they rarely used it, another 4 (2.5%) used it sometimes, while five (3.2%) use it often and just one (0.6%) used it always.

In view of the below, while Wolt and Bolt Food are operating averagely with some possibility of competition between the two companies, Tellitoit and Takeout.ee appear to still have a lot to contend with individually in order to gain competitive advantage in the market.

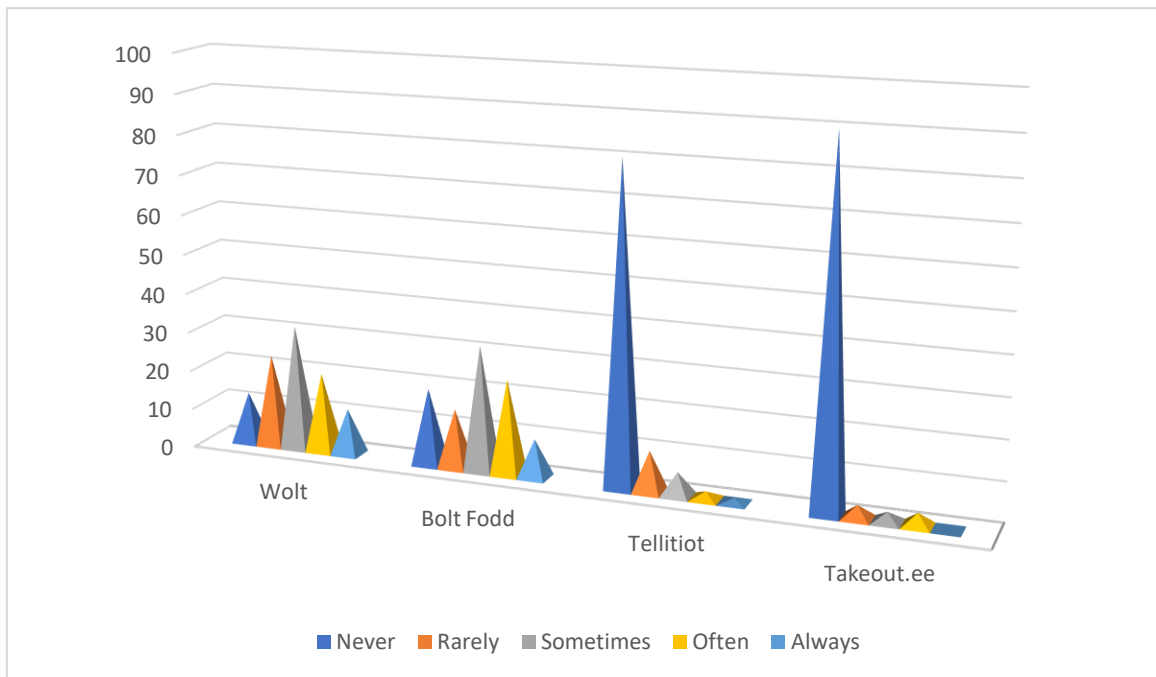


Figure 4: Food delivery companies frequently use

As above, statistically wolt has majority of the responses with a mean of 2.942 followed by Bolt with a mean of 2.896. This means that the responses tunes towards both delivery companies and the remaining questions will be answered as such.

Table 9: Statistics of frequently used delivery companies

		Statistics			
		frequently use? [Wolt]	frequently use? [Bolt Food]	frequently use? [Tellitot]	frequently use? [Takeout.ee]
N	Valid	154	154	154	154
	Missing	0	0	0	0
	Mean	2.942	2.896	1.331	1.208
	Median	3.000	3.000	1.000	1.000
	Mode	3.0	3.0	1.0	1.0
	Std. Deviation	1.1950	1.2481	.7843	.7018
	Sum	453.0	446.0	205.0	186.0

3.2 E-service quality

As presented below, talking about the E-service quality, 3 (1.9%) respondents strongly disagreed that they can easily find what they so want or need on the company(ies)'s website or application, 6 (3.8%) disagreed, 28 (18.1%) respondents rather stayed aloof, 89 (57.7%) agreed that they can easily find what they want and 28 (18.1%) others strongly agreed with the statement that can easily find what they want on the OFD's website or application. This then suggest that OFDs websites/applications are simplified. This further substantiates Persad & Padayachee (2015) assertion that one of the best features of a e-service is that

customer should be able to find that which they want on the app or website. This is the position with Lee & Josh (2007).

Second, 3 (1.9%) respondents strongly disagreed that the apps are well organized and easy to use, 6 (3.8%) others disagree and 21 (13.6%) steered clear the statement. However, 87 (56.4%) respondents agreed that the apps of OFD companies are well organized while 37 (24.02%) strongly agreed with the statement. Since the majority is arguing at the positive end, it is therefore save to say contents of websites or apps of online food delivery service are well organized. And in relation to Lee & Joshi (2007); Santos (2003) and Persad & Padayachee (2015) an effective OFD service must be such with a well arranged website.

Also, 1 (0.6%) respondent strongly disagreed that orders are intact when it is delivered to them, 4 (2.5%) only disagreed with the statement and 28 (18.1%) of the total respondents were neutral on this. On the other hand, 88 (57.1%) agreed that orders are intact upon delivery and 33 (21.4%) strongly agreed with the statement. to this end, it is safe to agree with the majority that orders are largely intact when it is delivered to intact. That is, care is usually taken to ensure that foods delivered using online delivery service are in good shape when delivered to customers. This hence revalidate the position of Prasetyo, et al. (2021) who believed that OFD optimal functionality must include that orders remain intact upon delivery.

In view of prompt of delivery of order, 2 (1.2%) strongly disagreed with that, 8 (5.1%) disagreed and 37 (24%) were neutral to the statement. But 86 (55.8%) of the respondents agreed with the statement and 21 (13.6%) strongly agreed with the statement. This is indicative of the fact that orders are promptly delivered to customers since the majority of the respondents agreed with it, with a handful others agreeing strongly with it. This result validate Khai, & Van (2018) who contended that responsiveness and fulfillment are functional parts of e-service quality.

Furthermore, 2 (1.2%) totally disagreed that there is quick attempt to resolve problems encountered by customers with regards to e-service, 13 (8.4%) disagreed and 44 (28.5%) stayed aloof. Conversely, 73 (47.4%) respondents agreed that there is prompt response to resolution of errors customers encounter online and 22 (14.2%) others agreed very strongly with this statement. On this note, one can rightly say customers usually get prompt resolution

to their problem while ordering food online. As averred by Persad & Padayachee Prasetyo, et al. (2021), (2015); Lee & Joshi (2007) and Khai, & Van (2018) that one an efficient OFD service must be able to resolve challenges promptly, the current study.

Also, one (0.6%) respondent disagreed strongly that they usually get the right or exact ordered food delivered to them, 4 (2.5%) disagreed while 11 (7.1%) respondents were silent on that. Interestingly, 93 (60.3%) agreed that the right food ordered are delivered to them and 45 (29.2%) strongly agreed with the statement. This is indicative of the fact there is usually no compromise in the type of food ordered and what is delivered to customers at the long run. Thus, according to the following authors, Prasetyo, et al. (2021); Persad & Padayachee Prasetyo, et al. (2021) (2015); Lee & Joshi (2007) and Khai, & Van (2018) an OFD service that must be above board must ensure that customers get exactly what they ordered for.

On the security of personal information of customers, 3 (1.9%) respondents strongly disagreed that personal information of customers are safe while using online food delivery service, 10 (6.4%) others disagreed and 50 others steered clear this statement. On the other hand, 61 (39.6%) of the respondents agreed that customers' information are safe online and 30 (19.4%) others strongly agreed to the statement. To this end, although most respondents agreed to it, the level of those that stayed aloof the question cast some doubt on the security of customers' information, hence, calling for more action.

In view of this, it is pertinent to note that Khai, & Van (2018); Prasetyo, et al. (2021); Prasetyo, et al. (2021); Persad & Padayachee Prasetyo, et al. (2021) (2015) as well as Lee & Joshi (2007) had agreed that security of customers' personal information while ordering food online is key to customers' satisfaction, and having had the majority of respondents suggesting that it is present in the OFD service in Estonian further suggests its place of importance.

In terms of the consistent availability of the delivery app, 1 (0.6%) respondent strongly disagreed, 3 others (1.9%) disagreed and 25 (16.2%) were neutral. Conversely, 76 (49.3%) agreed that delivery app is always up and 49 (31.8%) strongly agreed that it is always on. To this end, since the majority supports the fact that application is always on, this suggests that OFD network hardly experience downtime. The current finding supplement the position of

Khai, & Van (2018) who had earlier argued that for OFD service to be known as functional, it must experience little of network downtime.

Table 10: E-service quality

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I easily find what I need	3	1.9	6	3.8	28	18.1	89	57.7	28	18.1
The apps are well organized and easy to use	3	1.9	6	3.8	21	13.6	87	56.4	37	24.02
Orders are intact when delivered	1	0.6	4	2.5	28	18.1	88	57.1	33	21.4
Prompt Delivery	2	1.2	8	5.1	37	24	86	55.8	21	13.6
Quick problem resolution	2	1.2	13	8.4	44	28.5	73	47.4	22	14.2
The right order is delivered	1	0.6	4	2.5	11	7.1	93	60.3	45	29.2
Personal information is secured	3	1.9	10	6.4	50	32.1	61	39.6	30	19.4
Delivery app is always available	1	0.6	3	1.9	25	16.2	76	49.3	49	31.8
Total	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100

From the table below, both Wolt and Bolt food delivery companies have a significant correlation with E-service quality. Tellit records no significant correlation while Takeout.ee has negative correlation.

Table 11: Correlation between the frequently used delivery companies and the E service quality

	Frequently use? [Wolt]	Frequently use? [Bolt Food]	Frequently use? [Tellitoit]	Frequently use? [Takeout.ee]	Eservice quality
Frequently use? [Wolt] Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 154	.254** .001 154	.042 .608 154	.085 .296 154	.260** .001 154
Frequently use? [Bolt Food] Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.254** .001 154	1 154	.009 .915 154	.129 .110 154	.215** .007 154
Frequently use? [Tellitoit] Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.042 .608 154	.009 .915 154	1 154	.432** .000 154	.048 .554 154
Frequently use? [Takeout.ee] Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.085 .296 154	.129 .110 154	.432** .000 154	1 154	-.081 .316 154
Eservice quality Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.260** .001 154	.215** .007 154	.048 .554 154	-.081 .316 154	1 154

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.3 Food quality

With regards to food quality, 2 respondents (1.29%) strongly disagreed that food ordered online are healthy, 9 (5.8%) disagreed that such foods are healthy whereas 61 (39.6%) neutral, 65 (42.26%) agreed that such foods are healthy and 17 (11.03%) strongly agreed that they are healthy. Since the majority of the respondents is at the positive end of the argument this suggest that the foods are healthy. This further validates the position of Atkins & Bowler (2001) who argued that essentials of food quality sold over e-platform must include that such food is free from germs and other contaminations.

On the need to know if the food are fresh or not, 2 (1.29%) respondents totally disagreed with this, 8 (5.1%) respondents disagreed and 39 (25.3%) respondents kept a distance from the statement. However, 84 (54.5%) agreed to that and 21 (13.6%) others strongly agreed to the fact that such foods are fresh. On this note, one cannot but called to mind the position of Lee, & Hung (2017); Jang et al. (2011) who are of the view that freshness is a key component of food quality that is sold over the OFD.

Also, 2 (1.29%) respondents strongly disagreed that the foods are well packaged, 8 (5.1%) so disagreed with that and 29 (18.8%) stayed neutral to the statement. 81 (52.5%) respondents agreed with it and 35 (22.7%) of the total respondents strongly agreed with the statement. This shows that the foods are usually well packaged as the majority of the respondents agreed to that effect. This further deepens the position of Atkins & Bowler (2001); Lee, & Hung (2017); Jang et al. (2011) that OFD food must be adequately packaged.

And in terms of its tastefulness, 2 (1.29%) of the total respondents strongly disagreed, none other disagreed and 36 (23.3%) stayed neutral to the statement. On the other hand, 85 (55.1%) agreed that food bought using online food delivery service are tasty and 31 (20.12%) others strongly agreed with that statement. By this, it is evident that foods bought on OFD platform are tasty, suggesting that restaurants pay careful attention to such as to curry customers' purchasing decision. As Atkins & Bowler (2001); Lee, & Hung (2017); and Jang et al. (2011) have argued that quality food msut tasty, the current finding further revalidate that line of thought.

Table 12: Food quality

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Healthy	2	1.29	9	5.8	61	39.6	65	42.2	17	11.03
Fresh	2	1.29	8	5.1	39	25.3	84	54.5	21	13.6
Well-packaged	3	1.9	6	3.8	29	18.8	81	52.5	35	22.7
Tasty	2	1.29	0	0	36	23.3	85	55.1	31	20.12

With regards to the perceived value/satisfaction, and first, particularly if the delivery cost is reasonable, 5 respondents (3.24%) said they are very dissatisfied with food bought using online platforms, 18 (11.6%) were dissatisfied and 42 (27.2%) stood neutral to the statement. 70 (45.4%) said they are satisfied and 19 (12.3%) said they are strongly satisfied. This result hereby suggests that the cost of service delivery commensurate with the service rendered, it is reasonable. As suggested by Dang et al (2018); Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis (2012) that one of the perceived value or satisfaction of a reasonable price, this result further revalidates their position.

Second, 4 (2.59%) said they are strongly dissatisfied with the value they get for their money buying food online, 9 (5.8%) said they are dissatisfied and 43 (27.9%) were neutral to this statement. However, 78 (50.6%) said they are satisfied, they get the right value for their money and 20 (12.98%) others are very satisfied with such values. Therefore, it is safe to contend to contend that customers using OFD service get value for their money. This result goes a long way in complimenting the position of Titko, Lace, & Kozlovskis (2012) who had earlier asserted that a customer must get valued for whatever food he ordered online.

Also, 5 (3.2%) said they are very dissatisfied with the discounts and freebies that attend online food, 19 (12.3%) said they are dissatisfied with such and 50 (32.4%) were neutral. However, 59 (38.3%) said they are satisfied with such and 21 (13.6%) said they are very satisfied with them. Therefore since the majority is satisfied with this sort of inducement, it can be adjudged as the presence of a good customer attraction method towards influencing customers' decision.

And on the overall e-service assessment, 4 (2.5%) respondents each said they are very satisfied and satisfied with it respectively, 34 (22.07%) were neutral to the statement. 83 (53.8%) respondents said they are satisfied with it and 29 (18.8%) said they are very satisfied with e-service of the OFD companies generally. Thus, it is safe to agree that the general

assessment of the e-service component of OFD is satisfactory. Dang et al (2018) have earlier posited that the general assessment of e-service quality must be a full-orbed component and the current finding once again asents to it.

Table 13: Perceived value/satisfaction

Statement	Very dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Neutral		Satisfied		Very satisfied	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Reasonable delivery cost	5	3.24	18	11.6	42	27.2	70	45.4	19	12.3
I get value for my money	4	2.59	9	5.8	43	27.9	78	50.6	20	12.98
Discounts and freebies	5	3.2	19	12.3	50	32.4	59	38.3	21	13.6
General overall e-service	4	2.5	4	2.5	34	22.07	83	53.8	29	18.8
Total	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100

For behavioral intention, 3 (19%) strongly disapprove the possibility of recommending customers for online food delivery service, 7 (4.5%) disapprove, 30 (19.19.4%) were neutral, 74 (48.05%) approved of such tendency while 40 (25.9%) strongly approve recommending people for OFD. As the majority is the combination of those that agreed and strongly, this is an indication of hope that more customers will come through the recommendation of existing ones.

Also, 7 (4.5%) promised strongly disapprove of sticking to online food delivery service, 15 (9.7%) disapproved of it and 53 (34.4%) remained neutral. However, 58 (37.6%) approved on continuous usage and 21 (13.6%) strongly approved of it.

16 (10.3%) of the total respondent strongly disapproved of the tendency to purchase even if the cost of delivery increase 57 (35.06%) disapproved of it and 47 (30.5%) were silent on it. However, 26 (16.8%) approved of it and 8 (5.19%) strongly approved of it. Thus, it implies that an increase in the cost of delivery service will lead to decline in patronage.

2 (1.29%) respondents strongly disapproved that their frequency of patronage increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, 14 (9.09%) disapproved and 35 (22.7%) were neutral. Nevertheless, 63 (40.9%) respondents approved of it and 40 (25.9%) respondents. Since the majority affirmed that their frequency of patronage increased during the pandemic, shows that OFD is a potent weapon during issues as COVID-19 pandemic.

On the possibility of the continuous patronage of online food delivery service after COVID-19 pandemic, 7 (4.5%) respondents strongly disapproved of it, 19 (12.3%) disapproved of it and 36 (23.3%) respondents were neutral to the statement. 65 (42.2%) approved of it and 27 (17.5%) strongly approved of it. This is indicative of the fact that after the pandemic, OFD will still relevance in the society.

Table 14: Behavioral Intention

Statement	Strongly disapprove		Disapprove		Neutral		Approve		Strongly approve	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I will recommend to people	3	1.9	7	4.5	30	19.4	74	48.05	40	25.9
I will stick to online food service delivery	7	4.5	15	9.7	53	34.4	58	37.6	21	13.6
I will purchase even if the cost of delivery increase	16	10.3	57	35.06	47	30.5	26	16.8	8	5.19
My frequency of patronage increased during the pandemic	2	1.29	14	9.09	35	22.7	63	40.9	40	40.9
I will keep patronizing online food delivery service after the pandemic	7	4.5	19	12.3	36	23.3	65	42.2	27	17.5
Total	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100	154	100

3.4 Open questions discussion

Why do you make use of food delivery service?

This being an open ended question, the following are some of the answers given by the respondents; it is convenient particularly during odd time and bad weather, faster, easy to order, saves one of the stress of journeying around as well as saving time. To some, it is an option for comfort as well as when one is busy. Some other answered that it is to them a safety measure during COVID-19 pandemic. While some others see it as an escape from cooking at home, are others argued for its reliability and it is a means to accessing varieties of food that one may not have the skill or time to prepare at home and when food is needed

in the shortest possible time and when refrigerator or freezers are empty of food. Some others argued for the privacy it provides as against sit-in restaurant setting. Others argued for the freshness of the meal.

Table 15: Why do you make use of food delivery service?

Themes	F	%
Convenience	80	51.95
Fast/Time saving	50	32.47
Safety during COVID-19 pandemic	10	6.49
Access to other food varieties	14	9.09
Total	154	100

Where do you find information about the food delivery service?

Majority of the respondents argued that they usually find information about online food delivery service online through the following media; Google, Facebook, companies' applications or websites, other applications, through friends and family recommendations as well as their adverts on Google and through mailing adverts. To some others, it is a matter of subconscious and random picking, while some averred they saw it on social media, pop up adverts while others said it was through public advert or outdoor.

Table 16: Where do you find information about the food delivery service?

Themes	Frequency	%
Social media ads	85	55.19
Referral's/Recommendation	69	44.81
Total	154	100

In your opinion what are the advantages of the food delivery service?

Arguing for the merits of online food delivery service, many respondents said it saves time, convenient, fast and it gives access to wide variety of foods at the same time, remove the stress of cooking, it is reliable, it reduces accumulative stress before eating, and it is flexible. Some respondents viewed this from the socio-economic perspective to say that it is a source of employment or job creation as well as a source of revenue for restaurants having it and/or companies carrying out the service. It also keeps people employed during the pandemic as well making food readily available at all time.

Furthermore, other respondents assert that it reduces the associated risks associated with physical contacts during COVID-19 pandemic, therefore availing restaurants to stay in operation, the pandemic notwithstanding. Restaurants get to stay open even during the pandemic. In addition, they can serve more people than their physical spaces can ordinarily accommodate. It is also adjudged as fairly affordable and time saving, creating a sense of proximity between customers and restaurants. Also that customer gets maximum results with a minimum effort.

Table 17: In your opinion what are the advantages of the food delivery service?

Themes	Frequency	%
saves time/stress relieving	90	58.44
wide variety of foods	64	41.56
Total	154	100

In your opinion what are the disadvantages of the food delivery service?

Reacting to what could be the demerits of online food delivery service, respondents averred different factors to include the following: unhealthy food, language barrier which denied choice of right or desired food, delayed delivery, ineffective cost, poor packaging, poor or wrong description of order, impulsive purchase of unhealthy and expensive food, pollution and/or contamination in the course of delivery, exploitative tendency of delivery companies; according to some other respondents. it also leads to addiction, and that the bottleneck in resolving wrong order or wrong delivery is high, it is costlier and food can become very cold sometimes before it is delivered, some needs are not available for deliver, poor packaging, unhygienic condition of food, some it is mostly junk and could lead to obesity. Some respondents said it is making restaurant to becoming more of a dependent component of food production as it makes restaurants to appear chained, with fewer clients in restaurants as well as the monopolistic tendencies of the service owners against restaurants and couriers, as well as poor knowledge of the contents and constituents of food by customers.

Table 18: In your opinion what are the disadvantages of the food delivery service?

Themes	F	%
unhealthy food addiction	25	38.5
delayed delivery	30	46.2
ineffective cost	25	38.5
poor packaging	30	46.2
contamination in the course of delivery	44	67.76
Total	154	100

3.5 Correlation and Regression analysis

This study made use of Pearson correlation to analyze the data. I tested the relationship between the variables between E-service, food quality, perceived value/satisfaction and Behavioral intention. From the result, it shows that there is significance between food quality and E-service quality. This implies as e-service moves positively, food quality follows too. In addition, I observed that there is also a significance between both e-service and food quality with perceived value/satisfaction.

Table 19: Result of Correlation between variables (E-service, food quality, perceived value/satisfaction and Behavioral intention)

		Eservice quality	Food quality	PV/Satisfaction	BI
Eservice quality	Pearson Correlation	1	.669**	.622**	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
Food quality	Pearson Correlation	.669**	1	.668**	.497**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	154	154	154	154
PV/Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.622**	.668**	1	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	154	154	154	154
BI	Pearson Correlation	.476**	.497**	.555**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	154	154	154	154

From this result below, I made use of multiple regression to analyze my research questions to test the relationship between customer satisfaction as well as the influence of the different specific variables including age, E-service, Food quality and behavioral intention.

From the result, age has no significant value with satisfaction. This implies that older people are less likely to be satisfied even though it's not significant, it might also be due to the low purchasing decision from older people. All other variables are significant to satisfaction; this shows that there is a positive relationship between e-service, food quality and behavioral intention to the dependent variable satisfaction. Nationality has a little significance at just 10% on the satisfaction gotten from the OFD services.

Table 20: Regression results with and without specific variables model 1.

Variables	Customer satisfaction		
	model 1(with age)	model 2(without age)	Model 3(with nationality)
Constant	-0.16	-0.22	-0.13
Age	-0.40		-0.43
Nationality			0.19*
E-service	0.31***	0.32***	0.27***
Food quality	0.47***	0.47***	0.49***
Behavioral intention	0.26***	0.26***	0.27***
R²	0.55	0.55	0.56
Adjusted R²	0.54	0.54	0.54
F-sig	0.00***	0.00***	0.00***

Notes: *p # 0.001 level (2tailed);**

From the result on table 21, it indicates that age and Nationality has no significance in the behavioral intention of the customers. E-service has a little significance of 10% in customer behavioral intention of customers. Lastly, Food quality and customers satisfaction have a huge significance on the behavioral intention of customers to keep up making use of OFD services. This implies that their continuous patronage will be tied to the food quality and the satisfaction gotten from the service.

Table 21: Regression results with and without specific variables model 2.

Variables	Behavioral intention model
Constant	0.71
Age	0.48
Nationality	-0.17
E-service	0.22*
Food quality	0.14***
Satisfaction	0.37***
R²	0.36
Adjusted R²	0.34
F-sig	0.00***

Notes: *p # 0.001 level (2tailed);**

3.6 Discussion of Findings

Although the online food delivery service is fast gaining popularity even globally, how e-service quality and food quality influence customers' loyalty towards its adoption appeared not to gain popularity among scholars and stakeholders. Thus, the current study examined the roles of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers' decision towards adopting online food delivery service. The study, therefore, reveals certain crucial points as discussed hereunder.

First, the empirical research has revealed the importance of e-service quality as an effective and essential component in determining customers' decision towards online food delivery service, as responses from respondents show a direct relationship between the level of quality and customers' behavioural pattern. This is in tandem with the postulations of the like of Persad&Padayachee (2015) and Lee & Joshi (2007), which according to them for a restaurant to achieve a competitive advantage, such must be able to get through to the heart of the customers with certain components or qualities of e-service, such as time-saving, delivery performance, website functionality, Internet popularity, financial efficiency, risk, customer support as well as variety. This as these factors has both direct as well as indirect impacts on customers' decision towards online food delivery service. Therefore, e-service quality if maximally optimized stands the capability of influencing customers' decision in choosing or sticking to online food delivery service as it is also capable of entrenching perceived values into customers' heart. Thus, where the quality of e-service is top notched, it helps in reinforcing the attended quality of the food being the major reason that customer is using the service of online food delivery service. Translating to, though e-service quality is not all that fulfills customer's desire in using online food delivery service, rather the food, but it has a high impacting value on the overall satisfaction of the customers' further helping in swaying customers' decision towards adoption of online food delivery.

Findings therefrom also revealed as well as bolstering the role of food quality towards influencing customers' decision in adopting online food delivery service. That is, findings showed that customers' decision in using OFD service is a function of the shades of quality inherent in the food, as the decision of customers' to adopt OFD service mid-wived by the values a customers get from the food in terms of its inherent qualities. The foregoing substantiated Vindigni, Janssen, &Jager (2002) and Suhartanto, et al. (2019) who posit that

essential features a food company such as a restaurant is inherent in what can grossly be termed quality, which plays a very important role in influencing customers' perception and experience with the with the restaurant. Thus, no doubt, the quality inherent in food is a stimulating factor that necessitates if customers will continue to order more food or not, particularly using OFD service as a result of the value they derived from the food particularly.

In addition, this attests to the truism of results of earlier researches in the purview of food quality vis-à-vis online food delivery service that high quality food has the capability to influence customers (Ha & Jang, 2010; Liu et al (2017). As to them, the choice of a given restaurant or use of OFD by a customer is determined by the quality of food such offers for sale. Therefore, customers will be willing to purchase as well as recommend others if the food is known for a high quality. Thus, the finding here suggests that the inherent qualities of a food are a crucial features of servicing company, either in the context of a restaurant or through the platform of OFD. In view of this, it is necessary that food sold over the OFD platform should be of high quality that, if it does not beat customers' expectation, it should be at par with, in order to influence customers' decision towards attaining a competitive edge for the company.

Therefore, the overall effect of these two variables, e-service quality and food quality, suggest a similarity in roles of the two variables in influencing decision of customers towards online food delivery service. In sum, the two, e-service quality and food, is an encasement of formidable factors with the capacity to in the decision making process of customers in adopting online food delivery service. These comparable features of qualities indicate that both are potent factors with the capacity to influence customers' decision about online delivery service, suggesting that to influence customers' decision towards an online food delivery service, both components, food quality and e-service quality, must be available and at par. Thus, both factors must be emphasized by the stakeholders in the business of OFD service, and it must be done in a way that one will not thrive at the mercy of others.

In view of the theoretical or conceptual model, the appropriateness of the model designed and tested for this research work further extends and simplifies the prior findings in this circle of knowledge in works of Hsiao, et al (2016); Lovelock (2016) and Relihan (2017).

Thus, it is safe to contend that e-service quality and food quality are two major factors that influence customers' decision towards online food delivery service.

Thus, this study has further unearthed the existing nexus between e-service quality and food quality, implying that e-service quality has a direct relationship with food quality, as e-service having an impact on the inherent qualities of a food delivered over an online food delivery service. By implication, while the main object in this context is food, the quality of e-service complementarily goes a long way in tuning the satisfaction of the customer as well substantiating their expectation. This is because the delivery process and its attendant features also have a psychological effect on customers, suggestive of the fact that satisfaction of customers does not necessarily commenced with the consumption of the food rather from the moment customers begin to search for food online, through to the delivery process. Hence, it is the combination of the experience and values customers derived from the moment they logged online to search for food and the latent features of the websites, security as well as those latent qualities related to food – how intact it is upon, freshness, tastefulness etc. that influence customers' decision.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The following inferences have been drawn based on the outcome of this research endeavour. Thus, first, in view of one of the set objectives, that which concerns the need to examine the influence of e-service quality on customers' decision towards online food delivery service, result of the current study, both from theoretical review and empirical survey, has substantiated that electronic service quality, otherwise simply refers to as e-service quality, if well optimized and all its expected features and qualities are in perfect shape whereby one can easily find what he needs, features, components and menu of apps are well organized and easy to use, problems are quickly resolved, there is an assurance of security of personal information, and that delivery app has marginal or no downtime at all; as well as orders are promptly delivered and intact when delivered, with the right order being delivered to customers, has the capacity to influence customers' decision towards OFD service.

Second, the study examined the influence of food quality on customers' decision towards online food delivery services in Estonia, further substantiating that customers' decision in adopting online food delivery service is not a product of haphazard action, rather a function of many attributes of food such as how healthy it is, its freshness, how it is well packaged upon delivery as well as its taste. Thus, if a food delivered over an online platform will be known for all these attributes, it has the capacity of influencing customers' decision towards a consistent usage of online food delivery service.

Furthermore, in view of the need to examine the roles of both e-service quality and food quality in influencing consumer's satisfaction towards online food delivery services in Estonia, it has been substantiated that the combination of these variables are great factors in determining customers' satisfaction. That is, if stakeholders, those in the restaurants and the major players in the e-service end, will ensure that the shades of features or qualities are present in both the food and the e-service platform, customers will definitely be satisfied and in turn see OFD service a worthy option and will justify its adoption than cooking by themselves or patronizing traditional restaurants.

And pursuant to some of the complaints of respondents as reflected both in qualitative and quantitative data, it is certain that online food delivery service in Estonia is still way behind

customers' expectation, and need to be optimized in other that it may enjoy continuous and/or a much better patronage.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are consequent to findings of this research:

- i. Effective implementation of all of the components of both e-service quality and food quality are of immense benefit to online food delivery service; therefore, major stakeholders should ensure that those components are integral parts of what they offer as to be able to influence the decision of customers to adopt online food delivery service.
- ii. Pursuant to the fact that many of the respondents complained about the fact that food often get delayed and cold before it reaches them, it is hereby recommended that restaurants should come up with an especially fast cooking service for customers with the means and OFD companies should in turn procure some sorts of super-fast cars with able hands that will help to deliver the food to customers within the shortest possible time, so as to rip off the complaints associated with delayed delivery.
- iii. And to curb complaints as unhealthy food, poor packaging, poor or wrong description of order, exploitative and monopolistic tendencies, bottleneck in resolving wrong order or wrong delivery, unhygienic condition of food, lack of the knowledge of the contents and constituents of food by customers, junk foods and several other complaints, the government of Estonia particularly and that of all other nations where OFD service is available should set a regulatory body that will help in regulating the activities of OFD service and monitoring the complaints of customers as well as that the operations of both the restaurants and those of the OFD companies may in turns satisfy customers' expectations.
- iv. Following the alarming number of respondents that assert that they do not make use of Tellitoit and Takeout.ee, it is paramount that the two companies should individually conduct an intensive market survey to unearth the major reasons why customers do not really patronise them and thereby work on those weak points.
- v. Generally, all restaurants servicing OFD companies should as a matter of necessity undertake surveys to know the needs and complaints of customers so that their service can be tailored to meeting customers' complaints. Also,

OFD companies should consider having a multilingual service on their websites that customers from various linguistic backgrounds may be able to access services without linguistic barrier.

- vi. Further, the present global reality is that technology evolves on a daily basis; therefore, further researches on technological use in online food delivery service should be intensified so that OFD service may keep a pace with evolving technological innovations towards satisfying customers and achieving a competitive edge.
- vii. This study has proven that there are still vast uncovered grounds in the areas of food, e-service and OFD services; hence, subsequent research could be tailored towards a distinct scope of, perhaps, how e-service can benefit the traditional restaurant service, how the idea of OFD can be adopted in other spheres of life among several other researchable areas.
- viii. In view of the fact that competition is an indispensable factor in business, each OFD company should further intensify research on competitive areas so that it would know how best to compete and thrive among several other competing service providers. This is owing to the fact that consumers' taste is something that is fluid, thus research must be up-to-date to determine clients' desire at any given time.

Limitations

Basically, the generalization of this study is likely to be inhibited by the following factors: The study focuses on the role of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers' decision towards an online food delivery service; thus, the result may not be applicable to physical or traditional restaurants' operations. That is, since one of the main variables of this study focuses on how the quality of electronic service (e-service) can help to influence customers' decision towards online food delivery service, without taking cognizance of factors that influence customers' decision to traditional restaurant setting, this suggests that the result of this study may not find applicability in the traditional restaurant setting.

Second, the number of willing respondents, 154 respondents in comparison to the total population or residents of Estonia is very limited and insignificant; thus, if given chances, opinions of others may be different from the result of this study. Although the limited number of respondents was a result of factors such as inadequate time to gather more empirical data, the non-compliance of the food delivery companies to help in hosting the questionnaire on

their websites, as well as the financial implication of having a large number of respondents if other means or methods should be adopted in gathering data. To this end, the generalization of findings of this study is at stake. Moreover, since the research is focused on online food delivery service in Estonia, opinions of respondents are also bound to be limited only to experience of customers or respondents in Estonia and may be void of the power generalisation to online food delivery service in other nations, contiguous proximity notwithstanding.

Also the choice of questionnaire as the instrument, among other instruments of data gathering is to avail the benefit of carrying out a descriptive research as well as an in-depth investigation of the role of e-service quality and food quality in influencing customers' decision towards online food delivery service; however, if one had adopted one or more methods to gather data such may offer a more full-orbed research findings as well as limiting research excesses or miss-steps that the researcher might have committed.

In view of the forgoing, findings of this research is subject only to respondents' truthfulness and faithfulness in rendering what they purported their objective opinions as they answered the questionnaire. Howbeit, to avoid much of deviations and research pitfalls, the questionnaire was distilled and simplified to ensure that respondents comprehend the questions seamlessly.

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APPENDICE 1

Questionnaire

The Role of E-Service and Food Quality in Influencing Customers' Decision towards Online Food Delivery Service in Estonia

My name is Tomiwa Akegbejo-Samsons. I am a final year master's student of the Estonian University of Life Sciences. This questionnaire is part of my master thesis research project. I hereby solicit your help in filling this designed survey. Participation in this survey is voluntary and all information gathered will be used exclusively and strictly for academic purposes only.

This should take approximately 5 minutes

* Required

1. Gender: Kindly indicate your gender. *

Male

Female

Other:

2. Age: *

Less than 18

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

Above 64

3. Education *

Secondary/High school education

Vocational school

Bachelors

Masters

PhD and Post Doc

Other:

4. Occupation *

Student

Self-employed

Employed for wages

Unemployed

Entrepreneur

Pensionaire

5. Nationality *

6. Which of the following food delivery companies do you frequently use? *

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

Wolt
Bolt Food
Tellit
Takeout.ee
Wolt
Bolt Food
Tellit
Takeout.ee
7.E-service quality *
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
I easily find what I need
The apps are well organized and easy to use
Orders are intact when delivered
Prompt Delivery
Quick problem resolution
The right order is delivered
Personal information is secured
Delivery app is always available
I easily find what I need
The apps are well organized and easy to use
Orders are intact when delivered
Prompt Delivery
Quick problem resolution
The right order is delivered
Personal information is secured
Delivery app is always available
8. Food quality *
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
Healthy
Fresh
Well-packaged
Tasty
Healthy
Fresh
Well-packaged
Tasty
9. Perceived value /satisfaction *
Very dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Neutral
Satisfied
Very satisfied

Reasonable delivery cost
I get value for my money
Discounts and freebies
General overall e-service
Reasonable delivery cost
I get value for my money
Discounts and freebies
General overall e-service

10. Behavioral Intention *

Strongly disapprove

Disapprove

Neutral

Approve

Strongly approve

I will recommend to people

I will stick to online food service delivery

I will purchase even if the cost of delivery increase

My frequency of patronage increased during the pandemic

I will keep patronizing online food delivery service after the pandemic

I will recommend to people

I will stick to online food service delivery

I will purchase even if the cost of delivery increase

My frequency of patronage increased during the pandemic

I will keep patronizing online food delivery service after the pandemic

11. Why do you make use of food delivery service? *

12. Where do you find information about the food delivery service? *

13. In your opinion what are the advantages of the food delivery service? *

14. In your opinion what are the disadvantages of the food delivery service? *