



The Performance of Foodpanda During The Pandemic: A Study of Consumers' Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Foodpanda is a food delivery service widely known among Malaysians for ordering food and groceries. Due to the pandemic outbreak, the usage of Foodpanda apps has rapidly increased. The objective of the study is to identify the performance of Foodpanda during the pandemic and if Foodpanda is the favorite food delivery service. A total of 150 Foodpanda customers participated in the survey. Results indicated that Foodpanda is ranked as the most favorite food delivery service in Malaysia. The results also indicated that customer satisfaction and loyalty are the key elements of the better performance of Foodpanda. The recommendation is presented.

Keywords: Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction, Foodpanda, Malaysia, Pandemic, Performance

JEL Classification Codes: M10, L80, L86

INTRODUCTION

Food delivery service is surfaced like mushrooms after rain as our nation moved into a new era. The first-ever food delivery service was in 1768 in Korea for their famous cold noodle (*naengmyeon*) service delivery. Meal or food delivery service has become very demanding in our current pandemic year. Ordering food involves contacting a local restaurant or any food vendor by telephone or online app. Southeast Asia has a big market to be penetrated by food delivery services. While the food market is a gold mine to make business, it is a small part of this food delivery market (Kandasivam, 2017). This shows a significant opportunity for food delivery services' future growth. By the year 2022, it is expected that the annual revenue will grow to USD 956 million for the delivery business, where there is rapid growth in the sector market of food (EC Insider, 2018). Kee et al. (2021) stated that it is an opportunity to optimize the performance of food delivery services during the pandemic. Warriar et al. (2021) stated that online shopping has become a trend and replaces traditional shopping. To attract more customers to



shop online, retailers usually will make their online store environment more entertaining and attractive (Anwar, Kee, & Ahmed, 2020).

For many people nowadays, delivery services are a convenient option during movement control orders (MCO), or for safety reasons. We are not allowed to dine in at restaurants or go outside for leisure purposes. Many prefer this option of food delivery as this allows them to have fresh and healthy food at their offices or homes while they have the freedom to continue to work during this challenging time. The situation in the foodservice industry is unpredictable, where most businesses were forced to close for the pandemic time. Some initiatives are to be taken among businesses to comply with lockdown and social distancing regulations, including switching to take-away or delivery and adopting adaptive solutions to procure products. Initiatives have been taken to a certain degree of business adaptiveness and organizational resilience that has been addressed in previous research (Hall, Prayag & Amore, 2017).

This paper examines the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on foodservice industries on consumers satisfaction, customer loyalty, and convenience. Kamilah et al. (2020) reported that customer satisfaction and job satisfaction were the key elements of the success of Foodpanda. Foodpanda does take this opportunity by developing various marketing strategies during the pandemic. They introduce new pricing policies, deliver policies, and many other good things. Foodpanda is one of many delivery services that lead in the global online food delivery marketplace. It is headquartered in Berlin, Germany. It operates in more than 40 countries across 5 continents including Malaysia. All of their promotions are advertised using social media. Foodpanda has a variety of food categories and restaurants in the application and website enabling the customers to order food. After that, it will directly process the transaction and transmit the order to the partner restaurants that have been registered with Foodpanda application. Then, the food delivery workers or we call them riders will deliver the food and remind the customers to collect their orders by sending the SMS or by direct phone call to the customers. Customers may make payments with either cash on delivery or online transaction (Sparta, Alsumait, & Joshi, 2019).

The rise of Foodpanda during the pandemic is because of the powerful and user-friendly mobile app and website. Customers have the chance to browse the huge number of listed restaurants and order food without the hassle. They also may follow up using the mobile app or website on the orders they made until the orders arrived. Foodpanda has raised \$318 million of venture capital. Nearly \$20 million was raised in initial funding from Rocket Internet and investment AB Kinnevik 2013. During the same year, iMENA Holdings invested approximately \$8 million and received another \$ 20 million in the year 2014. Goldman Sachs also invested nearly \$100 million. All the investments really show confidence from investors and VCs about Foodpanda's success and growth. Despite the situation and marketing, the consistent purchase of a preferred product or service is considered as a deep commitment to customer loyalty.



The increased competition in the present environment (e.g., Uber Eat, Grabfood, Eat Fresh) and the fast-growing market entry of new concept stores and formats are the challenges of increasing performance. Foodpanda needs to understand and empirically estimate this important type of consumer behavior (Bloemer & Ruyter, 1998). Foodpanda needs to find more alternatives and intensify ways to attract potential consumers. The online loyalty of some brands in expanding conventional loyalty with the involvement of online technology as an intermediary of interaction between consumer and company. Abou-Shouk & Khalifa (2017); Kim, Jin, & Swinney (2009); Pee, Jiang, and Klein (2018) described online loyalty as the customers' loyalty toward the website. This indicates customers' intention to revisit the website of their preference and make a transaction or even just want to recommend their favorite website to others.

In the last few years, most Malaysians preferred to dine in, self-pick up, or even drive-thru, which had boosted the usage of the food delivery platform. Food delivery will continue to be a big trend in 2020 (Convenience comes home, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has hit the nation hard since March 2020 which causes economic issues and even unemployment rate growth. Under these critical circumstances, food delivery platforms are getting even stronger as customers can only order take-away and delivery. Cloud kitchens and food deliveries are the big winners in this MCO (Lim, 2020). Food delivery platforms are attracting more customers and attracting more people to join them as delivery riders. Food delivery services are seen as an odd job before, however, it became the most in-demand job (Kamel, 2021). Currently, these few years are the years we can see Foodpanda growing into a bigger platform which not only delivers food but also groceries and let users pre-order for self-pick-up. This leads us to investigate why consumers choose to use Foodpanda over other food delivery platforms and what strategies Foodpanda implemented to grow faster than the other food delivery platforms.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, food delivery services such as Foodpanda have been widely used, especially in Malaysia. The non-cash transaction and food delivery service are now important in Malaysia due to the hit of Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, it has been rare for customers in purchasing in stalls to avoid the virus. Product performance of associated with customer expectation is the subjective assessment of satisfaction (Suhartanto, Ali, Tan, Sjahroeddin, & Kusdibyoy (2019). Satisfaction is defined as the sense that fulfills the need, desired, goal and the fulfillment is pleasurable (Oliver, 1999). Satisfied customers with a particular delivery service may intend to use back the service for future use or may recommend it to others (Anderson & Srinivasan, 2003; Pee et al., 2018).

Customer satisfaction is vital in a competitive business environment such as in food and food delivery business. Satisfaction and customer experience have an important role in online food delivery services. Customer relationship is the objective of customer satisfaction, and it has antecedents like perceived quality and perceived value. The relationship of customer satisfaction and performance of the company became the focus of many studies for conventional marketing approach and the literature reveals only limited studies in online retailing (Evanschitzky, Lyer, & Hesse, 2004; Hsu, 2008; Jiang



and Rosenbloom, 2005; Kim, Ma, & Kim, 2006; Szymanski & Hise, 2000). Foodpanda needs to focus on the quality of service and the goal for its delivery service. According to Ashwin Irappa, Director of Product, Foodpanda, geofencing is used to mark the restaurants and about three to ten radius is where the restaurant can deliver. This enables consumers to just able to choose the restaurants near to them and could deliver the food in a shorter time compared to a restaurant located afar.

H1: There is a relationship between customer satisfaction and performance of delivery service during pandemic.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty is a concept of behavior in which loyal customers are those who systematically purchase goods repeatedly within a specific time in a certain period (Suhartanto et al. 2019). Customer tendency to regularly visit the network in the future is the behavioral intention of an individual (Brown & Venkatesh, 2005; Dwivedi, 2005; Venkatesh and Brown, 2001). Customer loyalty is about consumer emotional thoughts to repurchase or promote to others (Gursoy, Chen, & Chi, 2014). Reliability and efficiency of service provided by a delivery company, such as Foodpanda, are beneficial and the service must always be in a good performance to ensure customer loyalty are a top priority. Also, Foodpanda rider's attitude must be in an acceptable manner and meet delivery time expectations. Customer loyalty can be called brand loyalty where customers are loyal to a certain degree to a particular brand (Aaker, 1997). Brand loyalty is generally defined as an expression of sustained buying behavior such as future repurchase, recommendation, and word of mouth based on trust of the brand (Schreiner et al., 2008).

H2: There is a relationship between customer loyalty and the impact of performance on delivery service.

Convenient of Foodpanda

Online food ordering saves more time and promises lower costs compared to traditional food ordering (Akroush & Al-Debei, 2015). A behavioral intention that influence consumer for purchasing online is time-saving as it is the major contributory factors (Khalil, 2014). There was a rise in Malaysian consumers using mobile devices for online shopping. In 2016, it was 17.9 million, by the year 2020, it is expected to be 21.1 million. The rising penetration rate has made it easier to shop or even to order food from anywhere and at any time. Food delivery services are a convenient option during busy work or in a current pandemic situation. The food delivery service is a good choice for healthy and fresh food at home or in the office. The food and beverage industry impacted by the food delivery service has the potential to grow, with higher employee productivity, the accuracy of delivering orders, and building important customer databases (Moriarty, 2016). Foodpanda provides the convenience of an easy-to-use website, smooth navigation, and user friendly.



H3. There is a relationship between the convenience of Foodpanda app usage and its performance during the pandemic.

RESEARCH METHOD

All the questions were administered into a five-section questionnaire to measure the variables employed in the study. The questionnaire applied closed-ended questions with multiple choice answer options with predefined answers that offer the respondent the possibility to select and indicated a 5-point scale. All the respondents were required to indicate (1 = Strongly disagree; 5 = Strongly agree) the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each statement.

The first section is designed as a filter question to obtain the reliability and validity of our data collection. The second section is based on demography questions. The third section focuses on the convenience of Foodpanda (3 questions). The fourth section is mainly based on customer loyalty towards Foodpanda (5 questions). The questions from the fifth section cover the customer satisfaction towards Foodpanda delivery service (4 questions). For these questions, optional space was provided to elaborate on the answer. This open part is considered of great importance as it contributes to improving the interpretation of its overall results and provides additional valuable material.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 102 Foodpanda users have responded to the survey. Table 1 presents the demographics of the respondents.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics (N=102)

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| Age | | |
| 18-19 | 5 | 4.9 |
| 20-21 | 31 | 30.4 |
| 22-23 | 42 | 41.2 |
| 24-25 | 13 | 12.7 |
| 26-27 | 4 | 3.9 |
| 28-29 | 4 | 3.9 |
| 30 and above | 3 | 2.9 |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 51 | 50.0 |
| Male | 51 | 50.0 |
| Race | | |



| | | |
|-------------------------|----|------|
| Chinese | 43 | 42.2 |
| Indian | 9 | 8.8 |
| Indian Muslim | 2 | 2.0 |
| Malay | 48 | 47.1 |
| Occupation | | |
| Admin assistance | 1 | 1.0 |
| Clerk | 1 | 1.0 |
| Housewife | 6 | 5.9 |
| Insurance Agent | 1 | 1.0 |
| Student | 67 | 65.7 |
| Working Professionals | 26 | 25.5 |
| Income Per Month | | |
| RM 1000 and below | 68 | 66.7 |
| RM 1001 – RM 2000 | 18 | 17.6 |
| RM2001 – RM 3000 | 9 | 8.8 |
| RM 3001 – RM 5000 | 5 | 4.9 |
| RM 5001 – RM 10 000 | 1 | 1.0 |
| RM 10 001 and above | 1 | 1.0 |

The respondents were mainly in the age range of 22 to 23 years old (41.2%). Besides, 30.4% of the respondent are 20 to 21 years old, followed by 12.7% of the respondents are from the age of 24 to 25 years old. Half of the respondents were male and half were female. By race, 47.1% is Malay, 42.2% is Chinese, 8.8% is Indian, 1% is Indian and 2% is Indian Muslim. By occupation, 65.7% is students, 25.5% is professionals, 5.9% housewives, 1% is admin assistance, clerk, and insurance agent. By income, 66.7% of earns below RM 1,000, and 17.6% earns RM 1001 to RM 2000.

Table 2. Convenient of Foodpanda

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|
| How did you discover Foodpanda | | |
| Advertisement | 1 | 1.0 |
| App store | 59 | 57.8 |
| Friend recommendation | 20 | 19.6 |
| On the road | 1 | 1.0 |
| TV advertisement | 1 | 1.0 |
| Website | 19 | 18.6 |
| YouTube Advertisement | 1 | 1.0 |
| How long does Foodpanda delivery usually take | | |
| 15 minutes to 30 minutes | 68 | 66.7 |



| | | |
|--|----|------|
| 30 minutes to 1 hour | 33 | 32.4 |
| More than 1 hour | 1 | 1.0 |
| The method used for Foodpanda service | | |
| Direct call on the phone | 2 | 2.0 |
| Using Foodpanda mobile app | 92 | 90.2 |
| Using Foodpanda website | 8 | 7.9 |
| Rate on the Convenient of Foodpanda | | |
| Ranking 10 | 41 | 40.2 |
| Ranking 9 | 21 | 20.6 |
| Ranking 8 | 19 | 18.6 |
| Ranking 7 | 10 | 9.8 |
| Ranking 6 | 9 | 8.8 |
| Ranking 5 | 2 | 2.0 |

Customer's perception of mobile food ordering apps changes after ordering food online due to convenience and control, which led to an increase in online food ordering (Kimes, 2011). Certain characteristics were analyzed by the researchers on the online food ordering app, and the majority of the consumers agree that it is convenient to order food using the Internet (Sethu & Saini, 2016). Based on Table 2, more than half of the respondents (57.8%) discovered Foodpanda from the Apps, 19.6% were recommended by friends, and 19.8% discovered from the website. This shows that the Foodpanda delivery apps are convenient and easy to find. According to Malhotra (2016), customers can order food based on their desired situation because of the ease of using Foodpanda applications.

There are significantly increased penetration rates of smartphone usage, making it more convenient for consumers to shop around the globe. Retail sales via mobile devices accounted for 15% of all online sales in 2016. It is predicted that, by 2020, it will account for 22% of the total value of online sales. Based on the literature review and table above, almost 91.0% of the respondents agreed that they use the Foodpanda application via smartphone to order their food.

Most of the respondents also rated Foodpanda as the top convenient food delivery service; 40.2% rated 10, 20.6% rated 9, and 18.6% rated the rank 8. Foodpanda delivery service is also known as a well-designed app that is very handy for customers working after office hours and chasing deadlines where they do not have time to stop by for a meal. It is convenient for customers to select their favorite meal with a click of a mouse button or a tap on the smartphone away. Those who live in smaller towns might also find it convenient when they wish to savor dishes from their favorite restaurant in the comfort of their own home.

The main factor that affects the convenience of Foodpanda is to get the food in a short time. For example, when workers are having their lunch break, they can order through



Foodpanda and enjoy their meal within the break. According to our research, 66.7% of the respondents voted that they could get their food within 15 to 30 minutes, 32.4% got their food within 30 minutes to 1 hour. There may be times delivery do take more than an hour as there are various reasons such as the merchants received too many orders and cannot make it in time which could cause a delay in delivering.

Table 3. Customer Loyalty

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|
| Did you use Foodpanda delivery service before the pandemic (March 2020) | | |
| Yes | 71 | 69.6 |
| No | 31 | 30.4 |
| Do you use Foodpanda delivery service during the pandemic | | |
| Yes | 94 | 92.2 |
| No | 8 | 7.8 |
| Do you use Foodpanda delivery service more often during the pandemic | | |
| Yes | 74 | 72.5 |
| No | 28 | 27.5 |
| Foodpanda usage | | |
| Everyday | 8 | 7.8 |
| More than 3 days in a week | 26 | 25.5 |
| Once a week | 28 | 27.5 |
| Twice a month | 15 | 14.7 |
| Once a month | 4 | 3.9 |
| Once a two month | 15 | 14.7 |
| More than two months | 6 | 5.9 |
| On average, how much did you spend on Foodpanda services a month | | |
| Less than RM 100 per month | 81 | 79.4 |
| RM 101 – RM 200 per month | 19 | 18.6 |
| More than RM 201 per month | 2 | 2.0 |
| What is your acceptable delivery time | | |
| 15 minutes to 30 minutes | 60 | 58.8 |
| 30 minutes to 1 hour | 38 | 37.3 |
| Depends on the food and circumstances | 4 | 3.9 |



According to literature suggests, loyal consumers boost the company' profit through their enduring devotion towards the company and allows the company to minimize costs in acquiring new clients (Reichheld, Markey, & Hopton, 2000). Table 2 displays that most of the customers show their loyalty in Foodpanda's service where the majority of the respondents (69.6%) used Foodpanda delivery service even before the implementation of Malaysian Movement Control Order at March 2020. Also, we found that the customer usage of Foodpanda delivery was increased to 94 respondents (92.2%) during the pandemic. This shows positive customer behavior especially their loyalty towards Foodpanda where 74 respondents (72.5%) agreed that they used Foodpanda delivery service more often during the pandemic.

In addition, we also found that most of the respondents (27.5%) used Foodpanda delivery service once a week and 25.5% used it more than 3 days a week during this pandemic. This shows that customers' loyalty and commitment towards Foodpanda delivery service indicated customer intention to re-visit Foodpanda's service in long term. Besides, there are 81 respondents (79.4%) stated that they spent below RM 100 each month on Foodpanda delivery service. This can also be understood as Foodpanda acquired a large group of loyal customers from the market that generated a sum of expected income for Foodpanda monthly.

The customers' acceptable delivery time also directly reflected their loyalty toward Foodpanda where 60 respondents (58.8%) were willing to wait 15 minutes to 30 minutes for their delivery which is almost similar to their competitors' delivery time. Thus, in a competitive and challenging business environment, such as in the restaurant industry, having customer satisfaction is inadequate to ensure business survival, let alone to increase business success (Ha & Jang, 2010). The key for Foodpanda to survive and flourish in this competitive environment especially during the pandemic is through having loyal customers.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics, Cronbach's Alpha, And Zero-Order Correlations of all study variable

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Customer Satisfaction | 0.885 | | |
| Customer Loyalty | 0.911** | 0.896 | |
| Convenience | 0.641** | 0.749** | 0.845 |
| M | 4.392 | 4.400 | 4.513 |
| SD | 0.730 | 0.654 | 0.582 |

Note, N = 102; **p < 0.001 M; Mean, SD; Standard Deviation

Table 4 shows the coefficient alpha ranging between 0.885 and 0.845, and the correlation of customer satisfaction shows positive significance to customer loyalty where the average $r = 0.911$ and moderate with convenient of Foodpanda where average $r = 0.641$. The intercorrelated alpha is $r^2 = 0.835$.



Table 5. Regression Analysis

| Variable entered | Beta |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| (R ² change = 0.835) | |
| Customer loyalty | 0.983 |
| Convenient of Foodpanda | -0.095 |

Note, N = 102; **p < 0.001

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results

| No | Hypotheses | Finding |
|----|---|----------|
| H1 | There is a relationship between customer satisfaction and performance of delivery service during the pandemic. | Rejected |
| H2 | There is a relationship between customer loyalty and the impact of performance on delivery service. | Accepted |
| H3 | There is a relationship between the convenience of Foodpanda app usage and its performance during the pandemic. | Rejected |

Table 5 shows that customer loyalty and convenience of Foodpanda were set as an independent variable, while customer satisfaction was set as a dependent variable. Only customer loyalty was found as significant to customer satisfaction with sig <0.001 and beta of 0.983 while the convenience of Foodpanda was 0.126 with beta of -0.095. Customer loyalty plays role in achieving customer satisfaction thus helping in Foodpanda performance during the pandemic. From 3 of our hypotheses, only 1 hypothesis (H2) is accepted and it confirms that customer loyalty does give an impact on Foodpanda performance in the pandemic (see Table 6).

CONCLUSIONS

The results show that there is a negative relationship between customer satisfaction and the delivery service during the pandemic. Factors such as payment methods, people interaction, variety of food are important aspects of customer satisfaction in online food delivery services (Kwong, Soo-Ryue, Shiun-Yi, & Lily, 2017). Besides, the quality of service is the most important aspect in having customer satisfaction. To obtain customer satisfaction, service providers must not only focus to earn profit but also maximize customer satisfaction (Nicolaidis, 2008). Furthermore, the result indicates a positive relationship between customer loyalty and the impact of performance for delivery service. Performance of food delivery service provides an efficient way of technology with preferred payment methods and convenience of using the application. The application of food delivery service can be installed in a short time where customers are able to order and purchase at their desired time (Gupta, 2019).



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