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## Consumer choice factors in the use of delivery apps in the city of Guayaquil

Reconciling rights: Prenatal adoption and legislation in Ecuador

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### Abstract

This paper presents a detailed analysis of the various factors influencing user satisfaction with home delivery services in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador, during the specific context of the COVID-19 pandemic. A descriptive and cross-sectional methodology was used with a sample of 100 respondents, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques through online surveys. The results revealed that the most used applications are PedidosYa and Rappi, with a moderate trend of weekly or monthly use. Most users rated the quality of service positively, although areas of opportunity were identified to improve the user experience, such as timeliness of delivery and transparency of service. The importance of continuous innovation by delivery companies to meet the changing needs of consumers and maintain their position in the market is highlighted. In addition, it is suggested to conduct further research focused on the specific marketing strategies employed by companies on social networks.

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These digital platforms have acquired unprecedented relevance in the current era, becoming crucial channels for attracting and retaining customers. It is also recommended to analyze future trends in the delivery market, in order to assess the possible advantages, challenges and potential impacts on the Ecuadorian market.

**Key words:** Applications, Delivery, Consumer behavior, Satisfaction, Consumers.

## Resumen

El presente trabajo presenta un análisis detallado de los diversos factores que influyen en la satisfacción de los usuarios respecto a los servicios de entrega a domicilio en la ciudad de Guayaquil, Ecuador, durante el contexto específico de la pandemia COVID-19. Se utilizó una metodología descriptiva y transversal con una muestra de 100 encuestados, combinando técnicas cuantitativas y cualitativas a través de encuestas online. Los resultados revelaron que las aplicaciones más utilizadas son PedidosYa y Rappi, con una tendencia moderada de uso semanal o mensual. La mayoría de los usuarios calificaron positivamente la calidad del servicio, aunque se identificaron áreas de oportunidad para mejorar la experiencia del usuario, como la puntualidad en la entrega y la transparencia en el servicio. Se destaca la importancia de la innovación continua por parte de las empresas de reparto para satisfacer las necesidades cambiantes de los consumidores y mantener su posición en el mercado. Además, se sugiere realizar investigaciones adicionales centradas en las estrategias de marketing específicas empleadas por las empresas en las redes sociales. Estas plataformas digitales han adquirido una relevancia sin precedentes en la era actual, convirtiéndose en canales cruciales para atraer y retener clientes. Asimismo, se recomienda analizar las tendencias futuras del mercado de delivery, con el fin de evaluar las posibles ventajas, desafíos e impactos potenciales en el mercado ecuatoriano.

**Palabras clave:** Aplicaciones, Delivery, Comportamiento del consumidor, Satisfacción, Consumidores.

## Introduction

Over the past few years, we have witnessed the evolution of delivery services in Ecuador, marked by the rapid adoption of delivery apps. As these apps have become active in people's daily lives, it has become clear that the boom in home delivery has not only been the result of the expansion of e-commerce but also a direct reflection of consumers' choices for options that offer convenience and accessibility.

Initially, home delivery services were not frequently used by users; however, the unexpected global pandemic has acted as a catalyst for these services, making them, at that time, the only option for obtaining supplies at home. And with that, forcing many establishments to close their doors to the public and focus on home delivery to keep their businesses afloat.

A similar view is held by Alejandro Figari, director of PedidosYa Ecuador. "The pandemic prompted a faster adoption of Ecuadorians to use the delivery service for food, supermarket, pharmacy and anything else that can be delivered at home". (Vinueza, 2023)

This change in consumer behavior has redefined the market and brought new entrants, who compete with established services such as PedidosYa, formerly known as Glovo, one of the first apps to make inroads in the country in 2018, operating in 16 cities. That same year, Uber Eats was incorporated, which has been expanding its reach, reaching more than 10 cities. (Zapata, 2022)

A year after the arrival of PedidosYa and Uber Eats to the Ecuadorian market, the Rappi app arrived, which managed to diversify its presence and gain visibility during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

"The challenges that the pandemic brought us led us to many opportunities for improvement through the speed in the adoption of technologies, which allowed us to empower ourselves even more in

the digital ecosystem, always thinking of new ways of relating to the environment," says Alejandro Freund, general manager of Rappi Ecuador.

Delivery services are present in different types of businesses, being more used by restaurants, this is because the consumer lives in a society where time is of the essence and it becomes a necessity to buy online to satisfy a basic need, such as food. (Medina Chacón, 2021)

The main question posed by this article is: What are the main factors that contribute to user satisfaction or dissatisfaction with delivery services in the city of Guayaquil? The general objective of the paper was to analyze the factors that influence consumer choice and satisfaction when using delivery applications in Ecuador.

As specific objectives we have:

- Observe the frequency of users' use of ordering apps.
- Examine the behavior that influences consumer purchase and consumption decisions in delivery applications.
- Identify the services with the highest follow-up and demand among users.

The COVID -19 pandemic created a landscape of accelerated digital transformation. The restrictions led to increased adoption of mobile applications that offer home delivery services allowing people to shop without leaving home. According to a study by Statista, "In Latin America, the culinary business has always enjoyed great dynamism, but the boom in online ordering and delivery generated by the COVID-19 pandemic intensified demand significantly. Between 2019 and 2022 alone, it grew by more than 63%, surpassing the \$6 billion threshold." (Statista Research Department, 2024)

Digital marketing and advertising have played a crucial role in expanding the coverage of these services on digital platforms, making it possible to reach various corners of the country and thus broadening their reach.

"Social networks have marked a milestone in terms of mass dissemination, due to their reach, characteristics and impact on today's society. They are used by both individuals and companies, given that they make it possible to achieve interactive and dynamic communication." (Toledo Chambilla, 2021, p. 23)

The initial diffusion that companies gave to their services in different social networks, presenting them as a considerable preventive measure in the time of pandemic, caused a change in cognitive behavior that raised the level of trust in people, making them feel safe and protected. This strategy was subsequently implemented by medium-sized companies and enterprises.

Large companies have implemented various adaptations to provide a service in line with consumer needs. For example, Postmates introduced "contactless delivery" in the United States through its app.

This functionality allows the customer to request that their orders be left at their door, thus eliminating direct interaction between the courier and the customer. Companies such as Grubhub and Uber Eats have implemented a similar mechanism, while DoorDash advises its users to specify, via a message or image, where they prefer to receive their orders. Also in the field of deliveries in China, two giants such as Meituan and Alibaba have experimented with "contactless deliveries". (Walls, 2022)

Unlike large companies, the expenses and costs associated with delivery applications led local establishments to create their own "delivery", adapting them to the situation of each one. One example is Hunter's restaurant, run by Stalin Velastegui, which modified its order-taking process and incorporated courtesy gestures. At events such as Mother's Day, delivery drivers, formerly waiters protected with biosecurity uniforms, included a complimentary rose with each order delivered. (Ortiz, 2021). As Stalin expressed, "The reception has been good, because customers know that the person carrying their order has not been going all over the city, but only works with us." This type of adaptation demonstrates how establishments seek to

maintain the trust and satisfaction of their customers through personalized actions.

Some authors define satisfaction as a process of evaluating a product or service experience, comparing customer expectations with the results achieved (Westbrook, 1983, Hunt, 1977). On the other hand, loyalty is based on how well a company delivers on its basic promises and solves day-to-day problems, not on how spectacular its service experience may be. Most customers don't want to be "wowed," they want an effortless experience. And they are much more likely to punish you for bad service than reward you for good service. (Dixon, Toman, & DeLisi, 2013)

These two concepts, satisfaction and loyalty, are closely linked. Customer satisfaction is a key antecedent of loyalty, since when customers' expectations are met or exceeded, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards the company and establish a lasting relationship with it.

In this sense, companies should focus not only on offering quality products or services that meet customer expectations (which leads to satisfaction), but also on providing consistent service and solving problems efficiently on a day-to-day basis (which fosters loyalty).

## Methodology

This research focused on analyzing consumer behavior in relation to delivery applications, specifically in the city of Guayaquil. For this purpose, a descriptive and transversal methodology was used due to the need to obtain a deep and updated understanding of the diversity of factors that can influence purchasing decisions, preferences and practices of consumers at a specific time. The target population were users of different ages who use these applications.

A mixed methodology was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. It is important to note that the closed-ended multiple-choice questions were designed to obtain data on specific behaviors and preferences, while the open-ended questions allow us to capture more detailed perceptions and opinions of participants

based on their experiences, offering a deeper insight into the underlying factors. This mixed approach will allow not only to quantify patterns but also to understand the reasons and contexts behind consumer decisions.

The sample was selected through a non-probabilistic convenience sampling of 100 respondents. This data collection was conducted through structured online surveys.

The techniques applied in this research were the survey. The questionnaire included multiple-choice, closed-ended questions designed to obtain information on consumer behavior and its relationship with delivery applications. The survey was distributed via email and social networks to facilitate the participation of a broad spectrum of subjects. A three-week data collection period was established, during which respondents were encouraged to participate.

The data collected were analyzed using statistical software, which allowed for descriptive analyses of the multiple-choice and closed-ended responses, as well as a qualitative analysis of the responses elaborated. The ethical principles of confidentiality, privacy and informed consent were respected throughout the research process. Participants were informed of the objectives of the research and were asked for their consent to participate voluntarily.

## Results

The key aspects analyzed were to determine which delivery applications are most used by respondents when placing orders. The results indicate that "Pedidos Ya" is the preferred platform, closely followed by "Uber Eats" and "Rappi". In addition, it is observed that other alternative applications have a smaller share of the delivery market.

Another question analyzed was the frequency of use of delivery applications, divided into two equal groups: those who use them "once a week" and those who use them "occasionally". The most common option was "several times a month" with 26.7% and 17.3% "several times a week". No respondent uses them daily, suggesting moderate and non-exclusive consumption.

As a next point, we analyzed that the majority prefer delivery orders between 30 minutes and 1 hour, or less than 30 minutes, evidencing the demand for fast and efficient delivery services. However, a minority accepts to wait between 1 and 2 hours, prioritizing aspects other than delivery time, such as the quality of the product or service and the quality of the product or service.

In this question, respondents mentioned that they use these apps because of the offers and promotions offered by these platforms. Another key reason is to avoid the chore of cooking. Additional influencing factors, albeit to a lesser extent, are the time savings and convenience provided by home delivery services.

We also note that respondents have a positive tendency to give confidence to these applications and the option of "maybe" also with a high percentage seeing that he "is not" with a very low nature.

A large percentage (58.6%) said yes to good service, while 30% thought it was excellent and 9.9% thought it was bad, indicating that respondents thought the service provided was good.

Fast food is at the top of the respondents' list, followed by seafood and diet foods. Preferences in other categories are similar to each other, and a small group is undecided due to the wide variety of dishes available.

The evening hours are the most popular times for our respondents to use the applications, followed by the afternoon and as last options morning and early morning, it can be differentiated by the fact that the deliveries are more active from the afternoon to the evening. Punctuality is a fundamental factor when it comes to purchase of the respondents, followed by the cost of shipping that plays a big role with the guarantee.



This study highlights the significant impact of a crisis on consumer perception and purchasing behavior, as well as the transformation in market mentality. This change has been catalyzed by marketing and advertising strategies that have contributed to the consolidation of a new commercial sector. It is emphasized that this study focused on a sample of the population of the city of Guayaquil.

There were points treated in a vague way that would be important to develop in an exhaustive way, such as investigating the specific strategies used by the delivery companies to promote their services in social and other digital networks, and how these contributed to their growth and expansion. An analysis of future trends in the Deliverys market is also suggested, considering factors such as the adoption of new technologies, changes in consumer habits and the entry of new competitors, in order to evaluate in detail the advantages, challenges and possible impacts on the Ecuadorian market.

## Conclusions

After carrying out the research process and analyzing the results obtained, the conclusions of the study are presented in conclusion.

It is evident that PedidosYa and Rappi are the most used by the participants, positioning themselves as leaders in the Ecuadorian market, although a frequent use of these platforms was evidenced, with a weekly or monthly trend, it has not become an integral part of people's daily lives, its use remains moderate, without excesses.

The overall rating of the service provided by the applications was rated as "good" by the participants, but there was not as high a range of "excellent", this is due to several factors, and it is important to identify the shortcomings and adjust the services, this represents an area of opportunity for companies to continuously improve the user experience.

Contemporary society experiences high levels of stress and a fast-paced life, which increases the demand for fast and timely services,

such as the delivery of food, products and shopping in general, an important factor emphasized by most consumers.

The number of users of delivery applications continues to grow, underscoring the importance of maintaining competitive offerings and high quality service to retain users. While there is growing popularity, there is still a considerable population that does not yet fully trust these services, and one solution to this is to improve transparency, quality and customer safety.

As a recommendation, it is essential that delivery companies continue to innovate and adapt to the changing needs of consumers, offering convenient, fast and quality options to maintain their position in the market and build customer loyalty.

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