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## **Driving Sales in the Platform Economy: The Role of Taste and Promotion in Chaipao Asiok Purchases through GrabFood**

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### ***Abstract:***

*This study aims to examine the economic influence of taste and promotional strategies on consumer purchase decisions for Chaipao Asiok through the GrabFood application. As food delivery platforms become increasingly dominant in the digital economy, understanding key consumer drivers such as sensory experience (taste) and marketing efforts (promotion) is critical for business sustainability. The study population comprises all Chaipao Asiok consumers who ordered via the GrabFood application from 2020 to 2024. A total of 130 respondents were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The analytical method employed was multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that both taste and promotion have a positive and statistically significant impact on consumer purchase decisions. These results highlight the economic value of strategic flavor development and promotional engagement in enhancing consumer behavior within the food delivery ecosystem.*

**Keywords:** *Taste; Promotion; Purchase Decisions; Digital Economy*

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## **1. Introduction**

GrabFood is a food ordering service that provides convenience in the food delivery process and partners with various restaurants in the consumer's area that are registered with the GrabFood service. GrabFood has enabled millions of merchants and consumers to join the business of the future. It consistently helps small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and individuals grow their businesses by selling their products online (Dalal et al., 2023; Hwang et al., 2020; Lee & Lee, 2021; Zhang et al., 2024). The growth of digital platforms has created new opportunities for economic participation, particularly for micro and small food businesses (Prastito & Wardi, 2023; Tobing et al., 2023).

The results of an online research conducted by digital research company Snapcart Indonesia noted that GrabFood leads the e-delivery industry market for consumers

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and merchants in Indonesia. GrabFood is the most used food delivery app by merchants, with the highest average daily revenue. The research shows that 82% of restaurants and food and beverage stores use the GrabFood app for their services, followed by GoFood (71%) and ShopeeFood (28%). The level of popularity (brand awareness) of GrabFood and GoFood is the same. ShopeeFood is behind them in popularity, as it is a newcomer to the market. 100% of consumers know and recognize GoFood and GrabFood, while 52% know ShopeeFood. In the growing digital era, the trend of using food ordering apps such as GrabFood has become a significant phenomenon among consumers in Indonesia, especially in Medan. The ease of accessibility and convenience offered by this application has changed the pattern of consumer behavior in meeting their food needs (Ali & Novansa, 2017; Jayadi et al., 2022; Samiono & Pratiwi, 2023; Yeo et al., 2020).

The existence of the Chinese food business in Indonesia illustrates a very promising potential, especially with regard to chaipao which is increasingly growing. This is certainly characterized by the many competitors of chaipao. Entering the Chinese food business world is not difficult, because the market share for Chinese cuisine is quite broad and gets high enthusiasm from the public. The high consumer interest in Chinese food makes this business even more interesting to explore. Chaipao Asiok, which was founded in 1989, sells various snacks and Chinese bread at relatively affordable prices. Researchers at Chaipao Asiok obtained secondary data in the form of sales figures from 2019 to 2023. The data shows fluctuations in sales performance through GrabFood. In 2021, sales decreased by 24%; in 2022, they increased by 19%; in 2023, they declined again by 8%; and in 2024, sales dropped further by 12%. These fluctuations reflect instability in consumer purchase decisions via GrabFood (Pradini et al., 2021; Madani & Alshraideh, 2021).

Taste is a consumer's sensory-based evaluation of food or beverages, encompassing aspects such as aroma, texture, temperature, and flavor. It plays a significant role in purchase decisions, especially in the culinary industry. A distinctive and consistent taste increases product appeal and repurchase intent. Several studies affirm that taste significantly influences purchasing behavior in online food delivery services (Adiba, 2016; Hanifah & Wulandari, 2021; Munte et al., 2020; Wijaksono & Tuti, 2023). At Chaipao Asiok, declining food quality has resulted in negative reviews and lower ratings, signaling taste-related dissatisfaction among consumers (Li et al., 2024). Key factors such as aroma, seasoning, and flavoring contribute directly to the taste experience (Hwang et al., 2020).

Promotion is crucial for businesses as it drives sales, enhances brand awareness, and builds stronger customer relationships. In the digital food delivery industry, effective promotional strategies are essential in influencing consumer decisions and increasing competitiveness (Sari & Mustaqim, 2024; Regina et al., 2021). Although Chaipao Asiok has participated in several GrabFood promotional programs such as flash sales and discounts, the effectiveness of these campaigns remains limited due to minimal social media communication. Promotional content is typically posted only once, reducing the reach and impact among followers and potential buyers (Damara & Dianita, 2023; Pradini et al., 2021; Yeo et al., 2020). This inefficiency has constrained

their ability to convert promotional efforts into tangible sales increases (Tobing et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2024).

Consequently, this study aims to analyze how taste and promotion, as key marketing factors, influence purchase decisions for Chaipao Asiok through the GrabFood application, particularly within the broader context of digital consumer behavior and economic sustainability in the online food service sector.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **Purchase Decision**

The purchase decision is the stage in the buyer's decision-making process where the consumer actually buys. Decision making is an individual activity that is directly involved in obtaining and using the goods offered (Zang et al., 2024). Meanwhile, purchasing decisions are important because the pattern of these purchasing decisions will be the basis for product marketers to determine the best strategy to encourage purchases (Tobing et al., 2023). Purchase decisions are the result of a decision-making process that involves analyzing, evaluating and selecting from various available alternatives so that it becomes the most appropriate action for consumers (Sari & Mustaqim 2024). In purchasing decisions, there are six dimensions of purchasing decisions which are used as indicators of purchasing decisions, namely product choice, brand choice, supplier choice, purchase time, purchase amount, and payment method.

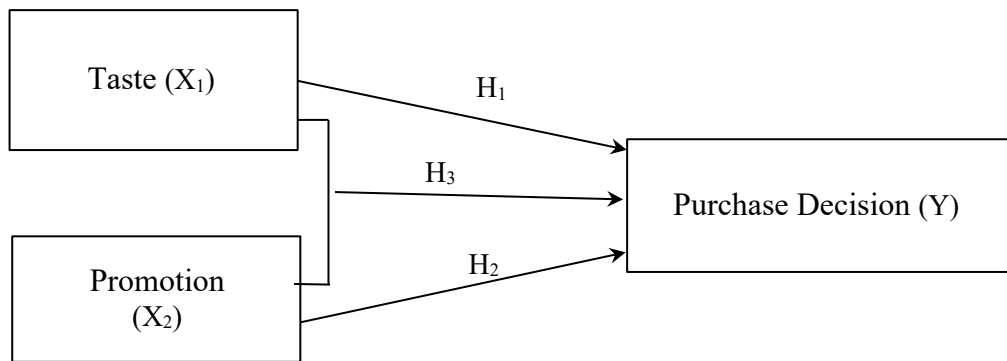
### **Taste**

Taste is an attribute of food and beverages that includes appearance, odor, taste, texture, and temperature. Taste is a form of cooperation of the five human senses, namely taste, smell, touch, sight, and hearing (Li et al., 2024). Taste is a way of selecting food that must be distinguished from the flavor of the food. Taste is a food attribute that includes appearance, smell, taste, texture and temperature (Surahman & Winarti, 2021). Taste is one of the determinants of product acceptance by consumers. Therefore, businesses must optimize the taste of each food. Taste can be measured by indicators of flavor, aroma and texture or shape of the product (Munte et al., 2020).

### **Promotion**

Promotion is an important component of marketing management that helps achieve business objectives and helps build positive relationships with target markets (Hwang et al., 2020). Promotion strategy is the planning and execution of communications to inform, persuade, or remind people about products. Promotion is a specific part of marketing that focuses on communicating marketing messages to target markets. Promotion is often one of the key elements in a broad marketing strategy to achieve specific marketing objectives

(Hwang et al., 2020). The following are some commonly used promotional indicators awareness, recall, response, sales, customer loyalty, customer value, profit, return on investment (ROI)(Pradini et al., 2021).



**Figure 1. Research Model**

Source: Researcher (2025)

### 3. Methodology

This research was conducted at Chaipao Asiok, located at Jl. Selamat No. 42B, Durian, Medan Timur, Medan City, North Sumatra 20236. The study uses a quantitative approach, employing both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through interviews and questionnaires distributed to respondents, while secondary data were gathered from documentation such as books and previous research journals related to the variables studied. The target population includes all Chaipao Asiok consumers who made purchases through the GrabFood application from 2020 to 2024. Since the total population is unknown, the Hair et al. sampling method was used to determine the appropriate sample size. With 13 indicators analyzed, the formula recommends a minimum sample size of 130 respondents, which was adopted for this study.

The analytical technique used in this study is multiple linear regression analysis, which is suitable for examining the influence of more than one independent variable on a dependent variable. In this case, the independent variables are taste and promotion, while the dependent variable is the purchase decision. Multiple linear regression helps determine both the strength and direction of the relationship between these variables. The analysis was conducted using statistical software to test hypotheses, evaluate the significance of each variable, and assess the overall model fit. This method enables researchers to draw meaningful conclusions about how taste and promotional strategies on the GrabFood platform influence consumer purchase decisions for Chaipao Asiok.

## **4. Empirical Findings/Result**

### **Respondent Characteristics**

The characteristics of the respondents in this study show that the majority were between 17 to 30 years old, indicating a younger consumer demographic. Most of the respondents were female, making up over half of the participants. In terms of purchase frequency, most consumers had made fewer than 15 purchases. Regarding their occupation, students represented the highest proportion, followed by private or public employees. This suggests that Chaipao Asiok's target market on the GrabFood platform primarily consists of young, female students with a relatively low purchase frequency.

### **Validity and Reliability Test**

The validity test for all questionnaire items related to the variables of taste, promotion, and purchase decision showed that each item's correlation coefficient ( $r$ -count) exceeded the critical  $r$ -table value of 0.361. This confirms that all questionnaire items are valid and suitable for measuring each respective variable. The reliability test also demonstrated strong internal consistency across all variables. The Cronbach's Alpha values were 0.809 for taste, 0.931 for promotion, and 0.863 for purchase decision, each exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.60. Therefore, it can be concluded that all instruments used in this study are both valid and reliable.

### **Normality Test**

To determine whether the data were normally distributed, the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used. The resulting significance value was 0.061, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the data follow a normal distribution. This conclusion is further supported by the P-P plot, where the data points closely follow the diagonal line, and the histogram, which shows a bell-shaped curve resembling a normal distribution. These results confirm that the residuals in the regression model are normally distributed, satisfying the assumption of normality.

### **Multicollinearity Test**

The multicollinearity test aimed to assess whether the independent variables (taste and promotion) were highly correlated with each other. The results indicated that both variables had a tolerance value greater than 0.1 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) below 10. Specifically, the tolerance values were 0.716 and the VIFs were 1.396 for both variables. This confirms that multicollinearity is not present in the regression model, and that the independent variables do not distort the results due to excessive correlation.

### **Heteroscedasticity Test**

To check for heteroscedasticity, the Glejser test was applied. The significance values for both the taste and promotion variables were above 0.05, specifically 0.528 and 0.814 respectively. These results indicate the absence of heteroscedasticity, meaning that the residual variances are consistent across all levels of the independent variables. Additionally, the scatterplot graph illustrates that the data points are randomly

distributed and do not form a discernible pattern, further confirming that heteroscedasticity is not an issue in this study.

### Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis is an analysis to determine whether there is a significant effect partially or simultaneously between two or more independent variables on one dependent variable variable.

**Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	15.577	2.212		7.042	.000
Taste	.383	.104	.248	3.691	.000
Promotion Experience	.377	.042	.608	9.058	.000

Source: Data processed (2025)

**Purchase Decision = 15.577 + 0.383 Taste+ 0.377 Promotion**

If Taste and Promotion experience an increase or constant, the Purchase Decision is 15,577 units. Every time there is an increase of one unit for the taste variable, the Purchase Decision is 0.383 units, assuming the Promotion variable is constant. Every time there is an increase of one unit for the Promotion variable, the Purchase Decision is 0.451 units, assuming the Taste variable is constant.

### T test

The t test can be used to partially test each variable. According to Sujarweni (2019), The t test shows how far the influence of independent variables or explanatory variables individually in explaining the dependent variable.

**Table 2. t Test**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	15.577	2.212		7.042	.000
Taste	.383	.104	.248	3.691	.000
Promotion Experience	.377	.042	.608	9.058	.000

Source: Data processed (2025)

The taste variable has a regression coefficient of 0.383 which shows the direction of the regression coefficient is positive. This means that Taste has a positive influence on purchase decisions at Chaipao Asiok. The tcount value (3.691) > ttable (1.979) then H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, meaning that partially taste has an effect on purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok. The significant value is 0.000 < 0.05. It can be said that taste is significant because the significant value is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Based on the test results, it can be concluded that Taste has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Chaipao Asiok. It can be concluded that hypothesis one (H1) is supported.

The promotion variable has a regression coefficient of 0.377 which shows the direction of the regression coefficient is positive. This means that promotion has a positive influence on purchasing decisions at Chaipao Asiok. The tcount value (9.058) > ttable (1.979) then H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, meaning that partially promotion has an effect on purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok. A significant value of 0.000 < 0.05. It can be said that taste is significant because the significant value is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Based on the test results, it can be concluded that promotion has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for Chaipao. It can be concluded that hypothesis one (H2) is supported.

### F Test

The F test is also known as the anova test, a test to see the effect of variables together. According to Sujarweni (2019), The F test is the significance of the regression model simultaneously independent variables affect the dependent variable.

**Table 3. F Test**

F	Sig.
91.661	.000

Source: Data processed (2025)

Based on Table 3. above, it can be seen that the Fcount value (91.661). For a confidence level of 95% with  $df1 = 2$  and  $df2 = 127$  is 3.09. Therefore, it is obtained that the value of Fcount (91.661) > Ftable (3.07) with a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05, then H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted, namely simultaneously the taste and promotion of the Grabfood application has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok. It can be concluded that hypothesis three (H3) is supported.

### Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination is a number between 0 and 1 that measures how well a statistical model predicts an outcome. The model does not predict the result. According to Su arweni (2023), the coefficient of determination (R2) is the most important measure in regression. The coefficient of determination (R2) reflects the ability of the dependent variable.

**Table 4. Coefficient of Determination**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.769 <sup>a</sup>	.591	.584	7.202

Source: Data processed (2025)

R Square is 0.591, which means that the taste and promotion of the Grabfood application on purchasing decisions at Chaipao Asiok is 59.1% and the remaining 40.1% is influenced by other variables outside of this study such as service quality, customer satisfaction, packaging.

## **5. Discussion**

The results indicate that the taste variable (X1) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok. Taste plays a critical role in the food industry as a primary sensory factor influencing consumer acceptance and preference (Lee et al., 2021; Nguyen & Tran, 2023). Components such as aroma, seasoning, texture, and flavoring combine to create the overall taste experience, which can significantly affect customer satisfaction and loyalty (Smith & Park, 2022). At Chaipao Asiok, a decline in taste quality has been linked to negative consumer reviews and lower ratings, which in turn impacts purchasing decisions adversely. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as the work by Johnson and Kim (2020), who found that taste perception significantly affects consumer buying behavior in food services. Similarly, research on social media platforms by Arora et al. (2022) confirmed that consumers' perceptions of taste influence their purchase decisions, supporting the results of this study.

Regarding the promotion variable on the GrabFood application (X2), this study finds a significant and positive influence on consumers' purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok. Promotion is widely recognized as a key driver in attracting and retaining customers, enhancing brand visibility, and stimulating sales growth (Choi & Lee, 2021; Martinez & Wilson, 2024). Chaipao Asiok employs various promotional strategies, including flash sales and discount campaigns on GrabFood and Instagram, aimed at increasing customer engagement and sales volume. However, the effectiveness of these promotions is somewhat limited by inconsistent communication, such as posting promotional offers only on the same day, which reduces consumer awareness and participation. This outcome corresponds with findings by Patel and Singh (2023), who emphasized that promotion frequency and timely communication are critical factors in maximizing promotional impact on purchasing decisions. Additionally, research on coffee purchasing behavior by Wang et al. (2022) highlighted that promotional efforts significantly enhance consumer purchase intent, further reinforcing the relevance of this study's findings.

The simultaneous effect of taste and promotion on purchasing decisions was tested using the F-test, revealing that these two variables together explain 59.1% of the variance in purchase decisions at Chaipao Asiok. This substantial explanatory power underscores the importance of both sensory experience and marketing activities in shaping consumer behavior (Garcia & Lopez, 2021). Nonetheless, 40.9% of the purchasing decision variance remains attributable to other factors not included in this study, such as service quality, customer satisfaction, and packaging, which have been identified in prior research as influential in consumer decision-making processes (Huang et al., 2023; Kim & Park, 2020). These results are consistent with the broader literature that demonstrates how a combination of product attributes and marketing efforts jointly influence consumer purchase behavior in the food delivery ecosystem (Zhang & Chen, 2024).



## 6. Conclusions

This study concludes that both taste and promotion on the GrabFood platform have a significant and positive influence on purchasing decisions for Chaipao Asiok, both individually and simultaneously. Therefore, it is essential for Chaipao Asiok to continuously monitor and improve these two factors while actively participating in various promotional programs on GrabFood.

To enhance the taste experience, Chaipao Asiok should ensure that the texture of the chaipao is consistently soft and appealing by using fresher sweet potatoes to achieve the ideal flavor and texture. Additionally, the filling should remain crunchy, savory, and fresh by maintaining the quality and freshness of vegetables and meat used. On the promotional side, Chaipao Asiok should focus on designing attractive and relevant promotions tailored to their target market, such as discounts, combo packages, or free shipping offers. Optimizing the store profile on GrabFood, including clear and appealing product photos and menu descriptions, will also help attract more customers and improve purchase decisions.

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