

Lived Experiences of Online Food Delivery Riders: A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

Online food delivery (OFD) is a relatively new industry in the Philippines that has grown significantly in recent years. This expansion has been accompanied by a noticeable surge in the number of OFD riders, who play a pivotal role in the transportation of food items from restaurants to customers' residences. This phenomenon has drawn interest to the developing industry, revealing a qualitative research gap. To address this, this study adopted a phenomenological approach to investigate the lived experiences of OFD riders, aiming to uncover the essence of these experiences and how these sustained them in their job. The participants of the study are six male OFD riders from GrabFood and Foodpanda who are employed within Iloilo City. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The findings revealed the main theme illustrating how riders navigate through various challenging situations. Moreover, a recurring theme emerged, indicating that participants derived satisfaction from the flexibility and autonomy offered by their current job, surpassing their previous employment experiences. This finding aligns with Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The study also revealed riders' struggles with road and web-related issues, system errors, and instances of fake bookings and fraudulent orders. Despite the challenges and difficulties they faced, the participants expressed a strong preference for retaining their current employment, citing the need to generate income to support their families and the freedom to work flexible hours without the presence of a supervisor. The

findings of this study contribute to raising awareness among OFD riders regarding their shared occupational experiences and enhancing consumer understanding of the challenges faced by them. Furthermore, this research provides a profound understanding of the lived experiences of delivery riders within a rapidly expanding industry in the Philippines.

Keywords: Food delivery, Online Food Delivery, Philippines, Food Riders