

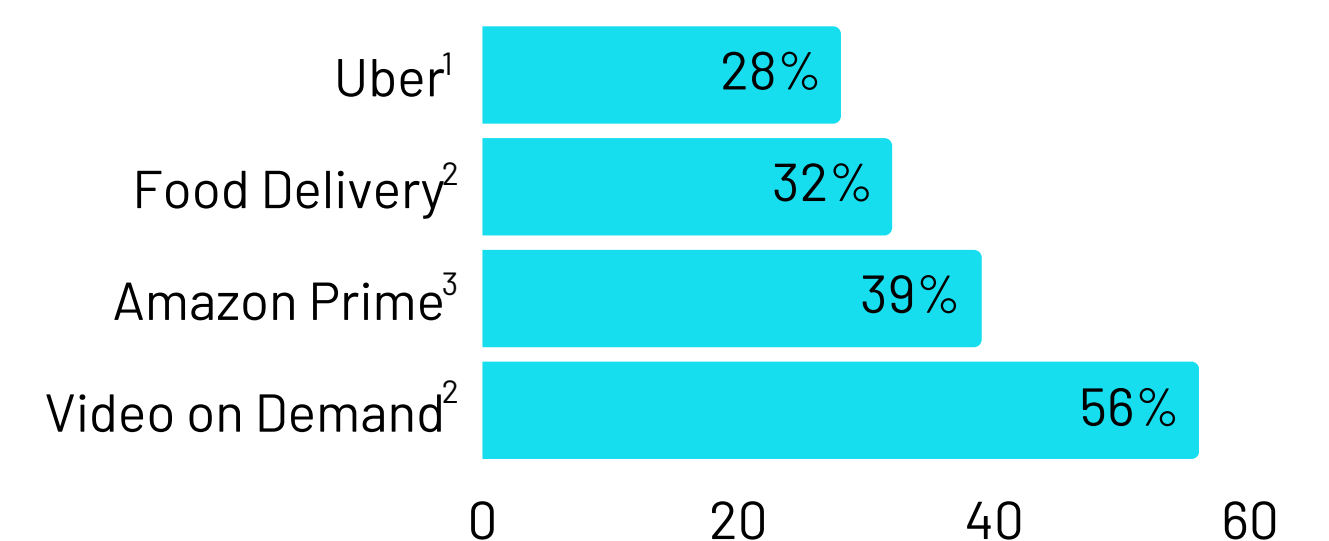
Social and Climate Implications of On-Demand Digital Services

Felippa Amanta | felippa.amanta@ouce.ox.ac.uk
 Environmental Change Institute, School of Geography and the Environment
 @iDODDLE_Oxford

Background

- People are increasingly using **on-demand digital services** that provide **fast delivery** of products, contents, or services.
- While on-demand digital services can contribute solutions to climate change, they may conversely increase energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- The net impact of on-demand digital services on climate change **depends on human behaviour**.

% of UK individuals using on-demand digital services (2020)



Source: 1. Uber & Public First, 2. Office of National Statistics, 3. Mintel

Research Questions

- How do households use on-demand digital services?
- How do on-demand digital services shape households' expectations and consumption patterns?
- What are the climate implications of on-demand digital services?

Preliminary Findings



Constant tension

- Constant adaptation of on-demand digital services usage based on life circumstances, identity, household composition, values, and market forces
- Moral conflict between social and environmental concerns versus benefits (price, convenience, options)

What does it mean for climate change?

- Resource-intensive fast delivery can increase energy consumption and lead to greater reliance on fossil fuel⁴
- Environmental consequences of overconsumption⁵

4. Meier, L. M. (2023). *Consumer Society and Ecological Crisis*. Routledge.

5. Evans, D.M. (2019). What is consumption, where has it been going, and does it still matter? *The Sociological Review*, 67(3), 499-517; Stuart, Gunderson, R., & Petersen, B. (2020). Overconsumption as Ideology: Implications for Addressing Global Climate Change. *Nature and Culture*, 15(2), 199-223.

Methods

- Semi-structured interviews with 14 households in Oxfordshire, UK, including low-, medium-, high levels of digitalisation
- Thematic analysis

Changing behaviours

- Normalising abundant options and fast delivery
- Increasing expectations of immediate gratification
- Inducing consumption

"I mean a lot of this stuff is really just **enabling more consumption.**"
 Male, 35

"And because they're used to it being now, it's all delivered, isn't it? **On a phone, it's all delivered; on a laptop, straight away. As soon as you want it, there it is.** And it guess the same is true of some of these and the things that we haven't used. I want it, I get it.
 And I think that's quite dangerous."
 Female, 52

