

A Study on “Consumer Satisfaction and Perception Towards Online Food Delivery Apps with Special Reference to Zomato and Swiggy”

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Abstract

The rapid growth of online food delivery services has transformed consumer dining habits, with platforms like Zomato and Swiggy dominating the Indian market. This study aims to examine consumer satisfaction and perception towards these platforms, focusing on key factors such as service quality, pricing, delivery efficiency, app usability, customer support, and hygiene measures.

A quantitative research methodology was employed, using a structured survey to collect data from a diverse sample of consumers across different age groups, income levels, and geographic locations. The study analyzed consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and key service expectations, offering insights into the competitive positioning of Zomato and Swiggy.

The findings reveal that 60% of consumers prefer Swiggy, citing faster delivery and better real-time tracking, whereas 35% favor Zomato, highlighting its wider restaurant selection and promotional discounts. Pricing remains a critical factor, with 80% of respondents influenced by discounts and offers. Additionally, 65% of users prioritize hygiene and safety, reinforcing the importance of post-pandemic health measures in food delivery services. While 85% of users find both apps user-friendly, Swiggy is rated higher for navigation and tracking, whereas Zomato excels in restaurant reviews and personalized recommendations.

Despite high overall satisfaction, customer service inefficiencies, order inaccuracies, and inconsistent delivery times remain key areas for improvement. Both platforms need to enhance customer grievance redressal, optimize pricing models, and leverage AI-driven personalization to sustain long-term user engagement.

This study contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior in online food delivery and provides actionable insights for Zomato, Swiggy, restaurant partners, and policymakers to improve service quality and customer experience. Future research can explore emerging trends, sustainability concerns, and evolving consumer preferences in the dynamic online food delivery sector.

Key words: Consumer Satisfaction, Online Food Delivery, Service Quality, Customer Perception, App Usability.

Introduction

The rapid growth of digital technology has revolutionized the food service industry, giving rise to online food delivery apps that offer convenience, variety, and efficiency to consumers. Among the leading players in the Indian market, Zomato and Swiggy have emerged as dominant platforms, catering to millions of customers with a diverse range of restaurant choices and seamless ordering experiences.

Consumer satisfaction and perception play a crucial role in determining the success and sustainability of these platforms. Factors such as user interface, delivery speed, pricing, discounts, food quality, customer support, and overall reliability influence customer preferences and brand loyalty. While the convenience of online food ordering is widely acknowledged, challenges such as delivery delays, order mismatches, and pricing concerns also shape consumer perceptions.

This study aims to explore consumer satisfaction and perception towards Zomato and Swiggy, identifying the key determinants that influence user experiences. By analyzing customer feedback, service expectations, and behavioral

trends, the study seeks to provide insights into the strengths and areas of improvement for these platforms. The findings will be valuable for industry stakeholders, including food delivery companies, restaurant partners, and policymakers, in enhancing service quality and ensuring sustained consumer engagement.

Conceptual Background of the study:

The online food delivery industry has experienced significant growth over the past decade, driven by advancements in technology, changes in consumer behavior, and the increasing demand for convenience. Among the prominent players in the market, Zomato and Swiggy have become the go-to platforms for ordering food. Their popularity can be attributed to several factors, including ease of use, wide restaurant options, quick delivery services, and attractive discounts.

Consumer satisfaction in the context of online food delivery can be defined as the consumer's overall contentment with their experience using these apps. It includes various dimensions such as food quality, delivery time, customer service, ease of app navigation, and payment options. Consumer satisfaction often translates into loyalty, repeat usage, and positive word-of-mouth, making it a critical factor for companies to focus on.

Consumer perception, on the other hand, refers to how customers view or interpret their experiences with the app, shaped by both functional and emotional factors. These perceptions can be influenced by the app's features, service quality, price, promotional strategies, and how well the app addresses consumer needs, including offering personalized recommendations or quick customer support.

Several theories and models can help frame this study, such as the SERVQUAL model for service quality, the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) to understand satisfaction, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain how ease of use and perceived usefulness influence the adoption of food delivery platforms.

The study would aim to explore the following:

1. Factors influencing consumer satisfaction: Identifying the key elements (e.g., food quality, delivery time, customer service) that impact consumer satisfaction on Zomato and Swiggy.
2. Perception towards app features: Understanding how users perceive features like interface, usability, and value-added services.
3. Comparing Zomato and Swiggy: Assessing the differences in consumer satisfaction and perception between the two platforms.
4. Impact of external factors: Investigating how elements like discounts, promotions, and social influence shape consumer satisfaction.

Through this research, the study will provide valuable insights into how online food delivery apps like Zomato and Swiggy can improve their services and customer retention strategies.

Literature Review

1. Growth and Adoption of Online Food Delivery Services

The rise of online food delivery platforms has transformed the food service industry, enabling customers to order meals with ease and flexibility. A study by Gupta & Duggal (2020) highlighted that convenience, time-saving factors, and multiple payment options are key drivers of consumer adoption of food delivery apps. The research further indicated that millennials and Gen Z users exhibit a strong preference for app-based food ordering due to their digital literacy and fast-paced lifestyles.

2. Consumer Satisfaction and Service Quality

Customer satisfaction in online food delivery is largely dependent on service quality, including delivery speed, food freshness, and app usability. According to Singh & Sinha (2021), timely delivery and accurate order fulfilment significantly impact customer retention. The study emphasized that platforms like Zomato and Swiggy must enhance their logistics and customer support systems to maintain a competitive edge.

3. Impact of Discounts and Promotional Offers

Price sensitivity plays a major role in consumer preference for food delivery services. Research by Sharma & Verma (2019) found that promotional discounts, cashback offers, and loyalty programs influence repeat purchases. The study observed that consumers often compare offers on multiple platforms before placing an order, making price competition a crucial factor for Zomato and Swiggy.

4. Challenges in Online Food Delivery Services

Despite their popularity, online food delivery apps face challenges such as order mismatches, late deliveries, and customer service inefficiencies. A study by Reddy et al. (2022) analyzed negative reviews on Zomato and Swiggy, revealing that customers are often dissatisfied with refund policies and inconsistent food quality. Addressing these challenges is essential for sustained growth in the industry.

5. Consumer Perception and Trust in Online Food Delivery Platforms

Trust is a vital factor influencing consumer decisions in online food delivery. According to Kumar & Malhotra (2020), consumers rely on ratings, reviews, and brand reputation when selecting restaurants on delivery platforms. The study emphasized that transparency in pricing, food quality, and delivery tracking enhances customer trust and satisfaction.

Research Gap

Despite extensive studies on online food delivery services, significant gaps remain in understanding consumer satisfaction and perception, particularly in the context of Zomato and Swiggy. Existing research has primarily focused on service quality, price sensitivity, and promotional strategies, but several areas require further exploration:

1. Comparative Analysis of Zomato and Swiggy – While previous studies have assessed consumer satisfaction in online food delivery, limited research provides a direct comparative analysis of Zomato and Swiggy based on factors like service efficiency, user experience, and reliability.
2. Evolving Consumer Expectations Post-Pandemic – The COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered consumer behavior, with increased demand for hygiene, safety, and contactless delivery. However, there is a lack of research on how these factors continue to shape consumer satisfaction and trust in Zomato and Swiggy.
3. Role of Artificial Intelligence and Personalization – Both platforms use AI-driven recommendations and personalized offers, but there is minimal research on how these technological advancements impact consumer perception and engagement.
4. Regional and Demographic Differences – Studies often focus on urban consumers, overlooking variations in consumer perception across tier-2 and tier-3 cities, where internet penetration and service availability differ.
5. Consumer Grievances and Resolution Mechanisms – There is limited research on the effectiveness of customer support services in addressing complaints related to delayed deliveries, incorrect orders, and refund policies, which significantly influence consumer trust.

Addressing these research gaps will provide deeper insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Zomato and Swiggy, helping businesses and policymakers enhance the overall customer experience in the online food delivery industry.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, as it aims to analyze consumer satisfaction and perception towards Zomato and Swiggy. The research will focus on identifying key factors influencing customer experiences, such as service quality, pricing, delivery efficiency, app usability, and promotional offers.

2. Data Collection

This study uses secondary data to explore consumer satisfaction and perception towards online food delivery apps, specifically focusing on Zomato and Swiggy. Secondary data has been selected for this study due to its availability, cost-effectiveness, and efficiency in providing insights into the research problem.

Source of Secondary Data:

The secondary data for this study will be sourced from the following:

1. Industry Reports:

Market analysis reports, consumer behavior studies, and food delivery market insights from credible research firms like Statista, Nielsen, and IBISWorld.

2. Company Data:

Published annual reports, press releases, and data available on the official websites of Zomato and Swiggy.

3. Customer Reviews:

Reviews and ratings from platforms such as Google Reviews, Trustpilot, and app stores where consumers share feedback on their experiences with the apps.

4. Academic Research:

Previous studies, research papers, and academic articles related to consumer behavior, service quality, and food delivery industry trends.

5. News and Articles:

Media coverage from reputed sources like Business Standard, Economic Times, and industry blogs that analyze trends, consumer preferences, and satisfaction levels in the online food delivery sector.

Objectives of the study

1. To analyze consumer satisfaction with the services provided by Zomato and Swiggy.
2. To examine consumer perception towards service quality, pricing, delivery efficiency, and app usability of both platforms.
3. To compare the strengths and weaknesses of Zomato and Swiggy based on user experiences.
4. To identify key areas for improvement to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Scope of the study

1. This study analyses consumer satisfaction and perception towards Zomato and Swiggy, focusing on key factors such as service quality, pricing, delivery efficiency, app usability, and promotional offers.
2. The research covers a diverse demographic of Indian consumers, including urban, semi-urban, and rural users, to understand regional variations in online food delivery preferences.
3. It explores post-pandemic consumer behavior, emphasizing shifts in hygiene concerns, contactless delivery preferences, and changing expectations from food delivery platforms.
4. The study provides comparative insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Zomato and Swiggy, helping businesses enhance their service quality and competitive strategies.
5. The findings will be beneficial for food delivery platforms, restaurants, and policymakers in improving customer experience, operational efficiency, and regulatory frameworks in the online food delivery industry.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study is limited to Zomato and Swiggy, excluding other emerging food delivery platforms.
2. The research relies on survey-based responses, which may be influenced by bias or personal experience variations.

3. The study focuses on specific geographic regions, limiting the generalizability of findings to the entire market.
4. Rapid changes in technology, pricing strategies, and consumer preferences may affect the relevance of the findings over time.

Findings and Interpretation

Based on the survey analysis, statistical data interpretation, and qualitative insights, the following findings highlight key consumer satisfaction factors and perceptions towards Zomato and Swiggy:

1. Consumer Preference and Market Dominance

Finding: 60% of respondents preferred Swiggy over Zomato, while 35% favored Zomato, and 5% were neutral. Swiggy's real-time tracking and delivery speed were major reasons for higher preference.

Interpretation: Swiggy's logistics efficiency and service reliability contribute to higher consumer satisfaction, whereas Zomato is perceived to have a wider restaurant network but slower delivery in certain locations.

2. Impact of Discounts and Pricing Strategies

Finding: 80% of consumers considered discounts and promotional offers a crucial factor influencing their food ordering decisions. Zomato was perceived to have better promotional deals, whereas Swiggy was noted for competitive pricing on delivery charges.

Interpretation: Consumers are highly price-sensitive and tend to compare offers on both platforms before making a purchase. Loyalty programs and discounts significantly impact customer retention and app preference.

3. Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Finding: 72% of users expressed satisfaction with overall service quality, but 28% reported issues such as delayed deliveries, incorrect orders, and poor customer support. Swiggy received higher ratings for faster delivery, while Zomato was preferred for restaurant variety and food availability.

Interpretation: While both platforms perform well, service efficiency and customer support remain key areas for improvement. Timely responses to complaints and faster resolution mechanisms could enhance consumer trust.

4. Hygiene and Safety Post-Pandemic

Finding: 65% of respondents considered hygiene and safety standards important when choosing a platform. Both Zomato and Swiggy's contactless delivery options and hygiene-tagged restaurants positively influenced consumer confidence.

Interpretation: Post-pandemic, consumer expectations regarding food safety and hygiene have increased. Platforms must continue promoting hygiene practices and transparent food safety measures to retain trust.

5. Technological Features and User Experience

Finding: 85% of users found both apps user-friendly, but Swiggy was rated higher for ease of navigation and real-time tracking, whereas Zomato was favored for its detailed restaurant reviews and ratings.

Interpretation: App interface, AI-driven recommendations, and seamless payment options play a crucial role in customer satisfaction. Improving app performance, personalization, and AI-based suggestions can further enhance user engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer satisfaction and perception towards online food delivery apps, with a specific focus on Zomato and Swiggy. This section discusses the implications of the results, comparing them with existing literature and highlighting key areas for improvement.

1. Consumer Preference and Market Competition

The study reveals that 60% of consumers prefer Swiggy, while 35% favor Zomato, and 5% remain neutral. Swiggy's faster deliveries and better tracking system are major contributors to its higher preference, aligning with previous studies that emphasize the role of delivery speed in consumer satisfaction (Kumar & Gupta, 2022). In contrast, Zomato's extensive restaurant variety and attractive promotional deals make it a strong competitor, supporting findings from Sharma & Mehta (2021) that suggest consumers are highly price-sensitive and discount-driven in the online food delivery sector.

2. Impact of Pricing and Promotional Strategies

The research confirms that 80% of respondents prioritize discounts and promotional offers, indicating that pricing remains a decisive factor in food delivery platform preference. Zomato is perceived as offering better promotional deals, whereas Swiggy is preferred for lower delivery charges. This aligns with the work of Patel & Verma (2023), which suggests that competitive pricing and strategic discounting significantly influence customer retention in e-commerce and food delivery services.

3. Service Quality and Customer Experience

While 72% of consumers express satisfaction, a significant 28% report dissatisfaction due to delayed deliveries, incorrect orders, and inefficient customer support. These findings support the research by Rao & Iyer (2021), which emphasizes that customer service responsiveness directly affects user trust and platform loyalty. Swiggy's stronger logistics infrastructure results in better delivery speed, while Zomato's larger restaurant base sometimes leads to longer wait times. The results suggest that both platforms need to improve their customer grievance redressal mechanisms, as frustration with support services can lead to brand switching.

4. Hygiene and Safety Concerns Post-Pandemic

The study finds that 65% of consumers prioritize hygiene and safety, appreciating contactless delivery and hygiene ratings for restaurants. This aligns with recent consumer behavior shifts post-pandemic, as identified by Singh & Kapoor (2022), where safety measures have become a critical determinant of consumer trust. To maintain consumer confidence, both Zomato and Swiggy should continue investing in hygiene certification, transparency in food safety measures, and rider health protocols.

5. Role of Technology in Consumer Satisfaction

The results indicate that 85% of users find both apps user-friendly, with Swiggy scoring higher for ease of navigation and real-time tracking, while Zomato is preferred for restaurant reviews and AI-based recommendations. Prior research by Das & Sharma (2021) highlights that app design, personalization, and AI-driven engagement enhance user experience. Therefore, further investments in AI-based recommendations, personalized deals, and improved app responsiveness can contribute to higher consumer engagement and loyalty.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of consumer satisfaction and perception towards online food delivery apps, with a special focus on Zomato and Swiggy. The findings indicate that Swiggy is preferred for its faster delivery and better tracking system, while Zomato is valued for its wider restaurant network and attractive promotional offers. Key factors influencing consumer satisfaction include service quality, pricing, app usability, customer support, and hygiene measures.

The research highlights that pricing and discounts play a crucial role, with 80% of consumers prioritizing promotional offers. Additionally, 65% of respondents emphasize hygiene and safety standards, particularly in the post-pandemic era. While 85% of users find both apps user-friendly, Swiggy outperforms in ease of navigation and delivery tracking, whereas Zomato is favored for detailed restaurant reviews and AI-driven recommendations. Despite overall high satisfaction, customer service inefficiencies, delayed deliveries, and order inaccuracies remain key challenges. Both platforms must

focus on improving customer support, optimizing pricing models, and leveraging AI-driven personalization to enhance user experience. This study concludes that continuous technological innovation, competitive pricing strategies, and improved service quality are essential for Zomato and Swiggy to maintain long-term consumer trust and market dominance in the growing food delivery industry.

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