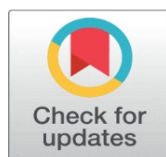


A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF USER EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION ON SWIGGY AND ZOMATO IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.6168](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.6168)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of food delivery platforms has changed consumer dining behavior in urban and semi urban areas of India. The present study presents a comparison of user experience and satisfaction in two leading food delivery platforms (Swiggy and Zomato) in Tirunelveli District; the purpose is to show which platform is preferred; to measure how satisfied users are with each platform across service parameters such as delivery time, food quality, app interface, customer support, promotional offers and to ascertain major factors that influence user choice of platform for food delivery. Using structured questionnaire, 187 regular users of food delivery platforms were surveyed; data was analyzed using percentage analysis, weighted average, Garrett ranking, t-tests and chi-square tests. Results showed that Swiggy had a slight preference over Zomato, both platforms scored well with delivery time and food quality but customer support needed improvement, moreover, results indicated that there was no significant difference between satisfaction levels for the two platforms, and that there was no association between platform preference and gender. The findings would provide food delivery executives with some information on improvements needed, and could also be useful for determining customer loyalty in a growing food delivery market.

1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of digital technology and growing affordability of smartphones have fundamentally altered the food service industry in India. Strikingly, one of the changes taking place are online food delivery services in which Swiggy and Zomato are synonymous far and wide in cities and towns. These services have transformed how consumers interact with meals, eat and access hospitality industries with, options, convenience and timeliness. The increase in digital lifestyles continues to foster high-demand need for cost effective, fast and seamless food delivery services at an escalating pace. With the customer delivery segment of food service growing and increased competition in the delivery sector, key focus for owners and management has been on understanding customer satisfaction coupled with user experience. The research literature identifies several variables of influence on the delivery experience and overall customer satisfaction. Factors like delivery speed, food quality, pricing structure, app architecture and design, promotional offers, customer care responsiveness and digital payment design are all important contexts for settling consumer choice, engagement and loyalty to their service. In this regard, user satisfaction is beyond simply measuring efficiency of service, but also as determining factors for the potential sustainability and expansion of their business.

Although studies have evaluated the dynamics of online food delivery in metropolitan areas, less work has researched consumer preference in new retail sectors in city like Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. Tirunelveli is experiencing rapid and unprecedented development as the level of digital literacy and urban consumption patterns are increasing in the city's populace presents an intriguing case for investigating user perceptions of food delivery platforms. This study proposes to fulfil that gap by studying a comparative case analysis of two prominent food delivery portals, Swiggy and Zomato focused on the use-bases, satisfaction with the service, and determinants of preference regarding the use of two portals.

The study will specifically investigate how satisfied users are with the services that they receive on Swiggy and Zomato, along with their reasons for choosing the respective platform. The study will also explore a range of demographic information, along with usage frequency, payment preferences, and satisfaction with features on the site of online food delivery space. The study examines the positives and negatives of both platforms to inform recommendations to improve both service delivery, customer engagement, and market positioning strategies for the online food delivery platforms.

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To identify the most preferred food delivery platform among Swiggy and Zomato users in Tirunelveli.
- 2) To measure and compare the satisfaction levels of users on key service aspects such as delivery time, food quality, app interface, customer support, and offers.
- 3) To analyze the frequency and mode of app usage among consumers.
- 4) To determine the key factors influencing platform choice.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. GROWTH OF ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY PLATFORMS IN INDIA

The development and expansion of online food delivery in India has experienced phenomenal growth, driven predominantly by: (1) changing consumer preferences, (2) evolving technologies, and (3) the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During a time of increased national stress, food as fuel was consumed without much thought to how it was procured, as there was ample opportunity to explore new, consistent repository for applying meals and sustenance; notice the hue and cry for immediate food delivery; further notice that fast delivery with the 30-minute promise was provided exclusively to urban middle class youth, for the rapidly developing delivery space being unjustifiable not becoming a transformative phenomenon. It is unlikely that there is another urban location in the world where online ordering will consistently take daily practice orientation; Just-in-time (JIT) convenience, as the appeal for ordering, is rapidly increasing (Chakraborty, 2024); it is not only convenient, it provides (the illusion) of service and consumer satisfaction - i.e. Zomato, Swiggy deliver within 10 mins, thus meeting the needs of cultural customer expectations; In addition, the rapid globalization of India's economy and increased digitalization and modernization of food consumption patterns, has created a state wherein ordering in is the general approach to urban youth's food options (Patgiri, 2022); The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has enacted new regulatory laws addressing food safety/food hygiene standards, with emphasis on ensuring product purity and product examples (Charan & Madhumita, 2020). However, technology advances, such as AI, big data analytics, have helped to enhance a benchmark for service delivery satisfaction and consequently consumer engagement; which helps the platform provide some level of varying, perhaps aligned, service versus specific unique needs of their primary group of consumers (Singh et al., n.d.). The online food delivery market in India, which is growing at 15%, is advanced above the global average growth rate of 9.01%; which suggests strongly an accelerated opportunity for the industry to flourish (Singh et al., n.d.). The journeys of Swiggy and Zomato illustrate how rapidly the online food delivery market has evolved in India with the advancement of technology and constantly changing consumer behaviours. Zomato, originally created as 'Foodiebay' in 2008, was rebranded as Zomato in 2010 and by the end of 2012 was operating across countries like the UAE, UK and South Africa, later adding Brazil and New Zealand in 2013. Since launch, Zomato has been continually innovating, introducing features like user-generated/consumer reviews and restaurant menus in order to facilitate and encourage user engagement (Panigrahi et al., 2020; Ramadan & Kanso, 2023).

Swiggy launched in 2014 and initially helped themselves grow rapidly by developing their customer experience through fast and efficient deliveries (Frederick & S., 2022). They have been able to streamline their operations and better user experience through advanced technology, resulting in increased revenue and customer engagement (Frederick & S., 2022). They worked to quickly reduce delivery speed and improve service quality (Puri, 2024).

Both companies have excelled in a competitive, changing environment but are still grappling with challenges related to market saturation and changing consumer preferences. The relentless rivalry between Swiggy and Zomato poses implications for the future of food delivery in India.

2.2. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR ON ONLINE FOOD DELIVERY

Consumer behaviour with online food delivery (OFD) is continuously evolving and changing, largely based on convenience, trust, and perceived usefulness. These factors have been determined as salient, leading consumers to establish their level of intention and satisfaction, both of which are essential for future growth within OFD services offerings. Consumers are mainly concerned with the usability of creating an order quickly and the speed at which their order is delivered; ease of use, or ordering time, positively correlated with overall satisfaction and willingness to use OFD services repetitively (Chakraborty, 2024). Trust in a service provider is paramount, often information from a user analysis can significantly affect intention to use OFD services. If the functions and system are secured, reliable, and uncomplicated in its use, trust can be established within a consumer's service experience (Paudel et al., 2024). Consumer perceived usefulness of OFD i.e., how much time they save or how easy the service is to access, remains one of the strongest forming determinants of their intention to continue to using OFD services ("Assessing Consumer Intentions for Online Food Delivery in a Post-Coronavirus Pandemic", 2024) (Jusoh et al., 2022). Additionally, a user's positive attitude towards OFD is heavily influenced by their user experiences and the social norms which shape their behaviour in this regard and is also an important predictor of a purchaser's behaviour (Wijaya et al., 2024) (Jusoh et al., 2022).

2.3. COMPARISON ON ZOMATO AND SWIGGY

Swiggy and Zomato are both leading online food delivery services in India and they attract consumers to varying aspects of their services. A study employing grey analysis technique shows that when consumers look at uniqueness on price, quality and delivery, Zomato and Swiggy receive no maximum rank in overall terms (Chandrasekhar et al., 2019). A sentiment analysis on Twitter data indicated Zomato received slightly more positive sentiments (26%) than Swiggy (25%) and Zomato's negative sentiments were lower (12%) than Swiggy's (13%). Thus, Zomato has slightly better customer perception on social media (Trivedi & Singh, 2021). It should be noted that consumer preferences are broad, and the studies confirm that the uniqueness has reliability, consistency and total service quality components affecting consumer perception. Consumers apply difference ways to get overall satisfaction, with both Swiggy and Zomato offering different levels of satisfaction. There is no single service provider taking clear advantage with customers (Chandrasekhar et al., 2019; Trivedi & Singh, 2021). In conclusion, whilst Zomato seems to have slight benefit in customer sentiment, both parties need to improve their service recovery models. Zomato and Swiggy could better increase customer satisfaction and loyalty with added proactive initiatives like "stealing thunder" (Guchait et al., 2019). They could develop the effectiveness and modes of their communication, make employees more accommodating and responsive as well (Komunda&Osarenkhoe, 2011). In this competitive food delivery market, both Zomato and Swiggy need to constantly upgrade their service and recover efforts to keep their competitive hold on the market.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a descriptive research design, as it aims to describe and compare consumer satisfaction patterns between Swiggy and Zomato based on user opinions and experiences.

3.2. AREA OF THE STUDY

The research is confined to Tirunelveli City, Tamil Nadu, where Swiggy and Zomato are widely used for online food delivery.

3.3. SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for the study is 187 respondents, who are regular users of Swiggy and/or Zomato in Tirunelveli.

3.4. SAMPLING METHOD

The study uses Convenience Sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, to select respondents who are readily available and willing to participate in the survey.

3.5. SOURCES OF DATA

Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to the respondents (both online and offline).

Secondary Data: Sourced from company websites, news articles, research journals, and other relevant publications to support the analysis.

4. TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed using the following statistical tools:

- Percentage Analysis: To understand frequency distributions.
- Weighted Average Analysis: To rank satisfaction levels based on scores.
- Garrett Ranking Method: To identify the most influencing factors.
- Hypothesis Testing using SPSS:
- Independent Sample t-Test to compare satisfaction levels between Swiggy and Zomato users.
- Chi-Square Test to analyze the association between gender and platform preference.

4.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 Platform Preference

Sl. No	Preferred Platform	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Swiggy	104	55.6%
2	Zomato	83	44.4%
Total		187	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Out of 187 respondents, 55.6% prefer Swiggy while 44.4% prefer Zomato. This indicates Swiggy holds a slight edge in consumer preference in Tirunelveli.

Table 2 Frequency of Using Food Delivery App

Sl. No	Frequency of Use	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Daily	42	22.5%
2	2-3 times a week	66	35.3%
3	Once a week	40	21.4%
4	Occasionally (Monthly)	29	15.5%
5	Rarely	10	5.3%
Total		187	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

A majority of the respondents (57.8%) use food delivery apps at least 2–3 times a week or more. This indicates frequent app usage and strong customer dependence on delivery services.

Table 3 Preferred Mode of Payment

Sl. No	Payment Method	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	UPI (GPay, PhonePe)	96	51.3%
2	Debit/Credit Card	44	23.5%
3	Cash on Delivery	31	16.6%
4	Wallets (Paytm etc.)	16	8.6%
Total		187	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

More than half of the respondents (51.3%) prefer UPI-based payments. This shows a strong shift toward digital payment methods in Tirunelveli's online food ordering behaviour.

Table 4 Factors Influencing Choice of Platform

Factors	Average Garrett Score	Rank
Delivery Time	72.4	I
Discounts & Offers	68.9	II
Food Variety	64.7	III
App Interface	60.1	IV
Customer Service	55.3	V
Packaging	49.6	VI

Source: Primary data Interpretation:

The most significant factor influencing consumer satisfaction is Delivery Time, followed by Discounts & Offers, and Food Variety. Packaging and Customer Service rank lower in influencing satisfaction.

Table 5 Satisfaction with Delivery Time

Sl. No	Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Highly Satisfied	37	19.8%
2	Satisfied	102	54.5%
3	Neutral	26	13.9%
4	Dissatisfied	16	8.6%
5	Highly Dissatisfied	6	3.2%
Total		187	100%

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

Nearly 74.3% of consumers are satisfied or highly satisfied with the delivery time, suggesting that punctuality is a strong point for both platforms.

Table 6 Satisfaction Level on Different Features

Feature	5 (Very Satisfied)	4	3	2	1 (Very Dissatisfied)	Weighted Score
Food Quality	44	72	41	21	9	3.57

Delivery Time	49	64	39	25	10	3.57
App Interface	32	79	38	27	11	3.47
Price and Offers	36	58	45	32	16	3.31
Customer Support	29	47	46	41	24	2.97

Source Primary data

Interpretation:

The highest satisfaction was recorded for Food Quality and Delivery Time (both scoring 3.57), while Customer Support received the lowest rating at 2.97, indicating an area for improvement.

HYPOTHESIS 1: INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

H_0 : There is no significant difference in satisfaction level between Swiggy and Zomato users.

Group Statistics

<i>Platform</i>	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
<i>Swiggy</i>	104	3.68	0.84	0.0824
<i>Zomato</i>	83	3.45	0.89	0.0977

Independent Samples Test

<i>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</i>	<i>t-test for Equality of Means</i>				
<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>
<i>0.013</i>	<i>0.909</i>	<i>0.167</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>0.867</i>	<i>0.23</i>

Interpretation:

- Since $p = 0.867 > 0.05$, the test fails to reject the null hypothesis.
- There is no significant difference in satisfaction Sig. (2-tailed) levels between Swiggy and Zomato users.

HYPOTHESIS 2: CHI-SQUARE TEST

H_0 : There is no association between gender and platform preference.

Cross-tabulation: Gender and Platform Preference

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Swiggy</i>	<i>Zomato</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Male</i>	58	47	105
<i>Female</i>	46	36	82
<i>Total</i>	104	83	187

Chi-Square Tests

<i>Test</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</i>
<i>Pearson Chi-Square</i>	0.000	1	1.000
<i>Likelihood Ratio</i>	0.000	1	1.000
<i>Linear-by-Linear Assoc.</i>	0.000	1	1.000
<i>No. of Valid Cases</i>	187		

Interpretation:

- Since Asymp. Sig. = 1.000 > 0.05
- to reject the null hypothesis.
- There is no significant association between gender and platform preference.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) The sample size is limited to 187, which may not represent the entire population of Tirunelveli.
- 2) Data was collected only from users who have used either or both platforms recently.
- 3) Responses are subjective and may involve personal bias or recent service experience.
- 4) The study focuses only on Swiggy and Zomato, excluding other delivery platforms like Uber Eats or Dunzo.

6. FINDINGS

- 1) 55.6% of respondents prefer Swiggy, while 44.4% prefer Zomato, showing a slight edge for Swiggy in Tirunelveli.
- 2) A majority (57.8%) use food delivery apps at least 2–3 times a week, indicating frequent and consistent usage behavior.
- 3) UPI-based payments (like GPay and PhonePe) are the most popular, used by 51.3% of respondents, reflecting a digital payment trend.
- 4) The top three factors influencing consumer choice are:
 - Delivery Time (Rank I)
 - Discounts & Offers (Rank II)
 - Food Variety (Rank III)
- 5) 74.3% of users are satisfied or highly satisfied, showing that timely delivery is a strength for both platforms.
- 6) Highest satisfaction observed in Food Quality and Delivery Time (Score: 3.57 each) Lowest satisfaction in: Customer Support (Score: 2.97)

7. HYPOTHESIS FINDINGS

- 1) Hypothesis Testing - T-Test (Satisfaction Level Comparison)
 - No significant difference in satisfaction levels between Swiggy and Zomato users ($p = 0.867$).
- 2) Hypothesis Testing - Chi-Square (Gender & Preference)
 - No significant association between gender and platform preference ($p = 1.000$).

8. SUGGESTIONS

1) Improve Customer Support

- With the lowest satisfaction score (2.97), both platforms must strengthen support services, including response time and issue resolution.

2) Enhance Offers and Discounts

- Although ranked second in importance, price-based satisfaction is moderate (3.31). Introducing loyalty rewards or personalized discounts may help.

3) Focus on App Interface Simplicity

- Swiggy and Zomato should aim for a more intuitive and glitch-free user interface to improve user experience.

4) Expand Food Variety and Partnerships

- Since food variety is a top-ranking factor, platforms could partner with more local eateries and introduce seasonal/ethnic menus.

5) Increase Awareness of Wallet Use

- Digital wallets are used (only 8.6%). Special cashback or wallet-only discounts could promote alternative digital payments.

9. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that both Swiggy and Zomato have carved a significant place in the daily lives of consumers in Tirunelveli, with Swiggy slightly more preferred. Consumers are generally satisfied with core aspects like food quality and delivery punctuality. However, areas such as customer service and interface usability need targeted improvements. The hypothesis testing confirms that satisfaction levels do not significantly differ between platforms and that gender has no influence on platform choice. These insights can guide food delivery platforms in tailoring services to enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty in regional markets like Tirunelveli.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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