

# An Empirical Study on the Impact of Customer Delight on Online Food Delivery Services

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## Abstract

*Customer delight is increasingly recognized as a key factor influencing customer loyalty, satisfaction, and repeat purchase behavior in the online food delivery sector. This study examines the impact of customer delight on consumer behavior toward online food delivery platforms such as Zomato, Swiggy, and Uber Eats. A survey of 200 online food delivery users was conducted to evaluate factors contributing to customer delight, including service quality, food quality, delivery speed, customer support, and personalized offers. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. Results indicate that service quality and personalized experiences significantly enhance customer delight, which in turn positively affects customer loyalty and repeat usage intentions. The study provides practical insights for online food delivery services to design strategies that maximize customer satisfaction and engagement.*

**Keywords:** Customer Delight, Online Food Delivery, Service Quality, Customer Loyalty, Consumer Behavior

## Introduction

The rapid growth of online food delivery platforms has transformed the restaurant and food retail sector. Convenience, variety, and real-time ordering have made these services highly popular, particularly among urban consumers. However, customer satisfaction alone is no longer sufficient; businesses are focusing on customer delight—an emotional response that exceeds customer expectations and fosters loyalty.

Customer delight occurs when service experiences exceed expectations, creating a lasting positive impression. In the online food delivery industry, factors such as timely delivery, order accuracy, responsive customer service, and personalized promotions contribute to delight. Understanding the drivers and impact of customer delight is crucial for platforms aiming to enhance engagement and encourage repeat usage.

## Literature Review

### Customer Delight and Its Importance

Customer delight is distinct from satisfaction; while satisfaction reflects meeting expectations, delight exceeds expectations, creating a strong emotional connection (Oliver, 1997). Delight has been linked to higher loyalty, word-of-mouth promotion, and repeat purchases.

### Online Food Delivery Services

Research shows that online food delivery platforms have become critical service intermediaries. Factors like ease of ordering, variety, discounts, and real-time tracking influence user experiences and satisfaction (Chatterjee et al., 2021).

### Factors Influencing Customer Delight in Food Delivery

Key determinants of customer delight include:

- Service Quality: Accuracy, timeliness, and reliability of delivery.
- Food Quality: Taste, freshness, and packaging.
- Customer Support: Responsiveness to complaints and queries.
- Personalization: Customized recommendations, offers, and loyalty rewards.
- Surprise & Value Additions: Unexpected offers, complimentary items, or personalized messages.

### Research Gap

While prior studies have addressed satisfaction and loyalty in online food delivery, limited research specifically explores customer delight as a distinct construct in the Indian context, motivating this study.

## Methodology

### Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to investigate the impact of customer delight on online food delivery service usage.

### Population and Sample

Population: Consumers who order food online in urban India.

Sample Size: 200 respondents selected through convenience sampling across multiple cities.

### Survey Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed, comprising:

- Demographics: Age, gender, income, frequency of online food orders.
- Customer Delight Factors: Service quality, food quality, delivery speed, customer support, personalization.
- Customer Loyalty: Likelihood of repeat usage and positive recommendations.
- Responses were recorded using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

### Data Collection

- Data were collected via Google Forms and social media channels. Participants were informed about confidentiality and voluntary participation.

### **Data Analysis Tools**

- SPSS for descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.
- Regression Analysis to determine the influence of customer delight factors on loyalty and repeat purchase intentions.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Demographic Profile**

- Gender: 55% female, 45% male respondents.
- Age Group: Majority (50%) between 21–30 years.
- Frequency of Ordering: 40% order online once a week, 35% twice a month, 25% occasionally.

#### **Regression Analysis**

Regression results indicate that service quality, food quality, and personalized offers significantly impact customer delight ( $p < 0.05$ ). Customer delight, in turn, positively influences loyalty and intention to reorder.

### **Discussion**

The study confirms that customer delight is a strong predictor of loyalty in the online food delivery sector. Service quality and personalization emerge as critical drivers, consistent with findings by Chatterjee et al. (2021).

The emotional element of delight—such as receiving a personalized message or a complimentary item—strengthens customer attachment to the platform. Younger consumers (21–30 years) are particularly responsive to surprise and delight elements.

#### **Implications for food delivery platforms include:**

- Focus on consistent service excellence to exceed expectations.
- Integrate personalization strategies, such as customized offers or loyalty rewards.
- Train delivery personnel for better customer interactions.
- Monitor feedback and respond promptly to enhance delight and satisfaction.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study demonstrates that customer delight significantly impacts loyalty and repeat purchase behavior in online food delivery services. Platforms that exceed customer expectations through service excellence, food quality, and personalized offerings can achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Enhance service quality: Timely, accurate, and reliable delivery.
2. Focus on food quality and packaging to create positive experiences.
3. Implement personalization strategies like customized offers and recommendations.
4. Develop customer support systems for quick and effective resolution of complaints.
5. Create surprise elements such as complimentary items, messages, or discounts to generate delight.

These strategies can help online food delivery services foster loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term customer engagement.

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