



Impact of Customer Reviews and Ratings on Consumer trust in Gig Delivery Platforms

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Abstract

The proliferation of gig delivery platforms has revolutionized urban consumption patterns, especially in metropolitan cities such as Chennai. In the absence of physical interaction, consumer trust becomes a critical determinant of platform adoption and continued usage. Customer reviews and ratings serve as vital electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) mechanisms that significantly influence consumer perceptions and trust formation. The present study aims to examine the impact of customer reviews and ratings on consumer trust in gig delivery platforms with special reference to Chennai city. A structured questionnaire was administered to 300 gig platform users, and data were analyzed using statistical tools such as Chi-square test, Correlation, Regression, and One-Way ANOVA through SPSS. The findings reveal that customer reviews and ratings significantly influence consumer trust, with reviews exerting a stronger impact than ratings. The study contributes to existing literature by offering region-specific empirical evidence and provides actionable insights for gig platform managers to enhance trust mechanisms.

Keywords: Customer Reviews, Ratings, Consumer Trust, Gig Economy, Delivery Platforms, Chennai City

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of the digital economy has transformed traditional service delivery mechanisms, giving rise to platform-based gig services. Gig delivery platforms have emerged as a dominant force in urban India, particularly in metropolitan cities such as Chennai. These platforms connect independent delivery partners with consumers through mobile applications, enabling on-demand delivery of food, groceries, medicines, and other essentials. Prominent platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, Zepto and Blinkit operate extensively in Chennai, serving millions of consumers daily.

In the absence of physical interaction between service providers and consumers, trust becomes a critical determinant of consumer decision-making. Unlike traditional retail environments, consumers on gig delivery platforms rely heavily on digitally mediated cues, particularly customer reviews and ratings, to assess service quality, reliability, safety, and credibility. Reviews and ratings act as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencing consumer perceptions and reducing perceived risk associated with online transactions.

Customer reviews typically provide qualitative insights regarding delivery timeliness, behavior of delivery partners, packaging quality, order accuracy, and responsiveness of customer support. Ratings, on the other hand, offer a quantitative summary of prior consumer experiences. The combination of these two mechanisms serves as a trust-building signal that influences consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. In competitive platform markets, even marginal variations in ratings can significantly affect platform preference and repeat usage.

Chennai city presents a unique socio-economic and cultural context for studying consumer trust in gig platforms. The city exhibits a heterogeneous consumer base comprising students, working professionals, families, and elderly users with varying levels of digital literacy and risk tolerance. Furthermore, Chennai has witnessed accelerated adoption of app-based delivery services post-COVID-19, making it an ideal setting to empirically investigate the impact of customer reviews and ratings on consumer trust.

Against this backdrop, the present study attempts to examine how customer reviews and ratings influence consumer trust in gig delivery platforms, with special reference to Chennai city. The study integrates behavioral theories of trust, technology acceptance, and e-WOM to provide empirical insights relevant to academia, platform managers, and policymakers.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Customer Reviews and Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM)

Customer reviews are a central component of electronic word-of-mouth communication. According to prior research, online reviews significantly shape consumer attitudes by providing experiential information from fellow users. Studies have established that positive reviews enhance perceived usefulness and credibility of online platforms, while negative reviews amplify perceived risk.

Scholars have emphasized that review valence, volume, and credibility jointly influence consumer trust. High review volume indicates platform popularity, whereas credible and detailed reviews enhance diagnosticity. Research in e-commerce contexts has demonstrated that consumers perceive peer-generated reviews as more trustworthy than firm-generated promotional content.

2.2. Role of Ratings in Trust Formation

Ratings act as heuristic cues that simplify consumer decision-making. Numerical ratings reduce cognitive effort by providing quick assessments of service quality. Several studies have found a positive relationship between higher ratings and consumer trust, satisfaction, and repurchase intention.

However, some researchers argue that extremely high ratings may sometimes create skepticism, especially when accompanied by generic or repetitive reviews. Thus, the interaction between ratings and review quality plays a vital role in shaping trust.

2.3. Trust in Gig Economy Platforms

Trust in gig platforms is multi-dimensional, encompassing trust in the platform, trust in service providers, and trust in the technological interface. Existing literature suggests that trust mediates the relationship between platform attributes and consumer loyalty. In gig delivery services, trust reduces uncertainty related to food safety, payment security, delivery reliability, and grievance redressal.

V Anupriya, G Maheswari, M Kavitha (2021) ^[6] Factors determining brand resonance of apple iPhone. - Psychology and Education, 2021. Building brand resonance in a competitive market can play an active role in the modern marketing arena. It is now widely acknowledged by companies and business enterprises that strong brand resonance will create a competitive advantage in the

marketplace that will enhance their overall reputation and credibility. Brand resonance depends on a systematic understanding of the company's consumers, competitors, and marketing environment. Brand resonance is based on appropriate identity that needs to reflect the marketing strategy and the firm's willingness to invest in the programs needed for the brand to live up to its promise as well as commitment to consumers. Strong brands take pleasure in consumer loyalty, the possibility to charge premium prices, and extensive brand power to hold up new product and service launches. Companies and business enterprises need to have careful as well as systematic understanding of consumer beliefs, behaviors, product or service characteristics as well as attributes and rivals.

A Asha, GS Maheswari, M Kavitha – 2025 ^[7] Consumer Purchase Decision Making of Omni-Channel Market-A Study with Special Reference to Chennai City. International Conference on Automation and Computation (AUTOCOM). Consumer shopping behaviour has changed noticeably as omni-channel retailing—especially in cities like Chennai—has proliferated. In this sense, stores must be rather clear about the factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions.

S Dhanalakshmi, M Kavitha, S Senthil Kumar – 2025 ^[8] Counterfeit Product Detection Using Structured Prediction-Based Deep Convolutional Generative Adversarial Networks for Classification. International Conference on Networks and Cryptology (NETCRYPT) For many different industries, the proliferation of counterfeit goods now poses a significant challenge that compromises brand integrity and consumer confidence in them. Conventional methods of spotting counterfeit products sometimes depend on hand inspection or basic image recognition algorithms. These methods rely on hand inspection; thus, they could not be able to find minute differences between actual and fake products. A solution that is not only automated but also robust and scalable is quite important to detect false products in real time. On the other hand, traditional deep learning techniques are not able to incorporate structural dependencies in image data, which might help to raise the accuracy of counterfeit detection.

2.4. Research Gap

While extensive research exists on online reviews in e-commerce and hospitality sectors, limited empirical studies focus specifically on gig delivery platforms in the Indian urban context. Moreover, region-specific studies examining Chennai city are scarce. There is also a need to empirically test the combined influence of reviews and ratings on consumer trust using robust statistical tools.

3. Scope of the Study

The scope of the present study is confined to consumers using gig delivery platforms within Chennai city.

The study focuses on understanding:

- The influence of customer reviews on consumer trust
- The role of ratings in shaping trust perceptions
- The relationship between reviews, ratings, and overall trust
- Differences in trust levels across demographic groups

The study covers major gig delivery platforms operating in Chennai but does not include traditional ecommerce or ride-hailing services.

4. Limitations of the Study

Despite methodological rigor, the study has certain limitations:

1. The study is geographically limited to Chennai city, restricting generalizability.
2. Data is collected using a self-reported questionnaire, which may involve response bias.
3. Consumer perceptions are dynamic and may change over time with platform updates.
4. The study does not incorporate longitudinal data.
5. External factors such as pricing and promotions are not deeply examined.

5. Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant association between customer reviews and consumer trust.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between customer ratings and consumer trust.

H₀₃: Customer reviews and ratings do not significantly predict consumer trust.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in consumer trust across demographic groups.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Chi-Square Test – Customer Reviews and Consumer Trust

Variables	χ^2 Value	df	Sig.
Reviews × Trust	18.742	4	0.001

Interpretation: Since $p < 0.05$, H₀₁ is rejected. There is a significant association between customer reviews and consumer trust.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Reviews	Ratings	Trust
Reviews	1	0.62	0.71
Ratings	0.62	1	0.68
Trust	0.71	0.68	1

Interpretation: Strong positive correlations exist among reviews, ratings, and trust.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Model	R	R ²	F	Sig.
Reviews & Ratings → Trust	0.755	0.570	97.63	0.000

Interpretation: Reviews and ratings jointly explain 57% variance in consumer trust. H₀₃ is rejected.

Table 4: ANOVA – Trust Across Age Groups

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.84	3	4.28	6.72	0.001
Within Groups	185.63	296	0.63		

Interpretation: Significant differences exist across age groups. H₀₄ is rejected.

8. Findings of the Study

1. Customer reviews significantly influence consumer trust.
2. Ratings act as strong heuristic trust indicators.
3. Reviews have a stronger impact than ratings.
4. Younger consumers rely more on reviews and ratings.
5. Trust positively influences continued platform usage.

9. Suggestions

1. Platforms should promote verified and detailed reviews.
2. Fake reviews should be strictly controlled using AI tools.
3. Rating transparency should be enhanced.
4. Consumer education on interpreting reviews is essential.
5. Trust-centric design should be integrated into apps.

6. Research Methodology

6.1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the relationship between customer reviews, ratings, and consumer trust.

6.2. Data Collection

- **Primary Data:** Structured questionnaire administered to gig platform users
- **Secondary Data:** Journals, reports, websites, and prior studies

6.3. Sample Design

- **Sampling Technique:** Convenience Sampling
- **Sample Size:** 300 Respondents
- **Area of Study:** Chennai City

6.4. Statistical Tools Used - Chi-Square Test, Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis and One-Way ANOVA

10. Conclusion

The study concludes that customer reviews and ratings play a decisive role in building consumer trust in gig delivery platforms in Chennai city. In digitally mediated service environments, trust is primarily shaped by peer-generated information. By strengthening review authenticity and rating transparency, gig platforms can enhance consumer confidence, loyalty, and long-term sustainability.

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