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Customer satisfaction with Ola Services: An Empirical Study in Bilaspur

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the level of customer satisfaction among users of the Ola Cabs mobile application in Bilaspur city. With the growing reliance on app-based ride-hailing services, understanding user perceptions and satisfaction has become essential for improving service delivery and customer loyalty. The research is based on primary data collected from 100 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The study specifically focuses on users aged 18–30 and evaluates key factors such as app usability, service quality, reliability, pricing, safety, and promotional offers. Descriptive statistics, tables, and charts were used to analyze the collected data. Findings indicate that a majority of respondents are satisfied with the overall experience, particularly in terms of convenience, speed, and available ride options. However, concerns remain regarding customer support, driver behavior, and app dependency on internet connectivity. The study highlights the need for service providers to maintain consistent service quality, address operational challenges, and tailor offerings to meet diverse customer expectations. These insights are valuable for both academic researchers and practitioners seeking to enhance user satisfaction in the competitive ride-hailing market.

Keywords- Customer Satisfaction**,** Ola Cabs App, Ride-Hailing Services, Service Quality.

I. Introduction

In recent years, the transportation landscape in India has undergone a significant transformation, driven largely by the advent of app-based ride-hailing services. Among these, Ola has emerged as a prominent player, offering convenient, affordable, and tech-enabled mobility solutions across urban and semi-urban areas. The increasing

penetration of smartphones and internet connectivity has enabled users to access services like Ola with ease, thereby redefining traditional commuting practices.

Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in the sustained success of any service-oriented business. In the context of ride-hailing platforms, satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors including ease of booking, ride availability, pricing, driver behavior, safety, punctuality, and overall ride experience. Measuring and understanding customer satisfaction not only helps service providers improve their offerings but also enhances customer loyalty and retention in a highly competitive market.

Bilaspur, a growing city in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh, has witnessed a gradual adoption of Ola services in recent years. While larger metropolitan cities have been extensively studied in terms of ride-hailing impact and customer perception, smaller cities like Bilaspur present a unique context where user expectations and service delivery may differ due to local conditions, infrastructure, and demographics.

This empirical study aims to assess the level of customer satisfaction with Ola services in Bilaspur city. It seeks to identify the key factors influencing satisfaction, analyze user perceptions, and offer actionable insights for improving service quality. Through primary data collection and statistical analysis, the study contributes to a better understanding of how app-based mobility services are performing in Tier-2 cities and what strategies can be adopted to enhance customer experience.

II. Literature Review

Recent research has examined customer satisfaction within the ride-hailing sector across different environments. Key factors affecting satisfaction include various service quality dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, and the role of information and communication technologies (Rosnini Jusoh & Ridzuan, 2022; Salim et al., 2021). Additionally, relational benefits—such as trust, personalized treatment, and recognition—have been found to positively influence both satisfaction and customer loyalty (Abdul Rahman et al., 2023). Elements like system functionality, service appeal, network structure, reliability, and professional conduct also play significant roles in shaping overall customer satisfaction (Shah & Kubota, 2022). Moreover, satisfaction has been shown to mediate the link between service quality and customers' intentions to continue using ride-hailing services. These insights highlight the critical need for maintaining high service standards and implementing effective driver engagement strategies to boost user satisfaction and long-term loyalty in the increasingly competitive ride-hailing market (Jusoh & Ridzuan, 2022; Abdul Rahman et al., 2023)

Service Quality & Safety Dimensions

Service quality dimensions are fundamental in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty across diverse sectors. Commonly recognized dimensions include reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (Taylor, 2024) (Deepth, Sekhar, & Karuna Sr, 2024). Scholars have identified two primary frameworks for evaluating service quality: one focusing on physical, interactive, and corporate quality, and another based on process and outcome quality (U. Lehtinen & Jarmo Lehtinen, 1991). In healthcare settings, for instance, a detailed model categorizes 15 service quality dimensions under infrastructural, procedural, and interaction-related aspects (Swain & Kar, 2017). Gaining insight into these dimensions allows organizations to better align

with customer expectations and elevate service performance (Deepth, Sekhar, & Karuna Sr, 2024) (Taylor, 2024). Recommended strategies for enhancing service quality include staff development, leveraging modern technologies, offering personalized experiences, and introducing well-defined service guarantees (Deepth, Sekhar, & Karuna Sr, 2024). These efforts contribute significantly to higher customer satisfaction and long-term brand loyalty across service-driven industries.

III. Objective of this study

To analyze the satisfaction level of customers using the Ola Cabs app in the Bilaspur area.

IV. Research Methodology

The present study is based on primary data collected from users of the Ola Cabs mobile application. Data was gathered through a well-structured questionnaire specifically designed to obtain relevant information from the respondents.

Sampling plan

Sampling Unit: The sampling unit for this study comprised individuals who actively use the Ola Cabs app. These users were identified and surveyed as part of the research process.

Sample Size: A total of 40 respondents were selected for the study.

Sampling Procedure: Data was collected using a structured questionnaire administered directly to the respondents. The purpose of the study was clearly communicated to the participants, and any doubts regarding the questions were clarified to ensure accurate responses. Efforts were made to eliminate personal biases during data collection and recording of responses to maintain objectivity and reliability in the study.

VI. Data Analysis

The analysis in this study is based on primary data collected from 40 respondents between the ages of 18 and 30, all of whom were users of the Ola Cabs app in Bilaspur city. The primary objective was to assess the level of customer satisfaction with the Ola Cabs service.

Data collected through structured questionnaires has been organized and presented clearly using tables and charts to support better interpretation and insights. This approach has helped to extract meaningful conclusions and identify key patterns and customer perceptions.

SWOT Analysis

Strength

- First-Mover Advantage: Ola, launched in 2010, was among the first in the Indian ride-hailing market, allowing it to capture a significant customer base early on.
- Advanced Technology: Ola leverages cutting-edge technology and robust data analytics to forecast regional demand accurately, ensuring timely availability of cabs.
- Diverse Product Line: The company offers a wide range of commuting options including bikes, autos, hatchbacks, sedans, shared rides, outstation trips, and rentals, catering to various customer segments.

- Strong Brand Recognition: Ola enjoys high brand recall, especially in the affordable ride segment, due to limited competitors in this niche.
- Low Operational Investment: As an aggregator, Ola does not need to own vehicles. Partnering with local drivers reduces capital expenditure and ensures operational scalability.
- Dynamic Pricing Model: The surge pricing system allows Ola to adjust fares based on demand, weather, and location, ensuring better demand-supply balance and increased revenue.

Weakness

- Limited Driver Control: Ola's aggregator model limits its ability to monitor or manage driver behavior effectively.
- Fake Ride Bookings: Some drivers exploit the system by encouraging fake bookings to boost their ride count, impacting service integrity.
- Customer Support Issues: Customer service is often rated poorly, leading to dissatisfaction and potential loss of loyalty.
- Dependence on Internet: The app-based model limits access for users in areas with poor internet connectivity.
- Niche Target Segment: Despite mass-market branding, the app's functionality is better suited to tech-savvy users, limiting reach in non-digital populations.

Opportunities

- Expand to Non-Tech-Savvy Users: Creating simplified or alternative booking methods (e.g., SMS or call-in bookings) could help Ola attract a broader customer base.
- Rising Internet Penetration: Government initiatives to improve digital infrastructure provide Ola with an opportunity to expand into Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- Inadequate Public Transport: In many smaller cities, public transport is lacking. Ola can fill this gap and establish a strong local presence.

THREATS

- Regulatory Challenges: Changing government regulations and licensing laws can adversely impact operations.
- Customer Retention: Poor customer service combined with strong competition (e.g., Uber) risks losing customers.
- Intense Competition: New and local ride-hailing apps, along with Uber's strong presence, threaten Ola's market share.

Gender of Respondent using Ola cabs

Gender	*Number of customer*	*Number of customer in %*
Male	**40**	**40%**
Female	**60**	**60%**
Total	**100**	**100%**

Interpretation- The data reveals that a higher proportion of Ola Cabs users are female (60%). This may indicate a greater reliance on app-based cab services by women, potentially due to the lack of personal vehicles or a preference for safer and more convenient transport. On the other hand, male users (40%) appear to use the service less frequently, possibly utilizing it more for outstation or occasional purposes rather than daily commuting.

Age Groups of Respondent

Age Groups	Number of customer	Number of customer in %
16 – 20	15	15%
20 – 25	50	50%
25 Above	35	35%
Total	100	100%

Interpretation- Respondents aged 20–25 form the largest user group at 50%, highlighting the dominance of young adults in using Ola Cabs services. This demographic is typically more comfortable with mobile apps and prefers flexible transport options. The 25+ group follows at 35%, showing that working professionals also form a significant share. The 16–20 group, with only 15%, may rely more on public transport or parental support for travel.

Occupation of Respondent

Occupation	Number of customer	Number of customer in %
Student	52	52%
Self-employed	22	22%
Private	26	26%
Total	100	100%

Interpretation- Students account for over half (52%) of the Ola Cabs users, indicating strong appeal among younger individuals who require affordable and flexible commuting options. The self-employed (22%) and private sector employees (26%) also make up a meaningful portion, showing that Ola services are also being adopted by working professionals who value on-demand transportation.

Do you think using Ola cabs app can offer you wider range of option

Yes	58	58%
Don't know	37	37%
No	5	5%

Interpretation- A majority (58%) of respondents believe that Ola provides a variety of ride options (bike, auto, sedan, outstation, etc.). However, the fact that 37% are unsure suggests that many users are unaware of the full range of services available. This indicates a need for better promotion and in-app visibility of Ola's offerings to educate users and increase usage diversity.

1. **Are you satisfied with Ola cabs app**

Agree	72	72%
Don't know	8	8%
Disagree	20	20%

Interpretation- Most respondents (72%) reported satisfaction with the Ola Cabs app, which reflects positively on the app's performance, usability, and service quality. However, the 20% dissatisfaction rate highlights room for improvement in areas such as ride availability, customer support, and pricing transparency. Addressing these issues could enhance overall satisfaction further.

Is this App comfortable and friendly

Agree	72%
Neutral	11%
Disagree	17%

Interpretation- The majority of users (72%) find the app easy to use and navigate, indicating a strong user interface and positive digital experience. However, the 17% who disagreed may have faced challenges with app functionality, such as booking errors or payment issues. This feedback is critical for developers to continuously improve the user experience.

Risk of using Ola Cabs app

Yes	65%
Not sure	8%
No	27%

Interpretation- A significant portion (65%) of respondents perceive some level of risk when using Ola, particularly during night travel. This highlights the need for Ola to strengthen safety measures such as driver verification, live ride tracking, and emergency support features. Only 27% feel the service is completely risk-free, signaling trust issues that must be addressed.

Since how long are using this app

One year	25%
Two years	7.5%
Six months	42.5%
Three months	25%

Interpretation- Most respondents (75%) have been using the Ola app for more than three months, indicating a solid customer base with sustained engagement. The majority, 42.5%, fall in the six-month usage bracket, showing relatively recent but regular use. This suggests both new adoption and retention, with potential for long-term customer loyalty if service quality is maintained.

Do you get any discount offer

Yes	47.5%
Not sure	27.5%
No	25%

Interpretation- Nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) have received discount offers, suggesting that promotional strategies are reaching many users. However, the fact that 27.5% are unsure points to unclear or poorly communicated offers. Strengthening marketing communications and highlighting discounts more prominently within the app can improve customer retention and satisfaction.

2. **Are you satisfied with the speed**

Yes	55 %
Not sure	35%
No	10%

Interpretation- Over half the users (55%) are satisfied with the speed of service, which includes factors like cab arrival time and ride efficiency. However, a notable 35% are uncertain—likely due to inconsistent experiences during high-demand hours or poor traffic conditions. Only 10% are outright dissatisfied, indicating that while most users are content, there is scope for improving service consistency.

VII. Conclusion

The present study aimed to assess the satisfaction levels and usage patterns of customers using the Ola Cabs app in Bilaspur city, focusing particularly on individuals between the ages of 18 to 30. Based on responses from 100 participants, the analysis provides valuable insights into the behavior, preferences, and concerns of Ola users.

The findings reveal that Ola Cabs is widely used among young adults, with the majority of users falling in the 20–25 age group. Students make up the largest occupational group, indicating that affordability and ease of access are major driving factors for using such app-based services. Female respondents outnumbered males, suggesting that Ola has become a trusted travel option among women, likely due to the convenience and perceived safety features.

A significant proportion of users are satisfied with the app's overall performance, including its user-friendliness and range of service options such as autos, bikes, rentals, and outstation travel. However, concerns were raised about the app's customer support and occasional risks during night travel. A noteworthy portion of respondents

also expressed uncertainty about the availability of discounts and speed of service, pointing toward inconsistent communication or service delivery.

While the app enjoys a strong brand presence and high adoption, the data indicates room for improvement—particularly in enhancing safety, customer support, and promotional visibility. The SWOT analysis further supports these findings, identifying Ola's key strengths in technology, service diversity, and brand recognition, while also highlighting weaknesses such as limited control over drivers and customer service issues.

Overall, the study concludes that Ola Cabs holds a strong position in the app-based transport sector in Bilaspur, with a positive user base and high satisfaction levels. Strategic focus on addressing weaknesses and threats will further strengthen customer trust and encourage long-term loyalty.

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