

People, Processes, and Customer Satisfaction: A Review Study of Work–Life Balance and Operations in Food Delivery Services

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Abstract

Food delivery services have exploded so thoroughly in the past few years, creating connections between delivery partners, process management, and satisfaction among the respective consumers. The study thus examines how individuals, processes, and customer expectations interact in and around the food delivery ecosystem to generate positive business outcomes in the food delivery ecosystem and, particularly, the work–life balance of delivery partners. Rapid growth in digital delivery platforms is a source of pressure for both riders and restaurants, and effective coordination and employee well-being must take top priority to keep customers satisfied. These things affect service and customer satisfaction. The objective of the study is to provide an understanding of the interplay of delivery partners, operational processes, and customer requirements in the quality-of-service delivery. The major object is to explore the association between work–life balance, delivery efficiency, and customer satisfaction. The study uses secondary data that consists of books, peer-reviewed journals, online publications, websites, and magazines. In conclusion, this study examines 8-10 pertinent research articles. In addition, the research finds important techniques in equitable work hours, communication, order assignment smoothness, and workload pressure relief. Key requirements include respectful customer engagement, supportive management, and realistic delivery targets as well as healthier workplaces, recovery breaks, and transparent evaluation systems. Using an analysis of people and processes, the study offers recommendations for how to improve experience for riders, improve service quality, and drive more efficiency overall.

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction; Delivery Partners; Food Delivery Services; Operations Management; Restaurant Coordination; Service Quality; Work–Life Balance*

Introduction

The way food is consumed in urban areas has been transformed by food delivery services through the provision of app-based ordering, real-time tracking, and extensive on-demand logistics. However, this growth has had some serious challenges attached to it, which are very real in terms of courier partners' lives and workflows and users' experiences. It must be noted that this relationship is interlinked, as the individuals performing on-road delivery are not merely components of the system; rather, their time, safety, and well-being are directly associated with service quality (Won *et al.*, 2023). When riders are under-resourced, stressed, or unsafe, the health and job satisfaction of riders suffer, and so does the reliability and experience of customers. The system operates by algorithmization at the platform level.

These approaches control ordering schedules, deadlines, and performance characteristics to improve efficiency and speed. But they also lead to unpredictable workloads and stress for riders (Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018; Parwez & Ranjan, 2021).

In a study conducted in 2012, researchers found that algorithmic control is a contributing factor to rider burnout, emotional exhaustion, and coping responses, so it is clear that algorithms do indeed have a role in how individuals live their lives and their digital well-being. The functions involved in designing these algorithms, such as route planning, ordering logic, restaurant management, and delivery timing, are particularly important in cities where service targets are high and urban life is under pressure. It is suggested that if processes don't consider human weaknesses, the riders may be given higher risk than the human limitations, a delay could take place, food quality might decline, and customer satisfaction could fall (Wotschack *et al.*, 2024). However, satisfaction with food delivery options can be more complex than expected. That includes not just what you receive (or don't) but also how much money you spend and how easy the app is to use. The system's perception and appeal are also influenced by timeliness, reliability, and fair treatment of workers. Socially conscious customers particularly want to know how workers feel about the labor, whether they trust the service, and what factors influence their willingness to pay (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2021).

Studies also reveal the real human cost of poorly designed processes: low salaries, limited time, and unsafe work environments cause fatigue, dangerous riding practices, and more accidents linked to inadequate safety practices. These are not just damaging to riders; these also negatively impact the continuity of operations and credibility of the platform. Such consequences require an integrated research methodology that considers people, process, or service and system satisfaction as elements of the systems of people, processes, and customer satisfaction; they do not consider such factors as independent entities (Ahmad & Omar, 2022; Sugumaran & Vishwanathan, 2023). Well-being and operational reliability are associated with the implementation of work-life balance, which has been recognized as one of the primary predictors of riders' welfare; additionally, work-life balance is specifically linked to operational dependability. Currently, it is noted that work-life balance is a key factor that enables riders to manage their working hours, sleep hours, family obligations, and health, in accordance with the work schedules and incentive structures programmed by the platforms. The outcome is influenced both by existing norms (e.g., pay transparency, paid time off, and compensation) and informal pressures (e.g., surge expectations, rating anxiety, and unclear penalties) (Dong *et al.*, 2025).

In the short term, those platforms that push for brief delivery windows and absolute throughput can enjoy some efficiency gains of their own, but not in the longer term: greater job loss, higher rates of service disruptions, and reduced public credit. On the contrary, fair pay, predictable scheduling, and realistic delivery targets serve to stabilize the workforce and provide the standard for reliable customer service (Wotschack *et al.*, 2024). Studies from diverse countries—rich urban centers and crowded emerging markets alike—have revealed similar structural friction. And, being algorithms, of course, they are often up against real-world challenges, from traffic congestion and restaurant readiness to the less formal nature of the workforce. Riders may work overtime and take risks and may rely on their own informal coping methods as a means of adapting and maintaining the service on the platform, but these represent exposures both to the user and to the system (Useche *et al.*, 2025).

These tensions are particularly pronounced in countries like India, where food delivery services have recently emerged and regulatory frameworks are still developing. Delayed payments, unclear payoffs, and the absence of safety nets negatively impact rider well-being and result in unpredictable service experiences that also affect the riders themselves (Hussain, 2024). Combating these challenges will require operational and people-oriented approaches. The proposed operational improvements might include more optimal routes, less unnecessary traveling, and modified order batching to make things more efficient but also serve a framework for how the restaurant can ensure that customer, rider, and restaurant interactions are good and maybe more equitable and less expensive. Humans: Platforms

need transparent pay frameworks, timely payment guarantees, consistency in the ratings/sanctions, and enough opportunity for rest and safety. The study shows that platforms supporting rider welfare are supportive not only for employee satisfaction but also for service quality, customer retention, and reputation (Wotschack *et al.*, 2024). Users care about how riders feel and react when platforms prioritize the welfare of their workers, which implies that these platforms are investing in the health and justice of riders, making it both a moral and strategic business decision (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2021).

The findings show that this study also reinforces the need for food delivery platforms to account for operational efficiency and rider well-being, as it provides them with an opportunity to do so in a different way. Framing people, processes, and customer satisfaction as a system, platforms can then design policies to maximize worker welfare and service reliability. Work–life balance plays a crucial role as a mediator. If riders can work within workable hours, receive compensation commensurate with their worth, and strive for reasonable delivery goals, both employees and customers benefit. Insisting on operational design and policy intervention on these lessons—transparent metrics, attainable timelines, a reasonable level of safety, and encouraging incentives—would yield a food delivery service that is both sustainable and of high quality to serve both the people in question and society as a whole (Useche *et al.*, 2025).

Literature Review

The study on Work-Life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers (Nolas & Fonceca, 2025). Based on the results of the study, it can be established that the gig workers in Tirupattur working in the food delivery industry have various issues such as poor work–life balance, a high amount of stress, and a low financial literacy level. These concerns impact their financial well-being, family life, social support, and mental and physical health. Results suggested the majority of the delivery staff doesn't know much about these problems or is not adequately supported to intervene to resolve them. This situation is why companies like Swiggy and Zomato must contribute to developing campaigns on financial literacy, providing gig workers with flexible working hours, and ensuring access to health benefits and social support systems. Meanwhile, technology and feedback loops allow workers to set their agendas and manage their health. By bolstering those components, businesses can increase job satisfaction, relieve stress, and even deliver better experiences for gig workers generally, which is a win for gig workers and for the companies they represent.

A paper on Customer Satisfaction and Challenges in Online Food Delivery: A Study in Surigao Del Sur (Orcullo & Grefalde, 2025). The objective of this study was to provide a sense of satisfaction with online food delivery services and to identify the current complaints of existing customers. A quantitative analysis was conducted on users' opinions of service quality and any service-related problems. The results also indicate that the number of users satisfied with service categories including fast delivery, correct orders, and safe payment processes was high. However, the review also found some recurrent problems such as small delivery zones, occasional service delays, and customer support that is not right. This stresses that platforms need never stop improving their services to win over the customer or restore trust.

A paper on the human cost of fast deliveries: A systematic literature review of occupational risks and safety outcomes in last-mile delivery workers (Useche *et al.*, 2025). The findings showed that those last-mile delivery workers need more support in all relevant areas, just to maintain their overall well-being. Physical risks—accidents, long hours, and harsh weather—are thrown in, as are psychological challenges—stress, pressure, and mental fatigue. But dealing with such issues is one-way employers can make their workplaces safer, develop robust occupational health programs, and provide counseling or advice about their workers' mental health. And there are more balanced and sustainable work practices that can avoid burnout and allow workers to work more safely and comfortably.

A study on job satisfaction among food delivery employees by Praveen and Rokith (2024) found that the factors contributing to job satisfaction for food delivery workers include steady income, work-life balance, job security, and general working conditions. Although delivery service jobs offer flexibility in terms of working hours and job selection, employees often face challenges such as unstable pay, long working hours, and the daily stress of riding through heavy traffic and bad weather. The findings indicate

that employers and delivery platforms should place greater emphasis on improving job satisfaction. Benefits, adequate training, and safety equipment can significantly enhance workers' well-being and motivation. As the food delivery industry continues to expand, taking care of delivery workers is extremely important. Addressing the problems explored in this study could improve workplace satisfaction, reduce turnover rates, and enhance service quality for both workers and customers.

Priyadharshini *et al.* (2024) conducted a systematic review on customer satisfaction with online food delivery services and observed that the industry has expanded rapidly, driven largely by customers' preference for speed and convenience. However, the 2023 review of customer feedback indicates that several areas still offer opportunities for service improvement. For customers, speed is not the only important factor; food quality, app or website usability, order accuracy, and staff effectiveness in handling issues are also critical. Although many reviews were positive, a considerable number of customers reported similar complaints. These included the need to improve customer service, reduce delivery delays through better delivery planning, maintain restaurant quality standards, enhance app and website usability, carefully inspect orders before dispatch, and train customer service staff to be responsive and effective. Addressing these issues can help companies serve customers better and support the continued growth of the online food delivery industry.

A study on consumer satisfaction with online food delivery apps in Chennai (Prabha & Mathipurani, 2022). Online shopping is booming, and it alters customers' behaviors in various areas in their lives. Fast urbanization and increasing numbers of professionals living in urban areas in India led to booming online food delivery companies. Businesses like Foodpanda, Swiggy, Just Eat, and Zomato are drawing customers in with many commercially based promotions and discounts. These corporations make sure that they tell their customers in an attractive manner why they are taking advantage of the situation with enticing deals. Smartphones also can make a difference because they make online and anywhere orders possible. Most food delivery apps are now available, so it allows customers to make convenient online orders at home. The customer's online selection of a food delivery service had a number of different but equally important aspects, the report found. These platforms are also funded through advertising on social media, including ads and posts related to their services. Today, payment is mainly made via cash on delivery, but payment methods online are more and more common.

As of early 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic that has already hit Indonesia, more than one million cases were affected as well (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2021). Research was carried out using an extended theory of planned behavior for the determination of customer satisfaction and loyalty toward online food delivery services during the "new normal" period. After 253 participants responded to the survey, consumer intention and actual use strongly depend on the levels of enjoyment, price, information quality, and promotions. But technical usability did not matter. Such findings can enable delivery platforms to improve service quality and inform similar studies abroad.

Table 1: List of Article Reviewed

The main themes and variables interrogated by earlier experimenters are stressed in the following table, which epitomizes important highlights and concentrated areas of some of the exploration studies reviewed in this study.

Study	Focus Area
Nolas & Fonceca, (2025)	Work–life balance & stress
Orcullo & Grefalde, (2025)	Customer satisfaction challenges
Useche <i>et al.</i> (2025)	Safety & occupational risks
Praveen & Rokith (2024)	Job satisfaction
Priyadharshini <i>et al.</i> (2024)	Customer satisfaction factors
Nirmala & Hidayathulla (2022)	Stress & well-being
Prabha & Mathipurani (2022)	Consumer behavior
Prasetyo <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Satisfaction & loyalty
Belanche <i>et al.</i> (2021)	Customer perception of workers

Other research has identified the challenges experienced by delivery workers in gig economy platforms. Useche *et al.* (2025) described occupational safety hazards related to long hours and contact with the road. Similarly, Nolas and Fonceca (2025) pointed out the psychological impact of irregular schedules on gig workers. However, although other studies concentrate on the safety and well-being of workers, little attention has been given to the impact of these on operational efficiency and customer satisfaction in food delivery.

It is, therefore, essential to determine the relationship between delivery workers' work–life balance, operational processes, and customer satisfaction to make food delivery platforms more sustainable. This review aims to synthesize the existing literature on these elements and to establish a conceptual framework that illustrates the connection between well-being, operational practices, and service outcomes in food delivery.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the current study are:

1. To explore how work–life balance impacts delivery efficiency and customer satisfaction.
2. To evaluate customer satisfaction in food delivery services.
3. To explore the relationship between people, processes, and service quality.

Methodology

This research is a qualitative literature review using secondary data (i.e., published academic journals). It is a kind of literature review that aims to compile and analyze existing knowledge, map out theoretical gaps, and develop avenues of future research. As such, the objective of this study is to present a synthesis and outline the findings of some of the articles on work–life balance and operational processes within the food delivery service.

This study adopts a qualitative literature review approach based on secondary data to examine the relationship between work–life balance, operational processes, and customer satisfaction in food delivery services. Literature review methodology is widely used to synthesize existing knowledge and identify research gaps (Shroff *et al.*, 2022). The study follows a descriptive and exploratory research design, which is appropriate for understanding relationships between variables without primary data collection. Relevant articles, journals, books, and online sources were systematically reviewed to ensure comprehensive coverage of the topic. A total of approximately 10 research articles and scholarly sources were reviewed as part of this study.

A systematic literature search was systematically performed using the key academic web resources (Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, and various academic publications) that identified articles relevant to food delivery companies and gig economy platforms. The literature was searched using the following keywords: food delivery services, gig economy, work–life balance, delivery partners, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Research articles and academic papers were searched individually and together according to the use of these search terms.

This review examines studies published between 2018 and 2025 to investigate recent developments in digital food delivery platforms and gig economy work. The review focuses on gig economy platforms, food delivery services, employee well-being, operational processes, and service quality. Publications unrelated to the food delivery industry or those that did not address work–life balance or operational processes were excluded.

Selection of Studies (PRISMA Approach)

To assure a systematic and transparent selection process, the study employs the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. This approach assists in identifying, screening, and choosing relevant studies in an organized manner.

The selection process involved multiple stages:

- **Identification:** A total of 40 research articles were primarily pinpointed through database searches, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and other academic platforms.
- **Screening:** After removing irrelevant and duplicate studies, 25 articles were selected for further screening based on titles and abstracts.
- **Eligibility:** The full text of these 25 articles was precisely reviewed to assess their applicability to the study objectives. Out of these, 15 articles were excluded due to lack of significance or insufficient data.
- **Inclusion:** Finally, 10 relevant studies were preferred and included in the review for comprehensive analysis.

PRISMA Flow of Study Selection

The study follows the PRISMA 2020 framework for systematic reviews. The selection process includes identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages.

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram illustrating the study selection process:

- Records identified (n = 40)
- Records screened (n = 25)
- Full-text assessed (n = 25)
- Studies included (n = 10)

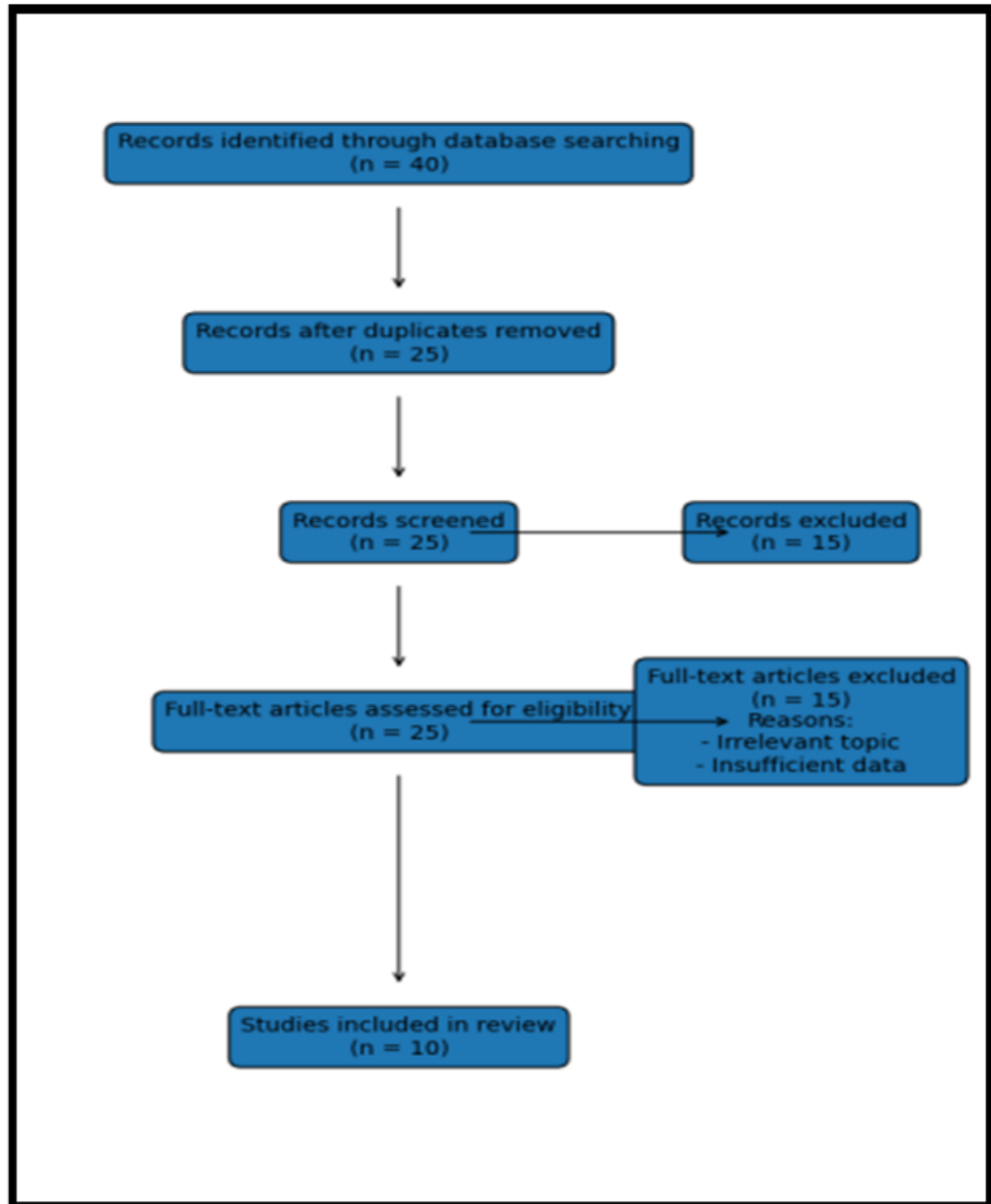


Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process

Data Analysis Approach

The chosen studies were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, where crucial themes like work-life balance, delivery effectiveness, functional objectives, and customer satisfaction were connected and compared. The findings from distinct studies were integrated to evolve an abstract understanding of the relationship between people, processes, and service outcomes in food delivery services.

The Impact of Work–Life Balance on Delivery Efficiency and Customer Satisfaction

Recent studies highlighted an issue in food delivery services: workers’ work–life balance and its effect on both performance and satisfaction. As noted in Occupational Stress and Psychological Well-Being—A Study on Employees in Food Delivery Services, occupational stress harms psychological well-being, reducing job performance and satisfaction. Similarly, Work Life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers by Nolas and Fonceca (2025) identifies inflexibility, income instability, and limited support as stressors.

Work–Life Balance: What It Means for Delivery Personnel

Work–life balance is a worker's capacity to balance professional duties and personal life, rest, and recovery. In the gig economy, especially for food delivery riders, such a balance is challenging due to irregular schedules, strict delivery timelines, and fluctuating workloads (Nirmala & Hidayathulla, 2022). Delivery workers who do not achieve equilibrium tend to burn out, become physically fatigued, lack motivation, and experience reduced job satisfaction. On the contrary, a healthy work–life balance supports employees' well-being, encourages their motivation, and ensures continuity of service delivery, resulting in improved delivery performance and lower operational errors.

Impact on Delivery Efficiency

For food delivery services, delivery efficiency can depend on pickup and drop-off times, route optimization, proper order handling, and coordination with restaurants and customers. Poor work-life balance has also been found to harm riders' physical and mental health (Nirmala & Hidayathulla, 2022; Nolas & Fonceca, 2025). In this context, it may lower attention, focus, alertness, and reaction time. Delivery staff who are stressed or burned out are more likely to choose inefficient routes, make errors, and respond poorly to customer complaints, leading to diminished service quality. On the other hand, workers who maintain a good work-life balance tend to have higher energy levels, better focus, and, most importantly, better decision-making ability. This increases operational effectiveness, reduces service delays, and enhances service reliability.

Effect on Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction in food delivery depends not only on food quality but also on delivery speed, order accuracy, and service conduct. Delivery workers experiencing stress due to poor work–life balance may be slower, less responsive, or less polite, negatively affecting customer experience. In contrast, well-balanced workers communicate better, remain patient, and provide attentive service, leading to higher satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, customer perceptions of delivery workers' conditions influence evaluations (Thuannadee & Praneetpholkrang, 2026). The role of customers in the gig economy: how perceptions of working conditions and service quality influence the use and recommendation of food delivery services confirm this relationship.

Opportunities and Policy Implications

The new research tells us how this organization-wide and policy-wide effort has to be applied. Flexibility in scheduling allows gig workers time for personal care and recovery, and both tend to increase job satisfaction and well-being significantly, as indicated in research like *Beyond Flexibility: Exploring Motivation Factors Influencing Work Satisfaction in the Gig Workforce*. These could include realistic delivery targets, mandatory rest breaks, and mental health support. Balance improves productivity and service quality, yes, but also reduces turnover and develops customers' sense of loyalty (Singh & Park, 2022).

Evaluating Customer Satisfaction in Food Delivery Services

Customer satisfaction is one of the essential factors affecting service provider success; as society's consumption of food delivery applications is rising, it is becoming an important factor. So, in a highly competitive market, it is key to know about the determinants of satisfaction. In food delivery businesses, delivery speed, order accuracy, food quality, and convenience determine satisfaction. Timely delivery is among the strongest predictors, and customers expect meals to arrive within the promised timeframe. Quick and trustworthy delivery engenders trust and demonstrates operational efficiency. Food quality is also critically important; fresh, well-packaged, and warm meals boost perceived value, while poor presentation or cold food reduces the likelihood of repeat trips (Mensah *et al.*, 2022; Macias *et al.*, 2023).

Order accuracy is a critical factor influencing customer satisfaction in food delivery services. When customers receive exactly what they ordered, including special instructions or customizations, their confidence in the platform increases. Errors such as missing or incorrect items can damage trust and reduce repeat usage, prompting platforms to adopt automated checks and confirmation systems. Convenience also plays a significant role; user-friendly apps, multiple payment options, easy reordering,

and flexible delivery timings enhance satisfaction and encourage customer retention (Gupta *et al.*, 2019; Faizar *et al.*, 2021). Interaction with delivery personnel and customer support further shapes satisfaction. Courteous behavior, timely communication, and effective issue resolution help customers feel valued, particularly during delays. While discounts may attract users temporarily, long-term satisfaction depends on perceived value. Technological features like GPS tracking, personalized recommendations, and AI-based support further strengthen trust, brand image, and online reputation, highlighting the importance of a consistent customer-focused approach.

Exploring the Relationship between People, Processes, and Service Quality

Service quality is an essential element of customer satisfaction and long-term success in service firms. People and processes are two important contributors to service quality. People include frontline employees, supervisors, and support staff who interact directly or indirectly with customers. Their training, motivation, communication skills, and ability to resolve problems heavily influence customer impressions of the service rendered. Processes are the formal steps that are used to design and provide services. If services were delivered clearly, efficiently, and predictably, they would be reliable, and the errors would be few. For food delivery services, good processes assist with improving order accuracy, speed, and coordination. Efficiency in both people and processes leads to better work performance, consistency in services, and ongoing responsiveness to changing customer expectations.

Proposed Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework Overview

This study elaborates a theoretical framework describing the influence of operational and compensation variables in food delivery platforms on service outcomes with respect to work–life balance. Because the study design is drawn on secondary data, the proposed framework is tested theoretically based on literature evidence rather than empirically.

The model identifies:

- **Inputs (Independent Variables):**
 - Algorithmic Control
 - Pay Structure
- **Mediator:**
 - Work–Life Balance
- **Outputs (Dependent Variables):**
 - Delivery Efficiency
 - Customer Satisfaction

Visual Representation of the Framework

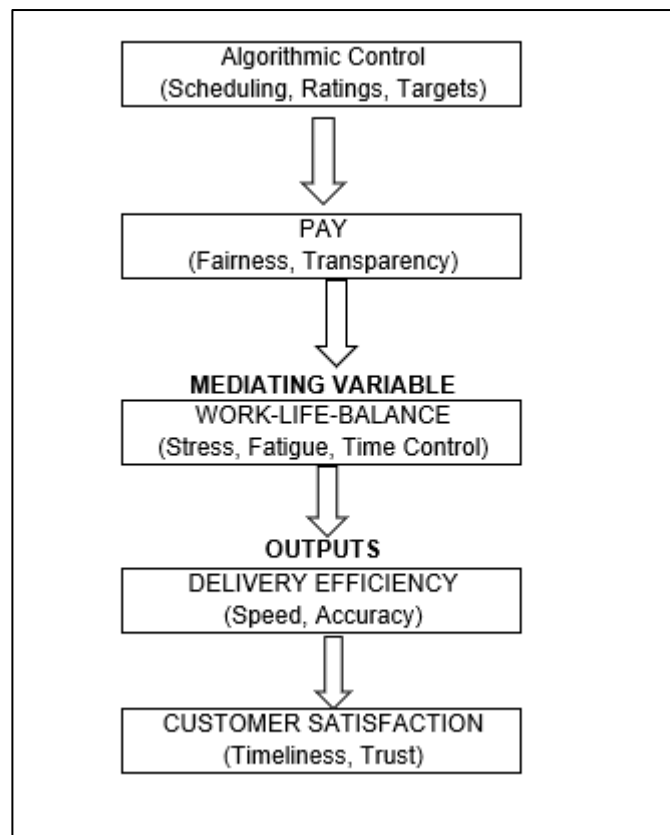


Figure 2: Proposed Conceptual Framework of Work-Life Balance in Food Delivery Services

Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of the study that explains the relationship between platform-controlled inputs (algorithmic control and pay structure), the mediating role of work-life balance, and the outcomes of delivery efficiency and customer satisfaction. The framework shows how operational and financial factors impact the well-being of delivery partners, which affects service performance and customer experience.

Detailed View and Explanation of the Conceptual Framework

Inputs (Independent Variables)

The left side of the framework is the set of platform-controlled inputs that determine the working conditions of delivery partners.

Algorithmic Control

Algorithmic control is about control by means of automation of systems (including in-app) in food delivery platforms to manage and observe the operation and work performance of the delivery workers of food delivery services. These systems include:

- Automated order allocation
- Route optimization and time deadlines
- Performance ratings and customer feedback systems
- Incentive-based task assignment and penalties

The framework represents algorithmic control as a direct input, as this establishes the structure of the delivery work performed daily. Research shows that while these algorithmic systems are designed to increase speed and efficiency, they frequently generate unpredictable workloads, time pressure, and psychological stress, which has a direct impact on the personal lives of delivery workers (Won et al., 2023).

The directional arrow from Algorithmic Control → Work–Life Balance is the theoretical position that strict or opaque algorithmic management will lead to work–life balance being lost due to loss of autonomy and increased stress.

Pay Structure

Pay structure comprises the financial compensation arrangements for delivery workers, including:

- Payments on a per-order or per-distance basis
- Incentive and surge pay systems
- Payment transparency and timeliness
- Income stability and fairness

Pay is regarded in the framework as a separate yet no less important input since income precarity frequently leads to workers working longer hours with shorter rest and personal time. Previous research indicates that insufficient or erratic income adversely impacts the emotional and mental well-being, family life, and job satisfaction of delivery workers (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2021).

The arrow from Pay → Work–Life Balance shows how fair, transparent, and adequate compensation contribute to healthier work scheduling and less economic stress, leading to a better work–life balance.

Mediating Variable: Work–Life Balance

Central to this framework is work–life balance, the main mediating variable connecting platform policies and service delivery results.

Work–life balance represents the ability of delivery workers to manage the following:

- Working hours and rest periods
- Physical and mental health
- Family and social responsibilities
- Job demands without excessive stress

The mediator role of work–life balance in the theoretical perspective supports the argument that platform inputs do not directly affect service outcomes but have a spillover effect on worker well-being. Prior studies demonstrate that work–life balance is critical in influencing alertness, motivation, and service behavior of delivery workers (Nirmala & Hidayathulla, 2022).

The model visually illustrates this mediating function by placing work–life balance between inputs and outputs, with arrows flowing through it.

Outputs (Dependent Variables)

The right-hand side of the framework shows the service outcomes involved and their relationship to work–life balance.

Delivery Efficiency

The efficiency of delivery refers to the operational effectiveness of food delivery services as well as:

- Timeliness of deliveries
- Route optimization and speed
- Order handling accuracy
- Reducing service delivery delays and interruptions

The arrow from Work–Life Balance to Delivery Efficiency reflects earlier studies showing that workers who maintain a healthy work-life balance are calmer, more focused, and better able to prioritize delivery tasks. Conversely, poor work-life balance can contribute to burnout and higher error rates. Similar findings have been reported in studies on stress levels among gig workers (Nolas & Fonceca, 2025).

Delivery efficiency is therefore conceptualized as an outcome that is indirectly impacted by algorithmic and pay-related influences via employee well-being.

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a measure of the customers' overall rating of their experience with the food delivery service—it entails:

- On-time delivery
- Order accuracy
- Courteous delivery interactions
- Trust and repurchase of the service

The arrow concluding Delivery Efficiency → Customer Satisfaction indicates that, as a service function, efficient operations lead to the best customer experience. Service strength has a major impact on customer satisfaction. Customers' opinions of the working conditions also have a substantial impact (Belanche *et al.*, 2021).

This positioning underscores the fact that customer satisfaction is the end result of a management mix of people, processes, and platform policies.

Table 2: Detailed Representation of the Proposed Conceptual Framework

Framework Component	Variable	Conceptual Meaning	Role in the Model	Key Literature Support
Input (Independent Variable)	Algorithmic Control	Platform-driven management systems such as automated scheduling, route optimization, performance ratings, time targets, and incentive-penalty mechanisms that regulate delivery workers' tasks and behavior	Influences delivery workers' autonomy, workload intensity, stress levels, and predictability of work hours	Won <i>et al.</i> (2023); Wotschack <i>et al.</i> (2024); Dong <i>et al.</i> (2025)
Input (Independent Variable)	Pay Structure	Financial compensation mechanisms including per-order pay, surge incentives, income stability, transparency, and timeliness of payments	Determines economic security, motivation, and the need to work extended hours	Nolas & Fonceca, (2025); Praveen & Rokith (2024)
Mediator	Work–Life Balance	The ability of delivery workers to balance work demands with rest, personal life, family responsibilities, and health	Acts as a mediating variable through which algorithmic control and pay influence service outcomes	Nirmala & Hidayathulla (2022); Useche <i>et al.</i> (2025)
Output (Dependent Variable)	Delivery Efficiency	Operational performance reflected through timely delivery, route accuracy, reduced errors, and reliable service execution	Outcome influenced by workers' physical and psychological well-being	Useche <i>et al.</i> (2025); Nolas & Fonceca, 2025
Output (Dependent Variable)	Customer Satisfaction	Customers' overall evaluation of the service based on delivery speed, order accuracy, service interaction, and trust	Final outcome resulting from efficient operations and positive worker-customer interactions	Prasetyo <i>et al.</i> (2021); Belanche <i>et al.</i> (2021); Orcullo & Grefalde, 2025

A standardized synopsis of the conceptual framework immersed in this investigation is shown in Table 2. It gives a clear explanation of how major factors like algorithmic control, pay structure, work-life balance, delivery efficiency, and customer satisfaction relate to one another. The table explains how input variables affect work-life balance, a mediating factor that influences service outcomes. Besides, it connects each factor to relevant literature, which strengthens the study's theoretical bases.

Discussion

The results of this review emphasize the interrelatedness of people, processes, and satisfaction in food delivery services. The analysis shows that functional capability alone does not guarantee service quality unless it is complemented by worker well-being (Wotschack *et al.*, 2024). Work-life balance has been identified as an essential mediator between delivery performance and customer satisfaction. The studies reviewed above indicate that algorithmic control and pay arrangements have a significant influence on employees' stress levels and job satisfaction. Similarly, customer satisfaction is influenced not only by delivery time and accuracy but also by ethical issues related to worker treatment (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2022; Belanche *et al.*, 2021). This emphasizes that both functional effectiveness and human aspects should be balanced.

The results of this review can also be viewed through the SERVQUAL model, in which customer satisfaction is assessed across several dimensions of service quality. On a food delivery platform, reliability is demonstrated through the timely and accurate delivery of orders, while responsiveness is reflected in how effectively customer requests and service issues are addressed. If delivery partners experience high work pressure and poor work-life balance, service quality may decline (Mathur & Gaur, 2022; Thuannadee & Praneetpholkrang, 2026). Therefore, a better working environment and stronger functional processes can improve service reliability and responsiveness. More importantly, these findings substantiate the need to integrate employee well-being with quality management strategies related to service quality dimensions in digital service platforms.

Gig workers have been observed in other countries in similar conditions of work, job insecurity, and work-life balance. However, operational models may look different depending upon platform, such as with the incentive structures and delivery policies from Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats (Cano *et al.*, 2021; Tong & Sutunyarak, 2024).

The findings of this research further reinforce previous research that highlights the significance of integrating both human and operational factors in service sectors. As an instance, Praveen and Rokith (2024) have studied that job satisfaction and work-life balance significantly affect employee performance and service delivery results. Likewise, Li *et al.* (2020) and Ray *et al.* (2019) show that customer satisfaction with food delivery services depends heavily on the consistency of service, platform usability, and delivery experience. This suggests that improving technological efficiency alone without improving worker well-being may not lead to sustainable service quality. Thus, a balanced approach with a combination of technological advancement and human-centered policies would be critical for the long-run success of the food delivery ecosystem.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that it relies entirely on secondary data obtained from previously published research articles. As a result, the proposed conceptual relationships have not been empirically tested through primary data collection. Future studies may validate the proposed framework through surveys or interviews with delivery partners, customers, and platform managers.

Quantitative or statistical analysis was not performed in the study because it was conducted through a literature review. Future research might use quantitative methods like regression analysis or structural equation modeling to investigate the proposed relationships in the conceptual framework.

Conclusion

The booming food delivery business shows that people, processes, and work-life balance are important factors in customer satisfaction. Delivery workers, customer support teams, operations managers, and

supervisors all play an integral role in shaping the customer service experience, which is directly connected to employee well-being. When employees maintain a healthy balance between their work and personal lives, they often demonstrate a better work attitude and become more focused, energetic, and reliable. This contributes to smoother operations and higher-quality service delivery. However, when work pressure becomes excessive, it may lead to stress, fatigue, and errors that negatively affect customers' perceptions of the service.

Processes provide the framework for food delivery activities, including ordering, food preparation, packaging, dispatching, real-time tracking, and feedback management. When these processes are well-structured, efficient, and technology-driven, they help ensure timely and accurate service. People and processes are closely connected; motivated employees can perform effectively when supported by well-designed systems, while poorly coordinated processes can limit even the most capable employees. This research emphasizes that when employees and operational workflows are aligned, organizations can achieve greater customer satisfaction, improved loyalty, and stronger overall service performance.

In food delivery, customer satisfaction depends on a combination of timely delivery, accurate orders, good food quality, and positive interactions. These outcomes result from the proper alignment of employee performance and optimized processes. Work–life balance has a subtle but powerful impact on employee motivation, clarity, and consistency. Firms that proactively address the human side of their operations while continuously improving production and delivery processes are more likely to meet high customer expectations and remain competitive in the market. In doing so, they maintain service reliability and build long-term trust among consumers in the fast-paced delivery industry.

Unborn exploration can concentrate on empirical testing of the proposed abstract frame using primary data collected from delivery workers and guests. Relative studies across different countries and platforms can provide broader perceptivity. Further exploration can also explore the part of technology, artificial intelligence, and policy regulations in perfecting work-life balance and service quality in frugality.

This study has not empirically tested the conceptual framework proposed. Quantitative analysis via survey data collected from delivery partners and customers may further validate these relationships between work–life balance, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction for future research.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

A.B: Conceptualization, Literature Review, Writing – Original Draft, Data Curation. H.H: Writing – Review & Editing, Validation, Visualization. L.S. J: Supervision, Guidance, Final Review & Editing.

AI Assistance Declaration

Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) were used by the authors only for language enhancement and grammar polishing in the preparation of this manuscript. All contents were checked, revised, and verified by the authors. The authors are responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the final manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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