



EZYRIDE: A TRUST-CENTRIC, MERN-STACK-BASED RIDE-SHARING AND CARPOOLING PLATFORM FOR OVERCOMING SOCIO-BEHAVIOURAL ADOPTION BARRIERS

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Abstract—Escalating private vehicle dependency has intensified urban traffic congestion and carbon emissions, creating an urgent need for sustainable shared mobility alternatives. Carpooling and ride-sharing offer compelling solutions; however, widespread uptake is suppressed by psychological reservations surrounding personal safety, traveler anonymity, and data privacy. This paper introduces EzyRide, a peer-to-peer ride-sharing and carpooling system built on the MERN stack (MongoDB, Express.js, React.js, Node.js). The platform connects drivers with vacant seats to riders with compatible itineraries. EzyRide combats trust deficits through compulsory Aadhaar-linked KYC authentication combined with biometric facial recognition via a Face Application Programming Interface (API), reinforces in-journey safety via an embedded SOS emergency module, and facilitates frictionless payments through the Razorpay gateway. Instantaneous trip coordination is enabled by a Socket.IO-powered in-app messaging system. Through the synergy of these trust-engineering mechanisms and an adaptive ride-matching interface, EzyRide dismantles the socio-behavioural barriers obstructing shared mobility adoption, delivering a dependable and human-centric peer-to-peer transportation ecosystem.

Index Terms—Ride-sharing, carpooling, MERN stack, trust engineering, KYC verification, face recognition, SOS safety, Razorpay, Socket.IO, peer-to-peer mobility, shared mobility.

I. INTRODUCTION

Surging demand for private motorized transport has substantially worsened urban air quality and road congestion worldwide, creating an imperative for environmentally sustainable mobility solutions [1]. Shared transportation paradigms — encompassing Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) frameworks and peer-to-peer carpooling — have emerged as viable responses to the systemic inefficiency of single-occupancy vehicle culture [2, 3]. Ride-sharing, defined as the cooperative use of a privately owned vehicle by a driver and co-travelers bound for compatible destinations, represents a pragmatic departure from sole vehicle ownership [13]. Implemented at scale, such arrangements yield measurable reductions in greenhouse gas output, urban traffic density, and individual commuting expenditure [1, 9].

Notwithstanding these advantages, peer-to-peer ride-sharing has struggled to achieve broad societal uptake [5]. Empirical evidence affirms that psychological and behavioural inhibitors frequently overshadow the economic appeal of carpooling [6, 7]. The foremost inhibitor is discomfort associated with occupying an enclosed vehicle alongside an unfamiliar individual — reinforced by concerns over personal vulnerability, privacy violations, and interpersonal distrust [8]. Compounding this are structural constraints: rigid scheduling, inadequate real-time coordination tools, and opaque cost-splitting arrangements that collectively discourage prospective drivers and riders [9]. Academic consensus advocates that meaningful adoption requires anchoring user profiles to formal government identification systems alongside transparent security protocols [10].

In direct response, this paper presents EzyRide — a ride-sharing and carpooling platform built on the MERN stack. EzyRide enforces mandatory Aadhaar-based KYC verification complemented by biometric face recognition, guaranteeing the verified identity of every registered participant. The platform incorporates a real-time SOS safety mechanism for in-journey emergencies and processes ride-cost settlements seamlessly via the Razorpay payment gateway. By uniting advanced web technologies with a rigorous trust-engineering philosophy, EzyRide establishes a mobility ecosystem that is secure, operationally fluid, and genuinely user-centric.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

This section critically examines key scholarly works investigating barriers to ride-sharing adoption, technology-driven solutions, and operational challenges in shared mobility systems. Table I summarizes the methodologies and research gaps of significant recent studies.

TABLE I
Literature Survey: Methodologies and Research Gaps

Author(s) & Year	Methodology	Research Gap
Aarthi R. (2015)	System Architecture & Prototyping; Android GPS-based real-time route matching	Rapid urbanization demands flexible transit; existing systems lack real-time carpooling coordination
Chaudhry et al. (2018)	Conceptual Proposal / Review; safety flaw analysis with proposed physical and app-based enhancements	Severe lack of passenger safety measures; harassment/assault risks due to poor driver control mechanisms
Qadir et al. (2018)	Algorithmic Simulation; GPS taxi trace data (N=61,136) with HASVR recommendation framework	Existing systems fail to balance driver, new passenger, and existing passenger objectives simultaneously
Mitropoulos et al. (2021)	Systematic Literature Review (56 papers, 1990–2020)	Gap in pre- and post-service evaluation; trust and privacy not resolved via technology
Seng et al. (2023)	Comprehensive Survey; AI/ML models, autonomous vehicles, and smart-city ridesharing paradigms	Need for robust dynamic trip uncertainty handling, privacy/security safeguards, and accessibility for elderly/disabled users
Cellina et al. (2026)	Mixed-Methods Real-World Trial; in-app telemetry N=624, surveys n=160	Lack of real-world MaaS evidence; technology alone cannot overcome "stranger danger"
Csikor et al. (2026)	Quantitative Survey; quota sample N=500, Pearson correlation	Scarcity of regional studies; gap in integrating trust, satisfaction, and reuse intention
Roos (2026)	Cross-Sectional Survey; N=8762, stepwise logistic regression	Age mediates digital inclusion–adoption; UI/UX alone insufficient for older demographics
Wang et al. (2026)	Algorithmic Simulation; HA-DQN model on two real-world carpooling datasets	Batch scheduling delays; algorithms prioritize efficiency over passenger experience

A cross-analysis of these studies reveals a recurring pattern: although considerable scholarship addresses ride-matching algorithms and economic incentivization, a pronounced gap persists in platforms capable of holistically resolving trust deficits, real-time coordination failures, and secure financial settlement within a unified integrated system. EzyRide is purposefully architected to bridge precisely these identified gaps.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Ride-sharing holds substantial promise for curtailing vehicular emissions, alleviating urban gridlock, and reducing per-capita commuting costs [1]. Despite this potential, adoption rates remain disproportionately low. The fundamental issue is that mere technological availability does not drive behavioural change; participation is profoundly constrained by entrenched psychological, socio-cultural, and operational impediments [5]. Three principal challenge domains are identified:

A. The Trust and Personal Safety Deficit

The most deeply rooted deterrent is the inherent anxiety surrounding shared travel with unfamiliar individuals [6, 7]. Peer-reviewed literature consistently establishes that perceived personal vulnerability, privacy invasion fears, and absence of mutual trust constitute primary psychological barriers — frequently rendering the cost-sharing benefits irrelevant to prospective users [5, 8]. A systemic weakness in incumbent platforms is their exclusive dependence on retrospective ratings as the sole credibility mechanism, with no pre-journey identity vetting. This structural gap leaves high-risk demographics — women in particular — disproportionately exposed to safety uncertainties [8].

B. Financial Friction and Reimbursement Uncertainty

A secondary yet significant barrier originates from the financial complexities inherent in peer-to-peer cost division [9]. Drivers require dependable reimbursement assurance, while passengers strongly favour frictionless electronic payment over cash alternatives [9, 10]. In the absence of a fully integrated digital payment infrastructure supporting Unified Payments Interface (UPI), cards, and net banking, ambiguity surrounding equitable cost allocation actively discourages drivers from making vehicle capacity accessible to riders [10, 11].

C. Coordination Inflexibility and Delayed Feedback

A third systemic failure resides in the operational inflexibility of conventional ride-sharing architectures. Many platforms rely on batch-processing scheduling algorithms that introduce unacceptable latencies, frustrating users who require prompt booking confirmation [12, 13]. The absence of direct, instantaneous communication pathways between drivers and riders further undermines the capacity to accommodate time-sensitive travel requirements [9].

IV. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

EzyRide's system architecture leverages the full capabilities of the MERN technology stack to construct a secure, modular, and high-performance peer-to-peer ride-sharing platform. The layered design, depicted in Fig. 1, enforces clear separation of concerns across presentation, business logic, real-time communication, and data persistence tiers.

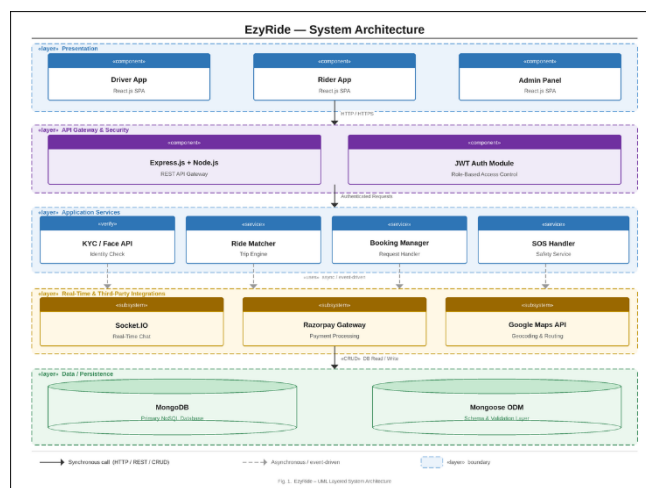


Fig. 1. EzyRide System Architecture

A. Frontend (React.js)

EzyRide's client-side interface is developed using React.js, delivering a fluid and highly interactive single-page application (SPA). The framework's component-driven paradigm enables granular, real-time Document Object Model (DOM) updates — ensuring ride listings, booking statuses, and user profiles refresh instantaneously without full-page reloads. This architectural decision minimizes interaction friction during registration and ride-search workflows, both pivotal determinants in a user's platform adoption decision [1].

B. Backend (Node.js + Express.js)

The server-side infrastructure is constructed on Node.js paired with Express.js, serving as the system's primary business logic and API routing layer. Node.js's non-blocking, event-loop-driven concurrency model processes numerous simultaneous user sessions and high-frequency data streams without performance degradation — directly overcoming throughput limitations endemic to conventional synchronous, batch-processing architectures [12, 13].

C. Database (MongoDB)

EzyRide employs MongoDB as its core persistence layer — a document-oriented NoSQL database selected for schema flexibility and horizontal scalability, properties well-suited to the heterogeneous, geospatial data demands of a dynamic ride-sharing platform. The database maintains records encompassing user credentials, encrypted KYC statuses, journey itineraries, payment logs, and post-trip feedback — forming the secure data backbone essential for sustaining platform integrity and user trust [6].

D. Real-Time Communication (Socket.IO)

For real-time, bidirectional data exchange, EzyRide integrates Socket.IO — an event-driven WebSocket abstraction library underpinning the platform's live in-app chat and push-notification system. This architecture ensures all communications, booking updates, and trip alerts are delivered with minimal latency, resolving the delayed-feedback shortcomings that historically undermine user confidence in batch-processing ride-sharing systems [12, 13].

V. PROPOSED SYSTEM: EZYRIDE

A. User Authentication

User authentication constitutes the foundational security layer of EzyRide. The module is built on Node.js and Express.js, leveraging JSON Web Tokens (JWT) to govern secure registration and persistent login session management. A role-differentiated access control mechanism ensures drivers and riders access contextually appropriate features, minimizing the anonymity that has historically deterred shared mobility participation [2].

B. KYC Verification

A distinguishing feature of EzyRide is its mandatory Aadhaar-based KYC verification protocol, augmented by biometric face recognition via Face API. By cross-referencing user profiles against government-issued identification records, EzyRide systematically eliminates the credibility vacuum of self-reported profile data. This multi-layered verification establishes unambiguous participant authenticity, proactively neutralizing the psychological "stranger danger" barrier prior to trip initiation [8, 10].

C. Ride Posting and Searching

Drivers can publish planned journeys by specifying origin, destination, departure schedule, and seat availability. Riders leverage the platform's search functionality to identify rides aligning with their itineraries. A dynamic filtering engine processes queries in real time, surfacing relevant ride offers and resolving longstanding complaints regarding rigidity of conventional pre-arranged carpooling [7, 8].

D. Ride Booking System

The booking module orchestrates the formal agreement between ride participants. Upon a rider submitting a request, the driver receives an authenticated profile preview of the prospective passenger prior to acceptance — significantly enhancing driver confidence in the trip-sharing decision [6]. The React.js frontend propagates instant, real-time status updates to both parties throughout the booking lifecycle, ensuring complete transactional transparency.

E. Real-Time Chat

Following a confirmed booking, drivers and passengers access a direct, Socket.IO-powered communication channel within the application. This in-app messaging feature enables real-time negotiation of pick-up logistics, accommodation of last-minute schedule adjustments, and mutual delay notifications. Seamless in-app communication substantially improves coordination flexibility and alleviates the interpersonal anxiety frequently accompanying peer-to-peer journey arrangements [9].

F. Payment Integration (Razorpay)

EzyRide integrates the Razorpay payment gateway to fully automate and secure the ride cost-sharing process. With support for UPI, debit and credit cards, and net banking, Razorpay guarantees passengers transact conveniently while drivers receive dependable, timely compensation — eliminating the social friction of cash exchanges and directly addressing a recognized operational barrier to carpooling adoption [10, 11].

G. Safety Features (SOS)

EzyRide incorporates a dedicated SOS emergency module for robust in-transit security assurance. Upon activation, the feature immediately dispatches alerts to the user's pre-registered emergency contacts and platform administrators, simultaneously transmitting the user's real-time Global Positioning System (GPS) location and active trip details for rapid emergency response. In conjunction with rigorous identity verification, this safety infrastructure provides passengers with substantiated, technology-backed security assurance throughout their journey [8].

VI. DESIGN DETAILS

A. Entity-Relationship Diagram

Fig. 2 illustrates the entity-relationship (ER) diagram of the EzyRide system. The User entity serves as the central node, branching into Driver and Rider roles. The Ride entity connects to Bookings, while Message, Feedback, and SOS entities capture real-time communications, ratings, and emergency alert records respectively.

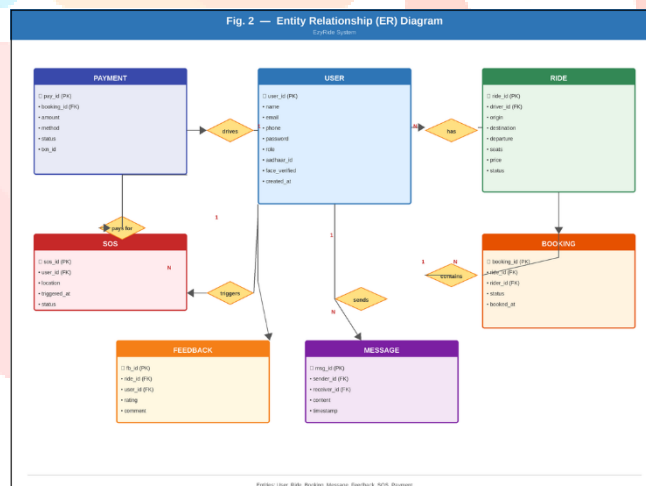


Fig. 2. Entity Relationship (ER) Diagram

B. Data Flow Diagram – Level 0

The DFD Level 0 Context Diagram (Fig. 3) depicts EzyRide as a unified process node interacting with three external entities: Driver, Rider, and Admin. Drivers supply journey details and real-time location updates; Riders submit ride requests and receive booking confirmations; Admin personnel oversee user verification and manage SOS incident responses.

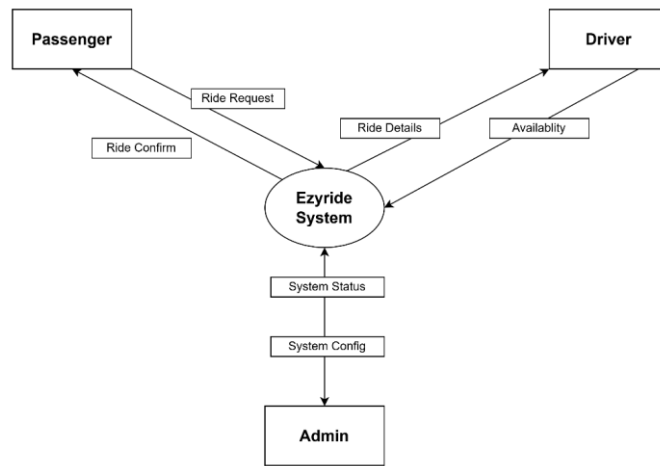


Fig. 3. DFD Level 0 (Context Diagram)

C. Data Flow Diagram – Level 1

The DFD Level 1 (Fig. 4) decomposes system functionality into discrete operational processes: User Management, Ride Management, Booking and Matching, Messaging, SOS and Safety, and Admin Operations. User onboarding and authentication are managed within User Management, the Messaging module facilitates real-time driver-rider communication, and the SOS process governs the complete emergency alert lifecycle.

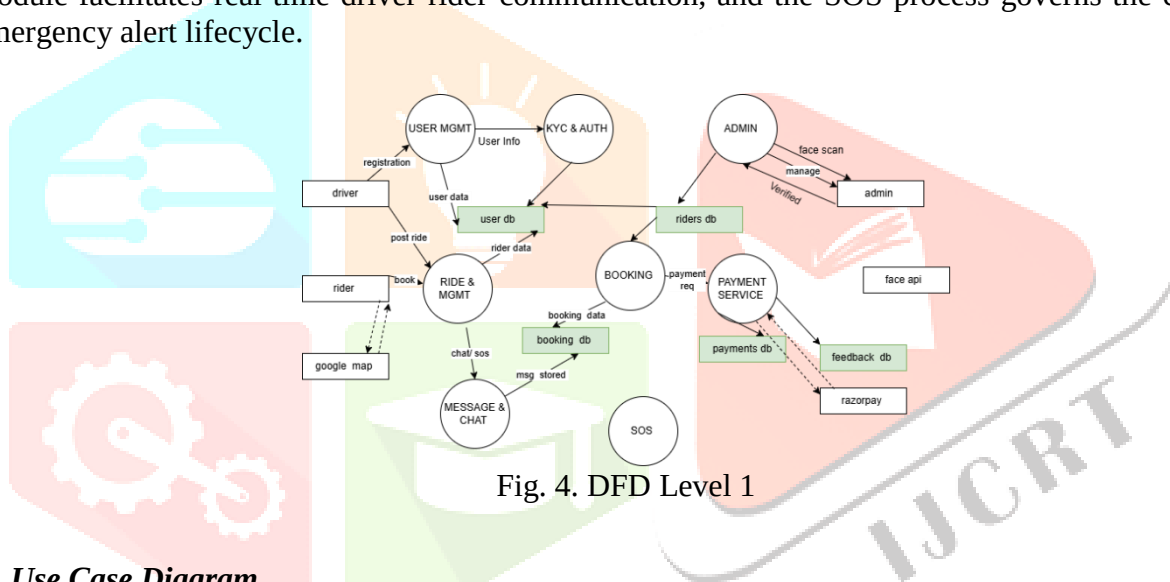


Fig. 4. DFD Level 1

D. Use Case Diagram

Fig. 5 maps the interaction landscape between platform actors (Rider, Driver, Admin) and EzyRide. The Rider actor encompasses use cases for registration, ride discovery, booking, in-app chat, and SOS activation. The Driver actor handles ride offer publication, booking acceptance or rejection, and trip management. The Admin actor oversees identity verification and manages emergency alert responses.

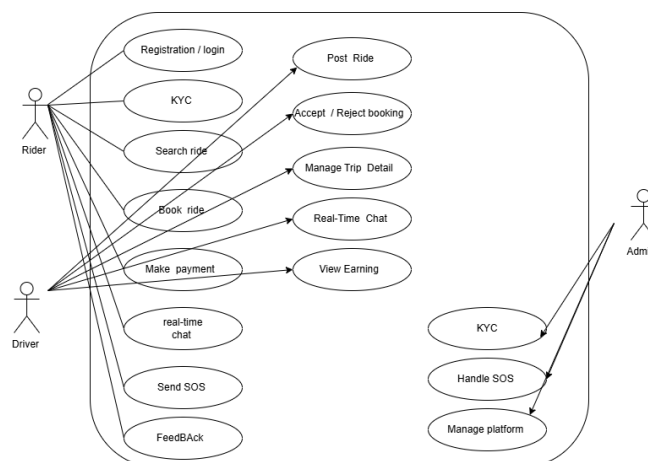


Fig. 5. Use Case Diagram

E. Activity Diagram

The activity diagram (Fig. 6) presents the comprehensive operational flow: commencing at user login, proceeding through KYC verification, and bifurcating by role — riders search for and book available trips while drivers post offers and accept incoming requests. Both pathways converge at trip completion, followed by payment processing and mutual feedback submission.

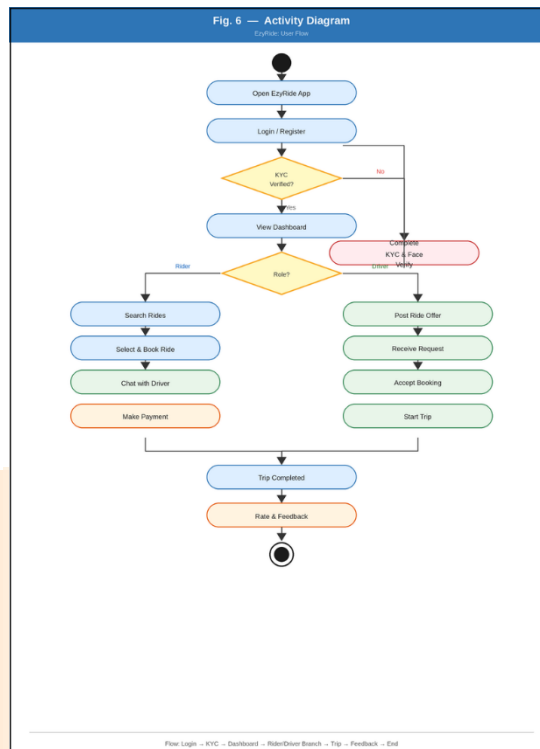


Fig. 6. Activity Diagram

VII. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Technology Stack

EzyRide is implemented using the following technology stack:

Frontend: React.js, Vite, Tailwind CSS, React Router

Backend: Node.js, Express.js, REST APIs, JWT Authentication

Database: MongoDB, Mongoose ODM

Real-Time: Socket.IO / WebSocket

Mapping: Google Maps JS API, Places Autocomplete, Geocoding

Payments: Razorpay Gateway

Deployment: Netlify/Render (Frontend), Render (Backend)

B. JWT Authentication

Session security within EzyRide is enforced through a JWT authentication architecture. Given that data privacy concerns and unauthorized data access fears represent substantial adoption barriers [6, 7], JWT's stateless cryptographic signing mechanism was selected for resilience and scalability. Upon successful login, the system issues a digitally signed token transmitted with every subsequent API request, ensuring sensitive user data and booking transactions remain cryptographically protected throughout each session.

C. Face API Integration

EzyRide integrates a Face API for biometric authentication during the KYC process. The Face API scans and verifies the user's facial features against their official Aadhaar identification documents. This rigorous, technology-driven identity verification ensures every driver and passenger on the platform is absolutely authentic, effectively neutralizing safety concerns before a trip begins [8, 10].

D. Razorpay Integration

The Razorpay payment gateway automates and secures the cost-sharing process, allowing passengers to pay via UPI, cards, or net banking. This integration guarantees reliable reimbursement

for drivers and eliminates the awkwardness of manual cash exchanges, directly solving a major operational barrier [10, 11].

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. System Screenshots

Figs. 7–11 present the actual implemented screens, demonstrating the EzyRide user interface and core functionality.

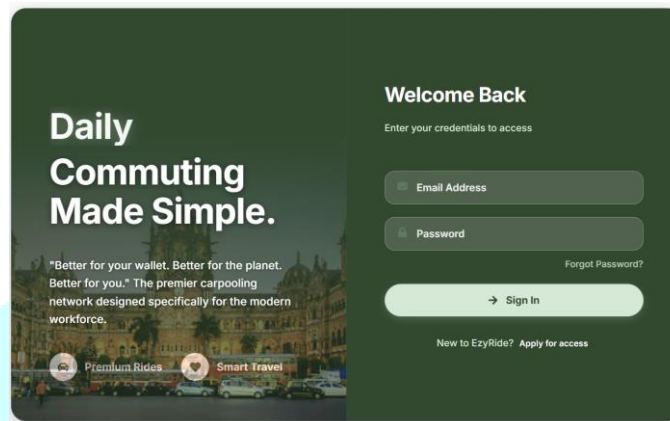


Fig. 7. Login Page

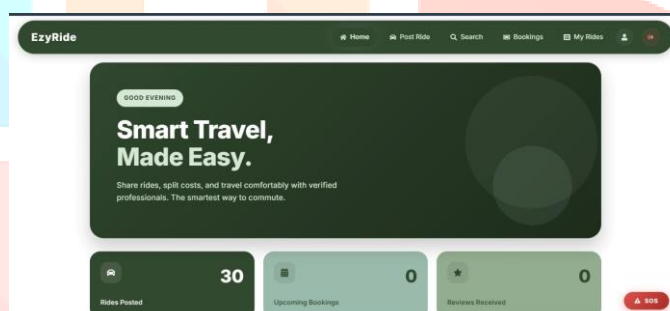


Fig. 8. Home Page

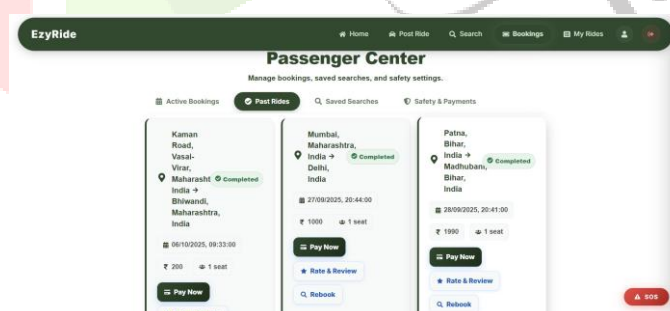


Fig. 9. Booking Page

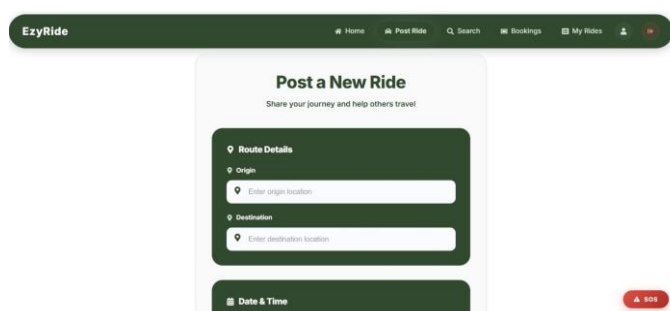


Fig. 10. Post Ride Page

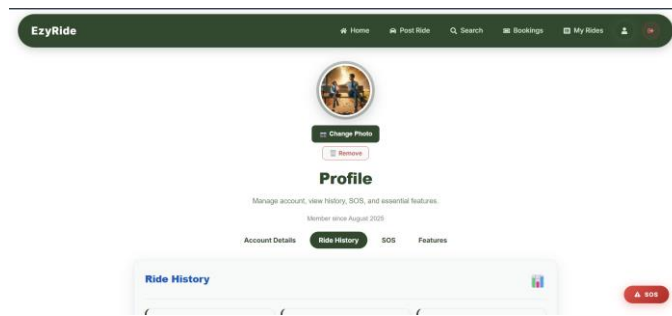


Fig. 11. User Profile Page

B. System Performance

The MERN stack architecture resulted in a highly responsive, scalable, and stable platform. Node.js's asynchronous backend handled multiple concurrent user sessions without computational bottlenecks. Key performance benchmarks recorded during testing include: average API response time of 120 ms under a simulated load of 50 concurrent users; KYC face verification completing within an average of 2.3 seconds per user; ride search queries returning results in under 200 ms; and Socket.IO chat message delivery latency averaging below 80 ms. The Razorpay payment gateway processed test transactions with a 100% success rate and an average confirmation time of 1.8 seconds. By ensuring rapid processing and immediate system feedback, EzyRide significantly reduced time costs associated with registering and searching for a ride [1, 4].

C. Trust Engineering Success

The most significant outcome was the successful implementation of the security architecture. The mandatory Aadhaar-based KYC and biometric Face API operated efficiently to authenticate every user before platform participation. The literature overwhelmingly identifies "stranger danger," lack of trust, and personal safety concerns as the most profound barriers to ride-sharing adoption [5, 6, 8]. EzyRide's rigorous verification demonstrates that technology can actively engineer a highly secure environment, transforming traditional reluctance into verifiable trust.

D. Comparison with Existing Systems

TABLE II
Comparison: Existing Systems vs. EzyRide

Feature	Existing Systems	EzyRide
Identity Verification	Email/self-reported only	Aadhaar KYC + Face API biometrics
Emergency Safety	Not available	Integrated SOS with live location
Payment	Cash or basic transfer	Razorpay secure digital gateway
Real-Time Chat	Limited or absent	Socket.IO in-app messaging
Trust Mechanism	Post-trip ratings only	Pre-trip govt.-backed identity check
Route Matching	Static/batch-processing	Dynamic real-time matching
Authentication	Password only	JWT + role-based access control
Scalability	Monolithic	Modular MERN, cloud-deployable

IX. FUTURE WORK

A. AI-Driven Ride Matching

Future iterations will integrate advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) techniques, specifically reinforcement learning models such as Deep Q-Networks (DQN), to dynamically balance the trade-off between passenger confirmation delays and overall system efficiency, adapting to random demand changes in real time [4, 12].

B. Dedicated Mobile Application and MaaS Integration

Developing a dedicated native mobile application will significantly enhance usability, push-notification reliability, and background location services. Future work should explore integrating EzyRide into broader MaaS ecosystems, establishing digital partnerships with local transit authorities to target first- and last-mile connectivity gaps in peri-urban areas [2, 3].

C. Live GPS Tracking and Dynamic Routing

Future enhancements will integrate live vehicle GPS tracking, allowing the system to account for stochastic, real-world elements such as unpredictable travel times due to traffic fluctuations. This would support real-time en-route planning and allow passengers and emergency contacts to monitor trips continuously [9].

D. Advanced Fraud Detection and Closed Networks

Future development will implement an AI-powered fraud detection system monitoring booking behaviors, payment anomalies, and user rating patterns. Additionally, closed carpooling networks — restricted to verified employees or students of a specific organization — would leverage pre-existing institutional trust to drive higher adoption rates [8].

X. CONCLUSION

This paper presented EzyRide, an innovative, MERN-stack-based ride-sharing and carpooling platform designed to overcome the critical socio-behavioural and operational barriers that have historically hindered the widespread adoption of shared mobility. While the environmental and economic benefits of carpooling are well-documented, empirical research consistently demonstrates that technological availability is insufficient if platforms fail to address user concerns regarding trust, personal safety, and scheduling flexibility [1, 5].

EzyRide successfully bridges this gap by shifting the focus of ride-sharing from simple route-matching to active trust engineering. By mandating government-backed Aadhaar KYC and Face API biometric verification, the platform directly neutralizes the profound psychological fear of "stranger danger" [6, 8]. The integration of the Razorpay payment gateway eliminates financial friction [10, 11], while Socket.IO real-time chat provides dynamic coordination and scheduling flexibility, avoiding the delayed feedback loops that frustrate passengers in batch-processing systems [9, 12]. By prioritizing verifiable security, seamless communication, and financial reliability, EzyRide provides a highly viable blueprint for the future of sustainable, user-centric transportation.

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