

Impact Of Quick Commerce on Changing Customer Expectations in Grocery Retail.

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Abstract

Grocery retail has been revamped in terms of speed, convenience, and service quality due to the increase of quick commerce (Q-commerce). This paper focuses on the impact on consumer behaviour and how these changes impact service benchmarks as a result of Q-commerce's ultra-fast delivery models available from different Q-commerce platforms. Data for this descriptive study was collected via a structured survey from 250 respondents, the majority of whom (74.8%) were within the 18–25-year-old demographic. Q-commerce was therefore found to already have widespread adoption among young, tech-savvy consumers. Data was analysed using descriptive statistical analysis tools in Excel.

The results show that Q-commerce has greatly increased consumer hopes of delivery speed with most consumers now wanting their delivery to be completed within 10 - 20 minutes; consumers also view the convenience of the quick/instant ordering, time from placing order to receiving it (instant), and real-time response as part of what defines a convenient service. While speed and convenience are key factors in Q-commerce usage, custom price sensitivity, product quality, and trust are still very important considerations for making a purchase decision and developing long term customer loyalty. Delivery challenges still exist (late deliveries, wrong items or missing item), and rider safety concerns will remain; however, consumers surveyed indicated high levels of overall satisfaction and willingness to use Q-commerce in the future, thus indicating an ongoing presence and market potential for Q-commerce moving forward.

The conclusion of this study is that consumer expectations for grocery retail experience has changed and made Q-commerce the industry standard. As a result, grocery retailers (traditional/brick and mortar) are under pressure to innovate ways to compete with Q-commerce service providers, and Q-commerce service providers (the platforms) will need to continue to find ways to improve accuracy and competitive pricing, quality control, and ethical delivery practices. While sample size and geographic concentration limitations were identified, further research across the entire demographic range and broad geographic coverage is recommended so as to have a better understanding of how consumers are continuing to evolve in their purchasing behaviours.

Keywords: Grocery Retail, Customer Expectations, Consumer Behaviour, Delivery Speed, Online Grocery Shopping, Last-Mile Delivery, Convenience Shopping, Digital Retail, E-commerce, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Retail Innovation

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology advancements and shifting customer lifestyles have resulted in major changes to the grocery retail sector. Traditional store-based buying methods have transitioned into digitally-enabled shopping formats that have home delivery options and mobile-based ordering options. Q-commerce (quick commerce), which is defined as a method of shopping where delivery occurs in minutes is the latest phase of this evolution. Companies like Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, and Dunzo are changing the way people perceive convenience by creating a level of

understanding that revolves around the ideas of immediacy, accessibility, and time efficiency. Therefore, speed of delivery has now become a critical measure of service quality and continues to be a key factor that influences customer expectations for grocery retailing.

In India's very rapidly evolving grocery retail environment, Q-commerce has become a significant power, with particular strength in urban and semi-urban areas. As internet penetration increases, there is also an increase in disposable income and desire for lifestyle convenience; customers expect that their

grocery needs will be met instantaneously. The emergence of Q-commerce has placed significant pressure on conventional supermarkets and e-grocery platforms, and retailers have had to change how their supply chains, inventory management, and customer service strategies work. To evaluate the long-term viability and competitive advantages in the grocery retailing market, it is important to assess how Q-commerce changes customer expectations.

Within grocery retailing, customer expectations have a significant impact on levels of satisfaction, repeat purchases and preference for brands. As Q-commerce becomes more widely used by consumers, they are increasingly accustomed to quicker response times, seamless ordering experiences and real-time fulfilment. Such enhanced consumer expectations apply not only to digital media, but also affect the way that consumers perceive traditional retailing formats. Therefore, retailers need to comprehend how customer expectations continue to develop if they wish to remain competitive in an environment where speed and convenience have transitioned from desirable elements to required expectations.

II. Research Gap

Online shopping and the growth of e-commerce have been thoroughly investigated in the literature. However, there has been little research into how Q-commerce impacts consumer expectations, especially within India. Previous studies have focused on evaluating elements such as business models, logistics efficiency, or geographic market expansion; this has resulted in limited understanding regarding the effect of ultra-fast delivery on consumer mindset and standard service expectations. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the shifts in expectation and trust perception as well as the changes in behaviour when consumers adopt Q-commerce.

III. Objectives of the Study

- A. To examine how Q-commerce affects customer expectations regarding delivery speed, convenience, and product availability.
- B. To assess the impact of Q-commerce on customer satisfaction and loyalty in grocery retail.
- C. To compare traditional retail, online grocery platforms, and Q-commerce in terms of service quality and customer experience.
- D. To identify operational and strategic challenges

faced by grocery retailers due to rising customer expectations driven by Q-commerce.

The paper begins with a review of existing literature on grocery retail, e-commerce evolution, and Q-commerce models. The second section discusses the research methodology used for data collection and analysis. The third section presents the findings related to changing customer expectations and their relationship with Q-commerce services. The fourth section provides an analysis and interpretation of results comparing them to those of previous studies. Finally, the last section presents final conclusions that provide insight into the first three sections, managerial implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Other studies have identified challenges that include high operational costs, issues with delivery partners, constraints in inventory, and sustainability; however, these factors continue to show that the fast delivery model for Q-commerce may not always be possible for all grocery retailers.

IV. Literature review:

- a) Goyal and Singh (2022): Q-commerce is an example of the digital retail evolution moving rapidly towards higher levels of customer service. Speed to fulfil orders will continue to play an important role in Q-commerce.
- b) Kapoor and Taneja (2023): The rapid rise of urbanization, density of cities and increasing number of smartphones used have created a very conducive environment for the growth of delivery models where goods can be delivered in 10-20 minutes.
- c) RedSeer Consulting (2022): According to industry experts, India has one of the fastest growing Q-commerce sectors in the world. The majority of Q-commerce consumers are young, digitally savvy users.
- d) Bhatti (2021): Delivery speed is one of the most important factors that shape how customers perceive online stores and therefore influences how satisfied they are, as well as whether they will purchase groceries online.
- e) Ramanathan & Gunasekaran, 2023: Perceived service level and loyalty/repurchase behaviour is influenced by shorter delivery times. These findings

demonstrate that Q-commerce has a strong psychological impact on customers' standards of time and convenience. The introduction of ultra-fast delivery has reset the expectations for appropriate wait times and thereby altered the amount of time that consumers are willing to wait before making an order.

- f) Wang & Li, 2022: From an operational perspective, many authors note supply chain innovations that have made Q-commerce a viable option. They state that the establishment of micro-fulfilment centres and dark stores has enabled fulfilment to take place within 20 minutes by reducing the last mile to less than 1km in distance. Additionally, this research points out that save time by utilizing route optimization algorithms, automated picking systems, and closed loop inventory management systems are essential.
- g) Sharma & Kumar ,2023: While speed provides customers with greater satisfaction, speed also creates higher logistics costs and therefore requires a sufficient order density to be profitable.
- h) Singh & Ramaswamy 2023: Q-commerce models typically have low profit margins; therefore, operating with optimum efficiency is critical to the success of Q-commerce companies.
- i) Gupta & Mehra (2021): Customers in South Asian countries put considerable weight on discounts, value-for-money, and offer bundles when determining which digital retailers to purchase from and continue using. They remain one of the main behavioural drivers in the grocery industry.
- j) Chakraborty & Bhatnagar (2023): Convenience-minded consumers base their decision on switching between platforms on the level of promotion. In developing markets like India, grocery shoppers generally look for a balance of convenience and affordability from a retailer. Therefore, it is important that Q-commerce companies continuously improve their pricing strategies to attract/retain customers.
- k) Desai & Prabhu (2022): A large amount of customers still trust traditional kirana shops more than they do online retailers because of

past experience and personal interaction with the store. Q-commerce companies have a "trust deficit" and can hinder customer loyalty by providing erroneous item selections, subpar product freshness, and, or, not providing the customer with what they ordered. Customers want the same, or better, quality from Q-commerce stores relative to traditional stores, regardless of whether the time between ordering and receiving their product is short.

- l) The existing body of research shows that Speed of Delivery is becoming one of the key categories of customer satisfaction for Digital Grocery Retailers. Providing shorter Fulfilment Timelines has been found to result in increased perceived convenience leading customers to repurchase. However, other research findings have stated that the operational complexity, cost pressure, and sustainability issues associated with the implementation of ultra-fast Delivery Models may present challenges for Continued Feasibility. Overall, therefore, while Q-Commerce is positively affecting customer experience it also creates new Strategic and Ethical considerations for Retailers.

V. Research Methodology

To investigate how quick commerce is changing grocery retail customers expectations, this research uses a descriptive research design. This design is cohesive with the research as it seeks to describe how consumers perceive, interact with, and change their expectations of grocery retail due to the growth of Q-commerce platforms.

This research will examine different variables including delivery speed expectations, convenience perception, product availability, service reliability, customer satisfaction, and a preference for Q-commerce over and traditional retail. These variables will provide insights on how Q-commerce is affecting consumers overall expectations when shopping for groceries.

The research utilized a survey method as the primary data collection technique. The 20-question, structured questionnaire utilized closed-ended questions and a Likert-scale type format in order to capture the participant's experiences and expectations when

shopping for groceries across various grocery retail formats. The survey was administered via an online platform, collecting responses from a sample of 250 participants, using a convenience sampling method providing access to a wide cross-section of participants within a short period of time.

Data analysis included the use of Microsoft Excel for cleaning, tabulating, and interpreting results from surveys. The analyses were descriptive statistical techniques, including using frequency distributions, percent-aging the data and creating charts as well as cross-tabulating all data to identify common patterns and trends from the customer expectations of Q commerce, online grocery sites, and traditional retail locations.

A. Research Design:

The Research Design consists of Descriptive Research at its base and will be utilized to gain information about the impact of Q-commerce on Grocery Retail Customer Expectations. The Descriptive approach is most appropriate for this study as it allows for the study of existing Consumer Behaviour, Preference and Perception, and how it is being impacted by Q-commerce, all while not manipulating any variables in the research process. The focus of the research will be on identifying patterns in relation to Delivery Speed, Convenience, Satisfaction and Trust amongst Customers who utilize Q-commerce Delivery Platforms.

B. Variables will be utilized in the research study:

Independent Variable: The use of Q-commerce delivery platforms (e.g. Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart)

Dependent Variable: Customer Expectations (including Delivery Speed Expectations, Convenience and Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty, Trust and Purchase Behaviour).

Control Variables: Age, Gender, Occupation, and Frequency of Use.

The purpose of the above variables is to evaluate the manner in which Q-commerce will impact the changing expectations of Grocery Retail Consumers.

C. Sampling Method

- The target population of the study is

Consumers that are using grocery delivery platforms (specifically Q-commerce apps).

- The sample size for the study will be 250 respondents.
- The sampling technique will be Convenience Sampling as respondents were readily available and could be easily collected on site in a short time period.

The majority of respondents will be within the age group of 18-25 years of age and are considered active users of digital platforms.

D. Data Collection Method

- **Primary Data:**

For primary data collection a survey was conducted using an online structured questionnaire (Google Forms).

The contents of this questionnaire consisted of demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, occupation), and 20 closed-ended questions measuring aspects of customer-related expectation/satisfaction/convenience/delivery time/trust.

- **Secondary Data:**

Sources included peer-reviewed articles, industry reports, and articles on various subjects related to Q-commerce, e-grocery shopping, and consumer behaviour.

E. Data Analysis

The analysis of the data used MS Excel to examine the collected data.

The methods used to analyse this data were:

Frequency distribution.

Statistical analysis using percentages & rates.

Tabulation of response data.

Recognising patterns and trends.

The outcome of the analysis assists in determining how Q-commerce is affecting consumer

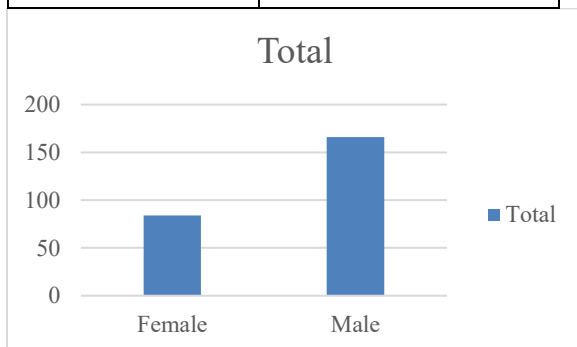
expectations/satisfaction/behaviour in the grocery retail sector.

VI. Data Analysis & Interpretation:

Demographic Variables

1. Gender

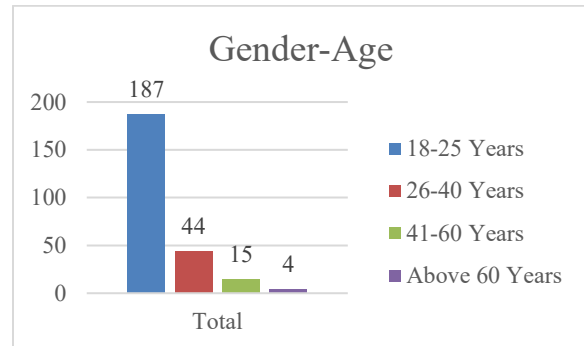
	Count of Gender
Female	84
Male	166
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: The majority of respondents are male, indicating that the sample is dominated by male users. This suggests that male consumers are more active in using quick commerce platforms and participating in online surveys.

2. Age Group

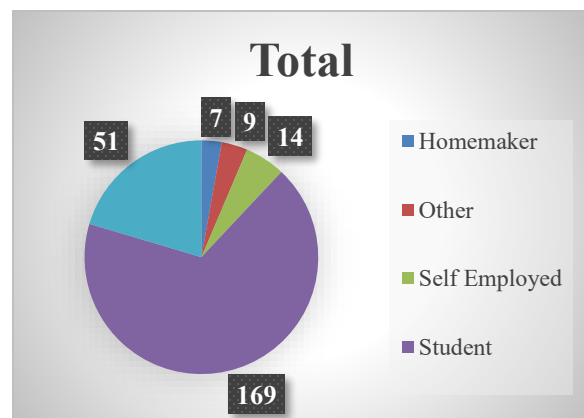
Age Group	Count of Age
18-25 Years	187
26-40 Years	44
41-60 Years	15
Above 60 Years	4
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents fall in the 18–25 age group, showing that Q-commerce usage is highest among young consumers. This group is tech-savvy and frequently uses quick delivery apps for daily grocery needs.

3. Occupation

Row Labels	Count of Occupation
Homemaker	7
Other	9
Self Employed	14
Student	169
Working Professional	51
Grand Total	250

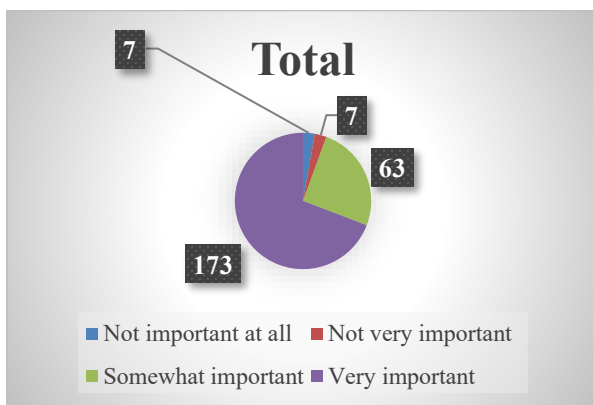


Interpretation: A large proportion of respondents are students, followed by working professionals. This indicates that the findings mainly represent young digital users who rely on quick commerce for convenience and time-saving.

Interpretation of Questions (1–20)

1. How important is delivery speed to you when ordering groceries online?

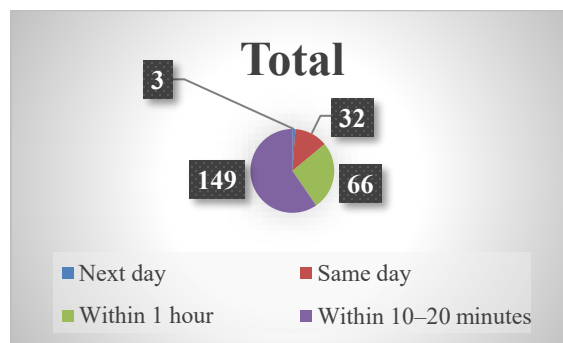
Row Labels	Delivery Speed
Not important at all	7
Not very important	7
Somewhat important	63
Very important	173
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents consider delivery speed very important. This shows that speed is a key factor influencing customer expectations and plays a major role in choosing grocery platforms.

2. What delivery time do you ideally expect from a grocery delivery app?

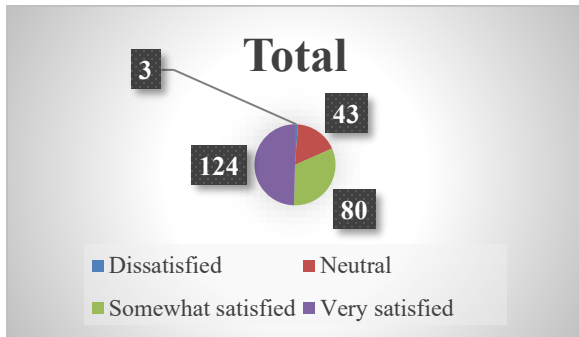
Row Labels	Delivery Time
Next day	3
Same day	32
Within 1 hour	66
Within 10–20 minutes	149
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents prefer delivery within 10–20 minutes. This indicates that quick commerce has set new standards for instant delivery expectations among customers.

3. How satisfied are you with the convenience and ease of using quick delivery apps (like Zepto, Blinkit)?

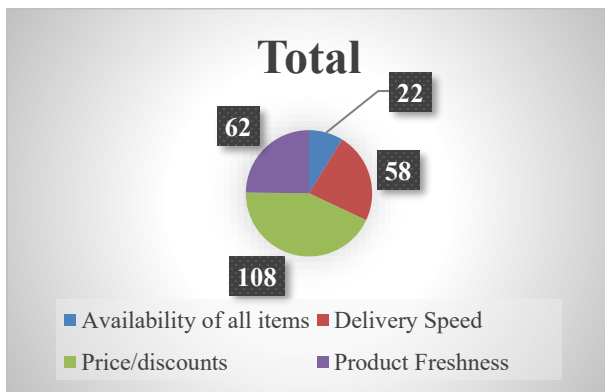
Row Labels	Satisfaction
Dissatisfied	3
Neutral	43
Somewhat satisfied	80
Very satisfied	124
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: A majority of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the convenience of quick delivery apps. This shows that Q-commerce platforms provide easy and user-friendly experiences.

4. When ordering groceries online, which factor do you prioritize the most?

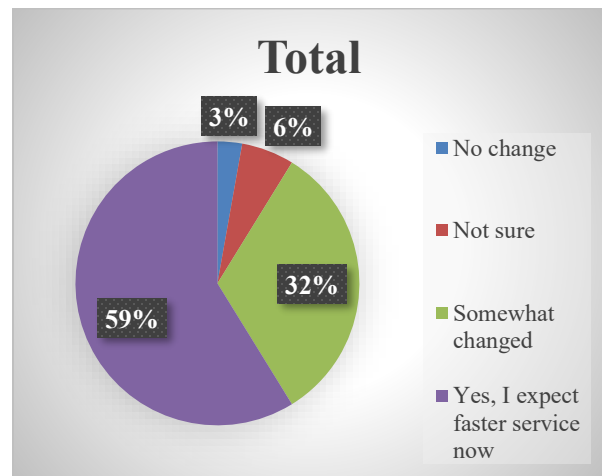
Row Labels	Priorities
Availability of all items	22
Delivery Speed	58
Price/discounts	108
Product Freshness	62
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Price and discounts are the top priority for most respondents, followed by product freshness and delivery speed. This shows that while speed is important, customers are still highly price-sensitive.

5. Has the rise of quick delivery apps changed your shopping expectations?

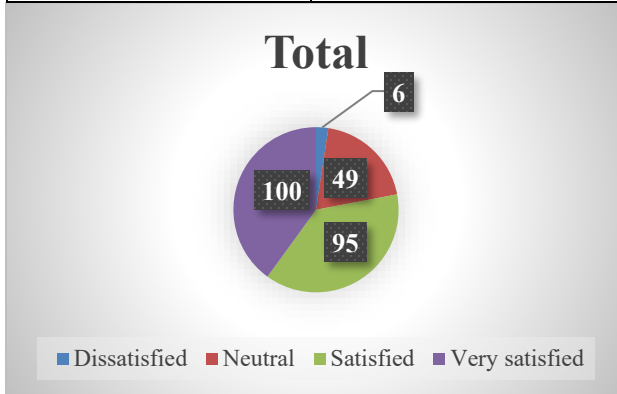
Row Labels	Expectation
No change	7
Not sure	15
Somewhat changed	81
Yes, I expect faster service now	147
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents agree that quick commerce has changed their expectations, and they now expect faster service. This shows that Q-commerce has raised customer expectations significantly.

6. How satisfied are you with your overall experience using Q-commerce grocery apps?

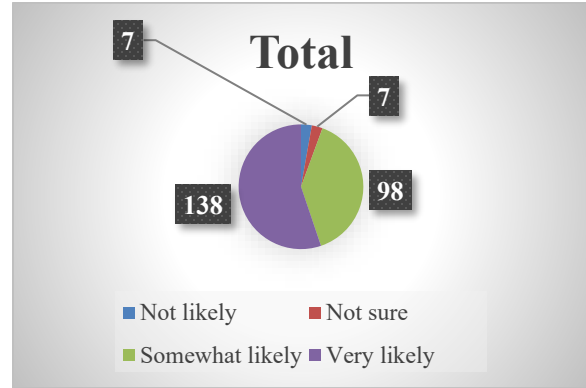
Row Labels	Satisfaction
Dissatisfied	6
Neutral	49
Satisfied	95
Very satisfied	100
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience. This indicates that Q-commerce platforms are successfully meeting customer expectations.

7. How likely are you to reorder from the same app after a positive delivery experience?

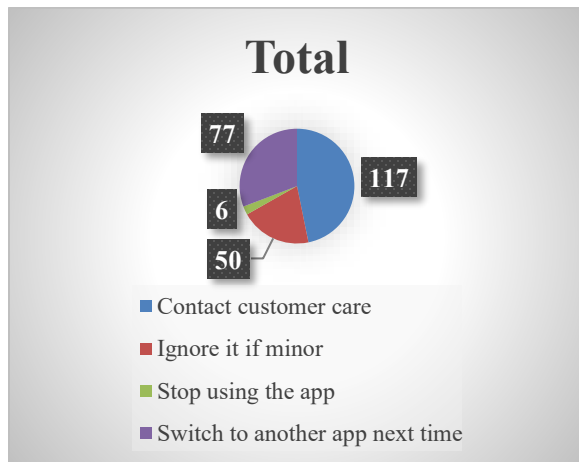
Row Labels	Behaviour
Not likely	7
Not sure	7
Somewhat likely	98
Very likely	138
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: A large number of respondents are likely or very likely to reorder after a positive experience. This shows that good service leads to repeat purchases and customer loyalty.

8. How do you usually respond if your grocery order is delayed or incorrect?

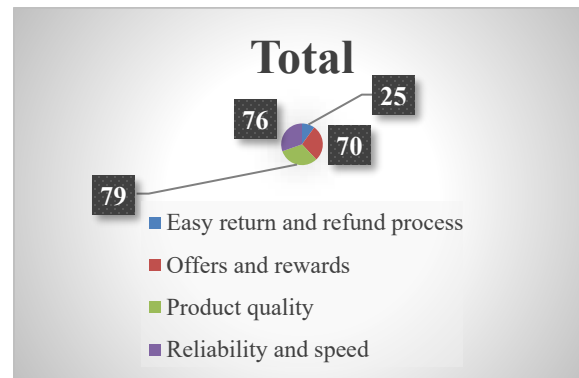
Row Labels	Delays or Issue
Contact customer care	117
Ignore it if minor	50
Stop using the app	6
Switch to another app next time	77
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents contact customer care or switch to another app if issues occur. This shows that service failures directly affect customer retention and platform switching behaviour.

9. Which factors most influence your loyalty toward a grocery delivery platform?

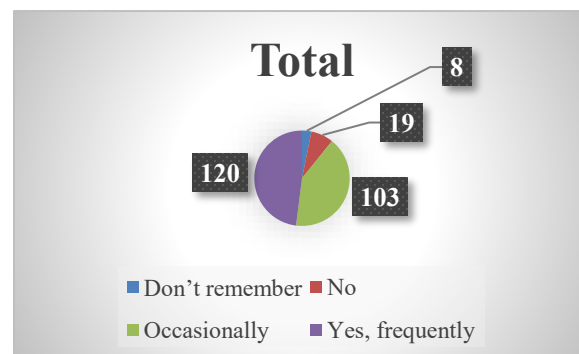
Row Labels	Loyalty Drivers
Easy return and refund process	25
Offers and rewards	70
Product quality	79
Reliability and speed	76
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Product quality, reliability, and speed are the most important factors influencing loyalty. This shows that customers expect consistent service along with good product standards.

10. Have you recommended or influenced others to use any quick delivery app?

Row Labels	Influence on Other
Don't remember	8
No	19
Occasionally	103
Yes, frequently	120
Grand Total	250

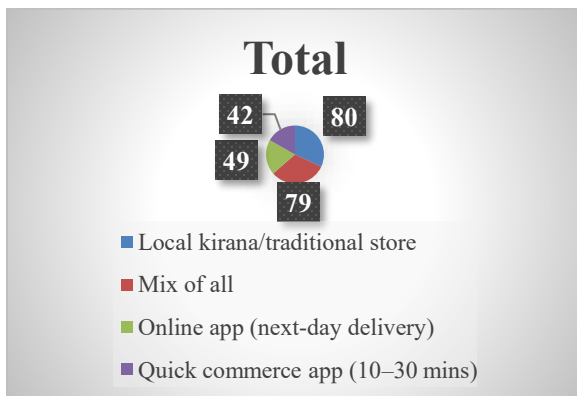


Interpretation: Most respondents have recommended quick delivery apps to others. This indicates positive customer experience and strong word-of-mouth

promotion.

11. Which channel do you use most often for buying groceries?

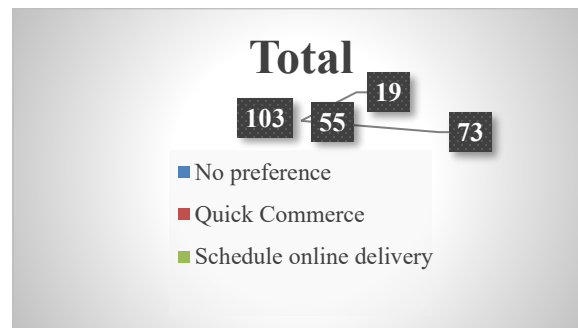
Row Labels	Grocery Shopping
Local kirana/traditional store	80
Mix of all	79
Online app (next-day delivery)	49
Quick commerce app (10–30 mins)	42
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Customers use a mix of channels, including traditional stores and online platforms. This shows that Q-commerce is growing but traditional retail still remains important.

12. Which mode of grocery shopping do you find most time-efficient?

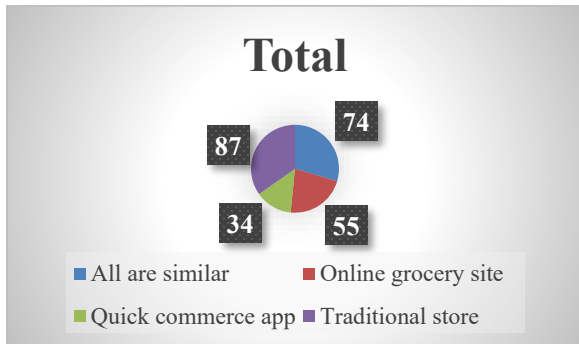
Row Labels	Time Efficiency
No preference	19
Quick Commerce	55
Schedule online delivery	73
Visiting a nearby store	103
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Many respondents still find visiting nearby stores time-efficient, followed by online scheduled delivery. This indicates that Q-commerce is convenient but not always the fastest option in all situations.

13. Where do you believe you get the best value for money?

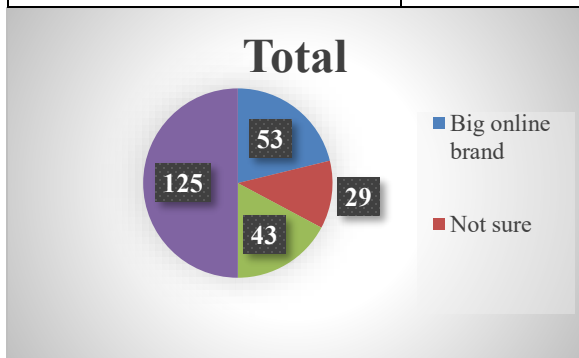
Row Labels	Best Value
All are similar	74
Online grocery site	55
Quick commerce app	34
Traditional store	87
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Traditional stores are perceived to provide the best value for money. This shows that price advantage still lies with offline retail.

14. Which grocery buying method do you trust the most?

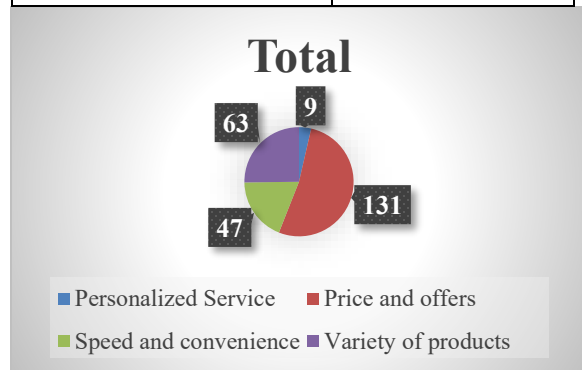
Row Labels	Trust levels
Big online brand	53
Not sure	29
Quick commerce apps	43
Traditional shopkeeper (personal touch)	125
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Traditional shopkeepers are trusted the most due to personal interaction. This indicates that Q-commerce still faces trust-related challenges.

15. What is the main factor that influences your choice of grocery platform?

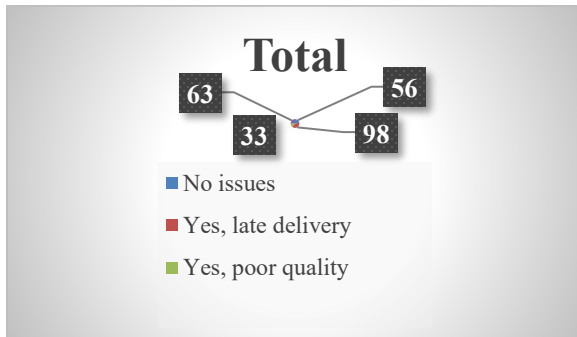
Row Labels	Factor Influence
Personalized Service	9
Price and offers	131
Speed and convenience	47
Variety of products	63
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Price and offers are the most important factors influencing platform choice. This shows that customers are highly sensitive to discounts and deals.

16. Have you faced any problems while using quick delivery apps?

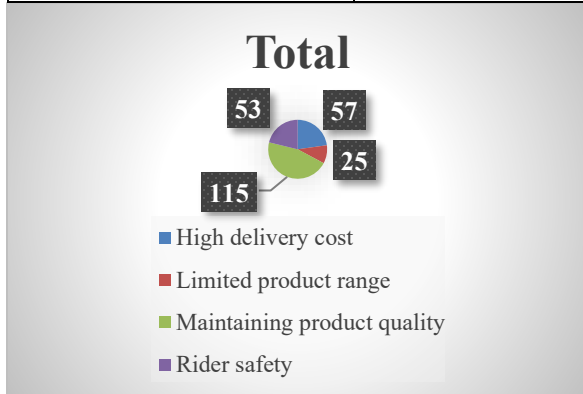
Row Labels	Experience & Challenges
No issues	56
Yes, late delivery	98
Yes, poor quality	33
Yes, wrong/missing items	63
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Many respondents have faced issues such as late delivery, wrong items, or poor quality. This shows that operational challenges still exist in Q-commerce services.

17. What do you think is the biggest challenge for 10-minute delivery services?

Row Labels	
High delivery cost	57
Limited product range	25
Maintaining product quality	115
Rider safety	53
Grand Total	250

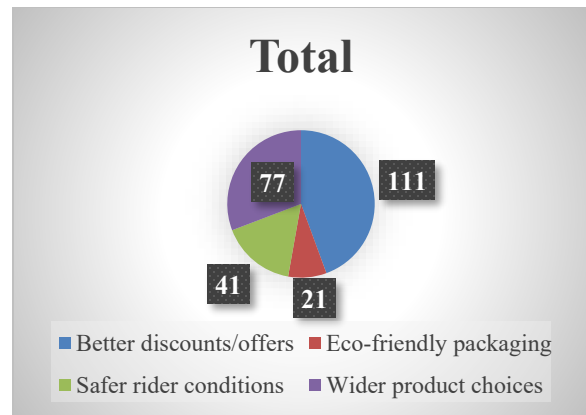


Interpretation: Maintaining product quality is seen as the biggest challenge. This indicates that speed should not compromise product standards.

18. What improvements would you like to see in

quick delivery services?

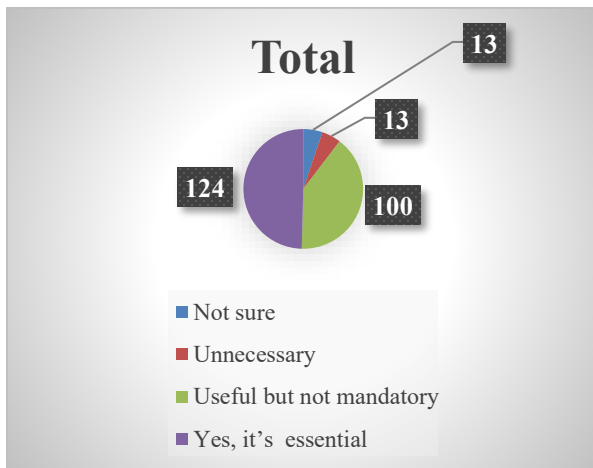
Row Labels	Consumer Expectation
Better discounts/offers	111
Eco-friendly packaging	21
Safer rider conditions	41
Wider product choices	77
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents want better discounts and wider product choices. This shows that customers expect both affordability and variety from Q-commerce platforms.

19. Do you think ultra-fast delivery (10–15 minutes) is truly necessary for grocery shopping?

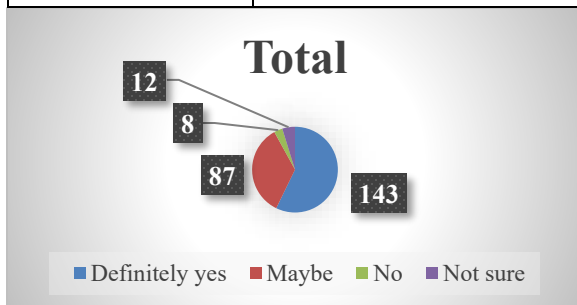
Row Labels	Ultra-Fast Delivery
Not sure	13
Unnecessary	13
Useful but not mandatory	100
Yes, it's essential	124
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: Most respondents believe ultra-fast delivery is useful or essential. This shows that quick delivery has become an important expectation for customers.

20. Do you plan to continue using Q-commerce apps in the coming year?

Row Labels	Future Usage
Definitely yes	143
Maybe	87
No	8
Not sure	12
Grand Total	250



Interpretation: A majority of respondents plan to continue using Q-commerce apps. This indicates strong future growth potential and customer acceptance of quick commerce.

VII. Findings

- a) "Quick-commerce" is a new term representing "fast shipping." It is the current standard for a quick delivery experience and is a basic expectation in grocery consumer products.
- b) The old "convenience factor" of grocery shopping is no longer a key differentiator or poignant selling point; it has become a collective expectation based on Q-consumer.
- c) Price is not just a product factor; it is a significant part of what customers have come to expect; Q-Consumer does not diminish the value of being priced correctly when compared to faster than normal delivery.
- d) With Q-Commerce, the expectation of receiving a product in a timely manner and in a fully complete manner (100% fulfilment of an order) has increased dramatically.
- e) A customer establishes brand loyalty through a solid buying experience; conversely, a negative buying experience results in immediate and unequivocal brand switching.
- f) Many consumers have a greater level of trust in the physical store; however, their use of quick commerce for grocery purchases increases the number of channels available for grocery shopping.
- g) Quick commerce has provided a new channel of shopping with added flexibility; therefore, grocery shoppers do not typically rely exclusively on one shopping channel.
- h) Quick commerce has also created a new grocery shopping category of "urgent needs;" nevertheless, grocery shoppers still generally accept longer shipping times on large or monthly grocery purchases, with most grocery shoppers preferring "normal" shipping times.
- i) Customers have high expectations of receiving fast deliveries, but they do not want to compromise on either the quality of their products or how quickly they can get them to their location through ethical means.
- j) Quick commerce has caused a shift in consumer behaviours and expectations that is likely to continue increasing in relevance.

VIII. Discussion

According to the results of the study, quick commerce has changed customer expectations to a greater extent

within grocery retail than any other industry, particularly among millennials and Generation Z consumers (i.e., aged 18-25), as shown by their preference for delivery to be within 10 to 20 minutes. Young people appear to be driving the trend of wanting to have everything instantly, which is in line with previous research on the transformation of digital retailing. Although Q-commerce platforms are excellent at providing fast service and convenience, the data also show that customers are highly price sensitive. Discounting remains the primary concern for most consumers. On the other hand, traditional grocery stores continue to maintain strong levels of trust and perceived value, which demonstrates that consumers still heavily rely on these stores for dependable products and strong personal relationships with the store. Also, many operational issues affecting Q-commerce companies, including late deliveries, wrong items delivered, and poor quality of products, indicate that simply being fast is not enough to create customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Overall, based on the discussion, Q-commerce has raised expectations regarding convenience and speed of delivery, and therefore the success of Q-commerce in the long run will depend on providing improved accuracy and trust, affordability, and consistent quality of service.

IX. Conclusions

1. This investigation shows that Q-commerce (or "Quick commerce") has fundamentally changed customer expectations in the grocery retail sector. Ultra-fast delivery has changed consumers' expectations of acceptable timelines for service and has increased the demand for timely, convenient service across all retail channels. Nevertheless, speed alone does not determine customers loyalty and influence their decisions to buy; other factors such as price, trust and product quality equally affect the customer's decision to purchase a product. Convenience is now the most influential decision-making factor for customers; it has replaced the traditional influences of store loyalty and brand familiarity. Speed, ease of ordering and minimal effort are now considered essential attributes rather than premium attributes.

2. Customers have become far less tolerant of delays and stock-outs than in the past. Quick commerce

models/technologies have established an expectation regarding the level of inventory accuracy and seamless order processing, thereby requiring traditional retailers to enhance their operational efficiencies.

3. Customers have transitioned from purchasing items in bulk to making frequent small-basket purchases. Quick commerce delivery models have made it feasible for customers to purchase only those groceries that they will need immediately, which is changing the way consumers purchase groceries.

4. The retail industry increasingly relies on technology to shape how consumers interact with the retail market. Consumers are becoming more drawn to retailers that provide app-based ordering, real-time order tracking, digital payment options, and personalized recommendations.

5. Urban consumers are showing a slight decrease in price sensitivity and are placing more value on convenience rather than small differences in price, providing an advantage for quick commerce platforms; however, traditional grocers will need to balance price and speed of service.

6. Traditional retailers are being pressured to move to hybrid business models (such as hyper-local delivery, dark stores, or express delivery) in order to remain competitive in an ever-changing retail environment in today's market.

7. With the ease of access to a variety of brands and stores that quick commerce allows, customer loyalty is becoming fragmented, as there is now less dependency on a single retailer.

8. Quick commerce is driving modernization of supply chains and grocery retail ecosystems through localized warehousing, digitized inventory, and demand forecasting, making grocery retailing more efficient.

X. Recommendation

One way to strengthen the Q-commerce sector is to enhance delivery accuracy and reliability through improved last-mile coordination, better packing checks, and AI-based route optimization. Customers can lose their trust when delivery fails to be accurate; therefore, this is extremely important for building customer confidence. Competitive pricing is also

critical; therefore, companies can offer personalized discounts, loyalty programs, and partnerships with FMCG brands in order to retain price-sensitive customers. Equally important for building trust is the use of freshness indicators and information about expiration dates, as well as transparent return policies and authentic consumer reviews. The quality of products and packaging should also be improved on an ongoing basis, including cold-chain management, use of tamper-proof materials, and ongoing audits, while keeping substitutions to a minimum. Expanding product selection without extending the delivery timeline should also be a priority. This can be accomplished by utilizing a diversified assortment of products in micro-warehouses and offering hybrid delivery methods. Establishing ethical delivery practices should be a standard operating procedure, such as reducing delivery personnel pressure, providing safety equipment and insurance, and communicating reasonable delivery expectations in inclement weather. Technology advancements should also be used to personalize the shopping experience through the use of AI recommendations, smart carts, voice ordering, tracking tools, and predictive ordering systems. Improved customer support should be achieved through instant chatbots, expedited refunds, simplified re-order processes, and automated escalation processes for unresolved issues.

Partnering with local stores to embrace omnichannel integration, leveraging click-and-collect, and implementing regular monthly delivery schedules can expand your customer reach and increase their trust in you. A strong inventory management system will allow you to better manage inventory by using predictive analytics, real-time visibility, and micro-fulfilment centers that are strategically placed, thereby minimizing out-of-stocks and errors.

Long-term programs for customer engagement (e.g., membership tiers, free deliveries, gamification reward systems, and referral programs) are critical to achieving customer retention in a highly competitive marketplace. Finally, sustainable practices such as using recyclable materials in your packaging, reducing plastic usage, utilizing green delivery methods, and maintaining low-carbon operations are important for long-term success and meeting regulatory compliance.

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