# "Q-Commerce and FMCG Consumption in India: A Conceptual Study on Changing Consumer Shopping Behaviour"

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#### **Abstract:**

Quick commerce (Q-commerce), defined as the supply of essential products within 10–30 minutes, has rapidly emerged as the next major disruption in India's retail landscape. Unlike traditional brick-and-mortar stores and conventional e-commerce platforms, which focus on variety, price, and planned purchases, Q-commerce emphasises speed, immediacy, and hyperlocal convenience. This transformation is reshaping consumer shopping patterns and significantly influencing their behavior. Consumers, especially urban professionals, millennials, and nuclear families, are increasingly shifting from bulk, planned monthly purchases to frequent, small-ticket transactions based on immediate needs. The growing reliance on Q-commerce platforms such as Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, and BigBasket Now highlights a move toward impulse buying, brand switching, and preference for instant gratification over long-term price considerations. For retailers and FMCG companies, this has brought about both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, Q-commerce gives companies access to real-time purchase data, customer micro- moments, and puts pressure on supply chains, raises concerns about sustainability, and calls into question the viability of ultrafast delivery models. This conceptual paper examines the drivers, behavioural implications, and emerging patterns associated with Q-commerce adoption. It also proposes a framework linking consumer behavior shifts with retail innovation. The findings suggest the while Qcommerce enhances consumer convenience and satisfaction, it necessitates rethinking business strategies, operational efficiency, and marketing approaches to remain competitive in an evolving retail ecosystem.

#### 1. Introduction:

One of India's most competitive and dynamic industries is the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. Consumer expectations and buying patterns have changed as a result emergence of fast commerce, or Q-Commerce, which refers to platforms that guarantee delivery in 10 to 30 minutes.

An essential pillar of the Indian economy, the fast–moving consumer goods (FMCG) corporate sector is distinguished by high turnover and frequent customer repurchases. The way that consumers purchase FMCG items has changed significantly during the past ten years. The rise of fast commerce, or Q-Commerce, an advancement of e-commerce that guarantees product delivery in 10 to 30 minutes, is one of the biggest shifts. Particularly in urban and semi-urban areas, this ultrafast delivery approach is changing customer behaviour and the retail stores. With changing customer demands for speed, convenience, and technology, quick commerce platforms like Blinkit, Swiggy, Instamart, Big Basket, Now, and others are

becoming more and more popular in urban areas as well as Tier II and Tier III cities. Delivering necessities such as groceries, snacks, drinks, dairy products, personal care items, and domestic necessities is the main focus of these platforms. This paper conceptualizes the changing shopping behavior of Indian consumers under the influence of Q-commerce and sets the foundation for further empirical research.

#### 2. Review of literature

## 2.1. Factors driving the popularity of Quick Commerce (Q – Commerce)

#### **Consumer Demand for Convenience:**

(Anjali Nair, Atharva Joshi, Yash Thakare, Dr. Rajesh Nair,: International journal on research and Development – A Management review ) The increasing need for convenience is one of the main causes driving Q-commerce's growth. Customers are increasingly searching for methods to save time and effort in the fast-paced world of today. This is addressed by Q-commerce, which allows customers to buy for things and have them delivered to their home in a matter of minutes, doing away with the need for them to wait days for delivery or physically visit stores. Customers with hectic schedules, such working professionals, parents, or city residents, who might not have the opportunity to visit physical establishments, would find this convenience especially appealing. The appeal of Q-commerce is that it allows for the fast ordering and delivery of daily essentials like groceries, home goods, and snacks without interfering with daily schedules.

#### Advancement in Mobile and Location-Based Technology

(Sankriti Soni, Vipinjot Singh (2025) A Study Exploring the Factors Affecting Purchase Intention of Online Consumers in Quick-Commerce) One of the main factors that has made Q-commerce possible is the broad use of smartphones and mobile applications. Customers may now easily place orders at any time and from any location thanks to mobile applications, which make the process effortless. Real-time GPS technology is being used in this mobile-first strategy to find the closest distribution hubs, or dark storefronts, and streamline delivery routes. Q-commerce platforms may provide very effective delivery alternatives and guarantee prompt order fulfillment by utilizing location-based services. The logistics of product delivery have been completely transformed by the integration of GPS tracking, real-time data, and algorithmic routing, which enables incredibly quick services even in crowded metropolitan settings.

VNSGU Journal of Research and Innovation (Peer Reviewed) ISSN:2583-584X

Special Issue October 2025

## The Rise of the On-Demand Economy

(Praddum Agrawal(2025) International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews) Companies like Uber, and Netflix have fueled the on-demand economy, raising the standard for customer service speed and convenience. Nowadays, customers anticipate instantaneous or on-demand delivery of goods and services. A logical progression of this trend is fast commerce, which gives customers the option to make impulsive, on-demand purchases and have them delivered promptly. An increasing need for immediate satisfaction and flexibility in purchase decisions is reflected in this change in consumer behavior. Customers demand quick fixes for urgent requirements, whether it's ordering meals, a bottle of wine, or a last-minute grocery item. They are no longer ready to wait days for products to arrive.

#### Changing consumer Expectations for speed and availability

(Praddum Agrawal (2025) International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews) Customers, who are increasingly used to quick delivery alternatives, have high expectations as a result of the growing availability of same-day or next-day delivery from big retailers like Amazon. Customers' expectations have changed to include almost rapid delivery as they see the advantages of quicker delivery times. Q-commerce sites have jumped at the chance to take advantage of this change by providing even quicker delivery windows, often within 30 to 60 minutes. One of the main reasons for the industry's explosive expansion is the need to fulfill these rising standards. Delivery speed is now considered a normal aspect of online purchasing by consumers, forcing businesses to keep ahead of the competition and innovate.

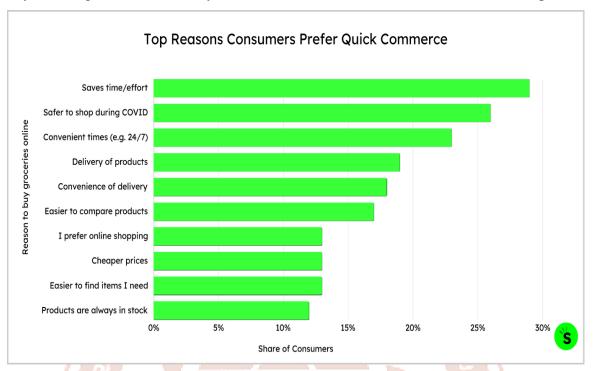
#### **Changing Shopping Habits and Impulse Buying**

(Vaibhav Prakash, Dr. Nausherwan Raunaque, 2025), Navigating the Digital marketplace: How Consumer Behaviour towards FMCG Products has Evolved (2015-2025). Additionally, Q-commerce fits in nicely with customers' evolving purchasing preferences, especially when it comes to impulsive purchases. Planning and budgeting are frequently a part of traditional shopping experiences, whereas Q-commerce encourages customers to buy things on the spur of the moment in response to needs or wants. The opportunity to place an order at any time and have it delivered promptly contributes to the tendency of impulsive buying, particularly when it in relation to commonplace, little objects. Q-commerce has grown in popularity as a result of this change in consumer behaviour, where

VNSGU Journal of Research and Innovation (Peer Reviewed) ISSN:2583-584X

Special Issue October 2025

ease and immediacy now take precedence over planning. Whether it's a last-minute dinner buy or an urgent home necessity, consumers now view Q-commerce as a feasible option.



# 2.2 Impact of Quick Commerce on Shopping Behaviour:

## **Shift Towards Impulse Purchases:**

(Praddum Agrawal, 2025) International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews) The rise in impulsive purchases is one of the biggest shifts in consumer behavior brought about by Q-commerce. Customers are more inclined to develop impulsive purchases based on urgent wants or preferences when buying things and having them delivered nearly quickly. In contrast to conventional e-commerce, where judgments about what to buy are frequently more considered and systematic, Q-commerce has created an atmosphere where Customers may easily purchase everything they need, be it a household item, a snack, or an urgent need. Customers may choose on-demand delivery over making advance plans for a longer shopping trip in areas like groceries, snacks, and personal care products, where this trend is most apparent.

#### **Increased Focus on Convenience and Time Saving:**

(Harter, A., Stich, L., & Spann, M. (2024) The impact of delivery times in Quick Commerce on customer rebuying behaviour. International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management) Q-commerce has incressed the importance of shopping convenience. Time has become one of the most valuable resources for many consumers, and being able to obtain things fast without leaving the house or waiting for lengthy delivery times is now

viewed as a significant benefit. Because deliveries are frequently made in 30 to 60 minutes, consumers have become accustomed to expecting faster and more effective shopping experiences in all retail categories. Nowadays, most consumers choose services that provide "instant gratification," where obtaining what they want is easier than comparing prices or even considering product diversity.

#### **Increased Use of Mobile and Digital Platforms:**

(Dev Shah (2023) International Research Journal of Modernisation in Engineering Technology and Science, The growing use of digital platforms and mobile applications for shopping is closely linked to the growth of Q-commerce. Q-commerce services have sped up the shift from in-person to digital-first encounters since they mostly function through mobile applications. The way that people approach their buying habits has altered as a result of this development. Instead of going to businesses in person or using desktop computers to browse websites, customers utilize cell phones as their main shopping device. With the ability to explore, purchase, and get order updates all from the comfort of their smartphones, the mobile-first strategy appeals to a generation that values accessibility and immediacy.

# **Changing Brand Relationships and Consumer Trust:**

(Margi mistry, yash jethva analyzing the impact of quick commerce on consumer buying decisions and satisfaction in Vadodara) Customers' interactions with brands have also been impacted by Q-commerce. Because swift commerce moves quickly, there are now higher standards for timeliness, transparency, and customer service. Customers are more likely to develop a relationship with firms who are open and honest about delivery schedules, give prompt updates, and provide simple fixes for problems that come up during the buying process. The Q-Commerce experience's instantaneity has increased the significance of customer service in building loyalty and trust. Customers anticipate timely communication and rapid remedies in the event that their purchase is delayed.

#### **Impact on In-Store Shopping and Traditional Retail:**

(S.S.YAAMINI PRIYA, 2014) A study on Buyers' perception towards retail shopping in FMCG products in Chennai) the growth of Q-commerce is also impacting traditional instore purchasing patterns. Many consumers are opting to forego physical storefronts entirely since they can order things from nearby retailers and have them delivered virtually instantaneously. Traditional merchants have been compelled by this change to re-evaluate their business strategies and adjust to the digital revolution; many have chosen to incorporate home delivery and online ordering into their activities. The emergence of Q-

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commerce has brought attention to the necessity for physical retailers to improve their online services and optimize their supply chains. To compete in the fast-paced retail market, several establishments have begun to provide curb side pickup, same-day delivery, or collaborations with Q-commerce platforms.

## **Sustainability and Conscious Consumption:**

(Mayank Rajan (2021) Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research | An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed and Refereed Journal) Although speed and convenience influence the majority of customer choices in the Q-commerce sector, environmental impact and sustainability are becoming more and more of a concern. The quick delivery strategy frequently uses several deliveries and single-use packaging, which increases waste and carbon emissions. Customers are thus becoming more aware of how their purchasing habits affect the environment. In response, a few Q-commerce platforms are implementing environmentally friendly packaging, providing alternatives for carbon offsetting, or streamlining delivery routes to reduce emissions. Future purchasing habits are anticipated to be impacted by this trend toward sustainability, as eco-aware customers can give preference to platforms that share their beliefs.

# 3. Objective of the study

- To assess Q-commerce's expansion and advancement in india with a special focus on its role in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.
- To analyze consumer behaviour patterns influenced by Q-commerce, including convenience orientation, impulse buying, and preference for immediacy.
- To identify the key drivers and challenges of Q-commerce adoption in FMCG consumption, such as technology, trust, time sensitivity, and sustainability concerns.
- To study the impact of Q-commerce on traditional retail formats (kirana stores, supermarkets) and consumer loyalty.
- To propose a Conceptual Framework that links Q-commerce growth, FMCG consumption trends, and changing consumer shopping behaviour in India.

# 4. Research Methodology

The study relies on **secondary data**, and therefore, its accuracy is dependent on the reliability of published sources. The framework is conceptual; empirical testing through surveys, interviews, or transaction data analysis is suggested for future research. The focus is limited to FMCG consumption; other product categories (electronics, apparel) are outside the study's scope.

5. Understanding the words contained in research:

I. FMCG Products:

II. Quick Commerce:

III. Quick commerce platforms:

I. FMCG Products:

**Meaning of FMCG** 

With a market size more than US\$13.1billion, the FMCG industry in India ranks as the fourth largest in the country's economy. A well-established distribution network characterises it, severe competition between the organized and unorganized divisions, cheap operating costs, and a substantial presence of large enterprises.

FMCGs or Fast Moving Consumer Goods are items that people buy regularly, such as cosmetics, toiletries, toothpaste, shaving products, detergents, and other non-durables like glassware, light bulbs, batteries, paper goods, plastic goods, etc. Previously known as the grocery sector, it is now simply referred to as FMCG. 'Things we buy on regularly at places like our local supermarket.'

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF THE FMCG INDUSTRIES:

Household Care, Beauty & Personal Care, Food and Beverages, Grocery & Kitchen Appliances, Baby Care, and Stationery & Electronics.

II. "Quick Commerce (Q-COMMERCE)"

The goal of "quick commerce" (Q-commerce), a fast-growing subcategory of e-commerce, is to deliver items to clients at unprecedented rates, typically in less than an hour. Q commerce places a higher priority on the "instant gratification" that contemporary customers are demanding more and more than regular e-commerce, where delivery periods might vary from a few days to a week. The emergence of hyper-local distribution centres and cutting-edge technology, which enable merchants to fulfil orders more rapidly and effectively than ever before, is the main driver of this ultra-fast delivery model.

Fundamentally, Q-commerce provides a smooth buying experience with little waiting time, which appeals especially to customers who value expediency or who have urgent needs. Products, including groceries, household goods, personal care products, and even cooked meals are frequently offered through Q-commerce. The range of products offered by Q-commerce platforms keeps expanding as more business move into the region; some even transport clothing, electronics, and other goods.

**III.** Quick Commerce Platforms:

Quick commerce (Q-commerce) is a next-generation retail model that emphasis extremely quick product delivery, usually within 10 to 30 minutes of an order being made. It

VNSGU Journal of Research and Innovation (Peer Reviewed)

ISSN:2583-584X

**Special Issue October 2025** 

is a development of immediate delivery services and traditionally-commerce, meeting the increasing needs of consumers for accessibility, speed, and convenience, particularly for daily necessities. It serves urban consumers' "I- need-it-now" mind set.

# 6. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF Q-COMMERCE:

## 1. Speed of Delivery:

- Deliveries are promised within a short time window, often under 30 minutes.
- This is achieved through hyper local warehouses or dark stores located close to high-demand areas.

#### 2. Limited Assortment of Products:

- Focuses mainly on high-demand, frequently purchased FMCG items such as:
  - Groceries (fruits, vegetables, dairy)
  - Packaged foods and beverages
  - Toiletries and personal care products
  - Household essentials (detergents, cleaners, etc.)

## 3. App-Based Ordering:

• Most Q-commerce platforms operate through mobile apps and offer real-time tracking, digital payments, and personalised recommendations.

## 4. Technology-Driven Operations:

• Utilise AI, data analytics, route optimisation, and inventory management systems to ensure rapid delivery and customer satisfaction.

#### 5. 24/7 Availability:

- Many services are operational around the clock, addressing late-night or emergency needs (e.g., medicine, snacks, and baby products).
- o Examples of Quick Commerce Platforms in India:

Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy, Instamart, and Big Basket, etc.

#### 7. O-commerce Trends – A new business revolution in India

Digital innovation, changing consumer lifestyles, and changing market expectations are all contributing to the significant development of India's retail scene. The rise of quick commerce, a retail model that provides quick delivery of consumer items, frequently within 10 to 30 minutes of order submission, is one of the biggest developments in recent years. This approach, which first appeared in developed countries, has become quite popular in India, especially in Tier II and urban areas, and is changing how people buy FMCG.

India's quick commerce market is expected to grow significantly, fuelled by rising demand for convenience, speed, and reliability. Industry leaders such as Zepto, Blinkit,

**Swiggy, Instamart, and Big Basket, Jiomart, Amazon Now** are aggressively expanding operations, offering promotional discounts, and enhancing delivery infrastructure to attract and retain users. According to Red Seer Consulting, India's quick commerce market is projected to reach \$5 billion by 2025, indicating the increasing relevance of this model in modern retail.

Year	Q-Commerce Market Size (USD Billion)	Share of FMCG in Q- Commerce (%)
2021	0.7	40%
2022	1.5	45%
2023	= 2.8	50%
2024	3.8	55%
2025	5.0	60%



TABLE: 2 " Key Data Points on Q-Commerce in India"				
Year	Q-Commerce Market Size (USD Billion)	Notable Insight		
2022	~0.5 (GMV)	Starting point for rapid growth ( <u>The Economic Times</u> )		
FY	2.2 (C) (I)	280% increase from FY22; CAGR ~73% ( <u>The</u>		
2024	3.3 (GMV)	Economic Times)		
2024	3.34 (Market Size)	Aligns with broader market valuation ( <u>The Economic</u> <u>Times</u> )		
FY	₹64,000 crore (≈ USD	Rapid domestic growth, triple expected by FY28 (The		
2025	7.7 billion)	Economic Times, DD India)		
2025	USD 6 billion	Forecast by Redseer, with 75–85% growth (Financial		
(Proj.)		<u>Express</u> )		
2025-	Up to USD 106.2			
2033	billion	Long-term exponential growth potential		
(Proj.)				
Source:	Source: The Economic Times, Financial Express, IBEF			

Customers who purchase goods and services through Q-commerce (Quick Commerce) have the advantage of receiving necessary items nearly immediately, frequently within 10 to 30 minutes of placing an order. This lightning-fast delivery model, backed by digital platforms, smartphone apps, and intelligent logistics networks, has completely redefined the convenience of shopping. Nowadays, almost anything can be delivered right away, including household goods, medications, groceries, and packaged food. These opportunities have been swiftly embraced by Indian consumers, making Q-commerce one of the retail sectors with the fastest growth.

Several industries are already feeling the effects of Q-commerce, particularly FMCG, grocery, and every day-need goods. By using AI-based demand forecasting, optimizing last-mile delivery, and creating dark stores, it gives businesses new chances to rethink their supply

chains. By satisfying the growing demand for immediate gratification, this model shortens delivery times, improves customer satisfaction, and changes the customer experience. Given the growing urban population's desire for speed and convenience, Q-commerce presents enormous potential for developing economies like India.

The number of businesses using the Q-commerce model has increased dramatically in India. With promises of deliveries in less than 20 minutes, major players like Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, Big Basket Now, and Jiomart Express have quickly expanded their operations to target urban customers. Many platforms now offer a wide range of products, including groceries, medications, electronics, and even gourmet items, as they have shifted away from relying on traditional e-commerce formats and toward FMCG-focused sales. In urban areas, Q-commerce is changing the way people make purchases because of its widespread adoption.

Industry estimates indicate that growing smartphone penetration, digital payments (UPI), and advantageous demographics will propel India's Q-commerce market to \$5 billion by 2025. The growing popularity of instant delivery services has given businesses a special chance to increase repeat business and foster customer loyalty. However, since mobile apps are used to place the majority of Q-commerce orders, m-commerce (mobile commerce) has further accelerated this trend. Smartphones are now commonly used for online shopping, and Q-commerce is emerging as the next phase of India's digital retail revolution.

# 8. Challenges Facing Quick Commerce

# 1. Infrastructure for Logistics and Delivery:

**Logistics & Delivery:** Managing fast (30–60 min) deliveries requires highly efficient supply chains, which are tough to scale.

**Urban Density:** Works well in cities but struggles in low-density areas; traffic congestion and narrow streets add delays and costs.

**Inventory Management:** Balancing stock to avoid shortages or overstocking is critical during demand surges.

**Last-Mile Delivery:** The final stretch to customers is the most costly and complex part of the process.

**High Operational Costs:** Maintaining local warehouses, staff, and speed leads to high, often unsustainable expenses.

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## 2. Sustainability concerns:

carbon Footprint: More delivery vehicles = higher emissions, especially with small, less-efficient vehicles.

Packaging Waste: Quick deliveries often use extra single-use packaging, creating more waste.

Sustainability Pressure: Consumers expect eco-friendly practices like EVs, reduced packaging, and carbon offsets. Ignoring this may lead to customer loss.

## 3. Customer Expectations and Competitions:

Rising Expectations: Customers demand ultra-fast delivery, variety, quality service, and low prices—requiring heavy tech and infra investment.

**Intense Competition:** Many players create price wars, making profitability harder. Low Loyalty: Customers switch platforms easily; building lasting loyalty is difficult.

## 4. Regulatory concerns:

Governments and regulatory agencies are starting to take a closer look at Q-commerce as its size increase, particularly with regard to labour practices, safety, and environmental effects.

## 9. Future Outlook on O-commerce

According to industry analysts, rapid commerce has a bright future ahead of it, with significant development anticipated in the next years.

Growing customer demands for quicker deliveries, technological developments, and enhancements in supply chain management and logistics will probably all contribute to Qcommerce's growth. Q-commerce also needs to adjust to changing consumer demands for more speed, a wide range of products, and customisation. Customers are expecting morefrom brands.

The rapid evolution of quick commerce offers several opportunities for future research and practical exploration:

#### 1. Empirical Validation of Consumer Behavior Models

Future studies can empirically test the conceptual framework proposed in this paper by analyzing consumer shopping data across different urban and semi-urban markets.

## 2. Comparative Studies with Traditional Retail and E-commerce

Research can compare Q-commerce with conventional retail and e-commerce in terms of consumer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term sustainability.

## 3. Impact on FMCG Supply Chains

Studies may examine how Q-commerce alters supply chain dynamics, warehousing, and last-mile delivery systems for FMCG companies.

## 4. Consumer Loyalty and Brand Switching

Further work can explore whether Q-commerce promotes brand loyalty through convenience or accelerates brand switching due to instant availability.

#### **10.Conclusion:**

One of the most disruptive trends in the Indian retail industry is quick commerce, or Qcommerce, which is radically altering consumer purchasing patterns and market dynamics. By offering ultra-fast delivery within minutes, Q-commerce is not merely a convenience-driven model but a behavioural shift that redefines how consumers perceive time, accessibility, and value. Unlike traditional retail or e-commerce, where shopping is often a planned activity, Qcommerce thrives on immediacy and impulse, encouraging frequent, smaller purchases that prioritize instant gratification over bulk buying and price sensitivity. This shift has significant implications for consumer decision-making and brand engagement. Consumers are increasingly willing to switch brands based on instant product availability, suggesting that loyalty is being redefined in the age of hyper-speed retail. At the same time, retailers and FMCG companies are presented with opportunities to capture micro-moments of consumer need, expand market penetration, and leverage real-time purchase data for personalized strategies. However, the growth of Q-commerce also raises challenges. The sustainability of ultra-fast delivery models is under question due to high operational costs, workforce pressures, and environmental concerns such as packaging waste and urban congestion. Moreover, regulatory and ethical issues surrounding delivery partners' working conditions add complexity to the sector's long-term viability. In conclusion, Q-commerce is not just a passing phenomenon but a transformative phenomenon that is reshaping consumer shopping patterns in India. For businesses, it demands innovation in logistics, marketing, and customer engagement strategies. For researchers, it opens new avenues to study evolving consumer psychology, retail models, and the balance between convenience and sustainability. Ultimately, Q-commerce's future will depend on its ability to deliver value not only to consumers but also to businesses, workers, and society at large.

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