

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR AND QUICK COMMERCE PLATFORMS IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

Quick commerce has emerged as a transformative trend in urban retail by offering rapid delivery of essential goods. This study examines consumer preferences and the impact of quick commerce on purchasing behaviour in Chennai. Primary data was collected from respondents using a structured questionnaire. The analysis was conducted using percentage and mean score methods to identify key patterns. The findings indicate that factors such as ease of app usage, pricing, and delivery efficiency influence consumer decisions. The study also reveals that quick commerce encourages frequent, low-value purchases while coexisting with traditional retail formats. The results highlight the growing importance of convenience-driven consumption in shaping modern consumer behaviour.

KEYWORDS: Quick Commerce, Consumer Behaviour, Purchasing Patterns, Urban Retail, Chennai

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has significantly transformed the retail landscape, leading to the emergence of innovative business models such as quick commerce. Quick commerce, characterized by ultra-fast delivery of goods within a short time frame, has gained considerable traction in urban markets. Platforms such as Zepto, Blinkit, and Swiggy Instamart have redefined consumer expectations by offering convenience, speed, and accessibility.

In metropolitan cities like Chennai, changing lifestyles, increased smartphone usage, and time constraints have accelerated the adoption of quick commerce services. Consumers are increasingly shifting toward convenience-driven purchasing, often favouring instant delivery over traditional shopping methods. This shift has contributed to evolving consumption patterns, including frequent small-value transactions and a growing tendency toward impulse buying.

Despite the rapid growth of quick commerce, its impact on consumer purchasing behaviour at a localized level remains an area that requires further exploration. While these platforms offer significant advantages in terms of speed and convenience, their influence on spending patterns, shopping preferences, and the continued relevance of traditional retail formats is not fully understood.

This study aims to examine consumer preferences toward quick commerce and analyse its impact on purchasing behaviour in Chennai. By focusing on usage patterns, key influencing factors, and behavioural outcomes, the study provides insights into how quick commerce is shaping modern consumption trends in an urban context.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to examine consumer preferences toward quick commerce and its influence on purchasing behaviour in Chennai. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To analyse the usage patterns of quick commerce platforms among consumers
- To identify the key factors influencing consumer preference for quick commerce services
- To understand the extent to which quick commerce influences the shift from traditional retail formats
- To evaluate consumer perceptions and future usage intentions toward quick commerce platforms

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent studies have highlighted the rapid growth of quick commerce and its influence on evolving consumer behaviour, particularly in urban markets.

The Rise of Quick Commerce: Changing Consumer Expectations in Urban India – RedSeer Consulting (2022) examined the emergence of quick commerce in India and found that consumers increasingly value speed and convenience over price. The study emphasized that urban consumers are willing to pay a premium for faster delivery, indicating a shift toward convenience-driven consumption.

Consumer Behaviour in E-commerce: A Study on Impulse Buying – Verhagen and Van Dolen (2019) explored the relationship between online shopping environments and impulse buying behaviour. The findings suggest that ease of access and instant gratification significantly increase unplanned purchases, which is highly relevant to quick commerce models.

Impact of Digital Platforms on Retail Consumption Patterns – McKinsey & Company (2021) reported that digital retail platforms have altered traditional shopping habits by encouraging frequent, low-value transactions. The study also highlighted the growing preference for hybrid shopping models combining online and offline channels.

Quick Commerce in India: Trends and Consumer Insights – Deloitte (2023) analysed consumer adoption of quick commerce and found that younger demographics are the primary users. The report also noted that trust, delivery speed, and product availability are key determinants of platform preference.

Overall, existing literature indicates that quick commerce is reshaping consumer expectations by prioritizing speed, convenience, and accessibility. However, there is limited research focusing specifically on its impact at a city level, particularly in Chennai. This study attempts to bridge this gap by providing localized insights into consumer preferences and purchasing behaviour.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyse consumer preferences toward quick commerce and its impact on purchasing behaviour. This design is suitable for understanding patterns, trends, and relationships within a specific population.

4.2 Data Collection

The study is based on primary data, collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to capture demographic details, usage patterns, consumer preferences, and behavioural changes related to quick commerce platforms.

4.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

- Sample Size: 42 respondents
- Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling

The respondents primarily consist of individuals residing in different regions of Chennai. The sampling method was chosen due to accessibility and time constraints.

4.4 Tools for Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed using the following methods:

- **Percentage Analysis** – to understand the distribution and general trends in responses
- **Cross-tabulation Analysis** – to identify patterns and associations between variables
- **Mean Score Analysis (Likert Scale)** – to evaluate consumer perceptions and preferences
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** – to assess customer satisfaction and likelihood of recommendation

The analysis focuses on descriptive and interpretative insights rather than inferential statistical testing.

4.5 Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to a sample size of 42 respondents, which may not fully represent the entire population of Chennai
- The use of convenience sampling may introduce bias
- The data is based on self-reported responses, which may be subject to individual perception and bias
- The findings are descriptive in nature and may not establish causal relationships

5. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

5.1 Demographic Profile

Table 5.1.1: Age Distribution

Age Group	Percentage
18–25	88%
26–35	7%
36–45	2%
Above 45	2%

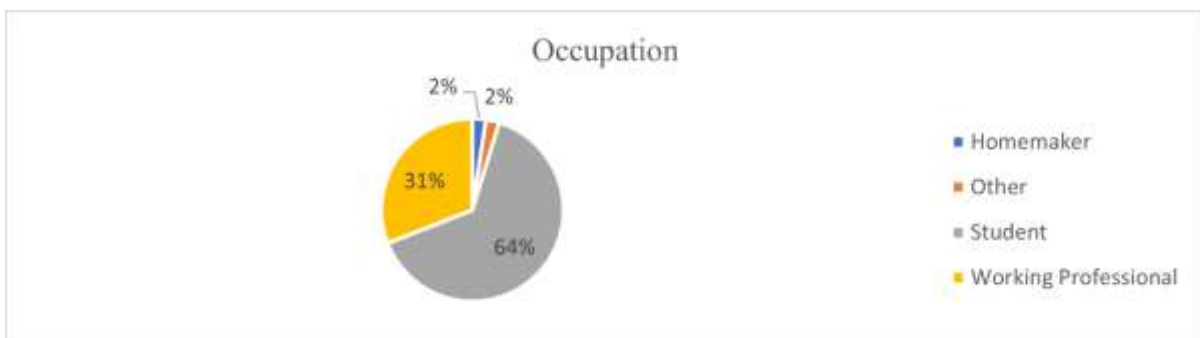
Interpretation: The demographic profile of respondents indicates that a significant majority (88%) belong to the 18–25 age group. This highlights that the study is predominantly representative of young consumers. Other age groups constitute a minimal proportion, indicating limited participation from older demographics. This suggests that quick commerce platforms are more actively used by younger individuals in Chennai.

Table 5.1.2 Gender Distribution

Gender	Percentage
Male	31%
Female	69%

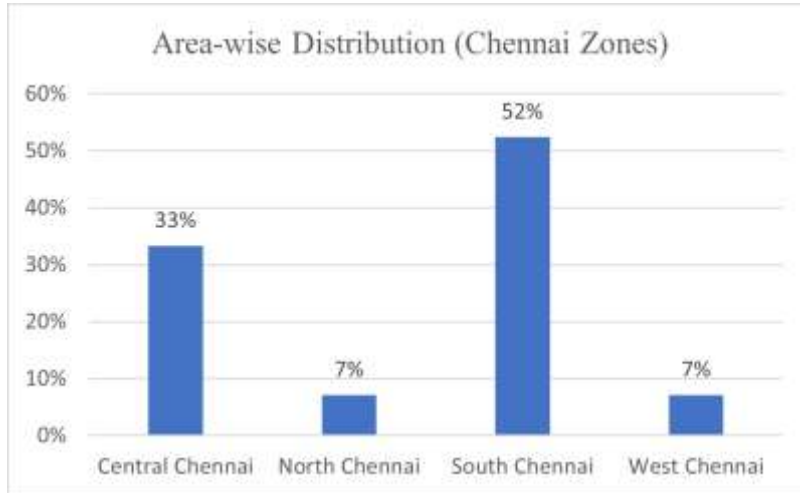
Interpretation: The gender distribution of respondents shows that females constitute a majority (69%), while males account for 31% of the sample. This indicates a higher participation of female respondents in the study, which may influence the overall results, particularly in terms of preferences and purchasing behaviour related to quick commerce.

Fig 5.1.1: Occupation Distribution



Interpretation: The occupational profile of respondents indicates that a majority belong to the student category, followed by working professionals. This reflects that quick commerce usage is more prominent among younger and digitally engaged individuals who prioritize convenience and accessibility in their purchasing decisions.

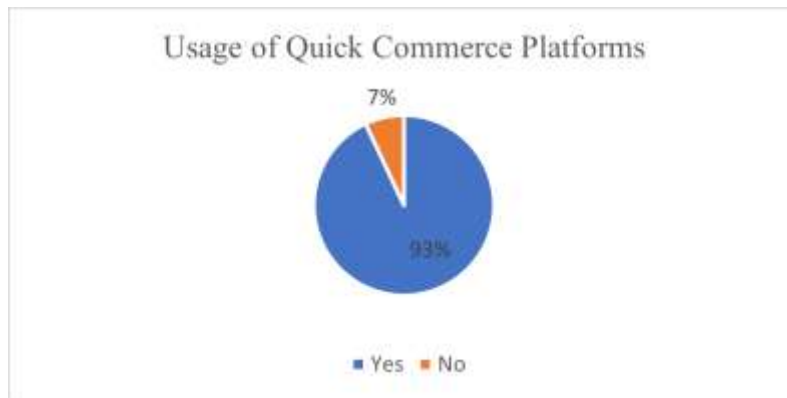
Fig 5.1.2 Area-wise Distribution (Chennai Zones)



Interpretation: The area-wise distribution shows that respondents are spread across different regions of Chennai, with a higher concentration in South Chennai. This indicates that quick commerce services have penetration across multiple zones of the city.

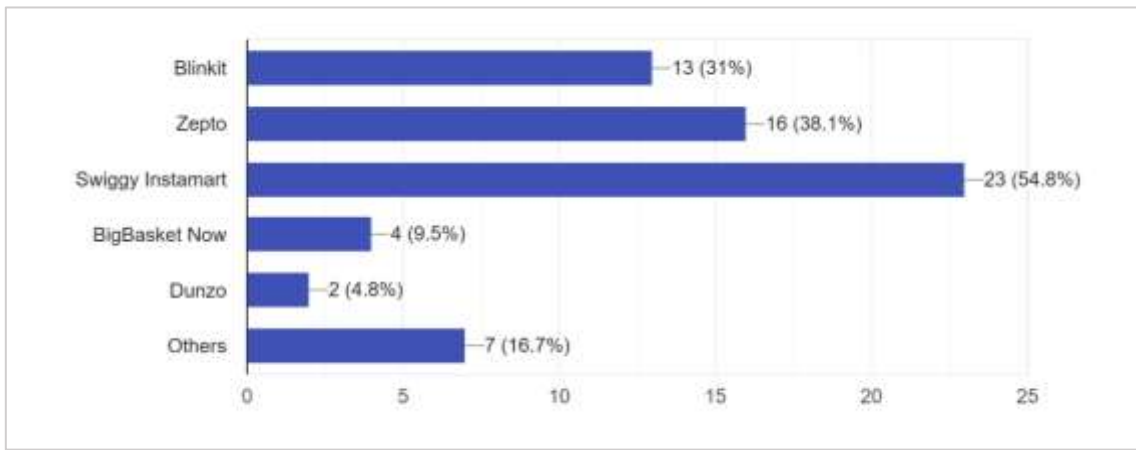
5.2 Usage Pattern Analysis

Fig 5.2.1 Usage of Quick Commerce Platforms



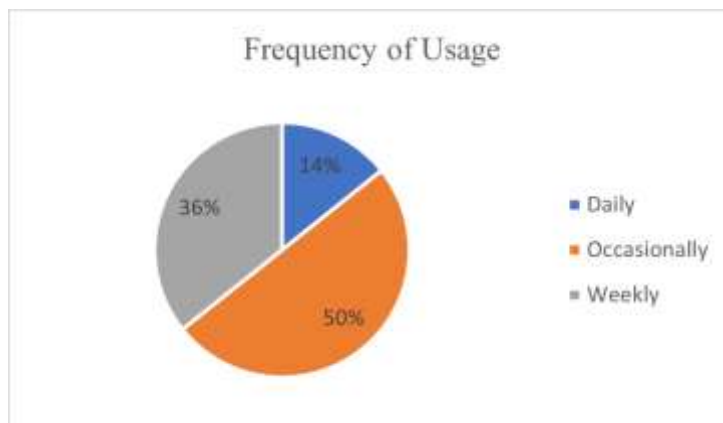
Interpretation: The analysis indicates that a vast majority of respondents (93%) use quick commerce platforms, while only a small proportion (7%) do not. This reflects the widespread adoption and growing popularity of quick commerce services among consumers in Chennai.

Fig 5.2.2 Platforms Used



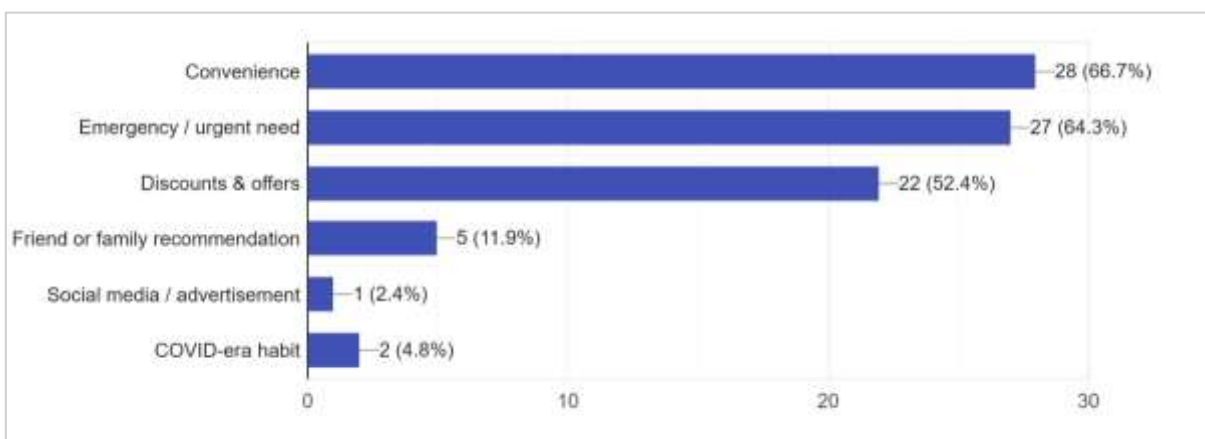
Interpretation: The analysis of platform usage reveals that Swiggy Instamart is the most widely used quick commerce platform among respondents, followed by Zepto and Blinkit. Other platforms such as BigBasket Now and Dunzo have comparatively lower usage. This indicates a strong preference for platforms that offer faster delivery and better service reliability.

Fig 5.2.3 Frequency of Usage



Interpretation: The majority of respondents (50%) use quick commerce platforms occasionally, followed by 36% who use them on a weekly basis. Only a small proportion (14%) use these platforms daily. This suggests that quick commerce is primarily used for specific or urgent needs rather than routine daily purchases.

Fig 5.2.4 Motivation for Using Quick Commerce



Interpretation: Convenience emerges as the most significant factor influencing the use of quick commerce platforms, followed by emergency needs and discounts. Factors such as social media influence and recommendations play a relatively minor role. This indicates that consumers primarily adopt quick commerce services for their time-saving benefits rather than external influences.

5.3 Consumer Preferences

Table 5.3.1 Primary Reason for Using Quick Commerce

Reason	Percentage
Faster Delivery	38.5%
Discounts & offers	28.2%
Convenience	23.1%
Product Availability	10.3%
Total	100%

Interpretation: The analysis of primary reasons for using quick commerce platforms indicates that faster delivery is the most significant factor, accounting for 38.5% of responses. This highlights the importance of speed as a key driver of consumer adoption. Discounts and offers follow as the second most important factor (28.2%), while convenience accounts for 23.1%. Product availability has the least influence (10.3%). This suggests that consumers are primarily motivated by speed and time efficiency, supported by pricing incentives.

Table 5.3.2 Importance of Factors Influencing Preference (Likert Scale Analysis) - Mean Score and Ranking of Factors

Factor	Mean Score (1–5)	Rank
Ease of App Usage	4.18	1
Pricing	4.00	2
Discounts	4.00	3
Product Availability	3.95	4
Delivery Speed	3.92	5

Interpretation: The analysis of factor importance indicates that ease of app usage has the highest mean score (4.18), making it the most influential factor in shaping consumer preference. Pricing and discounts follow closely with mean scores of 4.00, highlighting the importance of cost considerations. Product availability and delivery

speed rank lower, suggesting that while these factors are relevant, consumers place greater emphasis on user experience and perceived value. The relatively narrow range of mean scores indicates that all factors are important, with no single factor overwhelmingly dominating consumer preference.

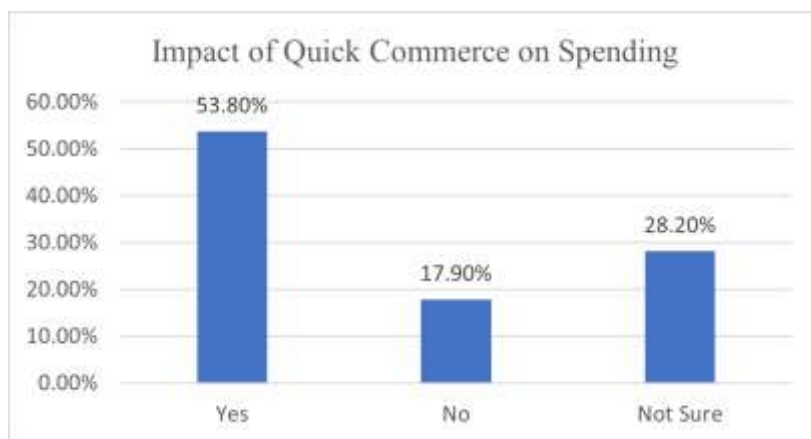
Table 5.3.3 Average Spending per Order

Spending Range	Percentage
Less than ₹200	7.7%
₹200–₹500	61.5%
₹500–₹1000	28.2%
Above ₹1000	2.6%
Total	100%

Interpretation: The spending pattern of respondents indicates that the majority fall within the ₹200–₹500 range per order, followed by lower spending categories. A relatively smaller proportion of respondents report higher spending levels. This suggests that quick commerce is primarily utilized for low-value, frequent purchases rather than large or bulk transactions.

5.4 Purchasing Behaviour

Fig 5.4.1: Impact of Quick Commerce on Spending



Interpretation: The findings indicate that a majority of respondents have experienced an increase in their overall spending due to the use of quick commerce platforms. This suggests that the ease of access and convenience associated with these platforms may encourage more frequent purchases, often in the form of low-value transactions.

Table 5.4.1 Shopping Preference

Preference	Percentage
Prefer Quick Commerce	28.2%
Depends on Situation	61.5%
Prefer Physical Stores	10.3%

Interpretation: The analysis reveals that a significant proportion of respondents prefer quick commerce platforms, while a considerable number adopt a situational approach depending on their needs. Only a smaller segment prefers traditional physical stores exclusively. This indicates the presence of a hybrid shopping behaviour among consumers.

Table 5.4.2: Situations Where Physical Stores Are Preferred

Situation	Percentage
Buying fresh vegetables / fruits	38.5%
Bulk monthly shopping	30.8%
Comparing products physically	15.4%
When internet is unavailable	2.5%
No particular reason – I always use quick commerce	12.8%

Interpretation: Despite the growing adoption of quick commerce, respondents still prefer physical stores in certain situations, particularly for purchasing fresh produce, bulk shopping, and when product comparison is required. This highlights the continued relevance of traditional retail for specific types of purchases.

Table 5.4.3: Future Usage Intention

Response	Percentage
Yes	28.2%
No	28.2%
Not Sure	43.6%

Interpretation: The analysis of future usage intention shows that 43.6% of respondents are uncertain about increasing their usage of quick commerce platforms, while 28.2% each expressed willingness and unwillingness to increase usage. This indicates a lack of clear consensus among consumers regarding future adoption.

The high proportion of uncertain responses suggests that although quick commerce is widely used, factors such as service experience, pricing, or product quality may influence future usage decisions. This reflects a cautious outlook among consumers rather than a strong inclination toward increased dependence on quick commerce platforms.

5.5 Analytical Insights

The analysis of consumer responses reveals several important patterns in the adoption and usage of quick commerce platforms. A high level of adoption is observed among respondents, particularly among younger consumers, indicating strong penetration of quick commerce in urban settings.

The findings suggest that consumer preference is influenced more by ease of app usage and pricing factors than by delivery speed alone. This indicates that while speed is a defining feature of quick commerce, overall user experience and perceived value play a more critical role in shaping consumer decisions.

In terms of purchasing behaviour, quick commerce appears to encourage frequent, low-value transactions, contributing to an increase in overall spending for some users. However, the absence of a clear majority in future usage intention highlights a degree of uncertainty among consumers, suggesting that long-term adoption may depend on improvements in service quality and reliability.

Furthermore, the continued preference for physical stores in specific situations such as fresh produce and bulk purchases indicates the persistence of a hybrid shopping model, where consumers combine both online and offline channels based on their needs.

Overall, the analysis suggests that quick commerce is reshaping purchasing behaviour by emphasizing convenience and accessibility, while still coexisting with traditional retail formats.

6. FINDINGS

- A significant majority of respondents are young consumers (18–25), indicating that quick commerce usage is more prevalent among digitally active age groups.
- Quick commerce platforms have a high adoption rate among respondents, reflecting their growing importance in urban retail environments.
- Most consumers use quick commerce platforms occasionally or weekly, suggesting that these services are primarily used for specific needs rather than routine purchases.

- Faster delivery is identified as the primary reason for using quick commerce, followed by discounts and convenience.
- Ease of app usage emerges as the most influential factor affecting consumer preference, highlighting the importance of user experience in platform selection.
- Consumers predominantly engage in low-value transactions, with the majority of spending per order falling within the ₹200–₹500 range.
- A portion of respondents report increased spending due to quick commerce usage, indicating its potential to influence purchasing behaviour through frequent transactions.
- Consumer preference reflects a hybrid shopping pattern, with many respondents using both quick commerce platforms and physical stores depending on the situation.
- Physical stores continue to be preferred for specific purposes such as purchasing fresh products, bulk shopping, and product comparison.
- A considerable proportion of respondents remain uncertain about increasing their future usage of quick commerce, indicating a cautious outlook toward long-term dependence on these platforms.

7. SUGGESTIONS

- Quick commerce platforms should focus on improving **user interface and app experience**, as ease of use is a key factor influencing consumer preference.
- Companies should adopt **competitive and transparent pricing strategies**, along with targeted discounts, to enhance perceived value among consumers.
- Efforts should be made to improve **product quality and reliability**, particularly for categories such as fresh produce, to build greater consumer trust.
- Platforms should enhance **delivery accuracy and service consistency** to reduce issues such as late deliveries or incorrect orders.
- To address consumer uncertainty regarding future usage, companies should implement **customer retention strategies**, such as loyalty programs and personalized offers.
- Quick commerce platforms can expand their offerings to include **better options for bulk purchasing**, which may help reduce dependence on physical stores.
- Businesses should focus on **sustainable packaging solutions** to address growing concerns related to environmental impact.

8. CONCLUSION

Quick commerce has emerged as a significant development in the retail landscape, particularly in urban environments like Chennai. The study highlights that consumers are increasingly adopting quick commerce platforms due to factors such as speed, convenience, and ease of use. However, the findings indicate that user experience and pricing considerations play a more influential role in shaping consumer preferences than delivery speed alone.

The analysis further reveals that quick commerce influences purchasing behaviour by encouraging frequent, low-value transactions, which may contribute to an increase in overall spending. At the same time, traditional retail continues to remain relevant, especially for specific needs such as bulk purchases and fresh products. This reflects the presence of a hybrid shopping model among consumers.

Despite high adoption levels, the study also identifies a degree of uncertainty regarding future usage, suggesting that long-term growth of quick commerce will depend on improvements in service quality, reliability, and value delivery.

Overall, quick commerce is reshaping consumer behaviour by prioritizing convenience and accessibility, while coexisting with traditional retail channels. The findings provide valuable insights into evolving consumption patterns and highlight the need for businesses to adapt to changing consumer expectations in the digital age.

9. REFERENCES

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