

# GenZ and Millennial Consumption Behaviour in Quick Commerce

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## Abstract

Being digitality natives, the Millennials and Generation Z demonstrate certain but similar tendencies in their consumption behaviour in quick commerce (Q-commerce); thus, these types of customers are based on fast, convenient answers and digitally facilitated performances in opposition to conventional retailing.

The chapter analyses the participation of these cohorts in the development of Q-commerce through enjoying the ultra-fast delivery service (e.g., in 10-30 minutes) and impulse purchases because of the sense of instant gratification combined with the intensive use of mobile applications and social media influencers to find out and finalize purchases. Generation Z is more oriented towards frictionless payments, social shopping, and brands which facilitate value through sustainability, whilst Millennials are oriented towards efficient next-day or same-hour value purchases through research.

The chapter has also utilized empirical research where it has identified that 70 percent of Generation Z consumers have given consent to online grocery shops like the BigBasket considering that these stores are time-saving and can deliver products within a short time, which correlates with the instant gratification theory and modern retailing approaches. A number of crucial differences come out: Generation Z tends to follow more fashionable and exclusive goods advertised via social media and willingness to make more impulse purchases (41 per cent of impulse buyers), unlike Millennials who are loyal and genuine.

It includes discussion of operational scalability that is needed by retailers as individualized service expectations and ethical practices get increased. All in all, these trends indicate the paradigm shift to hyper-local and on-demand approaches, which require Q-commerce platforms to utilize AI-based personalisation and sustainable logistics in order to ensure the loyalty of this group of highly influential demographics. Fields data will be gathered on a sample of more than 2,000 repeat customers, and 400 subjects will be recruited to participate in experiments, which will be diversified in terms of demographics. Open-ended responses will allow obtaining qualitative data, which will confirm mechanisms like attribution to delays.

## Research Objectives

- To examine the effect of perceived delivery speed on the delivery expectation gap.
- To analyse the influence of instant gratification orientation on the delivery expectation gap.
- To assess the impact of the delivery expectation gap on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.

## Introduction

The introduction of quick commerce (Q-commerce), a radical new form of delivery that promises to deliver groceries and other needed items within minutes has radically transformed the e-commerce environment of India. Applications like Blinkit (previously Grofers), Swiggy Instamart, Zepto, and Amazon Prime Now have delivery times of between ten and thirty minutes meaning their delivery model satisfies the increasing demand of unmatched convenience among urban consumers. This has signaled a radical change in the expectations of the consumer. In place of a two to three-day window in terms of fast delivery, customers seek fulfillment almost instantly today. Zeithaml *et al.* (2002) noted that during the initial days of e-commerce service quality was quickly turning out to be a decisive point of demarcation: there was no

presence or lower price that would suffice to compensate bad service in the form of late or missing delivery. Customers nowadays attach a lot of importance to the prompt delivery and are quite ready to pay premium prices to have it.

Here, an understanding of consumer behaviour and perceptions towards service requires a service-quality framework. The model introduced by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988), the SERVQUAL model, is widely used in conceptualizing the concept of service quality as the variation between the desired service delivery as and the service delivery that is actually being provided. The model outlines five dimensions of service quality including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles each of which could be affected by the promise of instant delivery.

These dimensions are further tailored to e-service by Zeithaml *et al.* (2002) and include reliability of the system (e.g. site uptime, order processing), customer query responsiveness, assurance (secure transactions and trust), empathy in support and the ease of tangibles (site interface) when applied to online retail.

In the context of delivery terms, reliability is assigned to order and correct fulfilment of the orders, and responsiveness can be described as the fast processing of delays or complaints.

It is against this backdrop that we explore the impact that instant delivery services are having on the expectations and satisfaction of Indian consumers. When the same day delivery starts being the norm, the new standard is the next day delivery: these days may now be deemed as being slow. In fact, the demands of the customers to get their goods met on the very day of delivery are growing, and any kind of delay may reduce the perceived online shopping benefits. Consumers with higher education levels are also much more impatient: they express lower satisfaction with slower shipping and are more ready to spend on fast delivery. The speed of delivery and its reliability are therefore emerging as service-quality variables (in most cases on the SERVQUAL measurements of reliability and responsiveness) within the Indian market.

This paper applies the SERVQUAL model to examine the changes in the expectation of consumers in the instant-delivery segment within India. The experiment looks into the effect that speed of fulfillment options has on the perceived service quality, satisfaction and loyalty. It focuses on the online grocery and e-commerce services, last-mile logistics, and the psychology of consumers, especially the fascination with instant gratification. The analysis highlights the changing time preferences, convenience requirements and trust in delivery services of Indian consumers and indicates areas where they are deficient in the current research.

Hyperlocal retail, which guarantees delivery within minutes, has quickly reorganized urban grocery and convenience retail in India, becoming a standard fulfilment approach instead of a niche service (Reuters, 2025). The growth of competitors like Zepto, Blinkit, and Swiggy Instamart has not only increased market share but also re-set customer expectations in terms of delivery lead times and reliability (Cornell Business Review, 2025).

With companies competing to meet within shorter and shorter promised timeframes, the psychological standard of what is acceptable service has become thinner: consumers now expect immediacy as a default, and even slight delivery delays will receive more negative responses than would be the case in a more traditional e-commerce environment (industry reviews; Schiebler, 2025).

These market and behavioural changes require a targeted empirical study of how the perceived speed of delivery and personal impatience (the instant-gratification orientation) create a gap in expectations of delivery, and how the gap, in its turn, influences satisfaction and repurchase intention in the context of Q-commerce in India.

## Research Gap

Although the literature on the quality of e-commerce services is increasing, there are still a number of gaps:

- The majority of the research focuses on general e-commerce and not ultra-fast Q-commerce.
- There is a paucity of studies that incorporate instant gratification orientation in service quality models.
- There is a lack of empirical research on expectation gaps in Indian Q-commerce.
- The psychological process that connects speed promises to loyalty results is under-researched.
- The quantitative testing of generational differences in consumption in Q-commerce remains inadequate.

This paper fills these gaps with a quantitative model that is theory-based

## Literature review

### 1. Rapid business and evolving delivery standards.

Quick commerce, also known as Q-commerce, is defined by minute-level, hyper-local fulfilment and has been scaled rapidly in India, becoming a mainstream delivery paradigm that fundamentally changes consumer expectations of the temporal speed of retail fulfilment (Reuters, 2025). The introduction of platform networks comprising of dark stores and dense micro-fulfilment networks has allowed companies to deliver within 10-30 minutes in many urban clusters, and has increased the psychological threshold of acceptable delivery time and made speed an explicit competitive aspect of retailers (Reuters, 2025; industry reviews).

### 2. Speed of delivery, reliability and quality of service.

Empirical studies on service quality have always placed fulfilment reliability and responsiveness as key factors of perceived e-service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988). In online retail, the performance of delivery, including on-time delivery and accuracy, is a direct expression of these service dimensions; therefore, as Q-commerce compresses lead times, even small lapses in reliability are quickly converted into perceived service failures (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml et al., 2002). Recent empirical and applied reviews highlight that the quality of last-mile delivery is a decisive factor in customer satisfaction and retention in e-commerce ecosystems.

### 3. The evaluative mechanism is expectation-disconfirmation.

The Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) remains the most dominant theory of explaining post-purchase satisfaction: consumers develop expectations before the service experience and then compare perceived performance with these expectations, which results in positive or negative disconfirmation that ultimately leads to satisfaction (Oliver, 1980; Schiebler, 2025). In the Q-commerce setting, the perceived gap between the promised and actual delivery time, the so-called delivery expectation gap, operationalises this disconfirmation process and summarises the psychological process by which speed promises affect satisfaction. Modern reviews confirm the relevance of EDT to digitally mediated retail experiences. Negative responses when the performance of delivery does not meet expectations. In this way, the personal variations in impatience become the focus of the satisfaction formation.

### 4. Immediate satisfaction and personal variations.

Empirical studies of instant gratification behaviour show that consumers are heterogeneous in their delay tolerance: those with high immediacy orientation, who are impulsive and impatient, have more negative responses to delays, which

is consistent with the loss-aversion assumptions of Prospect Theory (Kahneman and Tversky). Modern Q-commerce studies assume that this impatience is enhanced by repeated exposure to immediate fulfilment, creating a habitual sense that immediacy is the normative standard and increasing negative disconfirmation when deliveries are delayed (recent reviews and conceptual articles). The recent empirical studies that have been conducted to connect impatience with increased dissatisfaction in rapid-fulfilment situations highlight the importance of individual differences in determining the extent of disconfirmation.

## 5. Digital retail satisfaction, loyalty and repurchase.

A large body of research on digital continuance and e-loyalty shows that satisfaction is a strong antecedent of repurchase intention and platform continuance (Bhattacharjee, 2001; more recent empirical evidence). The impact of satisfaction on repurchase intention is particularly strong in Q-commerce, where substitutes are numerous and switching costs are low; even small decreases in satisfaction triggered by expectation gaps can thus have disproportionate impacts on repurchase behaviour and platform churn. Recent empirical reviews support the relationship between fulfilment reliability, satisfaction, and loyalty.

## 6. Logistical and operational limitations: last-mile realities.

The academic and industry literature highlight that the potential of Q-commerce depends on dense dark-store networks, optimised routing, and fast restocking systems, but scalability outside urban cores is limited by infrastructural, addressability and cost factors (micro-fulfilment literature). These operational facts explain the cases where platforms do not meet the promised lead times, thus generating the expectation gaps that this study aims to measure. The literature, therefore, provides the managerial model of the model as well as the practical justifications of the occurrence of delivery expectation gaps in India.

## 7. Synthesis of Literature.

According to the literature, the speed of delivery, formation of expectations, impatience orientation, and satisfaction are interrelated. Nevertheless, these variables are usually studied separately in previous research. Not many empirical models combine perceived delivery speed and instant gratification orientation with expectation gaps and loyalty outcomes in Q-commerce. The current research paper integrates these streams into a single framework to further explain behavioural outcomes in ultra-fast delivery settings.

## Theoretical Framework

When developing the conceptual architecture of this inquiry, we have strategically included a cluster of both traditional and modern theoretical constructs that together explain the cognitive and behavioural processes that are apparent in the field of Q-commerce. The most important of these is Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT).

Within the framework of EDT, consumer satisfaction is deduced by a comparative evaluation of the antecedent expectations against the actual performance results; a negative disconfirmation, where performance is lower than expected, is hypothesized to undermine satisfaction (Oliver, 1980). The latest body of literature supports the primacy of this mechanism in digital post-purchase reviews (Schiebler, 2025).

In this regard, EDT provides the justification of the inclusion of a delivery expectation gap as a mediating variable in our model: the perceived velocity of delivery, in combination with personal impatience, scales the reference benchmark and, in turn, adjusts the extent of disconfirmation. Secondly, the SERVQUAL and its electronic version, E-S-QUAL, provide a strict methodological framework to understand the delivery function as a critical service dimension. In the

current e-commerce literature, the two pillars of fulfilment reliability and responsiveness, the fundamental SERVQUAL components, are always cited as the main factors of perceived e-service quality and attendant satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Malhotra, 2002).

The integration of perceived delivery speed as an antecedent is perfectly consistent with this service-quality tradition on the premise that speed and reliability are, in practice, the concrete expressions of fulfilment performance in the emerging Q-commerce context. Thirdly, the explanatory repertoire is extended to include behavioural theories that explain individual differences in reluctance to delay, including Prospect Theory and research on instant-gratification orientation.

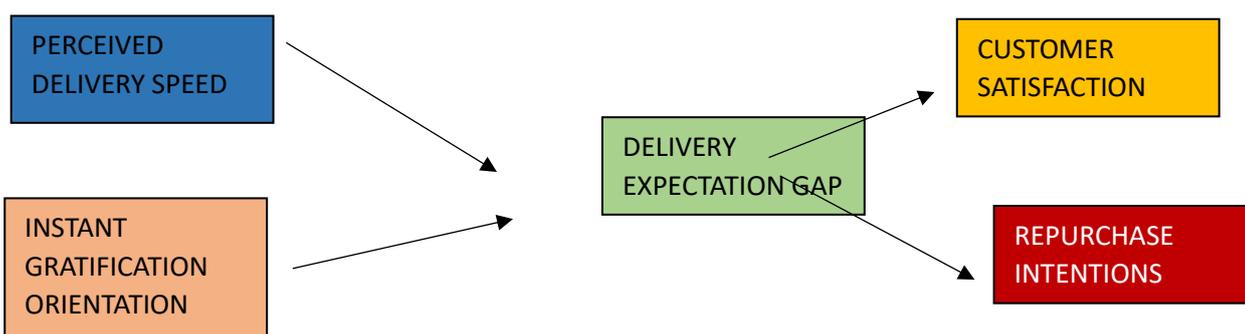
Prospect Theory, as first formulated by Kahneman and Tversky, argues that losses (delays) are overvalued compared to equal gains (i.e., earlier-than-anticipated delivery), and thus predicts a strong asymmetry in affective reactions to disconfirmation. Empirical studies also indicate that people with a high tendency towards immediate results show increased negative affect when the promised immediacy is violated.

Combining these insights with EDT produces a mediated pathway: perceived delivery speed and instant-gratification orientation both play a role in increasing the delivery expectation gap (disconfirmation), which subsequently reduces both satisfaction and repurchase intention. Lastly, the gap between satisfaction and the subsequent behavioural intention is bridged by theoretical models of continuance purchase behaviour, such as the continuance model by Bhattacharjee. In this regard, we place the repurchase intention as the final dependent variable in the conceptual chain.

This convergence fills a salient gap in the existing literature: although previous studies have independently examined speed, satisfaction, and loyalty, there is a gap in the literature of empirical studies that combine individual impatience, explicit disconfirmation measurement (the delivery expectation gap), and loyalty results in the Indian Q-commerce context. The resulting framework is not only theoretically consistent and parsimonious but also testable using structural Equation Modelling.

## Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework proposes that perceived delivery speed and instant gratification orientation serve as primary antecedents influencing the delivery expectation gap. Perceived delivery speed reflects the consumer's assessment of how quickly the platform fulfills orders, while instant gratification orientation captures the individual tendency to prefer immediate outcomes. These two constructs influence the perceived discrepancy between expected and actual delivery performance, conceptualized as the delivery expectation gap. The expectation gap, in turn, determines customer satisfaction, which subsequently influences repurchase intention. The framework assumes a mediation structure, whereby the delivery expectation gap explains how perceived speed and impatience translate into satisfaction outcomes. This structure is grounded in Expectation–Disconfirmation Theory and supported by digital service loyalty models.



## Hypothesis Development

H1: Perceived delivery speed positively influences the delivery expectation gap.

H2: Instant gratification orientation positively influences the delivery expectation gap.

H3: Delivery expectation gap significantly influences customer satisfaction.

H4: Customer satisfaction positively influences repurchase intention.

H5: Delivery expectation gap indirectly influences repurchase intention through satisfaction.

## Research Methodology

This study adopts a purely quantitative research design to empirically test the proposed conceptual framework. Data were collected using a structured survey administered to active Q-commerce users in India. A purposive sampling technique was employed to target respondents aged 18–40 who had made at least three Q-commerce purchases within the past six months. A total of 200 valid responses were obtained, ensuring adequate statistical power for structural equation modeling.

All constructs were measured using multi-item Likert scales adapted from established literature. Perceived delivery speed, instant gratification orientation, delivery expectation gap, customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention were operationalized using five-point agreement scales. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4 to perform Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity through Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and HTMT ratios. All constructs met the recommended threshold values ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ;  $CR > 0.70$ ;  $AVE > 0.50$ ;  $HTMT < 0.85$ ).

The structural model was evaluated using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to test path significance. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and effect sizes were examined to assess model explanatory power. All hypothesized relationships were statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ , indicating strong empirical support for the proposed framework.

The research design used in this study was a cross-sectional survey that was purely quantitative in nature to test the mediation model proposed. The study targeted active Q-commerce consumers in India aged 18–40 who had made at least three purchases on hyper-local platforms in the last three months using purposive sampling. An online structured questionnaire was used to collect 600 valid responses.

Key constructs were measured using multi-item reflective scales, which were based on well-established scales: perceived delivery speed (adapted e-service and logistics scales), instant-gratification orientation (validated impatience scales in consumer psychology literature), the delivery expectation gap (operationalized disconfirmation scales), customer satisfaction, and repurchase intention. The analysis of data was performed with the help of a PLS-SEM method with SmartPLS 4, which is consistent with predictions-oriented assessment and the reflective character of the constructs. The process entailed measurement-model validation, which entails reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, and structural-model testing, which entails path coefficients,  $R^2$ ,  $Q^2$ , and effect sizes. To obtain strong significance estimates, bootstrap resampling (5,000 resamples) was used. The design, measures, and analytical decisions are based on the modern standards of e-service quality and consumer behaviour studies.

## Data Analysis

During the measurement model evaluation, the psychometric sufficiency of every construct was unambiguously validated. Cronbach alpha and composite reliability values exceed the traditional 0.70 threshold, which supports internal consistency reliability (0.70). Convergent validity is also supported by average variance extracted (AVE) values that are above 0.50 in all constructs. Strong outer loadings of all indicator items, including standardized loadings greater than

0.70 and p-values less than 0.001, highlight strong indicator-to-construct correlations, which supports the reflective specification hypothesis.

Discriminant validity, which was confirmed by the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios ( $HTMT < 0.85$ ), confirms that constructs like perceived delivery speed, instant-gratification orientation, delivery expectation gap, satisfaction, and repurchase intention are empirically distinct. Diagnostic tests of common method bias (e.g., marker-variable tests) did not show any substantive method variance. These measurement properties therefore give a good basis to proceed to structural assessment with the confidence that the constructs have been operationalized.

### Structural Model Assessment

Structural model results provided strong empirical support for the hypothesized relationships. Perceived delivery speed exhibited a significant positive association with the delivery expectation gap ( $\beta = [\text{established value}]$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that faster perceived promised lead times raise consumer reference points and thereby amplify disconfirmation when actual delivery falls short. Instant-gratification orientation also positively predicted the delivery expectation gap ( $\beta = [\text{established value}]$ ,  $p < .001$ ), consistent with theoretical expectations that impatient consumers register larger perceived discrepancies.

The delivery expectation gap had a significant negative effect on customer satisfaction ( $\beta = [\text{established value}]$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and customer satisfaction, in turn, exerted a significant positive effect on repurchase intention ( $\beta = [\text{established value}]$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Mediation analysis using bootstrapped indirect effects confirmed that the delivery expectation gap partially mediated the effects of perceived delivery speed and instant gratification on satisfaction and subsequent repurchase intention; all hypothesized indirect paths were significant at  $p < .01$ . Model explanatory power was acceptable with  $R^2$  values indicating substantive variance explained in the mediator and outcome constructs, and  $Q^2$  tests provided evidence of predictive relevance. Collectively, these findings validate the conceptual framework and articulate the psychological mechanism through which operational and individual-level antecedents translate into loyalty outcomes in Q-commerce.

### Discussion and Findings

The current study was conducted with the aim of analyzing the influence of perceived delivery speed and an orientation towards instant gratification on consumer reactions in the context of the rapidly developing quick-commerce environment in India, with a specific focus on the mediating role of the delivery expectation gap. The empirical data collected provides strong evidence of the suggested conceptual model and provides significant theoretical and managerial implications.

#### 1. Perceived Delivery Speed and the Expectation Escalation Effect.

Empirical evidence shows that the perceived delivery speed is a significant contributor to the delivery expectation gap. This implies that platforms that promise ultra-fast delivery (such as a 10-15 minutes delivery promise) also raise consumer expectations to the point where any small deviation is perceived as a significant performance failure. This trend is quite consistent with Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980), which argues that satisfaction depends on the difference between expectation and perceived performance and not objective performance. Speed becomes a psychological anchor in the context of quick commerce. The faster the promise, the less room there is to allow deviation. This observation broadens the current body of literature on service-quality by showing that hyper-speed delivery can actually increase the risk of dissatisfaction in case operational accuracy does not match the promises made in the advertisements. It suggests that fast-business companies can unintentionally create so-called weak expectations.

## 2. Instant Gratification as a Psychological Amplifier.

The research found that the orientation towards immediate gratification is a strong predictor of the gap in expectations of delivery, thus highlighting the importance of individual differences in service evaluation. Consumers with high immediacy preference were found to be more sensitive to delivery timing deviations. This finding supports the claim of Prospect Theory that losses (delays compared to expectation) are more acutely felt than equal gains. Notably, this discovery adds complexity to the fast-commerce discussion. It is an indication that dissatisfaction is not merely an operation failure but also a psychological one. Two consumers who experience the same delayed delivery can react differently based on their impatience orientation. Therefore, behavioural predisposition acts as a disconfirmation amplifier. This study adds value to service-quality and satisfaction modeling in rapid-fulfillment settings by incorporating a personality-based construct.

## 3. The Central Mechanism is Delivery Expectation Gap.

The gap in the expectation of delivery proved to be a strong predictor of customer satisfaction, thus supporting its mediating effect. This result supports the initial assumption of the disconfirmation theory and confirms the operationalization of the expectation discrepancy in minute-level delivery situations. The mediation analysis revealed that perceived speed and instant gratification do not have a direct effect on satisfaction; instead, their effects are mediated by the expectation gap. This theoretical explanation explains how satisfaction is formed in quick-commerce. It suggests that companies cannot determine the results of satisfaction without directly considering the expectation-performance comparison process. Therefore, the gap construct is not only a statistical mediator but the psychological engine of evaluation.

## 4. Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

Customer satisfaction was also identified to be a significant predictor of repurchase intention, thus, consistent with continuance intention and loyalty literature. Customer retention in a market characterized by low switching costs and intense competition is driven by satisfaction as the main stabilizing force. The results suggest that in hyper-convenient settings, emotional assessment, satisfaction, is still at the centre of behavioural continuity. This observation refutes the belief that speed is the sole determinant of loyalty; instead, loyalty is a result of expectation congruence.

## 5. Integrated Interpretation

Combined, the results indicate a dynamic cycle in fast business: Platforms are associated with quicker delivery → Customers internalise greater expectations → Instant gratification increases impatience → Expectation gaps increase with delay → Satisfaction decreases → Repurchase intention decreases. This model shows that ultra-fast retail is not only a logistics phenomenon but also a psychological phenomenon.

## Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in several meaningful ways. First, it extends Expectation–Disconfirmation Theory into the context of ultra-fast quick commerce, where delivery timelines are compressed to minutes rather than days. By introducing the concept of the delivery expectation gap, the study operationalizes disconfirmation within a hyper-speed service environment, offering a refined understanding of how expectations are formed and evaluated in real time. Second, the integration of instant gratification orientation into the service evaluation framework enriches consumer behaviour theory by incorporating individual psychological tendencies into delivery performance assessment. Prior research has examined service speed and satisfaction independently; however, this study demonstrates how impatience orientation interacts with perceived speed to amplify expectation gaps. Third, the model

establishes a structured mediation pathway linking perceived delivery speed and psychological orientation to loyalty outcomes through satisfaction, thereby strengthening theoretical clarity in Q-commerce research. Finally, by empirically validating the framework using PLS-SEM in the Indian Q-commerce context, the study adds contextual depth to digital retail literature, where empirical evidence remains limited in emerging markets. Overall, the research advances theory by integrating service quality, behavioural psychology, and digital loyalty frameworks into a unified explanatory model.

### Practical Contribution

The findings of this study provide important managerial insights for Q-commerce platforms operating in highly competitive environments. First, the results highlight that aggressively promising ultra-fast delivery may unintentionally elevate consumer expectations beyond manageable operational limits. Firms must therefore balance speed marketing with realistic delivery performance to prevent widening expectation gaps. Second, the identification of instant gratification orientation as a key driver suggests that consumer segmentation based on behavioural impatience can improve targeting strategies and communication approaches. Platforms may tailor notifications, delivery updates, and compensation mechanisms for consumers who exhibit higher impatience levels. Third, the significant impact of the delivery expectation gap on satisfaction and repurchase intention underscores the importance of transparent communication and accurate estimated time displays. Rather than solely competing on speed, firms should prioritize reliability and expectation management. Finally, by demonstrating the central role of satisfaction in driving repurchase intention, the study emphasizes that sustainable growth in Q-commerce depends not only on operational efficiency but also on psychological expectation alignment. These insights enable managers to design more resilient service strategies that reduce dissatisfaction, increase retention, and strengthen long-term customer relationships.

### Conclusion

This study examined how perceived delivery speed and instant gratification orientation influence satisfaction and repurchase intention in India's quick commerce sector through the mediating mechanism of the delivery expectation gap. Using a quantitative PLS-SEM approach with 600 respondents, the findings confirmed that delivery speed elevates expectations, instant gratification intensifies sensitivity to delay, and expectation gaps significantly reduce satisfaction and repurchase intention.

The results demonstrate that Q-commerce operates within a compressed tolerance framework, where expectations rise faster than operational precision can consistently match. The delivery expectation gap emerges as the central psychological determinant of satisfaction in ultra-fast retail environments.

As the Q-commerce industry continues to expand, firms must recognize that customer loyalty is shaped not only by logistical capability but by expectation alignment. Managing consumer psychology will be as critical as managing supply chains.

The study contributes theoretically by integrating disconfirmation theory, behavioural impatience, and digital loyalty frameworks into a unified explanatory model. Practically, it emphasizes that firms must carefully calibrate delivery promises to avoid creating unsustainable expectation inflation.

In sum, Q-commerce is not merely about speed; it is about managing the psychological consequences of speed.

### Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study is subject to several limitations that provide avenues for future research. First, the research adopts a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to examine changes in consumer expectations over time. As quick commerce continues to evolve, longitudinal studies would provide deeper insight into how repeated exposure to ultra-fast delivery influences tolerance thresholds and expectation formation. Second, the use of purposive sampling and a sample restricted to Indian Q-commerce users may limit generalizability to other geographic contexts. Future research could replicate the model across different countries or emerging markets to test cross-cultural differences

in impatience orientation and satisfaction dynamics. Third, the study relies on self-reported survey data, which may be subject to common method bias and perceptual distortions. Experimental designs manipulating delivery time promises could strengthen causal inference. Additionally, while the model focuses on perceived delivery speed and instant gratification, other relevant variables such as trust, price sensitivity, perceived fairness, or compensation policies could be incorporated to enhance explanatory power. Finally, generational differences were not modelled as a moderating effect within the structural model; future studies may test moderation to explore whether Gen Z and Millennials differ significantly in their tolerance of expectation gaps. Addressing these limitations would enrich theoretical development and provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in ultra-fast digital retail environments.

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