

Factors Influencing App Choice Among Quick Commerce Users

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Abstract

The sudden rise in quick commerce has significantly impacted the retail landscape in urban areas by facilitating ultra-fast delivery of necessary items. Although the existing literature has focused mainly on consumer adoption and satisfaction, with a focus on survey studies evaluating consumer satisfaction, including contentment surveys, there is a lack of research on the determinants of actual consumer behavior that shape app choice decisions among quick commerce consumers. The proposed research seeks to explore and analyze the key factors shaping app choice decisions among quick commerce consumers using transactional data. To this effect, quantitative analysis techniques are used to assess the importance of various variables such as delivery time, discounts, order value, travel distance, product type, and customer ratings.

Using quantitative analysis, the proposed research discovers that delivery time, discounts, and service quality are key factors shaping app choice decisions among quick commerce consumers. The results of the research show that, despite the importance of ultra-fast delivery, service quality is a significant factor in app choice decisions. In addition, order value and product type are found to moderate the relationship between pricing incentives and app choice decisions.

By going beyond the boundaries of perception studies using surveys, the proposed research makes a significant contribution to the growing body of literature on quick commerce by providing a fresh insight into this emerging phenomenon.

Keywords: Quick Commerce, App Choice, Delivery Speed, Discounts, Customer Satisfaction, Transactional Data, Consumer Behavior

1. Introduction

The retail and online shopping industry has witnessed a dramatic shift with the rise of quick commerce (Q-commerce), a business model that aims to provide customers with essential commodities in an exceptionally short period of time, ranging from 10 to 30 minutes. Quick commerce platforms have gained immense popularity in recent years, thanks to the urban lifestyle, time constraints, and the growing use of smartphones. Everyday commodities such

as groceries, snacks, personal care products, and home essentials are increasingly being purchased through mobile applications that focus on speed, convenience, and reliability.

With the growing competition among quick commerce platforms, the importance of understanding why consumers choose one application over another has become a strategic imperative. Several factors influence the choice of an application in the quick commerce industry, including delivery time, pricing and discount offers, product offerings, service reliability, user experience, and context-driven factors such as distance and order size. Unlike the traditional e-commerce industry, where deliveries take place over several days, quick commerce takes place in a high-pressure environment where even the slightest variation in performance can make a huge difference to the user experience.

The existing literature in this area has mainly concentrated on consumer adoption, satisfaction, and intention to use quick commerce apps. Most of the studies have been conducted using survey research methods with small sample sizes and have been primarily focused on perceived convenience, discounts, and time-saving advantages. Although these studies have been quite informative regarding consumer attitudes, they have been limited by self-reported data and may not necessarily reflect actual decision-making patterns at the time of choosing an app. Therefore, there is a need for empirical studies in this area that investigate actual usage patterns to identify the determinants of app choice.

In addition, quick commerce is a highly situational consumption practice. Urgency, product type, distance of delivery, and order value could potentially change the relative weights of speed, price, and quality in determining app choice. These complexities have not been considered in perception-based studies but can be better investigated using actual order data.

This research examines what drives users of quick commerce to choose one app over another, based on large-scale transactional data. By analyzing delivery time, discount, order amount, distance, categories, and customer ratings, it seeks to identify the key factors that influence this choice. This method of analysis provides insight into the nature of competition in the quick commerce market and provides evidence-based information on how consumers make their choice.

This research, by examining actual behavior in choosing apps over and above the intention to use them, contributes to the existing literature on quick commerce and digital consumer behavior. The findings of this research are expected to have implications for the management of platforms, optimizing design and operations, while also providing academic insights into technology-enabled retail decision-making.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emergence of Quick Commerce

Quick commerce, or Q-commerce, is a new breed of online shopping that revolves around the delivery of items ridiculously quickly—just 10 to 30 minutes. It is an extension of the basic model of e-commerce and hyperlocal delivery, using dark stores, real-time inventory, and a complex logistics network (Hübner, Kuhn, & Wollenburg, 2016). Its explosive growth is

driven by larger cities, more smartphone users, increased adoption of digital payment methods, and the overall consumer desire for immediacy (Statista, 2023).

While traditional online shopping may focus on price, selection, and assortment, Q-commerce is all about speed, reliability, and ease of use. As the category matures, accuracy and reliability are emerging as new differentiators.

2.2 Delivery Speed and Consumer Preference

Delivery speed has been a significant factor in the satisfaction of online shopping experiences for a long time. Research has found that faster delivery times increase the perception of convenience and reduce the opportunity cost for consumers (Rao, Griffis, & Goldsby, 2011). In hyperlocal and quick-commerce settings, delivery speed is a direct factor in the perception of service quality and long-term purchases (Homburg, Jozić, & Kuehnl, 2017).

However, reliability can sometimes be more important than speed. Missed or late deliveries can have a negative effect on customer loyalty and trust, whereas early deliveries can only have a slightly positive effect on customer satisfaction (Xing & Grant, 2006). Despite the extensive research on delivery performance and customer satisfaction, few studies have examined the effect of delivery time on app-choice behavior in quick-commerce settings.

2.3 Pricing, Discounts, and Promotional Influence

Price strategies, particularly discount pricing, have a great promotional influence on people's behavior in digital markets. Discounts increase perceived value and increase purchase activity (Grewal, Monroe, & Krishnan, 1998). In highly competitive online markets, promo pricing is often used to target price-sensitive segments, such as students and middle-class consumers. However, overuse of discounts can lead to switching behavior rather than loyalty (Gupta & Cooper, 1992). Discount-seeking consumers are less loyal and more price-sensitive. Although there has been extensive research on the impact of discounts on adoption and purchasing, there is less emphasis on the impact of discount strategies on app-choice behavior in quick-commerce settings.

2.4 Product Availability and Assortment

Product availability and assortment are very important for app choice in digital retail. Product assortment refers to the variety of products offered, while product availability refers to the ability to purchase the product when you want it. The literature indicates that larger product assortments are associated with greater perceived choice and satisfaction, but there is a trade-off: too much choice can lead to choice overload and slower decision-making. In grocery and quick-ship markets, product availability is particularly important because purchases are often urgent. If the product is not available, customers can quickly turn to another platform, particularly in online shopping where switching platforms is very easy. While researchers have emphasized the importance of assortment and availability in retail, there is limited

research on their role in influencing app choice in quick commerce. This study examines the role of factors associated with product category and availability to understand the process of platform choice.

2.5 Service Quality and Trust Factors

Service quality is a basic concept in consumer behavior studies. The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, emphasizes the importance of reliability, responsiveness, and assurance in perceived service quality. In online shopping, the concept is referred to as electronic service quality (e-SQ) for digital marketplaces. Customer reviews and ratings of delivery partners serve as quality signals in platform markets. Research studies have shown that higher ratings increase trust, reliability, and purchase intentions. In quick-serve markets, where competition is fierce and switching costs are low, service quality signals can have a significant impact on app choice.

2.6 Behavioural Data vs. Perception-Based Research

Most of the research on quick commerce has relied on survey research to understand customer perceptions, intentions, and attitudes. While these perception-based findings are useful, they are often subject to biases and may not accurately reflect actual decision-making. On the other hand, behavioural data, particularly transaction data, provides a more objective perspective on actual customer decision-making. Observational studies of actual platform choices can help identify revealed preferences, as opposed to stated preferences. This is consistent with the principles of behavioural economics, which state that actual behaviour is a more reliable indicator of decision-making patterns than self-reported attitudes.

2.7 Identified Gap in Literature

The literature has extensively covered the topics of adoption, satisfaction, pricing, and service quality in digital retailing, but there is a gap in the literature when it comes to understanding the actual drivers of app choice behaviour in quick commerce. Specifically, the moderating effects of contextual variables such as order value, product type, and distance have not been investigated. This research study seeks to fill this gap by examining transaction data to demonstrate how operational, economic, and service quality variables influence app choice in quick commerce.

3. Research Objective

This research explores the factors that influence consumers in choosing one app over another in the quick-paced world of quick commerce, based on actual transaction data. It aims to identify the following:

1. The role of delivery time in influencing the choice of app.

2. The role of discounts and total order value in influencing the choice of app.
3. The role of service quality indicators such as customer ratings and delivery personnel ratings in influencing the choice of app.
4. The role of contextual variables such as distance, product type, and number of items in an order in influencing the choice of app.
5. Identifying behavioral insights directly from transaction data instead of survey data.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The research takes a quantitative approach to identify what influences quick-commerce users in selecting a specific app. Unlike other studies that are perception-based, this research uses secondary transactional data to identify consumer behavior.

4.2 Data Source and Sample

The research is based on a large dataset with high transaction values, consisting of 100 completed transactions among quick-commerce users. Every row in the dataset represents a completed transaction made by a quick-commerce app user. The dataset contains delivery performance, price, transaction information, service ratings, and several other demographic variables. The large sample size helps in making the results more reliable.

4.3 Variables

Dependent Variable

- App Choice (Company): It indicates the app chosen for the transaction.

Independent Variables

- Delivery Time (Delivery_Time_Min)
- Discount Applied (Discount_Applied)
- Order Value (Order_Value)
- Distance (Distance_Km)
- Items Count (Items_Count)
- Product Category (Product_Category)
- Customer Rating (Customer_Rating)
- Delivery Partner Rating (Delivery_Partner_Rating)
- Customer Age (Customer_Age)
- Payment Method (Payment_Method)

These are operational, economic, service quality, and demographic factors that influence the choice of a platform.

4.4 Analytical Techniques

The research uses:

- Descriptive statistics to present data on transactions.
- Correlation analysis to determine the relationship between variables.
- Regression analysis to determine the effect of independent variables on app choice.
- Chi-square tests and cross-tabulations to compare data across categories.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The data is anonymous and used only for research purposes.

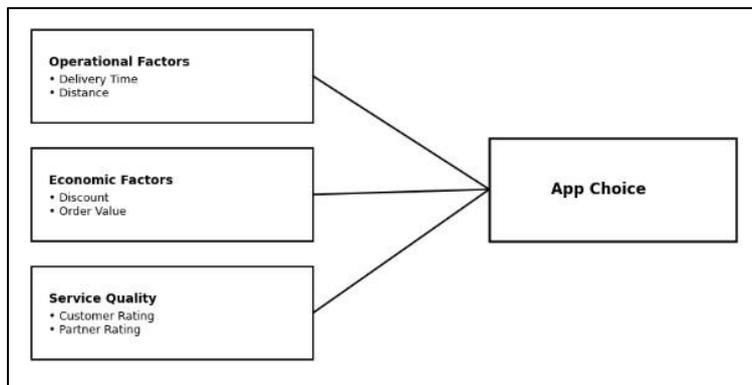


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Factors Influencing App Choice Among Quick Commerce Users

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Delivery Time and App Choice

When comparing the platforms, a quicker average delivery time is often associated with more transactions. However, when examining the data, having a quick delivery time is not necessarily an automatic way to improve customer ratings. What is more important is consistency, as having a consistent delivery time is more closely associated with customer satisfaction. Therefore, although the delivery time is important for choosing the app, consistency is more important for retaining their loyalty.

Quick Commerce Platform	Average Delivery Time (Minutes)
Amazon Now	19
Big Basket	18
Blinkit	15
Dunzo	14
Flipkart Minutes	17
Jio Mart	23
Swiggy Instamart	16
Zepto	10

Table 1: Average delivery time across Quick Commerce platforms.

Interpretation: The longer the distance, the longer the delivery time. More specifically, the average delivery time increases from approximately 13.3 minutes for distances of up to 3.4 km to around 20.0 minutes for distances of 12.1-15.0 km, indicating a clear relationship between the distance of a delivery and the time it takes to complete it.

5.2 Discounts and Economic Factors

Analyzing discounts, there is a positive relationship between the frequency of orders for customers—discounts for good behavior tend to encourage customer preference for a given app. However, the level of discounts does not strongly correlate with customer ratings, indicating that discounts are more of a temporary motivator than a long-term factor. Order value and size correlate somewhat with each other, suggesting that economic considerations are important in determining how engaged customers are with a given app.

5.3 Product Category and Contextual Behaviour

The choice of app for customers is influenced by product category. For time-sensitive products, fast delivery is more important, whereas products that are ordered in advance are less dependent on fast delivery.

5.4 Service Quality and Ratings

Customer ratings increase with increased ratings for the delivery partner. In other words, the quality of last-mile delivery is an important determinant of customer satisfaction.

5.5 Distance and Delivery Performance

Distance is positively correlated with delivery time and slightly negatively correlated with customer ratings.

Distance Range (Km)	Average Delivery Time (Minutes)
(0.486, 3.4]	13.3
(3.4, 6.3]	14.9
(6.3, 9.2]	16.5
(9.2, 12.1]	18.3
(12.1, 15.0]	20.0

Table 2: Average time (mins) across distance ranges(km).

Interpretation: Zepto leads the way with the quickest average delivery time of 10 minutes, while Jio Mart is at the other end of the spectrum with 23 minutes. This also brings out the fact that there is a significant difference in the efficiency of delivery times among quick commerce apps.

6. Discussion

The current study provides empirical evidence on what influences quick commerce app users to select one app over another, based on actual data. As expected, delivery time is one of the most important factors in app selection. However, this study brings out a new point: reliability and consistency in delivery times are as important, if not more so, than speed in customer satisfaction. Previous studies have revealed that delays can impact customer behavior, but faster delivery times provide only a marginal improvement to the overall experience.

Discounts also turn out to be an important influencer in app selection, primarily by increasing the frequency of orders. However, discounts have only a small effect on ratings, as expected in previous studies that revealed discounts increase short-term usage more than long-term preference. The current study also brings out product type as a situational factor, where time-sensitive purchases are highly dependent on speed, while non-time-sensitive purchases are less dependent on delivery speed.

Quality of service, as indicated by customer and delivery partner ratings, indicates a significant relationship with user satisfaction. This is an important indication of the role of last-mile service quality in influencing app choice and supports the service quality theory, which emphasizes the role of reliability and trust as key factors in influencing consumer choices on digital platforms.

Logistics considerations also play a role, with delivery distance impacting delivery time and, consequently, service quality. This is an important indication of the challenges that quick commerce platforms face in ensuring service quality in different settings.

In conclusion, the results indicate that quick commerce app choice is influenced by a combination of factors related to operational efficiency, economic incentives, service quality, and situational factors. The use of transactional data offers a more reliable indication of user behavior than perception-based surveys, which is an important contribution to the quick commerce literature.

7. Conclusion

This research delves into what really influences quick-commerce users to choose one app over another, based on transaction data instead of what users think they believe. By focusing on actual buying behavior, it provides a more accurate view of what really influences app choice in this rapidly changing market.

The key findings reveal that delivery speed, price incentives, service quality, and the context in which the choice is made all influence which app the consumer will choose. While speed is a factor, reliability and consistency of delivery are crucial for satisfaction and future app choice. Discounts are also important, but they do not influence long-term loyalty.

The context of the choice also influences the importance of delivery speed and price incentives. For instance, the type of product being purchased and the amount of the purchase influence the importance of speed and price incentives. Delivery logistics, such as delivery distance and delivery efficiency, also influence app choice.

This research changes the discussion on quick-commerce from adoption or perception-based influences to actual influences from transaction data. The findings of this research can help quick-commerce apps develop strategies to maintain a competitive advantage in the market.

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