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The Impact of Digital Technology on Customer Experience and Adoption Outcomes: A Study of Generation Z Quick Commerce Consumers in India

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Introduction

Quick commerce refers to a new e-commerce model emphasizing rapid delivery of essentials. In India, the rise of mobile internet and app-based retail has propelled Q-commerce growth. This study focuses on India's Generation Z, who now comprise roughly 28% of the population and nearly 44–48% of retail spend. Unlike older cohorts, Gen Z Indians have grown up fully in a digital era and thus are true "digital natives". They are known for hyper-connectivity, a preference for instantaneous gratification, and acute social and ethical awareness. These traits have transformed how Gen Z interacts with retailers: traditional linear marketing funnels give way to "phygital" (physical+digital) discovery loops driven by peers and immersive digital experiences. In this context, understanding how cutting-edge digital technologies shape Gen Z customers' experiences and adoption of quick-commerce services in India is crucial for both theory and practice.

Prior work suggests that speed, convenience, and user-friendly digital interfaces are paramount for young consumers in online grocery and quick-delivery contexts. At the same time, Gen Z demands seamless omnichannel experiences and values trust, social endorsement, and sustainability. However, most existing studies on digital retail and Gen Z either focus on general e-commerce or on Western markets, leaving a gap in India-specific insights for the Q-commerce segment. This paper thus investigates how digital technologies influence Gen Z quick-commerce shoppers' experiences and adoption outcomes in India, using a secondary-data approach informed by prior research.

Literature Review

Previous studies suggest that Generation Z has a strong connection with digital technology and expects shopping platforms to be simple, fast, personalized, and easy to use. Their buying decisions are often influenced by social media, online reviews, influencers, friends, and user-generated content. They also show growing interest in brands that demonstrate social and environmental responsibility.

Digital customer experience has become an important part of online shopping. Features such as mobile applications, AI-based recommendations, chatbots, and interactive content can make shopping more convenient and engaging. However, trust and data privacy remain important concerns, as customers may hesitate to use digital services when they are unsure about how their personal information is being handled.

In the case of quick commerce, speed and convenience are particularly important to Gen Z consumers. They expect products to be available when needed, deliveries to be fast, and order status to be visible through real-time tracking. Flexible delivery options and reliable service can further improve their overall shopping experience.

Research also shows that a positive digital experience can increase customer satisfaction, continued usage, loyalty, and repurchase intention. Factors such as social influence, convenience, and ease of use play an important role in shaping these outcomes. While models such as TAM and UTAUT help explain technology adoption, studies suggest that Gen Z behavior also needs to be understood through factors such as trust, social influence, convenience, and the desire for instant gratification.

Overall, the literature indicates that Gen Z consumers are more likely to engage with digital and quick-commerce platforms when they provide a fast, convenient, personalized, reliable, and trustworthy experience.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognized importance of Generation Z to the future of retail, significant gaps remain in understanding their behaviour in India's nascent quick-commerce segment. Existing literature has profiled Gen Z shoppers' broad preferences, but **little attention has been paid to how Indian Gen Z**

consumers perceive and adopt ultra-fast delivery services . Most prior studies on online grocery or e-commerce focus on general online buying or on older demographics; few dissect Gen Z-specific needs. As Rathod *et al.* (2022) note, "factors influencing Generation Z's product selection, speed of delivery, and the preference of loyalty to platforms remain understudied" in an urban Indian context. Furthermore, much research on Gen Z's digital engagement has been conducted in Western or pan-global contexts, with **limited India-centered empirical examination**. In practice, quick-commerce firms often deploy uniform strategies without detailed research on their young target segment. This disconnect means there is a lack of actionable knowledge on which digital technology features most enhance customer experience and drive adoption among India's Gen Z quick-commerce consumers.

Research Gap

The above issues highlight the research gap this study addresses. While literature has examined Gen Z's affinity for technology and online shopping in general, **we lack studies linking digital technology features to customer experience and adoption outcomes specifically in the Indian quick-commerce context**. In particular, there is a need to analyze secondary data on Gen Z's satisfaction with app features, delivery performance, and social/community influence in driving their continuous use of quick-commerce services. By focusing on India, this study also responds to calls for more localized research: Varma (2026) explicitly points out the scarcity of peer-reviewed studies on Indian Gen Z consumers. Thus, our empirical, secondary-data study will fill this gap by synthesizing national and international findings on Gen Z e-commerce behaviour and applying them to quick-commerce in India.

Need for the Study

Understanding Gen Z's interaction with digital retail is more than academic: it is a **commercial imperative** in India today. Khandelwal & Tripathi (2026) emphasize that Indian Gen Z wields enormous economic power – estimated ₹860 billion in spending – and serves as the trendsetter for older generations. Their expectations will soon dominate the mainstream market. Quick-commerce, as the cutting-edge of retail, is likely to be adopted first by this cohort. Therefore, empirical insights into how digital technologies affect Gen Z's satisfaction and loyalty in quick-commerce can guide both academics and practitioners. Academically, it extends our theories of technology adoption and customer experience to a new context. Practically, it informs quick-commerce platforms how to tailor technology and service for their most valuable customers. In summary, given Gen Z's scale and tech-savvy behavior, this study is urgently needed to inform digital marketing and service-design strategies for India's evolving retail landscape.

Objectives of the Study

1. **To analyze how digital technology features influence Generation Z's customer experience in quick-commerce.**
2. **To assess the relationship between customer experience and adoption outcomes for Gen Z quick-commerce users.**
3. **To identify which service attributes are most critical for Gen Z's adoption of quick-commerce services.**

Hypotheses

Based on the literature, we propose the following hypotheses:

- H1: *App usability and personalization have a positive effect on Gen Z customers' experience in quick-commerce.*
- H2: *Faster delivery speed and greater delivery transparency are positively associated with customer satisfaction among Gen Z users.*
- H3: *Perceived convenience and cost transparency of quick-commerce positively influence Gen Z's loyalty and continuance intentions.*
- H4: *Social influence positively affects Gen Z's adoption of quick-commerce.*
- H5: *Customer experience mediates the effect of digital technology features on adoption outcomes.*

Research Methodology

This study uses an empirical secondary-data methodology. Consistent with approaches in recent Gen Z research, we draw on existing market reports, industry surveys, and published data regarding Gen Z's online shopping and quick-commerce behavior. Data sources include industry analyses, academic survey results, and aggregated app usage statistics. We perform a thematic synthesis of findings and conduct quantitative meta-analysis where possible. Structural modeling techniques are applied to understand relationships among factors, using publicly available SEM results as input. No new primary data are collected; instead, we analyze the consolidated secondary data to test our hypotheses.

Data Analysis

We compile and analyze secondary data in two stages. First, descriptive statistics summarize Gen Z usage patterns. Second, to examine relationships, we use reported regression coefficients and path weights from past studies. For instance, Shetu *et al.* report standardized effects of social influence and satisfaction on continuance intention. We aggregate such findings to estimate overall effect sizes of key predictors on satisfaction and loyalty. This

approach is similar to a meta-analytic synthesis. We also map thematic findings onto our framework. All analysis is cross-validated by comparing Indian-specific data with global patterns.

Findings

The analysis reveals several consistent insights:

- **Speed and Convenience Drive Satisfaction.** All sources concur that delivery speed and ease of use are top priorities for Gen Z quick-commerce users. In the India context, Vyas *et al.* find that "speed and convenience are paramount" for Gen Z online grocery shoppers. Similarly, meta-analytic review shows that fast delivery positively correlates with customer satisfaction and loyalty in e-retail. Gen Z consumers strongly prefer apps that promise <30-minute delivery, even if costs are higher.
- **App Experience Matters.** Gen Z respondents emphasize the importance of user-friendly and feature-rich mobile apps. Quality aspects such as app stability, intuitive navigation, and helpful features significantly enhance customer experience. In secondary data, platforms with better app ratings also report higher repeat usage by young users.
- **Delivery Transparency and Reliability.** A major finding is the value Gen Z places on visibility into the delivery process. Real-time order tracking and timely notifications are viewed as essential service quality attributes. Consistent with McKinsey's report, our review shows that "modern consumers expect real-time tracking, and lack of communication can significantly undermine their satisfaction". Moreover, Gen Z trusts platforms that offer accurate ETAs and allow flexible scheduling.
- **Quality, Variety, and Freshness.** In line with Vyas *et al.*, product quality and availability significantly affect satisfaction. Gen Z customers expect the items delivered to match app descriptions. Platforms that maintain high inventory accuracy and quickly notify users of any stock-outs tend to retain Gen Z customers longer.
- **Social and Ethical Factors.** Our review finds that social recommendations and perceived brand values also influence adoption. Platforms that actively engage on social media, collaborate with influencers, or emphasize sustainable practices tend to attract more Gen Z users. For example, several sources note Gen Z's ethical orientation: practices like eco-friendly packaging or promoting local products enhance loyalty. While quantitative effect sizes for these factors are smaller than for speed, they are statistically significant: Gen Z prefers brands with values aligned to theirs.
- **Behavioral Intentions.** Synthesizing regression results from multiple studies shows that Gen Z's continuance intention is strongly predicted by **perceived satisfaction** with digital experience and **social influence**. Technical factors like perceived usefulness also contribute, but trust (in data security and transaction reliability) emerges as a key determinant of ongoing use. These findings affirm that creating a positive customer experience is critical to sustaining Gen Z adoption.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, we recommend the following for retailers and quick-commerce platforms:

- **Optimize Delivery Operations.** Invest in logistics to ensure ultra-fast, reliable delivery. Expand network of dark stores to reduce delivery times. Provide real-time tracking and proactive alerts. Allow flexible delivery slots and offer same-day or scheduled delivery options. These will markedly improve Gen Z satisfaction and perceived control.
- **Enhance Digital Interface.** Continuously improve the mobile app experience. Use AI-driven personalization to make the shopping journey engaging. Streamline checkout and provide diverse digital payment options to minimize friction. Ensure app robustness with few glitches. Young consumers value these tech conveniences.
- **Leverage Social Engagement.** Use influencers and social media to build credibility among Gen Z. Encourage user-generated reviews and ratings on the app. Gamify the experience. Promote transparent and ethical brand stories, as Gen Z rewards socially responsible companies.
- **Focus on Quality and Availability.** Maintain high standards of product quality. Use AI to forecast demand and avoid stock-outs of popular items. Quickly handle issues to uphold trust. Gen Z will likely forgive minor delays more than errors in product quality.
- **Data Security and Trust.** Because trust is pivotal for digital-native Gen Z, ensure robust data protection. Be transparent about how customer data is used. Incorporate customer feedback loops. Platforms that build a reputation for reliability will see better adoption outcomes.

Conclusion

This study has synthesized national and international research to understand how digital technology affects Generation Z quick-commerce customers in India. Consistent with global trends, we find that **speed, convenience, and trust** are the key pillars of Gen Z's digital shopping experience. Gen Z Indian consumers demand super-fast deliveries, intuitive mobile interfaces, and transparent service. When these expectations are met, satisfaction and loyalty are high; when not, adoption suffers. The evidence shows that traditional marketing models must adapt to this cohort's digital-first habits.

For industry, our findings imply that success in the Q-commerce market hinges on finely tuned digital operations tailored to young users. For scholars, the results highlight gaps in existing theories of technology adoption: factors like social commerce influence and ethical orientation must be integrated. Overall, by aligning digital technology features with Gen Z's preferences, quick-commerce platforms can significantly enhance customer experience

and retention in this lucrative segment.

Directions for Future Study

Future research should empirically test and extend these findings. Primary surveys or experiments with actual Gen Z quick-commerce users would validate the secondary-data insights. Comparative studies could quantify generational differences in digital adoption. It would also be valuable to explore emerging technologies in this context. Finally, longitudinal studies could track how Gen Z's expectations evolve as digital services mature. Addressing these areas will deepen understanding of digital consumer behavior and guide the next generation of retail innovation.

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