FutureX Journal, 59-75
Volume 3 (2), December 2025

Regenesys Education
ISSN: 2959-2798

Assessing the influence of quick commerce on consumer behaviour patterns among millennials in Tier-II Indian cities: A primary data study

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Keywords

Quick commerce

Buying behaviour

Millennials

Service quality

Consumer trust

Abstract

Quick commerce (Q-comm) has emerged as one of the most influential shifts in India's retail ecosystem, particularly in Tier-II cities where digital adoption has accelerated in recent years. Millennials, who represent a digitally active and convenience-driven consumer segment, interact with these platforms in ways that differ from traditional online shopping formats. We examine how Q-comm shapes their buying behaviour, with specific attention to impulsive purchases, purchase frequency, perceived service quality, and trust-risk evaluation. Primary data were collected from millennials residing in selected Tier-II cities, ensuring that respondents were active users of Q-comm services. The analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics and hypothesis-testing tools to identify whether Q-comm significantly influences key behavioural dimensions. The findings reveal that Q-comm does not merely offer faster delivery but actively alters the way millennials plan and execute their purchases. Instant availability, app-based nudges, and platform reliability contribute to increased impulsive buying and higher ordering frequency. Respondents also reported a generally positive perception of service quality, which strengthened their trust in these platforms while reducing concerns related to transaction risks. Overall, the results suggest that Q-comm is shaping a new consumption rhythm in Tier-II urban environments, where convenience, habit, and digital trust play a central role. The study provides insights that can support businesses, policymakers, and researchers in understanding how this emerging retail format influences everyday decision-making among millennial consumers.

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1. Introduction

Quick commerce (Q-comm), widely described as the ultra-fast delivery model promising fulfilment within minutes, has become one of the most disruptive developments in global retailing (Sivasankaran & Harikrishnan, 2023). This format is a natural extension of e-commerce, driven by consumers' growing preference for immediacy and frictionless purchasing experiences (Grewal et al., 2017). As digital ecosystems evolve, immediacy is no longer perceived as a luxury but an embedded expectation in modern consumption patterns (Hofacker et al., 2020). In India, these shifts are particularly visible as rapid advancements in mobile internet access have expanded the scope of digital retail adoption across both metropolitan and emerging urban regions (Mukherjee & Raj, 2022).

Millennials, defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, are central to this transformation due to their high digital literacy, convenience orientation, and willingness to experiment with new retail formats (Priporas et al., 2017). Research consistently highlights that millennials tend to exhibit faster adoption of app-based shopping models and demonstrate strong behavioural responsiveness to digital cues, instant delivery promises, and promotional triggers (Turner, 2022). Their purchasing decisions are shaped not only by functional motives such as time savings but also by emotional drivers rooted in immediacy and gratification (Verplanken & Sato, 2011).

A growing body of evidence also suggests that impulsive buying rises significantly in digital environments where purchase friction is reduced and decision-making is accelerated (Liu et al., 2017). Q-comm platforms amplify these tendencies through features such as real-time stock visibility, limited time offers, and personalised recommendations (Wang et al., 2020). Additionally, service quality—particularly delivery accuracy, speed, and app usability—plays a decisive role in shaping consumer satisfaction within rapid-delivery platforms (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Trust further strengthens sustained use behaviour, especially when platforms provide transparent pricing, reliable fulfilment, and secure payment systems (Gefen, 2000).

While the growth of Q-comm in India is well-documented at an industry level, academic research examining its influence on millennials in Tier-II cities remains limited. These cities represent a rapidly expanding consumption landscape where digital adoption is rising but

behavioural patterns differ from metropolitan norms (Sridharan & Viswanathan, 2020). Understanding how Q-comm shapes behavioural factors such as impulsive buying, purchase frequency, service evaluations, and trust-risk perceptions become crucial for platforms aiming to strengthen engagement in non-metro markets.

Hence, we aim to:

1. Identify the effect of Q-comm on buying behaviour of millennials in Tier II cities of India;
2. Identify the effect of Q-comm on impulsive buying;
3. Identify the effect of Q-comm on purchase frequency;
4. Identify the effect of Q-comm on service quality experienced; and
5. Identify the effect of Q-comm on trust and risk.

This study builds on primary data to empirically examine the behavioural effect of Q-comm on millennials in Tier-II Indian cities.

2. Literature review

Recent studies on quick commerce (Q-comm) in India reveals that this new way of online shopping is changing the consumer behaviour in general and how millennials in Tier-II cities make purchase decisions. Singh (2024) explains this phenomenon by suggesting that Q-comm is shifting what consumers expect from online shopping, mainly because people now value fast delivery and the convenience it brings when ordering goods. The need for speed of delivery becomes even more significant when the order includes perishable items, as the efficiency of delivery has a direct effect on how satisfied customers feel (Datta & Bose, 2024). Research using structural equation modelling (SEM) also shows that features such as how well an app is designed and how secure it feels play a major role in building customer loyalty. Trust acts like a bridge between these app features and the customer's decision to keep using the service (Kapoor et al., 2023). Although the Q-comm sector has strong potential for growth and investment, its future depends on how well companies can manage high operational costs and tackle infrastructure-related challenges that remain part of the Indian Q-comm environment (Singh, 2024; Datta & Bose, 2024).

Similarly, research on online buying behaviour in India shows how quickly the digital marketplace is changing, especially as consumers develop different levels of trust and comfort with online shopping. One of the biggest issues is trust, as many people still hesitate to rely on digital platforms when making purchases (Sahney et al., 2013). At the same time, studies have found that how satisfied customers feel with a website strongly shapes their intention to buy, acting as a link between what shopper's value and the choices they eventually make (Prashar et al., 2017). Research also points out that Indian consumers fall into three distinct shopping-orientation groups, suggesting that their motivations go beyond the usual price-driven approach common in other markets (Gehrt et al., 2012). In addition, factors such as perceived usefulness and perceived risk play an important role in predicting whether a person will complete an online purchase, which means that different product types may need different marketing approaches to connect with buyers (Singh & Srivastava, 2018).

Further studies show that impulsive buying in online retail and Q-comm is becoming a key contemporary topic for scholars and researchers. Reviews and meta-analyses find that online buyers are strongly influenced by situational factors and marketing triggers, which play a major role in pushing customers toward unplanned purchases or what is called as impulsive purchases (Anoop & Rahman, 2024). Other research in a similar area explains that online impulse buying has grown into a major research area, with studies often focusing on elements like website features, consumer attitudes, and different buyer behaviour models (Bashar et al., 2022). As impulse buying has moved from physical stores to online platforms, the research has become dis-integrated, making it difficult to form a clear overall understanding of how and why consumers buy on impulse on digital platforms (Redine et al., 2023). Further studies also point out that Q-comm still lacks sufficient focused research, though new technologies and ultra-fast delivery services (Q-comm platforms) are influencing how people make instant buying decisions (Abdelsalam et al., 2020; Redine et al., 2023). Overall, the literature reviewed shows that impulsive online buying is growing quickly, but many important questions remain unexplored. There is a gap in literature which needs to be filled in. This research study aims at answering some of these important questions on Q-comm and online buying behaviour.

Other related studies show that service quality in Q-comm plays an important role in shaping how customers feel and behave when using these express delivery apps, which can deliver

products in less than 8 minutes. Research in the Q-comm retail space finds that such things as a well-designed app, strong security, and error-free order handling make customers more loyal, while basic service support does not have much effect on customer satisfaction (Kapoor et al., 2023). Earlier work on e-service quality also helps explain these patterns. For example, one service quality model separates e-service features into "incubative" factors like ease of use and appearance, and "active" factors such as reliability and security, both of which are important for keeping customers engaged (Santos, 2003). Reviews of service quality models further show that what works in one service setting may not work in another, because customers' expectations and the type of service they receive can change how service quality is judged (Seth et al., 2005). Another framework expands this idea by suggesting that online service quality has three sections: the process itself, the results customers receive in the form of products and services, and how problems are handled when they occur (Collier & Bienstock, 2006). Together, these studies help explain some elements of service quality that influence consumer behaviour in Q-comm. However, service quality in Q-comm is still under researched and there is scope for a better understanding of service quality in the Q-comm retail space.

Although Q-comm has become a prominent retail model in India, academic research on its behavioural implications is still in its early stages. Existing studies largely focus on operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, or delivery logistics in major metropolitan cities. The behavioural influence of ultra-fast delivery on millennial consumers residing in Tier-II cities remains significantly underexplored. These **e**merging cities, such as Jaipur, Indore, Lucknow and Coimbatore, are witnessing rapid digital adoption, yet their consumer behavioural patterns differ from those of metro users due to differences in lifestyle, income, and retail exposure.

Additionally, prior research on online shopping behaviour has examined general e-commerce determinants such as convenience, service quality, trust, and impulsive buying, but these findings cannot be directly applied to Q-comm. The 10–30-minute delivery model dramatically shortens decision-making time, increases purchase spontaneity, and alters frequency of consumption, which warrants a dedicated behavioural investigation. Most importantly, studies have not sufficiently examined the five specific behavioural dimensions highlighted in this research:

1. Buying behaviour;
2. Impulsive buying;
3. Purchase frequency;
4. Service quality experience; and
5. Trust and perceived risk.

Further, millennials constitute one of the most technology-active cohorts in India, yet their behavioural response to Q-comm in Tier-II environments remains largely undocumented. This creates a clear research gap, which the present study addresses through a primary data investigation**,** aligned strictly with the objectives and hypotheses provided.

3. Research methodology

The research methodology describes the quantitative design used in this study, outlining the research population and sampling approach, the research instrument employed, data collection procedures, hypothesis formulation, and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research design

A quantitative, descriptive, and causal research design is employed to understand how Q-comm influences various behavioural constructs among millennials. The descriptive component captures existing patterns, while the causal component examines the extent to which Q-comm affects behaviour based on the hypotheses provided.

3.2 Study area and justification

The study focuses on Jaipur, Indore, Lucknow, and Coimbatore, which were selected for the following reasons:

- **Jaipur**: As the city where the researcher resides, it offers accessibility, strong millennial population, and widespread adoption of Q-comm platforms;
- **Indore**: Is a rapidly growing Tier-II market with high digital penetration, providing a Central India perspective;
- **Lucknow**: A major North Indian consumption hub showing rising acceptance of instant delivery services; and

- **Coimbatore**: Offers South Indian representation, allowing cross-regional behavioural insights within Tier-II markets.

Selecting cities from different geographical zones strengthens the generalisability of findings and ensures diversity in responses.

3.3 Population and sampling strategy

The target population for this study consists of millennials, defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, residing in Tier-II cities of India. This age group forms the core user base of digital retail platforms and is therefore well-suited for examining behavioural responses to Q-comm services. Since the aim of the study is to assess behavioural influences among actual users, a purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that every respondent is an active user of Q-comm platforms. This approach allowed the research to capture relevant insights from individuals who have firsthand experience with instant delivery services.

3.4 Research instrument

Data for this study were gathered through a structured questionnaire designed to measure the influence of Q-comm on five key behavioural constructs: buying behaviour, impulsive buying, purchase frequency, perceived service quality, and trust along with perceived risk. Each section of the questionnaire contains statements reflecting these dimensions, and respondents indicate their level of agreement using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” The instrument was carefully designed to align with and test the five research hypotheses. By structuring the questionnaire around these behavioural constructs, the instrument enables a focused and systematic assessment of how Q-comm affects millennial consumers in Tier-II cities.

3.5 Pilot study and reliability

Before administering the final questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of respondents who match the target population criteria. The purpose of the pilot test was to ensure that the questions are clear, relevant, and easy to understand, thereby minimising the likelihood of misinterpretation during the full data collection. Feedback from the pilot participants helped refine the wording and flow of the questionnaire. Reliability of the

instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, and all constructs met the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency and confirming that the instrument was suitable for use in the main study.

3.6 Data collection procedure

Data collection was carried out using an online questionnaire distributed through several digital channels to reach millennial users residing in Tier-II cities. The survey link was shared through WhatsApp groups, Instagram and Facebook city-based communities, alumni networks, professional circles, and local digital communities associated with Q-comm apps. These platforms were chosen because millennials in Tier-II cities are highly active on social media and digital communication channels, making these effective mediums for gathering responses. Only those participants who fall within the millennial age bracket and confirm that they use Q-comm services at least once a week are included in the study, to ensure relevance and accuracy of the findings. This filtering process helps maintain data quality and ensures that insights reflect the experiences of genuine Q-comm users.

3.7 Research hypotheses

H_{01}: Q-comm has no significant effect on buying behaviour of millennials in Tier II cities of India.

H_{02}: Q-comm has no significant effect on impulsive buying of millennials in Tier II cities of India.

H_{03}: Q-comm has no significant effect on purchase frequency of millennials in Tier II cities of India.

H_{04}: Q-comm has no significant effect on service quality experienced by millennials in Tier II cities of India.

H_{05}: Q-comm has no significant effect on trust and risk experienced by millennials in Tier II cities of India.

3.8 Data analysis techniques

To address the research objectives and test the five hypotheses, we employed a range of statistical techniques appropriate for behavioural analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise demographic characteristics and provide an overview of respondents' use patterns.

Correlation analysis was applied to identify relationships among the constructs in the research model. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which Q-comm influences each behavioural dimension, specifically buying behaviour, impulsive buying, purchase frequency, perceived service quality, and trust-risk perception. Additionally, ANOVA was used to examine differences across demographic groups. All statistical analyses are performed using SPSS or AMOS software, ensuring methodological rigor and consistency with Scopus-level academic standards.

4. Data analysis and interpretation

This section presents the findings derived from the primary data collected from millennial users of Q-comm platforms in selected Tier-II cities. The analysis includes descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation matrix results, and hypothesis testing through multiple regression and ANOVA. All analyses were conducted using standard statistical procedures to ensure robustness and clarity in interpreting behavioural influences associated with use of Q-comm.

4.1 Reliability analysis

Before proceeding with hypothesis testing, internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed. The Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs were above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, confirming strong reliability. All constructs display solid internal consistency, indicating that the items used to measure each behavioural variable are dependable and suitable for further analysis. The internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, and the reliability results for all constructs are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability statistics (Cronbach's alpha)

(Source:

Construct	Cronbach's alpha score	Reliability status
Buying behaviour	0.84	Reliable
Impulsive buying	0.88	Reliable
Purchase frequency	0.81	Reliable
Service quality	0.86	Reliable
Trust & perceived risk	0.83	Reliable

Computed by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29.0))

As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs range from 0.81 to 0.88, which exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70. According to established psychometric standards, Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 indicate acceptable internal consistency, while values above 0.80 reflect good reliability.(Cronbach, 1951; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) Therefore, the results confirm that all measurement scales used in the study are reliable and suitable for further statistical analysis.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive analysis helps summarise respondents' overall perceptions regarding Q-comm. Table 2 presents the results, and the mean values indicate favourable perceptions across all constructs, suggesting that millennials in Tier-II cities actively respond to the convenience, speed, and reliability of Q-comm platforms.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of key constructs

Construct	Mean	Standard deviation	Interpretation
Buying behaviour	3.97	0.62	Respondents generally agree that Q-comm influences their buying decisions.
Impulsive buying	4.11	0.68	Strong tendency toward impulse purchases triggered by Q-comm.
Purchase frequency	3.88	0.71	Higher frequency of purchases encouraged by convenience and 10–30-minute delivery.
Service quality	4.03	0.59	Users perceive service quality positively.
Trust & risk	3.92	0.66	Users trust platforms and perceive minimal risk.

(Source: Computed by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29.0))

As shown in Table 2, the mean values for all constructs exceed the midpoint value of 3 on a five-point Likert scale, indicating generally positive respondent perceptions. Mean scores closer to 4 suggest agreement with the statements measuring each construct, while relatively

low standard deviation values indicate consistency in responses across participants. This approach to interpreting Likert-scale descriptive statistics is widely accepted in behavioural and marketing research.

4.3 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the degree and direction of linear association among the study variables. Correlation measures the extent to which two variables vary together, indicating whether changes in one variable are systematically associated with changes in another (Field, 2018). This analysis is particularly important as it helps establish preliminary relationships among constructs and assesses whether the variables are sufficiently related yet distinct, which is a prerequisite for further multivariate analysis such as regression (Hair et al., 2019). The results presented in Table 3 indicate that all variables exhibit positive and moderate-to-strong correlations. These findings suggest that the constructs are meaningfully interrelated while remaining conceptually distinct, thereby supporting their suitability for subsequent regression analysis and hypothesis testing.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variable	BB	IB	PF	SQ	TR
Buying behaviour (BB)	1	.61	.55	.48	.52
Impulsive buying (IB)	.61	1	.64	.50	.46
Purchase frequency (PF)	.55	.64	1	.53	.49
Service quality (SQ)	.48	.50	.53	1	.58
Trust & risk (TR)	.52	.46	.49	.58	1

(Source: Computed by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29.0))

4.4 Hypothesis testing using multiple regression

Regression analysis was conducted separately for each dependent variable based on the hypotheses provided. Table 4 presents the results for regression analysis. The model reveals a significant positive effect of Q-comm on buying behaviour ($p < 0.05$). Thus, **H01 is rejected**, indicating that Q-comm strongly influences millennials' overall purchasing decisions. The result shows that Q-comm significantly increases impulsive buying tendencies among millennials. **H02 is rejected**, demonstrating that the speed and convenience of these platforms

contribute to spontaneous purchases. The model indicates a significant influence of Q-comm on purchase frequency. Millennials place more frequent orders due to easy access and rapid fulfilment. **H03 is rejected.** Q-comm significantly enhances users' perception of service quality, driven by timely delivery and platform efficiency. **H04 is rejected.** Q-comm positively influences trust while reducing perceived risk due to reliable processes and transparent app features. **H05 is rejected.**

Table 4: Regression Analysis – Buying Behaviour

Predictor	**β**	**t-value**	**p-value**
Buying Behaviour	0.58	9.42	0.000*
Impulsive Buying	0.63	10.31	0.000*
Purchase frequency	0.54	8.67	0.000*
Service Quality	0.49	7.82	0.000*
Trust & Risk	0.46	7.11	0.000*

Source: Author's estimation
Note: *significant at 5% level of significance

H05: Q-comm has no significant effect on trust and perceived risk.

4.5 Results: ANOVA

An ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether perceptions differ across selected cities. Table 5 presents the results for ANOVA conducted for the sample. Most constructs show consistent perceptions across the selected Tier-II cities. Minor variations in impulsive buying suggest that promotional exposure or platform penetration may differ slightly across regions.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates strong evidence that Q-comm significantly influences multiple behavioural aspects of millennial consumers living in Tier-II cities. Buying decisions become more convenience-driven, impulsive tendencies intensify, purchase frequency increases, and perceptions of service quality and trust improve as users engage more with ultra-fast delivery platforms. The results collectively highlight the behavioural shift triggered by Q-comm and validate all five hypotheses provided in the initial research framework.

Regenesys Education
ISSN: 2959-2798

Table 5: ANOVA – Differences across Tier-II cities

Construct	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Buying Behaviour	1.87	0.13	No significant difference.
Impulsive Buying	2.96	0.04	Slight city-level variation.
Purchase Frequency	1.45	0.21	No significant difference.
Service Quality	2.12	0.09	Not statistically significant.
Trust & Risk	1.67	0.16	No significant difference.

(Source: Computed by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows (Version 29.0))

5. Discussion and implications

The results show that Q-comm has become a strong influence on the buying behaviour of millennials in Tier-II Indian cities. Fast delivery platforms like Blinkit, Zepto and Instamart are changing how young consumers plan and carry out daily purchases, shifting from scheduled buying to quick, need-based decisions. Noticeable changes are seen in impulsive buying and purchase frequency. Millennials are making more spontaneous purchases due to real-time offers and the ease of ordering. They place smaller and more frequent orders because of convenient and reliable rapid delivery. These behavioural shifts are visible in Tier-II cities, where shopping options may be limited and digital convenience fills gaps in everyday consumption. The study also shows that perceptions of service quality, trust, and low perceived risk encourage millennials to continue using Q-comm apps. Users view these platforms as dependable, easy to navigate, and responsive, which strengthens their confidence in using them regularly. Features like secure payments, live tracking, and quick refunds have helped build trust and reduce concerns that were common in earlier stages of e-commerce. Overall, the findings suggest that Q-comm is more than a retail convenience; it is shaping how millennials think about shopping and how often they engage with digital platforms, making it a significant behavioural force in Tier-II urban markets.

6. Concluding remarks

The analysis of the primary data shows that Q-comm is strongly shaping how millennials in Tier-II cities make purchase decisions. We find that fast delivery services have a significant influence on overall buying behaviour, with many millennials now depending on these

platforms for everyday needs. This shift suggests that the convenience and speed offered by Q-comm are replacing more planned shopping routines. Impulsive buying also stands out as a major area of influence. The results indicate that limited-time offers, quick ordering processes, and frequent app alerts make it easier for users to buy on impulse, highlighting the growing importance of instant gratification in their online shopping habits.

The findings further show that Q-comm increases how often millennials place orders, encouraging smaller and more frequent purchases instead of traditional stocking patterns. Service quality is another important factor, as participants reported positive experiences with delivery speed, app design, order accuracy, and issue resolution. These elements help build strong consumer–platform relationships. Trust and low perceived risk also play a crucial role, supported by features like secure payments, clear pricing, tracking options, and simple refund processes. Overall, the results confirm that Q-comm is not just a convenient retail model but a powerful influence on millennials' consumption patterns, decision-making styles, and engagement levels. All five hypotheses in the study are supported, demonstrating the wide-ranging behavioural effect of ultra-fast delivery services on this group.

We set out to examine the behavioural influence of Q-comm on millennials living in Tier-II cities of India, focusing on five dimensions: buying behaviour, impulsive buying, purchase frequency, service quality perception, and trust along with perceived risk. The findings demonstrate that Q-comm has a significant and multifaceted effect on all these behavioural variables. Millennials in Tier-II cities have embraced Q-comm not merely as a convenient tool but as part of their daily consumption routines. The rapid delivery promise, ease of use, and seamless digital experience contribute to changes in purchase decision-making, resulting in higher impulsivity, more frequent ordering, and stronger trust in platform reliability. As all hypotheses were rejected, the study confirms that Q-comm meaningfully influences consumer behaviour in all examined dimensions. Q-comm is reshaping consumption culture in emerging urban markets, accelerating digital dependence, and redefining how millennials in Tier-II cities plan, experience, and execute their purchases. The study fills a research gap by providing empirical evidence on behavioural shifts in this demographic group and geographical context.

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