From Clicks to Delivery in Minutes: Analyzing Customer Satisfaction in Zepto's Quick-Commerce Digital Grocery

Sabarish R[1], Karthik Rajan C S[2]

[1]Department of Commerce, SRM Institute of Science &Technology, Kattankulathur, Chennai, Tamilnadu, India

[2]Department of Psychology, SRM Institute of Science &Technology, Kattankulathur, Chennai, Tamilnadu, India

Abstract

The rapid evolution of quick-commerce platforms has transformed consumer behaviour in the FMCG sector, with Zepto emerging as a key player in India's online grocery delivery space. This study investigates customer satisfaction with FMCG products purchased via Zepto, emphasizing product quality, pricing, freshness, delivery efficiency, and brand variety. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected through structured surveys and in-depth interviews from 108 respondents, primarily young adults aged 18–25. The findings reveal that while a majority perceive Zepto's product quality and delivery speed positively, a significant portion remains neutral, suggesting room for improvement in packaging, pricing transparency, and product availability. Descriptive statistics highlight key drivers of satisfaction, including value for money and the breadth of brand offerings. The study underscores the importance of aligning operational efficiency with evolving customer expectations in the competitive quick-commerce landscape. Recommendations are offered to enhance customer experience and strengthen Zepto's market positioning. This research contributes to the growing discourse on consumer satisfaction in digital retail environments and offers strategic insights for e-commerce and supply chain professionals.

Keywords: FMCG, Customer Satisfaction, Quick Commerce, Zepto, E-commerce, Delivery Logistics, Consumer Behaviour, Value Perception, Online Retail.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rapid expansion of quick-commerce (Q-commerce) platforms has significantly reshaped consumer behaviour, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. As urban consumers increasingly prioritize convenience, speed, and digital access, platforms such as Zepto, Blinkit, and Swiggy Instamart have redefined the paradigms of grocery shopping by offering ultra-fast delivery models, often within 10–15 minutes. Among these, Zepto has emerged as a disruptive force in the Indian market, leveraging technology, dark-store models, and hyperlocal logistics to meet the evolving demands of time-sensitive consumers.

FMCG products ranging from groceries to personal care items form the backbone of everyday consumption. With their high purchase frequency and low involvement nature, consumer satisfaction in this category is shaped by multiple dynamic variables such as price sensitivity, product freshness, availability, and delivery consistency. The intersection of digital innovation and shifting consumption habits has intensified competition among Q-commerce providers, compelling them to enhance customer experience, product offerings, and operational reliability.

While extensive research exists on customer satisfaction in traditional and e-commerce retail, the unique characteristics of Q-commerce, particularly in emerging markets like India, remain underexplored. There is a critical

need to understand how consumers perceive value, convenience, and reliability in ultra-fast delivery ecosystems, and how these perceptions influence brand loyalty and repurchase intentions.

This study seeks to address this gap by evaluating customer satisfaction with FMCG products purchased via Zepto. It investigates key determinants such as product quality, pricing, delivery speed, packaging, app usability, and customer service. By employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, this research aims to provide actionable insights into customer expectations and satisfaction drivers in the quick-commerce context. The findings are intended to inform strategic decisions for e-commerce platforms, supply chain managers, and retail marketers aiming to enhance consumer engagement and competitiveness in the digital economy.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical background

Customer satisfaction has long been recognized as a cornerstone of marketing and service delivery success. Rooted in expectancy-disconfirmation theory, satisfaction is typically defined as the outcome of a comparison between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase experience (Oliver, 1980). In the FMCG sector characterized by high purchase frequency and brand-switching potential customer satisfaction plays a pivotal role in driving loyalty, retention, and repurchase behavior (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.2 Customer Satisfaction in FMCG Retail

In traditional retail settings, satisfaction is influenced by factors such as product quality, price, availability, and customer service (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). The FMCG industry, due to its low-margin and high-volume nature, often relies on efficient logistics and emotional brand connections to ensure satisfaction. Studies have also shown that convenience, ease of access, and consistent availability are critical, especially in urban markets (Gajewska & Zimon, 2016).

2.3 E-Commerce and Online Grocery Behavior

With the rise of e-commerce, customer expectations have expanded to include user-friendly interfaces, rapid delivery, and trustworthy digital transactions. Research by Abdallah (2021) highlights the importance of website usability, product information, and security in shaping online satisfaction. The pandemic accelerated online grocery adoption, shifting consumer preferences towards mobile-first experiences and real-time inventory updates (Akhtar & Farooqi, 2022).

2.4 The Rise of Quick-Commerce (Q-Commerce)

Quick-commerce, a subset of e-commerce promising ultra-fast delivery (often under 15 minutes), introduces new satisfaction dimensions such as delivery punctuality, product freshness, and instant support. Platforms like Zepto and Blinkit use dark stores and micro-warehouses to fulfil orders, offering a hyperlocal alternative to traditional grocery shopping. However, the Q-commerce model also faces criticism over operational strain, inventory inconsistency, and ethical concerns regarding delivery worker conditions (Saldanha, 2023).

Studies in developed markets (Chen et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2019) show that speed alone doesn't guarantee satisfaction perceived value, delivery accuracy, and product quality remain central. In India, the integration of local preferences and value-sensitive pricing makes the dynamics of satisfaction more complex.

2.5 Research Gaps

Despite the growing body of literature on customer satisfaction and e-commerce, significant gaps remain in understanding consumer behaviour within the context of quick-commerce (Q-commerce), especially in emerging economies like India. Traditional studies on customer satisfaction have predominantly focused on either brick-and-mortar retail or general e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart. These studies emphasize factors such as service quality, price competitiveness, website usability, and delivery logistics. However, the Q-commerce model introduces a fundamentally different paradigm which is speed-driven, hyperlocal, and mobile-first which is not adequately captured by existing frameworks.

Moreover, while the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) models such as the ACSI (American), ECSI (European), and SCSB (Swedish) have been extensively applied to structured markets, they often fail to consider cultural and infrastructural nuances in markets like India, where consumer expectations and service dynamics differ significantly. There is also a lack of standardization in measuring satisfaction within Q-commerce environments, particularly in terms of delivery speed trade-offs, supply chain constraints, and user experience design in mobile applications.

Importantly, few empirical studies explore how young, urban, price-sensitive consumers interact with instant delivery platforms for FMCG purchases, where expectations around freshness, packaging, and brand availability are paramount. While some research has touched on online grocery satisfaction post-pandemic, most are qualitative or contextually outdated, not accounting for the technological surge and competitive saturation seen in platforms like Zepto.

Furthermore, little is known about how customers perceive value-for-money, trust, and brand loyalty in a business model where impulse purchases and convenience often outweigh deep product research. Given the unique operational, demographic, and psychological dimensions of Q-commerce, this study aims to bridge these gaps by providing data-driven insights into how customer satisfaction is shaped in one of India's fastest-growing delivery platforms—Zepto.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design, aiming to systematically investigate customer satisfaction related to FMCG products offered through Zepto which is a leading quick-commerce platform in India. The focus is on evaluating customer perceptions across multiple dimensions, including product quality, freshness, pricing, packaging, brand variety, delivery performance, and user interface experience. The descriptive approach enables detailed understanding without manipulating the study environment.

3.2 Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of the research are:

1. To evaluate customer satisfaction levels concerning FMCG products delivered through Zepto.

2. To assess the impact of factors such as delivery efficiency, product availability, and app usability on customer experience.

3. To analyze price perceptions and value-for-money considerations in the context of quick-commerce.

4. To provide actionable insights for enhancing customer engagement and operational performance.

3.3 Population and Sampling

The target population for this study comprises active users of the Zepto application who have purchased FMCG products within the last three months. Given the urban-centric nature of Zepto's customer base and its popularity among younger demographics, the study adopted a stratified sampling approach to ensure representation across different age groups, genders, and income levels. Within these strata, convenience sampling was used to efficiently gather responses. A total of 108 valid responses were obtained and included in the final analysis.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The research utilized both primary and secondary sources for data collection. Primary data were collected through an online structured questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions. In addition to the survey, qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews with selected participants and focus group discussions with frequent Zepto users, allowing for a richer understanding of user experiences. Secondary data sources included customer reviews and ratings from the Zepto app, as well as relevant academic articles, industry reports, and market studies related to FMCG and quick-commerce

.3.5 Limitations of the Study

While the study provides meaningful insights, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The sample is largely composed of urban and younger consumers, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other demographic segments or geographical areas. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce response biases or inaccuracies. Another constraint was the limited access to Zepto's internal data, which prevented a more in-depth validation of operational performance claims made by users.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical protocols were carefully observed throughout the research process. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study and their consent was obtained prior to participation. Anonymity and confidentiality of all responses were maintained, and no identifying information was collected or disclosed. Participation was entirely voluntary, and no form of coercion or inducement was involved, ensuring that the data collected reflected genuine customer perspectives.

4. DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

This section presents a comprehensive interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data collected from 108 participants. The analysis is divided into key dimensions of customer satisfaction: product-related factors, pricing and value perception, delivery logistics, customer service, and digital experience. A mixed-methods approach enables triangulation of findings for robustness.

4.1 Demographic Overview

The sample primarily consisted of younger users, with 87% of respondents aged between 18 and 25 years. The majority (93.5%) were full-time students, and 76.9% earned below ₹20,000 per month, suggesting financial dependence or early-stage employment. In terms of usage frequency, 64% reported using Zepto at least twice a week, while 23% were occasional users (1–2 times/month). These demographics underscore Zepto's strong appeal among urban Gen Z and young millennial users, who value convenience, affordability, and tech-savvy solutions.

4.2 Product Quality and Freshness

A majority of respondents (55.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that the FMCG products delivered through Zepto met high-quality standards, while 59.2% expressed satisfaction with the freshness of perishable items such as fruits, vegetables, and dairy. Qualitative feedback supported these findings, with one user noting, *"Most fruits I've ordered are crisp and fresh, even better than local stores sometimes"* (Female, 22, College Student). However, 32.4% remained neutral, suggesting inconsistent experiences, particularly with items like bread or leafy greens. A smaller segment (12%) reported issues such as expired products or damaged packaging, indicating room for improvement in quality control.

4.3 Pricing and Value-for-Money

A significant majority of users (61.1%) found Zepto's pricing competitive compared to rivals like Blinkit and Swiggy Instamart, while 63% appreciated the platform's frequent and attractive discounts. Additionally, 61.2% felt they received good value for their money, indicating strong price satisfaction. Notably, this sentiment was higher among lower-income users (earning below ₹15,000/month), highlighting Zepto's appeal to budget-conscious students and early-career individuals. However, 15.6% reported issues such as hidden charges or surge pricing during peak hours, which raised concerns about pricing transparency and could impact user trust.

4.4 Product Availability and Brand Variety

When it came to product availability, 54% of users reported that their frequently purchased items were "usually" in stock, though 18% faced regular shortages of essential goods like milk and cooking oil. Regarding brand selection, 56.4% found Zepto's mix of popular and regional FMCG brands adequate. However, qualitative feedback revealed gaps, with one user commenting, *"I wish they had more South Indian brands—sometimes I can't find the curd brand my family prefers"* (Male, 24, Working Professional). A significant portion (around 30%) remained neutral, indicating that while basic needs are met, the platform's brand assortment lacks the diversity to satisfy all consumer preferences.

4.5 Delivery Speed and Reliability

A majority of users (54.8%) positively rated Zepto's delivery speed, confirming its adherence to the 10–15 minute promise, while 53.3% reported receiving products in good condition. However, only 48.4% found deliveries consistently reliable—encompassing punctuality, accurate orders, and proper handling. User feedback reflected this divide, with some praising the speed (*"Always on time. The fastest among all delivery apps."*) and others noting errors (*"Sometimes the packer rushes and forgets items or mixes up SKUs."*). This underscores an operational trade-off between speed and accuracy, particularly during peak hours (evenings/weekends), where demand may compromise order precision.

4.6 App Usability and Checkout Process

A majority of users (54.9%) found the Zepto app intuitive and easy to navigate, while an equal percentage reported satisfaction with the seamless checkout process. Nearly half (46.8%) felt product descriptions—including expiry dates and ingredients—were sufficiently detailed. Users particularly valued features like real-time order tracking and estimated delivery times. However, 19% highlighted room for improvement, especially in refining search filters to better distinguish between similar products or package sizes, suggesting that enhanced precision in product discovery could further elevate the user experience.

4.7 Customer Service and Complaint Resolution

While a majority of users (56.5%) found Zepto's customer support helpful and professional, a significant portion expressed mixed feelings. About 25.8% remained neutral, indicating either infrequent interactions or inconsistent service quality. However, 17.7% reported dissatisfaction, citing delayed resolutions, lack of empathy, or the absence of direct human support. For instance, one user shared, *"I reported a missing item and only got a refund after two days—it was a frustrating back and forth"* (Female, 21, Intern). These pain points highlight the need for Zepto to enhance its support system, potentially through real-time chat features or a more seamless AI-human hybrid approach to ensure quicker and more empathetic issue resolution.

4.8 Summary of Key Satisfaction Metrics

Satisfaction Domain	Positive (%)	Neutral (%)	Negative (%)
Product Quality & Freshness	57.4	32.4	10.2
Pricing and Discounts	61.2	26.4	12.4
Product Availability & Variety	55.6	30.5	13.9
Delivery Speed & Reliability	54.0	32.1	13.9
App Usability and Checkout	54.9	29.8	15.3
Customer Service	56.5	25.8	17.7

Table 1. Summary of Customer Satisfaction Ratings Across Key Service Dimensions on Zepto

4.9 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data (Narrative Paragraph)

The qualitative interviews revealed several recurring themes that deepen the understanding of customer satisfaction in Zepto's quick-commerce ecosystem. A prominent theme was the speed-accuracy trade-off, where users expressed appreciation for the platform's rapid delivery capabilities but noted occasional errors such as missing or substituted items, especially during peak hours. Another critical theme was digital convenience, with many younger users praising the app's intuitive interface and seamless ordering process, though some suggested that better search filtering and personalized recommendations could enhance usability further. Trust emerged as a nuanced theme, particularly tied to pricing transparency and refund efficiency, where instances of hidden charges or delayed reimbursements created skepticism among otherwise satisfied users. Hyperlocal expectations also surfaced, with users seeking a wider inclusion of regional and culturally specific FMCG brands that better reflect local consumption patterns. Lastly, a few respondents described their reliance on Zepto during time-sensitive situations (e.g., forgotten groceries before exams or unplanned visits), revealing a degree of emotional loyalty linked to the platform's perceived reliability and convenience during emergencies.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that Zepto is generally perceived positively by its users in the context of FMCG product delivery. A majority of respondents were satisfied with product quality, pricing, packaging, and delivery speed—core attributes that strongly influence customer satisfaction in online retail. The high level of agreement regarding pricing competitiveness and frequent discounts reflects positively on Zepto's pricing strategies, which are crucial in a price-sensitive market segment such as FMCG.

However, the analysis also highlights a substantial proportion of neutral responses, particularly in areas like product availability, user interface experience, and customer service. These neutral responses may suggest either a lack of strong user opinions due to inconsistent experiences or a segment of customers who have not fully engaged with all aspects of the platform. The comparatively lower satisfaction levels related to stock availability and app navigability indicate operational and technological gaps that could hinder seamless shopping experiences.

Furthermore, while most respondents acknowledged the efficiency of delivery, a noticeable minority reported dissatisfaction with delivery condition and reliability, suggesting that last-mile logistics still require consistent performance. Given the dominance of younger users (primarily students) with low income, the platform's affordability and ease of use are key contributors to its adoption.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Zepto performs well in delivering FMCG products in terms of product quality, pricing, packaging, and delivery efficiency. A significant proportion of users are satisfied with their overall shopping experience. However, the presence of neutral and dissatisfied responses across several key indicators points to areas needing improvement.

The results affirm that while the company's quick-commerce model aligns with consumer expectations for convenience and speed, consistent service quality, better inventory management, and enhanced customer support are vital to maintaining and increasing satisfaction levels. These factors are especially important in a competitive landscape where customer loyalty is difficult to secure.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance customer satisfaction on Zepto:

1. **Improve Inventory Management**
   Implement predictive analytics and real-time stock monitoring to reduce instances of product unavailability and stockouts.

2. **Enhance Customer Service**
   Train support teams for faster resolution times and introduce chatbots or 24/7 assistance features to improve responsiveness.

3. **Refine App Interface and Checkout Process**
   Simplify app navigation, improve search filters, and optimize the checkout flow for a smoother user experience.

4. **Increase Brand and Product Visibility**
   Highlight both popular and local FMCG brands more prominently to improve product discovery and perceived variety.

5. **Offer Personalized Promotions**
   Use user data to provide personalized discounts and targeted offers, especially for frequent buyers and loyal customers.

6. **Strengthen Delivery Logistics**
   Ensure consistency in delivery condition and timing through improved packaging practices and real-time tracking enhancements.

7. **Collect Feedback Continuously**
   Integrate feedback mechanisms post-delivery to gather insights and track customer satisfaction trends regularly.

By acting on these recommendations, Zepto can strengthen its market position and deliver a more consistent and satisfying experience to its FMCG customer base.

References

1. Abdallah, N. (2021). Customer satisfaction in online shopping: Importance during the pandemic. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nahil-Abdallah

2. Al Mughairi, B.M., & Bing, G. (2020). Digital platforms and FMCG consumer behavior.

3. Chandrasekar, M.R., & Dharshini, S.D. (n.d.). Customer satisfaction dimensions in retail.

4. Darji, J., & Chaudhari, N. (2024). FMCG sector growth and evolving consumer behavior in India.

5. Gajewska, T., & Zimon, D. (2016). The role of logistics in customer satisfaction. Emerald Insight.

6. Ghosh, A., & Sarkar, N. (2023). Growth and trends in online grocery shopping in India.

7. Goel, M., & Sindwani, R. (2023). Definitions and perspectives on customer satisfaction.

8. Gomathi, R., Kishore, S., & Deepika, R. (2013). Retail customer preferences and satisfaction.

9. Kaakandikar, R. (2024). Customer satisfaction in Indian coffee cafés: The CCD case.

10. Kumar, P.M., et al. (2022). Customer sentiment analysis in quick commerce. IJRise Journal.

11. Kumar, S. (2020). Service quality and customer satisfaction: Nordic and American models. Emerald Insight. https://www.emerald.com/insight/

12. Lee, Y.C., Wang, Y.C., Lu, S.C., Hsieh, Y.F., Chien, C.H., Tsai, S.B., & Dong, W. (2016). National customer satisfaction index: CSI model and applications. SpringerPlus.

13. Nanwani, K., Raj, A., & Prabhu, G.N. (2022). Innovation and challenges in 10-minute delivery models.

14. Neelam, S. (2012). Factors influencing satisfaction in organized retail outlets.

15. Ranjekar, G., & Roy, D. (2023). Automating dark stores and optimizing supply chains in Qcommerce. IIM Ahmedabad.

16. Shobana, R., & Anbarasu, J. (2013). Store image and customer loyalty.

17. Soriano, D.R. (2001). External consulting and SME performance.

18. Svensson, G. (2004). Interactive service quality in automotive sector.

19. Truong, N.T. (2020). Perceived innovation and customer behavior. Emerald Insight.