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An Empirical Study on Changing Consumer Expectations and Behavior in the Era of Q-Commerce

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Abstract: *The effect of Covid -19 pandemic urged people to adopt to the buying habits through online shopping portals. As the marketing trends developed into more into E-commerce, quick commerce(Q-Commerce) emerged in 2020. Consumers are able to get their daily groceries at their door step so easily. Latently the shift in the consumer expectation of delivery in shorter span lead to many Q-commerce players like Blinkit, Swiggy instamart, Zepto and bigbasket started delivering their product in less than 10 minutes. This lead into more competition among the players. So the consumers are now able to get whatever they want in minutes. This research is carried to understand the changing expectations of consumers with sample size of 150 consumers. The data analysed through statistical tools and inferred that consumers are expecting speedy delivery and this resulted in using different apps for their requirement. They show dissatisfaction towards package and high delivery charges and return and refund issues. So it is suggested that service providers should focus on strengthening trust, improving product quality assurance, and catering to diverse user motivations to enhance customer retention and satisfaction.*

Keywords: Q-Commerce, Consumer Behaviour, Service Providers, Consumer Expectations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Q-commerce, also referred to as quick commerce, is a type of e-commerce where emphasis is on quick deliveries, typically in less than an hour. Q-commerce originally started with food delivery and it still represents the largest chunk of the business. It has quickly expanded to other categories particularly for grocery delivery, medicines, gifts, and apparel.

In early 2020, the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 pandemic began to give a major boost to q-commerce as it allowed retailers to remain operational via quick home deliveries.[3] At the time, it was speculated that prolonged restrictions would result in a long-term consumer behavior shift towards quick deliveries, establishing q-commerce as "the third generation of commerce".[4] However, as pandemic restrictions began to lift and a burgeoning cost of living crisis made paying higher prices for rapid delivery less sustainable, demand for q-commerce in many parts of the world waned, causing businesses to downsize or fold altogether. Companies in Q-commerce include BigBasket, Blinkit, Swiggy, JioMart, Zepto

Q-commerce ('quick commerce') - sometimes used interchangeably with 'on-demand delivery' and 'e-grocery' - is e-commerce in a new, faster form. It combines the merits of traditional e-commerce with innovations in last-mile delivery.

The premise is largely the same, with speed of delivery being the main differentiator. Delivery is not in days but minutes - 30 or less, to be competitive. This has in turn expanded the breadth of what individuals can order, with perishable goods - like groceries - being a large niche q-commerce companies speak to. It tends to focus on the micro - smaller quantities of fewer goods. For example, a missing ingredient urgently needed for a recipe that's already in motion.

"Consumers now want and expect more items than ever to be delivered to their doorstep...It is no longer a case of waiting 24-48 hours for a delivery. Rather, the expectation for this is now a matter of minutes." - Daniel Alonso, Global Director of q-commerce, Glovo

The bigger, less visible, difference happens on the backend - in the way that q-commerce operate behind the scenes. Not all have the same business model, but many use 'dark stores' - strategically located warehouses - to ensure a quick turnaround from order to doorstep. These can be anywhere between 3229 and 7500 sq ft (300-700sqm) in size and tend to stock upwards of 1,000 unique products. Many also crowdsource labor, equipping them with a fleet of individuals ready to spring into action at any moment. The combination of these factors, plus others (including adoption of the latest softwares, and the layout of dark stores themselves) provides them with the ultimate agility and flexibility required to adeptly respond to customer demand, round the clock.

A. Rise of Quick Commerce in India

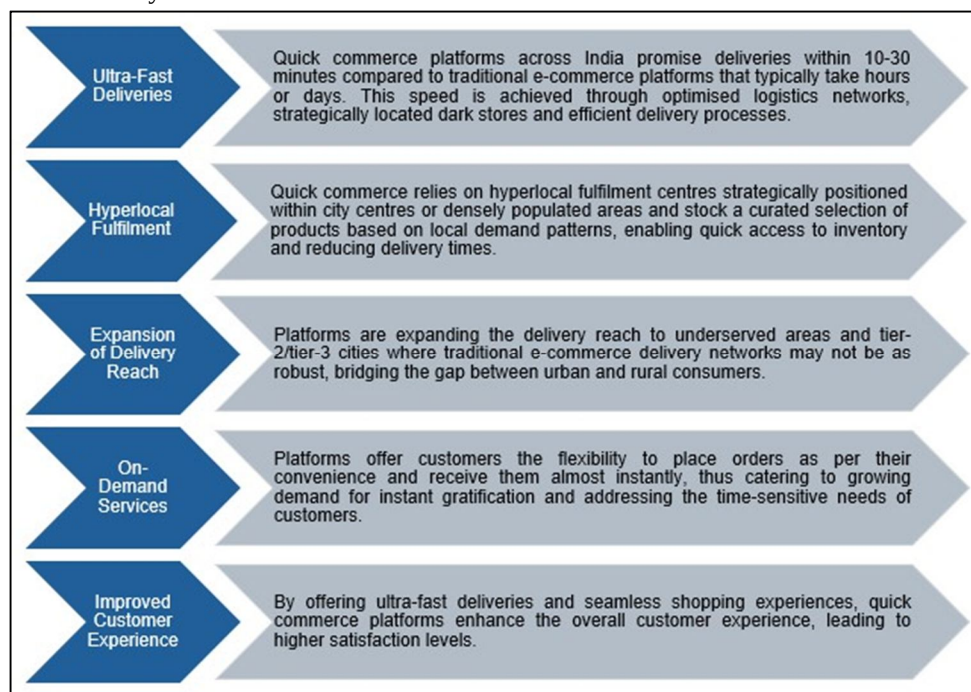
Quick commerce has recently reshaped the [e-commerce](#) landscape in India. The concept of instant deliveries has expanded beyond traditional ready-made meals to include various items like groceries, medicines, cosmetics, and electronics, combining the speed of instant market purchases with the convenience of home shopping. This innovative model caters to consumer demand for daily essentials, including groceries, vegetables, fruits, etc., promising to revolutionise the market. Key factors such as convenience, urbanisation, and busy lifestyles have influenced consumer behaviour, prompting companies to prioritise shorter delivery times. The pandemic further accelerated these needs as social distancing and work-from-home measures discouraged in-store visits. The quick commerce industry in India has experienced rapid growth since the pandemic. It is projected to touch US\$ 5.5 billion by 2025, as per a RedSeer report. Quick commerce platforms' contribution to the online grocery market is expected to rise from 10% to ~45% in the coming years. To adapt to this evolving landscape, the market has shifted from a singular central warehouse model to an advanced network of micro-warehouses or dark stores strategically located in proximity to delivery points, emulating the role of neighbourhood 'Kirana' stores. This model ensures a focused selection of high-demand items, typically within a two-kilometre radius. Notably, platforms such as Dunzo, Swiggy Instamart, and Blinkit have established 20-30 micro-fulfilment centres in major cities, facilitating 10-20 minute delivery services.

Figure 1: Snapshot of Quick Commerce in India



B. Role of Quick Commerce in last-mile Delivery

Quick commerce significantly impacts last-mile delivery in India by introducing innovative solutions to address the challenges associated with traditional delivery models.



The rise of quick commerce in India represents a fundamental shift in the retail industry, led by changing consumer behaviours, technological advancements, and a favourable business environment. Quick commerce is set to change the Indian shopping experience, offering immediate satisfaction, unmatched convenience, and significant investment and growth prospects for industry stakeholders. However, as the industry evolves, the success of quick commerce companies will depend on their ability to efficiently manage delivery infrastructure in a cost-effective manner by using innovative technology and artificial intelligence.

Players are likely to prioritise growth in major cities targeting consumers that value convenience over cost, implement delivery fees for orders below a set amount, explore new revenue possibilities like advertising and FMCG partnerships, and focus on sustainability measures. The price-sensitive nature of India's market poses sustainability challenges for quick commerce players in the long term; however, a vast potential lies in India's diverse consumer demographics and varied needs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Krishna Sudheer et al (2024) : The researcher introduces the Digital Immediacy Adoption Framework (DiIA-F), a novel theoretical framework that explains the rapid adoption of quick commerce (Q-commerce) services in Indian urban markets. The study demonstrates paradoxical relationships such as the sustainability-immediacy paradox and the anxiety-based value-creating effects. The findings validate that cognitive-temporal and digital-psychological factors exert strong influences on Q-commerce adoption through complex psychological mechanisms that are not captured by conventional models. This framework has actionable implications for platform design, marketing, urban planning and sustainability efforts in rapidly digitalizing emerging markets.

Risba Singh (2024): The study reveals that economic impact of q-commerce resulting from consumer behavior changes includes reduced profit margins for q-commerce players due to the high operational costs of meeting logistics expectations and the need to offer affordable prices. The demand for certain appliances, like refrigerators, may decrease due to reduced long-term storage needs. To balance profitability and customer expectations, q-commerce businesses may consider partnerships with local stores, changing the economic outlook for both sectors.

Ashish Raj (2025) The researchers develop an analytical model that studies the interaction between “the delivery fees paid to the riders by the Q-commerce company” and “the efforts put by both the players - the delivery riders as well as the Q-commerce company towards a successful delivery” under two different setups: *with* versus *without penalty*. The researchers suggest that prior commitments to efforts by the Q-commerce company lead to better payoffs for both the company and the riders.

Moreover, contrary to popular belief, the analysis shows that the sharing of rider's effort-cost mechanism in which a Q-commerce company shares some percentage of the operating cost of the riders accrues more significant benefits.

Dr.Priyanka Jarolia et al (2025) : The researchers opine that introducing new standards for speed, ease of use, and consumer happiness, quick commerce has transformed traditional ECommerce. It creates opportunities for innovation and hybrid solutions, but it also presents difficulties for established firms. More integration of hyper-local, on-demand services with conventional ECommerce platforms is anticipated in the retail environment as q-commerce grows. By investing in technology, growing their delivery networks, and collaborating with major brands, ECommerce businesses can enhance their delivery times to meet rapid commerce (Q-commerce) Technology: For real-time inventory management, demand forecasting, and route optimisation, use artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics. Additionally, real-time traffic data can increase the precision and effectiveness of deliveries.

Dr.Truptha Shankar (2024) The study observes the utilization of both e-commerce and q-commerce applications by customers, according to their diverse needs. It helps to understand the changes in preferences of the customers from electronic commerce applications to quick commerce applications.

Prof.Vishal R Thomar & Ravi Rakesh singh (2024) The study reveals that a substantial majority of respondents perceive Q-commerce as markedly more convenient and faster than traditional retail, with 58% indicating a preference for its convenience and 69% acknowledging its superior delivery speed. Satisfaction levels were also notably higher among Q-commerce users, underscoring their appeal in an increasingly digital marketplace

A. Research Gap

From the above literature review it's found that less research conducted in the Bangalore and minimal survey is on behavioural changes in customer expectations. So this research is conducted to bridge this gap.

B. Research Methodology

The survey is conducted in Bangalore city with sample size of 150 with structured questionnaires. The convenience sampling method is used for data collection. Data analysed through SPSS using tolls like Factor Analysis, One sample Test, One way ANOVA.

- 1) To examine the changing expectations of consumers regarding product quality, delivery speed, pricing, and convenience in Q-commerce platforms.
- 2) To analyze consumer behavior patterns in adopting and using Q-commerce applications for their daily purchases.
- 3) To identify the key factors influencing consumer trust and satisfaction with Q-commerce services.
- 4) To assess the impact of Q-commerce on traditional online and offline shopping behavior.

III. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.753	25

The reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.753$) demonstrates that the instrument has a satisfactory internal consistency, ensuring that the responses collected from participants are dependable and reflect a coherent measurement of the study variables.

Table 1: showing One-way ANOVA results

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Why do you use E-commerce apps?	Between Groups	29.853	5	5.971	4.069	.002
	Within Groups	177.548	121	1.467		
	Total	207.402	126			
How fast do you want your order delivered?	Between Groups	8.020	5	1.604	2.116	.067

	Within Groups	103.868	137	.758		
	Total	111.888	142			
How often do you order from Q-Commerce apps?	Between Groups	4.365	5	.873	.723	.607
	Within Groups	165.453	137	1.208		
	Total	169.818	142			
What do you usually buy through Q-commerce?	Between Groups	14.604	5	2.921	2.287	.049
	Within Groups	174.949	137	1.277		
	Total	189.552	142			
What is most important to you when using Q-Commerce?	Between Groups	13.329	5	2.666	2.342	.045
	Within Groups	155.916	137	1.138		
	Total	169.245	142			
Do you trust the quality of products you receive?	Between Groups	9.344	5	1.869	2.985	.014
	Within Groups	85.775	137	.626		
	Total	95.119	142			
What would make you stop using a Q-commerce app?	Between Groups	4.369	5	.874	.735	.599
	Within Groups	162.876	137	1.189		
	Total	167.245	142			
How did you find about the Q-commerce app you use?	Between Groups	8.289	5	1.658	1.931	.093
	Within Groups	117.599	137	.858		
	Total	125.888	142			
What time do you usually place your Q-commerce orders?	Between Groups	9.184	5	1.837	2.186	.059
	Within Groups	114.288	136	.840		
	Total	123.472	141			
Do you care about eco-friendly packaging?	Between Groups	2.158	5	.432	.585	.711
	Within Groups	101.087	137	.738		
	Total	103.245	142			
Would you pay extra for delivery in 10minutes or less?	Between Groups	3.440	5	.688	.603	.698
	Within Groups	156.308	137	1.141		
	Total	159.748	142			
Do you use more than one Q-commerce app ?	Between Groups	8.227	5	1.645	2.284	.050
	Within Groups	98.710	137	.721		
	Total	106.937	142			
What is your biggest worry about Q-commerce ?	Between Groups	4.013	5	.803	.747	.590
	Within Groups	146.135	136	1.075		
	Total	150.148	141			
Do you prefer scheduled delivery or instant delivery ?	Between Groups	5.480	5	1.096	1.297	.269
	Within Groups	106.490	126	.845		
	Total	111.970	131			
Would you recommend your favorite Q-commerce app to friends ?	Between Groups	6.980	5	1.396	2.103	.069
	Within Groups	90.923	137	.664		
	Total	97.902	142			
Has your shopping behavior changed after using Q-commerce ?	Between Groups	7.360	5	1.472	1.347	.248
	Within Groups	149.731	137	1.093		
	Total	157.091	142			
How do you prefer to pay on Q-commerce apps ?	Between Groups	8.227	5	1.645	1.682	.143
	Within Groups	133.983	137	.978		
	Total	142.210	142			

What do you do if there's a problem with your order ?	Between Groups	4.121	5	.824	1.142	.341
	Within Groups	98.858	137	.722		
	Total	102.979	142			
Do product suggestions in the app help you decide what to buy ?	Between Groups	3.663	5	.733	.958	.446
	Within Groups	104.770	137	.765		
	Total	108.434	142			
Do you think Q-commerce will continue in the future ?	Between Groups	3.680	5	.736	.981	.431
	Within Groups	102.753	137	.750		
	Total	106.434	142			

Inferences:

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences among respondent groups regarding their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward E-commerce and Q-commerce applications. The results for twenty survey items are summarized in the table above.

The findings indicate that five variables demonstrated statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level, namely: Reasons for using E-commerce apps (Sig. = 0.002), Types of products purchased through Q-commerce (Sig. = 0.049), Factors considered most important when using Q-commerce (Sig. = 0.045), Trust in the quality of products received (Sig. = 0.014), Usage of more than one Q-commerce app (Sig. = 0.050)

These results suggest that respondents differ significantly in their motivations for using E-commerce platforms, the kinds of products they prefer to purchase, and the aspects they prioritize—such as convenience, price, delivery speed, or reliability—when engaging with Q-commerce services. Furthermore, there are variations in the degree of trust users place in product quality and their tendency to use multiple Q-commerce apps, indicating competitive user behavior and selective platform loyalty.

Conversely, the remaining fifteen variables, including delivery speed preference, ordering frequency, eco-friendly packaging awareness, willingness to pay extra for faster delivery, recommendation behavior, and payment mode preference, did not reveal significant differences among the groups. This suggests that user attitudes toward these operational aspects of Q-commerce are generally consistent and uniform across different demographic or behavioral segments.

Overall, the ANOVA results highlight that motivational and trust-based factors are the primary dimensions where consumer opinions diverge, whereas functional or behavioral aspects of Q-commerce usage remain relatively homogeneous. These insights imply that service providers should focus on strengthening trust, improving product quality assurance, and catering to diverse user motivations to enhance customer retention and satisfaction.

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Gender	40.201	142	.000	1.629	1.55	1.71
Age(In years)	18.405	142	.000	1.287	1.15	1.42
Education	39.422	142	.000	2.154	2.05	2.26
Monthly income(in ₹) (optional)	20.952	142	.000	1.972	1.79	2.16
Which app you will use for Drink or Grocery?	20.142	142	.000	3.406	3.07	3.74
Why do you use E-commerce apps?	20.334	126	.000	2.315	2.09	2.54
How fast do you want your order delivered?	26.566	142	.000	1.972	1.83	2.12
How often do you order from Q-Commerce apps?	31.811	142	.000	2.909	2.73	3.09
What do you usually buy through Q-commerce?	30.471	142	.000	2.944	2.75	3.14
What is most important to you when using Q-Commerce?	25.048	142	.000	2.287	2.11	2.47
Do you trust the quality of products you receive?	26.259	142	.000	1.797	1.66	1.93
What would make you stop using a Q-commerce app?	26.892	142	.000	2.441	2.26	2.62
How did you find about the Q-commerce app you use?	25.046	142	.000	1.972	1.82	2.13
what time do you usually place your Q-commerce orders?	32.015	141	.000	2.514	2.36	2.67
Do you care about eco-friendly packaging?	20.203	142	.000	1.441	1.30	1.58
Would you pay extra for delivery in 10minutes or less?	28.225	142	.000	2.503	2.33	2.68

Do you use more than one Q-commerce app ?	31.029	142	.000	2.252	2.11	2.40
What is your biggest worry about Q-commerce ?	23.990	141	.000	2.077	1.91	2.25
Do you prefer scheduled delivery or instant delivery ?	24.666	131	.000	1.985	1.83	2.14
Would you recommend your favorite Q-commerce app to friends ?	24.977	142	.000	1.734	1.60	1.87
Has your shopping behavior changed after using Q-commerce ?	26.873	142	.000	2.364	2.19	2.54
How do you prefer to pay on Q-commerce apps ?	27.993	142	.000	2.343	2.18	2.51
What do you do if there's a problem with your order ?	26.415	142	.000	1.881	1.74	2.02
Do product suggestions in the app help you decide what to buy ?	26.508	142	.000	1.937	1.79	2.08
Do you think Q-commerce will continue in the future ?	24.244	142	.000	1.755	1.61	1.90

All variables show statistically significant differences from the test value (0). This indicates that respondents have clear and measurable attitudes, preferences, and behaviors regarding Q-commerce apps, from app selection and ordering frequency to delivery preferences and trust in product quality.

IV. CONCLUSION

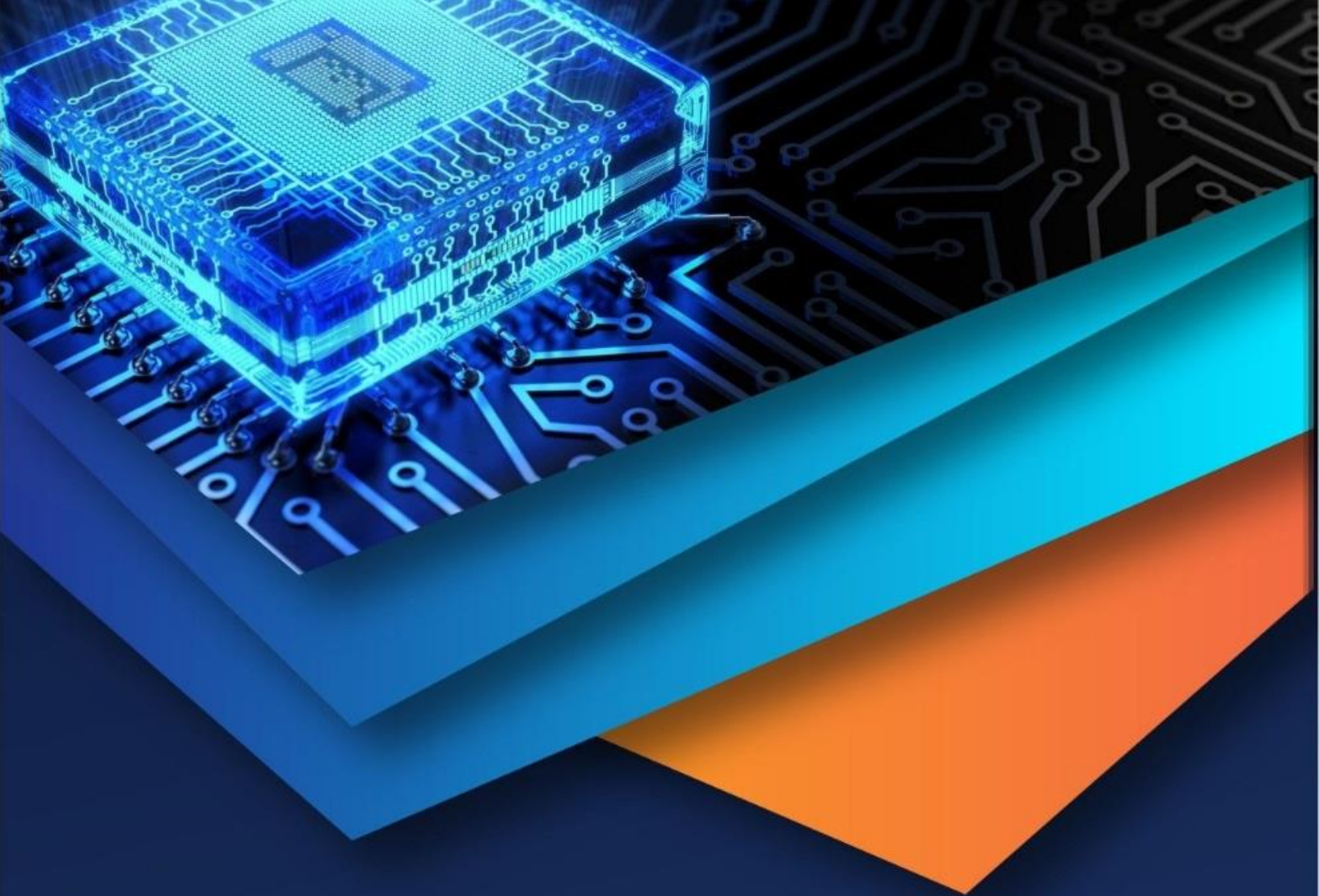
Q-commerce has become need of the hour for consumers, as because of the shift in the life style and social status all have inclined towards delivery of the products to their door step. The change in the expectations of the consumers with regards to Q-commerce survey conducted to analyse the behaviour of the consumers. The major findings are the consumers expects speedy delivery, high quality, good packing and relatively easy process of refund and replacement. The q-commerce players are facing challenges in retention of the consumers as their expectations are high. Consumers are not loyal to any Q-commerce players in Bangalore, as per their need and expectations they choose the Q-commerce players for ordering products. It is suggestable to service providers that they should focus on strengthening trust, improving product quality assurance, and catering to diverse user motivations to enhance customer retention and satisfaction

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