



“Q - Commerce: The Upgraded Era of E- Commerce”

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ABSTRACT

Quick Commerce (Q-Commerce), emerging from e-Commerce and hyper-local delivery models, has significantly impacted India's retail sector. Initially centered on food delivery services, q-commerce subsequently broadened to encompass groceries and essential items, based on a dedication to ultra-fast delivery in just minutes. This research examines the rapid growth of q-commerce in India and evaluates its sustainability in a competitive and resource-intensive market. The model responds to evolving consumer needs for quickness and ease, yet it faces obstacles such as elevated operational costs, logistical hurdles, workforce volatility in the gig economy, and challenges related to environmental sustainability. The study also explores its dual impact: reducing customer dependence on traditional retail stores while simultaneously reshaping online shopping by establishing new delivery standards. By examining its foundations and evaluating its expansion, it highlights both the opportunities and challenges of Q-Commerce in shaping the future of retail in India. Moreover, it emphasizes the need for innovation in the regulatory structure of supply chain management and sustainable practices to ensure the long-term viability of this rapidly growing model in India's diverse consumer market. In India, e-commerce has grown considerably in the past ten years. The widespread availability of the internet has transformed consumer behaviors, offering sellers and



business owners many chances to advertise online. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's regular and stringent lockdowns and social distancing measures, consumers were encouraged to buy groceries online

Introduction

The retail landscape has evolved from traditional stores to e-commerce and now to Q-commerce. This model combines speed, convenience, and technology, responding to the modern consumer's desire for immediate satisfaction. It examines how Q-commerce is reshaping the retail ecosystem and altering the competitive environment. This paper delves into the evolving journey of Q-commerce, its growth catalysts, technological facilitators, and the hurdles it encounters in maintaining profitability and operational efficiency in a competitive, on-demand market.

Objectives :-

- 1) To know the concept and origin of Q- Commerce
- 2) To study the impact of Q- Commerce on traditional And online retail.
- 3) To evaluate challenges on sustainability of this model in India.

Literature Review

The quick commerce has changed the face of online retail in India .Several authors and researchers have explore the foundational concepts of E- commerce Laying the ground work for understanding this accelerated model of delivery . C.V.S. Murthy in E- Commerce concepts, models, Strategies .provides a comprehensive frame work for understanding traditional and modern e- commerce Ecosystems . Murthy's insights into last mile delivery , inventory strategies and technological integration are particularly relevant when examining how Q- commerce differs from conventional models . The encyclopedia of e- commerce by Kamal Sharma offers an extensive overview of digital commerce trends globally and within India. In addition to these books research papers and journal articles shed light on the rise of Q- commerce post 2020. Particularly during and after Covid 19 pandemic Although there is substantial literature on E-commerce , the niche field of Q- commerce is still emerging .

Origin of Q- commerce



The emergence of quick commerce (Q-Commerce) signifies a transformative model in the ever-evolving realm of digital commerce, altering consumer expectations and delivery benchmarks. Originating from the framework of e-commerce, Q-Commerce emphasizes exceptionally fast delivery times of 10 to 30 minutes, catering to a generation that prioritizes speed, convenience, and immediate satisfaction. The growth of Q-Commerce is closely linked to improvements in logistics, AI-enhanced demand forecasting, and hyper-local distribution networks. By providing groceries, daily necessities, medicines, and electronics, Q-Commerce is reshaping the shopping experience for consumers.

Q-Commerce, or Quick Commerce, emerged as a natural progression from traditional e-commerce and the on-demand delivery model. Its origins are linked to the rising demand for ultra-fast delivery in urban areas, spurred by the success of food delivery services like Zomato, Swiggy, UberEats, and DoorDash in the mid-2010s. As consumer lifestyles became increasingly hectic and the desire for immediate gratification grew, companies started to explore delivering groceries and essentials in less than an hour. The concept truly gained momentum around 2019-2020, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when lockdowns and safety concerns led consumers to depend significantly on home deliveries. This period marked a significant boom in hyper local delivery infrastructure with players like Dunzo, Zepto, Blinkit, and Getir leading the charge in Q-Commerce.

Impact Of Q-Commerce On Traditional Retail

Quick Commerce characterized by the rapid delivery of goods often within 10 – 30 min. has significantly transformed the dynamics of the retail sector. While it offers unmatched convenience to consumers, it poses several challenges and competitive pressures on traditional retail businesses.

The key impacts are outlined below :-

1) Changing Consumer Expectations :

Q-Commerce has redefined consumer expectations by offering instant delivery, extended service hours, and digital convenience.

Traditional retailers, accustomed to fixed operating hours and standard delivery timelines, face increasing difficulty in meeting these elevated expectations.

2) Reduction in foot traffic :

With the convenience of home delivery, especially for daily essentials, consumers are increasingly opting for digital platforms. This has resulted in a notable decline in footfall at physical retail outlets, particularly in grocery and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) segments.



3) Increased Pricing Pressure :

Q- Commerce platforms frequently adopt aggressive pricing strategy , including deep discounts and promotional offers.

This puts considerable pressure on traditional retailers to match prices ,often at the expense of their profit margin.

4) Technological Disruptions :

The Technological Infrastructure under pinning Q-Commerce such as AI based Inventory management, Real time tracking ,and friendly user mobile applications set so high standards. Traditional retailers are compelled to invest in digital transformation initiatives to remain competitive

5) Supply chain and inventory challenges :

Q- Commerce utilizes decentralized, hyper local warehouses, or “ dark stores” to ensure quick delivery. In contrast traditional retailers with their centralized storage and longer replenishment

Cycles may struggle with agility and responsiveness .

6) Evolution towards hybrid models :

To adapt the changing retail landscape , many traditional retailers are integrating digital channels into their operations , leading to the emergence of “Phygital” (Physical + Digital) models .This allows them to combine the advantages of in-store experience with speed and convenience of online shopping .

Impact On Online Retail :

1) Redefinition of delivery standards :

Q- commerce has significantly raised the benchmark for delivery time lines in online retail. Customers who were once content with 2-3 day deliveries now expect near instant gratification . As a result standard e- Commerce Platforms are under pressure to reduce delivery times to remain competitive

2) Increased infrastructure demands :

To match Q- Commerce’s efficiency traditional e- commerce business must invest in decentralized warehousing, last mile logistics and dark store operations . This increases the capital and operational expenditure required to maintained consumer satisfaction .

3) Shifting consumer behavior :



Consumers are increasingly drawn to platforms that offer immediate delivery ,especially for low involvement , high frequency purchases like groceries , personal care items and over the counter medicines . This shifts a substantial portion of daily transaction volume away from conventional online retailers towards Q- commerce platform .

4) Need for technological advancement :

Q- Commerce relies on AI , real- time tracking , Predictive analytics , and mobile – first user experiences. Online retailers are compelled to upgrade their technological ecosystems to include faster order processing , localized inventory management , and improved user interfaces .

5) Increased Competitive Pressure

Q-Commerce Platforms often adopt aggressive pricing , frequent offers ,and subscription – based loyalty models . Traditional online retailers must respond with similar strategies to retain customers loyalty , which can compress profit margins and heightened operational challenges .

6) Expansion of Product categories :

Q- Commerce’s initial focus on essentials has expanded to include electronics accessories, gifts, pet care , and more . This broadening of scope threatens to encroach upon the territory of mainstream online retail platforms, requiring them to innovate or risk market share erosion.

Challenges Of This Model In India :-

India being a diverse country creates many barriers for newly growing businesses .Here are few challenges faced by Q- commerce :

1) Lack of proper cyber laws :-

It is not possible to conduct e- Commerce business smoothly without implementing timely and appropriate cyber law in india .

The cyber law should be standard so that individual property rights, the privacy of data and content, Data protection should be reserved with its commercial and criminal areas of law.

2) Localization in terms of place And language :

Localization is necessary to deliver the product in a timely manner which can stimulate the Q- Commerce business easily .

3) Consumers Perception :-



Consumers may believe that new internet based processing methods expose them to new potential risks the dangers of online fraud , identity theft, and phishing swindles means schemes to still confidential information using spoofed websites have become common place and are likely to cause alarm and fear with in consumers

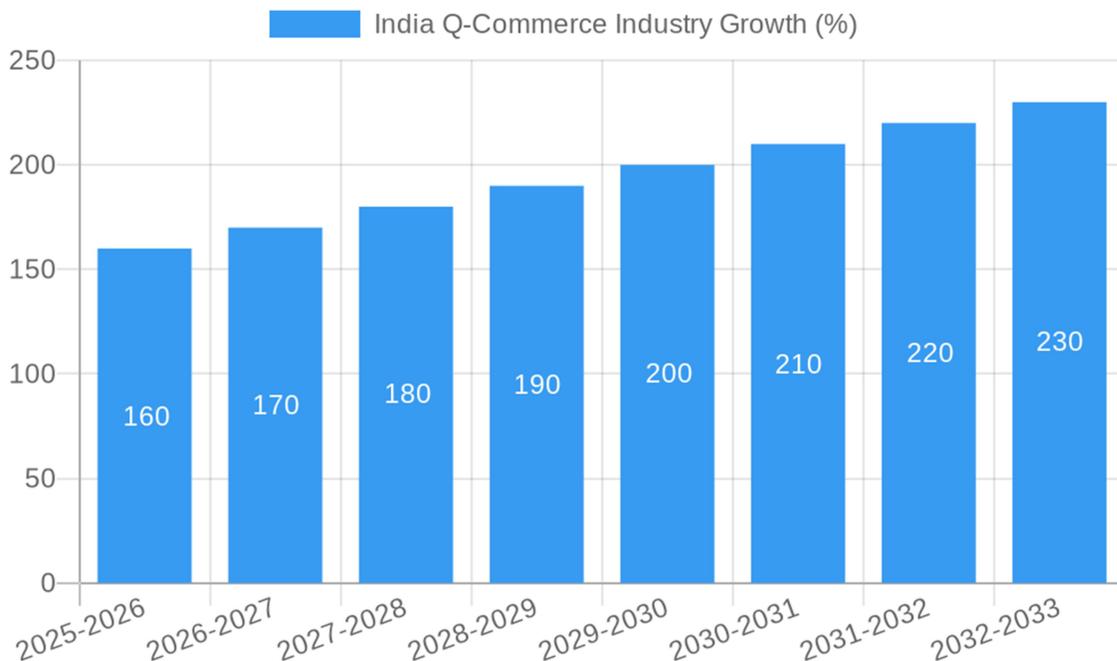
4) Unrealistic competition :-

The long term prospects for E- Commerce Companies are so exciting that some investors are willing to spend irrationally high amounts of money to acquire market share today.

An Overview Of Growth In India

The growth of quick commerce has been fuelled by the pandemic, which not only made customers order most products online but also made finance to businesses available at a cheaper cost, with central banks engaging in monetary easing. The sector’s phenomenal growth has attracted multiple players in India and worldwide. This has also raised questions about the sustainability of quick-commerce businesses

Significant growth accelerators include the development of dependable cold chain infrastructure to efficiently handle fresh produce and the increasing e-commerce penetration in India's tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Market expansion will also be accelerated by more technological investment to enhance inventory management, optimize delivery routes, and customize consumer experiences. Lastly, mergers and acquisitions and strategic alliances will be vital in determining the competitive environment and propelling the expansion of the industry as a whole.

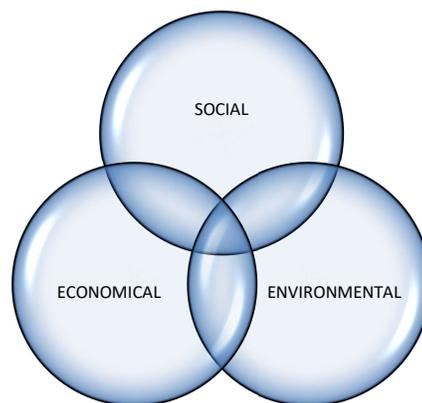




Sustainability Of This Model In India

To evaluate the sustainability of the quick commerce sector, this paper utilizes the three pillars of sustainability established by the World Conservation Union (IUCN, 2006). The model presents three interconnected dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, to examine sustainability. It adopts a multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach to the concept of sustainability. The economic pillar investigates the long-term financial health of the industry. This pillar is further categorized into financial and market factors to thoroughly assess the industry's economic sustainability. The social pillar examines the effects of quick commerce enterprises on their workforce, stakeholders, society, and the wider community.

It encompasses aspects such as the safety and well-being of employees within the workplace, charitable initiatives for the community, and the overall ethical behavior of the companies operating in the sector. The environmental aspect aims to evaluate how the industry's business practices affect the environment through factors like emissions, pollution, and ecological harm, among others. Concerns have been raised regarding the financial sustainability of quick commerce businesses, as many of these enterprises are facing losses due to their prioritization of growth over profitability. Although it is typical for startups to put growth ahead of profitability in the early phases of their operations, rapid commerce endeavors are having trouble persuading clients to spend the whole cost of deliveries and to adhere to them. For fast commerce businesses, offering deep discounts and free delivery is the most popular strategy for attracting clients. Although it aids in expanding market share, it also causes losses for businesses. Customer loyalty is reliant on the maintenance of such steep reductions due to fierce rivalry from new competitors supported by rival venture capitalists. This has a negative impact on quick delivery businesses' profitability, which lowers their valuation and turns off investors. Several businesses have shut down and declared bankruptcy.



Three Pillars of Sustainability



Conclusion :-

The rise of q-commerce has introduced both opportunities and challenges for retail sectors. While it enhances customer convenience and operational efficiency, it also necessitates a strategic overhaul of traditional retail models. Businesses that are able to blend traditional strengths with digital agility are more likely to thrive in this evolving landscape. Q-Commerce is not merely a Supplement to online retail- it is a transformative force. It challenges existing e-Commerce players to revisit their logistics models, enhances user engagement, and rethink their value propositions. Those who adapt with agility and innovations stand to gain a competitive edge in this fast paced retail environment.

In India, e-commerce has grown rapidly during the past ten years. The widespread availability of the internet has led to a shift in customer behavior, which has given vendors and business owners a plethora of chances to sell online. Customers were compelled to shop for groceries online because of the COVID-19 pandemic's frequent and strict lockdowns and social distancing regulations. The expansion of the fast commerce sector reflects its dynamic and ever-changing character.

Growth is a representation of its dynamic and changing character. The industry has been thoroughly reviewed in this article, which also provides the basic operating model of the sector as well as the many business models employed by different companies within the sector. The secret to increasing the company's productivity and competitiveness is automating dark storefronts. Achieving economic viability, social responsibility, and environmental sustainability are long-term issues for the industry. There is room to develop creative company plans that adhere to the three sustainability pillars.

The emphasis should be on improving the rapid commerce supply chain by making it more automated and flexible, even though the industry's prospects seem promising.

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