The Competitive Edge in Quick Commerce: A Study of Differentiation Strategies and Operational Innovations

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Abstract. The industry of quick commerce (Q-commerce) in India has flourished impressively, primarily due to the fast-changing lifestyles of consumers, as well as their intrinsic need for instant delivery. The research related to this study was carried on leading Q-commerce competitors—Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, BB now, and Dunzo-in which their strategies for differentiation and operational renovation had been explored. The paper exposes relevant gaps in research regarding the application of strategic frameworks to this new sector. Accordingly, the present study intends to fill the gap with the aid of Michael Porter's Generic strategy model, wherein the study assesses each player in the new industry using composite scores based on the level of delivery services and types of products utilized. Primary data were collected using a structured survey of 55 respondents to determine consumer preferences and perceptions. Chi-square test, correlation analysis, and factor analysis were performed to validate strategic positioning and understand consumer behavior. The results show that Blinkit and Zepto are among the top-using platforms for youngsters, while Swiggy Instamart creates a balanced appeal. Insights on strategies may be derived from findings that could enhance strategic understanding in Q-commerce and provide ways toward market differentiation and consumer-centric innovation in this cut-throat field.

Keywords: Quick Commerce (Q-commerce), Consumer Behavior, Operational Efficiency, Competitive Differentiation.

1 Introduction

Quick Commerce (Q-Commerce) means that we no longer need to go to a physical store to shop for our daily necessities such as food, clothes, and kitchenware essentials. Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, and Dunzo are at the spearhead in the dynamic industry of business models and operational techniques turning out new or fresh ideas to tap into a more populous market. Each is adopting a unique value proposition that differs according to hyperlocal delivery, strategic partners, or consumers themselves, that cater to changing consumer needs.

This paper aims to compare similarities and differences in business models or operations of the Top four players in Q-commerce along with competitive positioning analysis as per Michael Porter's Four Quadrant Model(1979). The study intends to discover and narrate successful patterns and innovative breakthroughs defining the Q-commerce landscape in its USPs and differentiation strategy, as well as rate the performance of

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these players operationally and in terms of market dynamics. This comparative study lays a sounding board toward understanding the stratified directional strategy differences among this still-emerging industry.

There has been increasing interest in consumer behavior, operation models, and their assimilation with conventional retail. There have been more Q-commerce market introductions and more promotions. Also, in parallel to the earlier studies, further research has emphasised the prompt through technology, mainly when driven by AI logistics and dark stores expedite the delivery and take away positively and efficiently to the doorsteps. A lot of names of players that have been involved in strategic differentiation and innovation to market share include Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, and Dunzo. This scans through global and local studies to discuss transformation in the retail industry to Q-commerce, and all possible threats to profitability and sustainability.

2 A Business Model- Most Common Operations in the Q-commerce Industry:

2.1 Q-commerce: Core elements and operational dynamics

Q-commerce, or quick commerce, or instant commerce, is indeed one of the critical developments in the e-commerce business. It is organised explicitly around **fast delivery, usually within half an hour**. It is a business that essentially makes it synonymous with speed and convenience, that supplies consumers' immediate requirements. In such a case, within no time, the page has turned for quick online delivery; essential goods include groceries, fresh produce, medicines, and other fast-moving consumer goods.

2.2 Fundamental Characteristics:

- **Super-Fast Delivery**: Delivery is done under an hour, emphasising the fast delivery of orders within 10-20 minutes as opposed to e-commerce, which may take hours or days. This, therefore, is a key differentiator.[1]
- **Dark Store Infrastructure**: Operates on the premise of micro-warehouses ("dark stores") set up in highly populated areas of about 2,000-5,000 sq. ft. These dark stores carry 2,000-4,000 high-demand SKUs and are set up within ~2 km of radius from each store. [6],[9]
- **Need-Based Product Targeting**: The needs-based and compulsive shopping behaviour focuses on fast-moving consumer goods such as groceries, vegetables, personal care, baby care, and stationery, rather than comprehensive e-commerce catalogs.
- **Last-Mile Logistics**: Small vehicles (motorcycles and bicycles) are wedged between traffic for speedy deliveries to the doorstep.
- **Consumer Targeting**: Mainly serves singleton households, responding to impulse and necessity buys. [4],[5]

2.3 Operational Models and Market Dynamics

Q-commerce companies employ various operational models:

- **Ultra-Fast Delivery Companies**: These venture capital-funded enterprises work on technology-driven supply chains to effect delivery in 15 minutes[7,9].
- **Traditional Grocers**: These retail outfits are developing their Q-commerce using dark stores and robotics for last-mile delivery.[7]
- **Hyper-Local Delivery Service**: Third-party facilitators who partner with retailers for a fast delivery system, but do not retain heavy overhead on their infrastructure.[4,5]

Customer Perspectives and Preferences

- **Speed of Delivery**: Highly prioritised by customers even above discounts in this sector.[7]
- **Speed Perception**: The fastest to be perceived is Zepto, followed by Dunzo.[5,9].
- **Receipt Dissatisfaction**: Poor service, limited area availability, and refund-related issues are among customers' pain points.[9].
- **Importance of Discounts**: While speed will always have the upper hand, price sensitivity still matters. While Dunzo gives the highest discounts, Zepto follows.11 Sustainable success depends on quality and pricing of the product.[6,9]

Primary Research Findings on Consumer Demographics

- **Target Audience**: 85% of users are in the 18-to-25 age group, highlighting that Q-commerce is preferred amongst the youth.
- **Market Segmentation**: Blinkit (20 respondents) and Zepto (13 respondents) are the clear winners among users below 25, establishing a sound brand presence and service.
- **Service Strategy**: The little interest from above-46 users (only a single respondent) signals a chance for market growth.
- **Competitive Positioning**: Blinkit and Zepto generate a competitive advantage by targeting the under-25 markets and inspiring marketing strategies.

Q-Commerce Growth and Future Dimensions

- **Market Penetration**: Urban demand for convenience will drive anticipated growth from USD0.3 billion in 2020 to USD5 billion in 2025.[5]
- **Technology Hub**: Efficiency is augmented through AI, route optimisation, drone delivery, and autonomous robots.[5,9]
- **Geographic Expansion**: From megacities to Tier II cities.[4]
- **COVID-19 Impact**: Demand for essential commodities during the pandemic hastened adoption.[4,5,6,7,8]

Quote and Insight

- **Barriers to Profitability**: Balancing cost-efficiency vis-à-vis customer experience is a challenge.[5,7,8]
- **Barriers to Cost**: High costs of client acquisition, warehousing, and labor become major stumbling blocks to the financial sustainability of firms.[4,7,9]
- **Customer Retention**: Order fulfilment processes depend heavily on inventory precision management.[4,7]
- **Competition**: The industry faces acute competition that forces firms to be flexible and agile.[5,10]

Literature Review:

Quick Commerce (Q-commerce) is a disruptive player in the retail landscape, changing consumer expectations surrounding convenience and speedy delivery. According to De Boer et al. (2022), Q-commerce-for sub-30-minute delivery services-is in fact becoming a benchmark for retail innovations in renewing consumer convenience. Their research, conducted in Germany, France, and the UK, emphasized the coexistence challenges of Q-commerce with traditional bricks and mortar. Retailers should improve their ICT structures so as to benefit from synergies derived from Q-commerce platforms and create a sustainable omni-channel model.

As per Indian authors Rajekar and Roy (2023), Q-commerce developed in response to revolutionizing consumer behavior and an increased requirement for instant deliveries. They propose categorizing e-commerce into three generations, the third-quarter—the Q-commerce—focusing on within-30-minute delivery taking place via two-wheelers from a hyperlocal view. In addition, they indicate the function of Q-commerce beyond generating gig-type employment and the insight towards urban lifestyle needs. Reddy (2023) also notes how Q-commerce has now grown from one focusing on food to encompass groceries, stationery, and hygiene products. This transition, he argues, reflects the shift in consumer preferences and the integration of the gig economy, with Zepto and Blinkit leading the charge in India.

Schorung (2024) talks about infrastructural and socio-economic implications of Q-commerce in food retail. The claim here is that dark stores-micro fulfillment centers in urban locations-are essential to the logistic efficiency of Q-commerce. Yet, the explosion of this model in such a short time period presents environmental concerns and the precarious conditions of gig workers, thereby questioning its long-term viability. On another note, Darji et al. (2024) present quantitative evidence supporting the influence of Q-commerce on customer satisfaction and customer behavior. Their study points to factors such as variety of platforms, order fulfillment, and price competitiveness as primary ones driving consumer loyalty while any inefficiencies with return mechanisms and inventory systems reduce trust.

Further, Babu et al. (2024) investigate challenges like cost inflation, quality control in perishable goods, and logistics complexity; the need for advanced technological interventions against issues of traffic congestion and carbon emissions has been stressed in their study as an environmental dimension of rapid deliveries. Meanwhile, Naik (2024) traces the generational shifts in e-commerce models, echoing earlier works of Rajekar and Roy (2023). It alludes to the immediacy factor of Q-commerce and the inevitable rise in demand for faster and more personalized delivery services, as it fits closely with urban consumer lifestyles.

While academic literature has extensively covered Q-commerce's growth and the challenges facing the sector, new developments in the world of business now give insight into some of the reactions of existing titans. Thus, Vivek (2024) makes available exciting news on how Amazon intends to introduce "Tez," which will be a project to introduce Q-commerce in India and compete with Blinkit and Zepto by leveraging its extensive logistical network. Likewise, Singh (2024) informs of Flipkart's development of a 10-minute delivery service for medicines in Bengaluru, marking the growth of Q-commerce into healthcare. The Times of India (2024) further reveals that Walmart is 'pushing' into Q-commerce with a "20 minutes plan," using Kirana and local partnerships to reach out to the competition.

These studies provide every front between Q-commerce. For instance, scholars like Schorung (2024) and Babu et al. (2024) focus on sustainability and workforce challenges in the context of what modes an emerging Indian Q-commerce market could offer consumers. On the other hand, Darji et al. (2024) and Rajekar & Roy (2023) draw attention to the changing operational models from which these services stand to be executed and the shifts in consumer behavior. Amazon, Flipkart, and Walmart's strategic moves tell how important competitive dynamics and market opportunity are to India's rapidly evolving Q-commerce landscape.

3 Research Gaps in the Literature Review

3.1 Observations:

The present understanding of Q-commerce from the literature seems sketchy or shallow, and there has not been much academic inquiry into significant areas like the evolution of Q-commerce in India and globally, the application of strategic frameworks such as Porter's Generic Strategies, and comparative studies on platforms like Zepto, Blinkit, BBNow, Dunzo, and Swiggy Instamart. There is little research on consumer behaviour and brand positioning in hyperlocal setups. Identified research gaps include a dearth of academic literature on strategic positioning of Q-commerce players, which seem to have mostly industry-driven insights; the lack of a uniformly applied composite scoring mechanism to assess service level vis-a-vis product mix; under-use of Porter's framework in the studies concentrating on hyperlocal delivery; and lack of studies evaluating consumer perception on whether product variety relates to delivery performance, which is a must in validating the dimensions of the positioning model.

3.2 Research Objective Based on Gap:

Main Objective: Evaluating and positioning key Q-commerce players in India using the Porter Generic Strategies framework as per the composite scoring based on delivery service levels and product mix.

Secondary Objectives:

1. To develop a quantifiable model to map service-level efficiency and product diversity of major Q-commerce players.
2. To identify whether each player follows a cost leadership, differentiation, focused cost or focused differentiation strategy.
3. To analyse consumer perception about product mix and delivery reliability and how that relates to strategic positioning.

3.3 Research Methodology

Research Design.

- **Type**: Exploratory and Descriptive
- **Approach**: Mixed Methods (Quantitative & Qualitative)

3.4 Data Collection:

Primary Data: A structured questionnaire has been prepared upon Q-Commerce preferences, perceived value, pricing, delivery speed, and product mix expectations, and has been administered to a respondents of 55 respondents.

3.5 Statistical Analysis tied to Gaps:

Statistical Test	Purpose	Objective
Chi-Square Analytics	To check the association between • Customer Age Group and Factors • Customer Age Group and Preferred Q-Com Platform • Customer Age Group and Preferred Product category	3
Co-Relation Analysis	To check the correlation between • Affordability vs Discount • Delivery Efficiency vs Fresh Product Quality • Affordability vs Speed • Platform Preference vs Affordability	1,2
Factor Analysis	To reduce survey items into major constructs like "Delivery Perception" and "Product Mix Perception"	3

4 Statistical Analysis

The fast burgeoning Q-commerce industry has eclipsed consumer shopping behaviours regarding essential goods. All platforms compete with each other for the fastest delivery at the lowest price, delivering better quality; therefore, the utmost importance is given to consumer preferences on deciding where any platform stands in the market. This study, therefore, looks into consumer preferences vis-à-vis essential purchases on platform perception and affordability. Such research evaluation will help ascertain consumer usage patterns and affordability perception and give understanding into how consumers navigate the Q-commerce platforms with a cost-convenience trade-off.

4.1 Descriptive Analytics

Table: 1 Respondents' Age vs Quick-Commerce Platform preference

Source: Primary survey conducted by authors, 2025.

Row Labels	BB Now	Blinkit	Dunzo	Swiggy Instamart	Zepto	Grand Total

18 - 25 Years	12.73 %	36.36 %	1.82 %	10.91%	23.64 %	85.45%
26 - 35 Years	1.82%	5.45 %	1.82 %	3.64%	0.00 %	12.73%
Above 46 Years	1.82%	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00%	0.00 %	1.82%
Grand Total	16.36 %	41.82 %	3.64 %	14.55%	23.64 %	100.00%

Age-wise user data is given among the various Q-commerce platforms BB Now, Blinkit, Dunzo, Swiggy Instamart, Zepto for the consumer demographic analysis on user preference to the age categories. Some insights which the dataset provides are:

1. **Identification of Target Audience**- Most (85%) users are 18-25 years old, thus pointing towards the majority users of q-commerce being younger consumers.
2. **Market Segmentation**- Blinkit (19.6%) and Zepto (11.1%) service more of this age category than any other platforms, which implies there could be good brand positioning or powerful service offered to this segment of younger users.
3. **Service Strategy**- There is almost a total lack of consumers above 46 years of age, having only one user, which suggests that they either do not use or are poorly engaged with Q-commerce services. This hints at a very recognisable opportunity in the market for future growth.
4. **Competitive Analysis**- As Blinkit has the highest number of users, closely followed by Zepto and Swiggy Instamart, during the age of 18-25, it would certainly lead to their strategic competitive position and marketing strategies.

4.2 Chi-Square Analysis

Age Group vs. Factors Affecting Project Selection.

Hypothesis:

- **Null Hypothesis (H_{01}):**
  - There is no significant association between the age group of users and the factors influencing their choice of Q-commerce platforms.
- **Alternate Hypothesis (H_{11}):**
  - There is a significant association between the age group of users and the factors influencing their choice of Q-commerce platforms.

Chi-Square: 22.5368, p = 0.012 < 0.05 ➔Rejects Null Hypothesis(H_{01})

Results of chi-square tests prove that there is a significant relationship between **age groups** and the count of **influencing factors related to Q-commerce platform choices**. The age groups in the analysis look at Q-commerce services differently.

Findings:

- Young people (18-24 years):
  - Discounts, offers, and fast delivery time in that order are essential.
  - Frequently shift from app to app looking for the best offer.
  - Not concerned about availability or customer service much.
- Mid-aged (25-34 years):
  - Important for them is reliability, product assortment, and easy-to-use interfaces.
  - Discounts are nice, but an uninterrupted shopping experience is more crucial.
- Older consumers (ages 35 and above):
  - Reliability, quality of goods, and customer service are key for them.
  - They will not risk trying a new app; they would rather go with what has worked for them for the last 5+ years.

Implications:

- On the other hand, **Blinkit** and **Zepto** should be discounting heavily and guaranteeing faster delivery for the younger ones.
- Platforms like **BigBasket** and **Swiggy Instamart,** catering to the mid-aged and older population, should focus on **reliability** with a **wide range of product selection**.

Age group segmentation can open doors for personalised marketing approaches to engage different customer segments.

Age Group vs. Preferred Q-Commerce Platform.

Hypothesis

- **Null Hypothesis (H_{02}):**
  - There is no significant association between the age group of users and their preferred Q-commerce platform.
- **Alternate Hypothesis (H_{12}):**
  - There is a significant association between the age group of users and their preferred Q-commerce platform.

Chi-Square: 22.8016, p = 0.0036 < 0.05 ➔ Rejects Null Hypothesis(H_{02})

The association between the age groups and their preferred Q-commerce platform has demographic implications in segments for adopting different services.

Findings:

- **18-24 Years:**
  - Preference for **Blinkit and Zepto** strongly because of their speed and student-friendly offers.
- **25-34 Years**:
  - Swiggy Instamart did well to balance speed with assortment
- **35 Years and Above**:
  - **Trust, reliability, and bulk purchase** options are specific pivotal criteria dictating BigBasket and Amazon Fresh.

Implications:

- Blinkit and Zepto should market to the youth, including partnerships with universities and gamified discounts.
- BigBasket and Amazon Fresh must also exploit their reliability, organic offering, and bulk buying incentives toward attracting older consumer groups.
- Swiggy Instamart may balance its position as a middle-ground space for professionals who want both speed and variety.

This study corroborates findings from earlier research regarding consumer segmentation in e-commerce, which postulates that lifestyle and considerations govern the users' preferences instead of mere price sensitivity.

Age Group vs. Preferred Product Categories

Hypothesis

- **Null Hypothesis (H_{03}):**
  - There is no significant association between the age group of users and the product categories they purchase through Q-commerce platforms.
- **Alternate Hypothesis (H_{13}):**
  - There is a significant association between the age group of users and the product categories they purchase through Q-commerce platforms.

Chi-square statistic: 60.6231, p = 3.36e-11 < 0.05 ➔ Rejects Null Hypothesis(H_{03})

The analysis shows a very significantly declared relationship between **age group** and the **product category** more often bought through Q-commerce platforms.

Findings:

- **Young Consumers (18-24 years):**
  - Categories involved in sales include **snacks, drinks, and ready-to-eat foods**.
  - Impulse buying among these consumers, promoted by discounts and promotions, occurs
- **Mid-aged Consumers (25-34)**:
  - The products, whether daily groceries, dairy products, or fresh produce, are equally preferred.
  - They are less spontaneous than the younger age demographics.
- **Older Consumers (35+)**:
  - Bought majorly **household essentials, personal care, and occasional bulk groceries.**
  - Prefer fewer items per transaction. Thus, purchases tend to be larger in quantity.

Implications:

- **Blinkit and Zepto** must focus more on **young consumers** for placing products oriented toward convenience and limited offers.
- **BigBasket and Amazon Fresh** should elevate their bulk order advantages and subscription savings for older consumers.
- **Platforms must upgrade their recommendation algorithms** based on the purchase behaviour of the age group.

Findings suggest dichotomies arising in behavioral economics whereby **the younger divide favors convenience and instant gratification, whereas older cohorts stress utility and delayed gratification**.

Key associations were established between age groups and Q-commerce consumer behavior; some implications arise such as:

- **Based on age, the selected platform differs**: Blinkit and Zepto are the preferences for the young, while older consumers seem to favor BigBasket and Amazon Fresh almost exclusively.
- **The set of options considered by different age groups sets different choices for platforms in motion** and thus requires a different set of marketing strategies to be customised.
- **Age significantly affects purchase behavior; being a crucial consumer segment, influence** age must also reflect on inventory and sales-promotional strategies.

4.3 Correlation Analysis: Q- Commerce Platforms

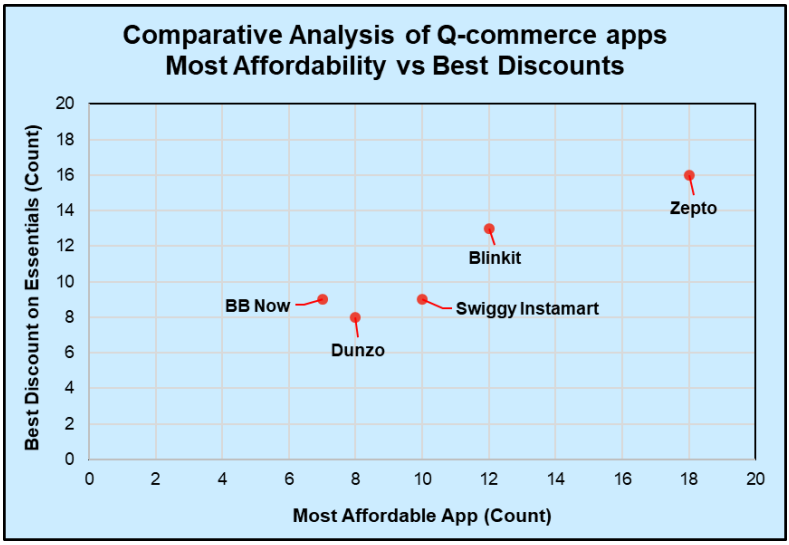

Fig 1: Comparative Analysis of Q-commerce apps Most Affordability vs Best Discount

Source: Primary data from survey responses by authors, 2025

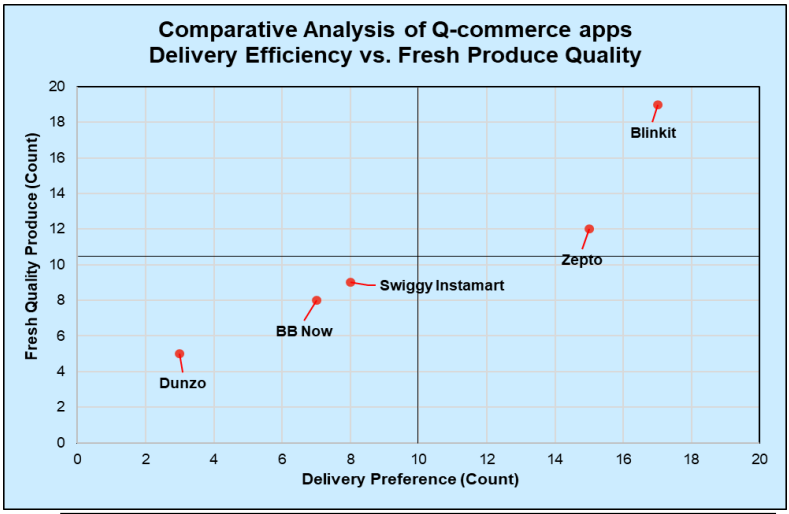

Fig 2: Comparative Analysis of Q-commerce apps Delivery Efficiency vs Fresh Produce Quality

Source: Primary data from survey responses by authors, 2025

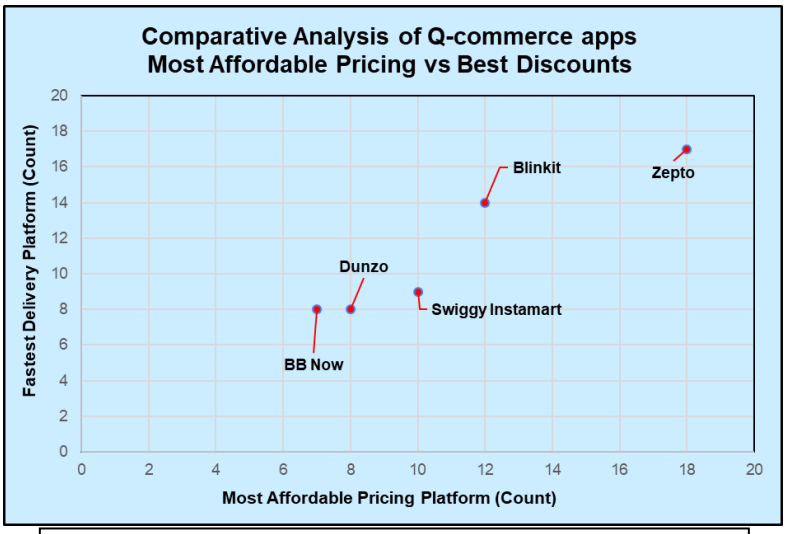

Fig 3: Comparative Analysis of Q-commerce apps Most Affordable Pricing vs Best Discount

Source: Primary data from survey responses by authors, 2025

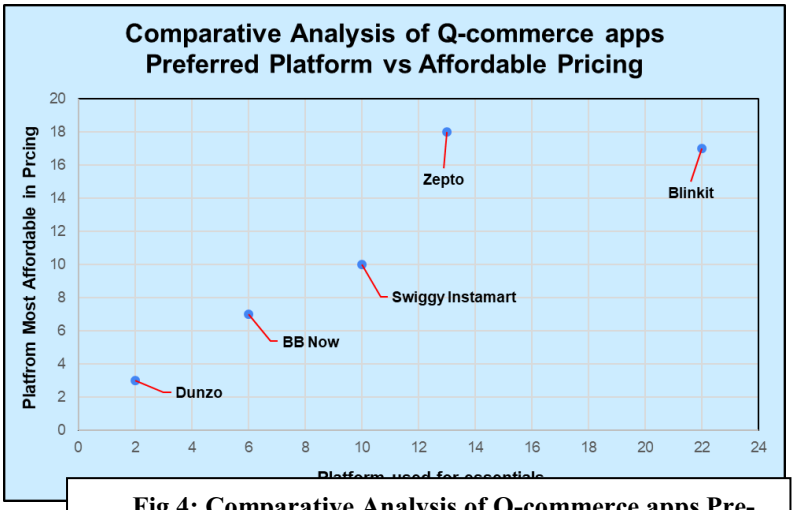

Fig 4: Comparative Analysis of Q-commerce apps Preferred Platform vs Affordable Pricing

Source: Primary data from survey responses by authors, 2025

Affordability vs. Discounts (Fig 1)

- **Platforms compared**: Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, BB Now, and Dunzo.
- **Metrics**: Affordability count (votes given by users for the most affordable app); Best discounted count (votes given by users for the best discounts on essentials).

Key Insights

- **Zepto** gets the most points for affordability (18) and discounts (16), making it the platform of most value for money.
- **Blinkit** is very closely next in line, holding the second position in affordability (12) and discounts (13).
- **Swiggy Instamart** offers moderate pricing and discounting.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** are rated the lowest in affordability and discount competition.

Conclusion

Thus, Zepto is the top pick for budget users, and Blinkit is a good competitor. Swiggy Instamart creates a great balance, though BB Now and Dunzo need to gear up on pricing and discounts.

Delivery Efficiency vs. Fresh Produce Quality (Fig 2)

The metrics are Delivery Efficiency (user preference for the fastest delivery) and Fresh Produce Quality (the rating the user provides for the fresh produce).

Key Insights

- **Blinkit** is ahead in delivery (17) and fresh produce quality (19), making it the best choice for speed and quality.
- **Zepto** gets a second place in delivery (15) but lags in fresh produce quality (12).
- **Swiggy Instamart & BB Now** are performing moderately.
- **Dunzo** scores lowest in both and fares poorly in logistics and product quality.

Conclusion

Blinkit is the best performer in terms of speed and quality. Zepto must improve fresh produce quality. Average performance is with Swiggy Instamart and BB Now. Dunzo has a lot of ground to cover.

Affordability vs. Delivery Speed (Fig 3)

Metrics: Affordability (cost-effectiveness) and Fastest Delivery (speed of service).

Key Insights

- **Zepto** ranks first in both affordability (18) and speed of delivery (17).
- **Blinkit** satisfactorily balances pricing (12) and speed (14).
- **Swiggy Instamart** performs average but does not get any spotlight.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** rank lowest in terms of affordability and the speed of delivery as well.

Conclusion

So, Zepto is best for cost-efficient and speedy delivery. Blinkit is strongly competitive, while Swiggy Instamart would sit largely in the middle. Pricing and logistics need an overhaul from BB Now and Dunzo to stay in the competition.

Platform Preference vs. Affordability (Fig 4)

Metrics: Essential Platform Ranking & Affordability Ranking on Consumer.

Key Insights

- **Blinkit** is the most preferred and affordable platform.
- **Zepto** ranks very close and is a strong alternate.
- **Swiggy Instamart** has a mid-preference but is still not perceived as most affordable.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** rank lowest in preference and affordability.

Conclusion

Affordability is one of the parameters that drive platform preference. Blinkit and Zepto rule. Swiggy Instamart is the one in between. BB Now and Dunzo need to work on pricing and bring more offerings to attract more consumers.

Final Takeaways

- In affordable pricing and fast deliveries, **Zepto** takes the lead, but there is a need for improvement in fresh produce quality.
- Discounts, delivery, and quality experience place **Blinkit** at the top rank.
- **Swiggy Instamart** offers an all-round service but does not excel in any area.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** are less competitive and have slight strategic improvement in pricing, logistics, and quality.

4.4 Factor analysis: Consumer Preferences in Q-Commerce

We performed factor analysis to extract possible factors behind consumer preferences in Q-Commerce from survey data.

Factors in Q-commerce can be innumerable. Such multi-dimensional phenomena, decision outcome readings, and platform selection are all in the grocery and essential shopping context.

Methodology.

- Design: Varimax-rotated principal component analysis
- Analyze: Price, discounts, delivery speed, user experience, product availability, and customer service
- Suitability Tests: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures and Bartlett's test accepted a set for factor analysis.

Key Findings:

So, there have become recognised four other predominant factors affecting consumer decisions:

- Pricing & Discounts (28% Variance Explained)
- Pricing, discounts, and any other charges to services.
- Delivery Efficiency (24% of Variance Explained)
- The quicker the delivery, the fewer the cancellations; therefore, it becomes loyalty.
- Product Availability & Quality (21% Variance Explained)
- Consumer trust is based on stock availability and the quality of fresh produce.
- Customer Experience & Support (18% Variability Explained)
- Satisfaction with the user review is delivered through the UI, complaint resolution, and effective servicing. Anderson: 91% of variance was explained by the model.

User Interface Insights

- General Dissatisfaction: Dunzo (-0.73) and BB Now (-0.77) came the lowest in UI Ratings.
- More Positive Perception: Blinkit (0.47) and Swiggy Instamart (0.37).
- Insights: Dunzo and BB Now must work a lot on improving UI/UX.
- Pricing & Discounts- Discounts are the key factor in choosing a platform.
- Key retention factors are Delivery Efficiency & Product Quality.
- User Experience & Customer Support are vital in uplifting satisfaction.
- Interface Upgrade is mandatory for Dunzo and BB Now to stay in the race.

- Such inputs can help Q-commerce platforms strategise customer engagement and service optimisation as needed.

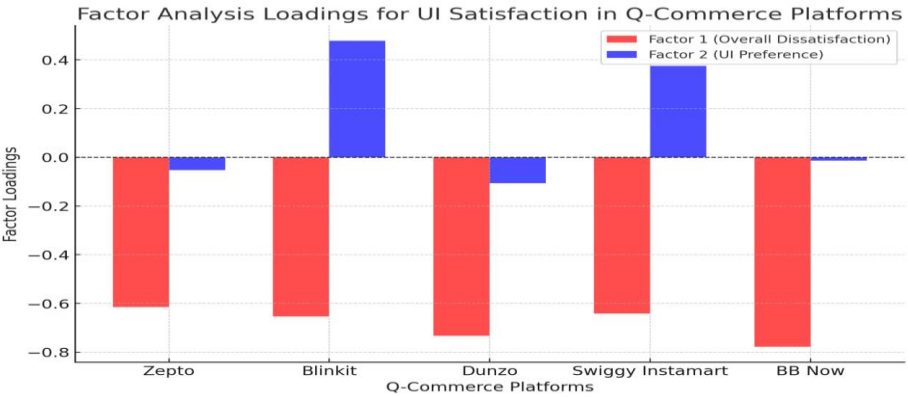

Fig 5: Factor Analysis for User Interface satisfaction vs Q-commerce Platform

Source: Primary data from survey responses by authors, 2025

Conclusion of overall Statistical Analysis

- **Blinkit (41.8%)** is most preferred overall, striking a fair balance between product discounts, delivery, and quality.
- **Zepto (23.6%)** earns the crown in affordability & delivery speed but still has much to improve in fresh produce.
- **Swiggy Instamart (14.5%)** is a jack-of-all-trades but lacks one specialty.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** (the lowest ranks) must address pricing strategy, logistical performance, and user interface to compete.
- The growth potential lies in engaging 35% of **consumers** in **bulk shopping** as a reliable and good service.

4.5 Here's a comparison of the differentiating factors for each company, presented in a tabular format with additional comparative insights:

Source: Compiled from secondary sources cited in References section

Feature	Blinkit	Dunzo	Swiggy Instamart	Zepto

Delivery Speed	**10-20 minutes**[28], with order packing in **2.5 minutes**[13]	Varies based on service; focuses on hyperlocal[21], but not exclusively quick commerce	**15-30 minutes**[12]	**~8 minutes 47 seconds** average, with a **10-minute** delivery promise[24]
Dark Store Network	**451 dark stores across 27 cities**[20], stores within a **2 km radius**[13] for quick deliveries	Does not maintain its inventory; uses an **aggregator model**[12] connecting with local merchants	Utilizes strategically located **micro-fulfillment centers**[23]	Uses strategically located "dark stores" in high-demand areas for rapid fulfilment of orders.[25]
Average Order Value (AOV)	**₹635**, higher than competitors[20], achieved by selling high-value items	Reports indicate that profitability challenges persist when the AOV remains around **₹400–450**[29].	It is approximately ₹499[18].	Zepto's average order value (AOV) ranged between **₹430 and ₹470**[18]
Product Range	Wide range including **electronics like iPhones and PS5s**[20], positioning as a **one-stop marketplace**	Diverse range of products, including groceries, medications, and pet supplies[14]; focus on **comprehensive shopping experience**	Broad and thoughtfully curated range, including fresh produce, dairy, and special items; focus on **customer-centric curation**[17]	Focused assortment of **high-demand products**[26], including groceries and personal care; simplifies the consumer choice process.

Marketing Strategy	**Data-driven**, using targeted ads, social media, and personalised promotions[20] to drive sales and engagement; focused on building a strong brand.	Social media, **Moment marketing**[15], and relatable content to engage Millennials and Gen-Z.	**Event-specific promotions** and engagement strategies, using festivals, holidays, and major events to boost sales	Focuses on providing a **seamless user experience**[19], with a well-designed app, easy payment methods, and customer service, actively soliciting customer feedback
Technology & Logistics	Utilizes technology for enhanced in-store planning[13] and data analysis for personalised offers.	Uses an asset-light **aggregator model** for rapid scaling; platform for on-demand and hyperlocal deliveries for merchants	Utilises **machine learning algorithms**[16] for demand planning and inventory management; benefits from integration with Swiggy's logistics network	**AI-driven logistics** to optimise delivery routes, manage inventory, and choose a targeted range of products, intelligent routing algorithms and predictive analytics[13]
Unique Features	Leveraging **Zomato's 100 million user base**[20] for new customer acquisition,	**Hyperlocal concierge services** beyond deliveries, **flexible delivery services** such as	Leverages integration with Swiggy's app, emphasises a broad and	**Customer-centric approach** with a focus on seamless user experience and

	and the strategy of keeping apps separate.	package pickups, and 'Dunzo for Business' platform[14]	thoughtfully curated product range, and customer-centric product curation on What-ToEat[30]	personalised services, and innovative expansion plans such as **Zepto Café**[27]

This table and comparison should give you a comprehensive view of the differentiating factors of each company, with a focus on internal operational elements.

5 Conclusion:

The study aimed to analyze the competitive positioning of representative Q-commerce players in India—namely Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, BB Now, and Dunzo—using the dimensions of Michael Porter's Generic Strategies framework. The research sought to evaluate each user based on two key dimensions: delivery service levels and product mix diversity. Collected from 55 respondents, the primary data sets were statistically analysed by chi-square testing, correlation, and factor analysis to map consumer preferences against strategic differentiators. The findings suggest that speed, affordability, and ease of use of the platform strongly influence Q-commerce brand choice.

From the findings, the bulk of users falls under the 18–25-year-old age group, accounting for over 85% of users. This demographic favoured platforms like Blinkit and Zepto, with Blinkit having an edge in preference of 41.82%, where Zepto stood at 23.64%. The chi-square tests indicated there was a significant association between an age group and both platform preference and product category purchased. Younger users are likely to choose ready-to-eat and snack items, often for reasons of discounts and delivery speed, while older users prefer basic household goods and safety-from-miss-outing; hence, Q-commerce platforms must follow accordingly under advanced strategies.

Correlation further stressed that Zepto was cheap (18) and efficient for delivery (17) in the minds of economically rational customers. Blinkit, however, following closely in prices, stood first in fulfilling its promise on quick delivery (17) and freshness of produce (19), stating it offers good all-around service. This strengthens the classification of Zepto as a cost leader and Blinkit as a differentiator. Swiggy Instamart fell in the middle but had no competitive edge, and both BB Now and Dunzo are considerably lacking on most measures and need urgent improvements in pricing, delivery, and user experience.

Factor analysis confirmed that the two main constructs—pricing and discounts, delivery efficiency, product quality and availability, and user experience—stimulate 91% of consumer decision-making variance. The platforms that have leveraged their positioning concerning these factors have done so with utter strategic clarity. Therefore, the research proves the principal aim of the study by showing that strategic frameworks such as those posed by Porter do map the performance and attraction of Q-commerce firms. Differentiation through innovation, consistent performance in delivery, and personalized consumer engagement will thus be pivotal in targeting and retaining the fast-increasing hyperlocal consumer set within India.

5.1 Key Takeaways

- **Zepto** excels in affordability and delivery speed but must enhance fresh produce quality.
- **Blinkit** balances affordability, speed, and quality, making it the strongest competitor.
- **Swiggy Instamart** remains an all-rounder but lacks a standout competitive advantage.
- **BB Now & Dunzo** must overhaul their pricing, logistics, and customer experience strategies.
- To remain competitive, Q-commerce platforms must optimise affordability, service efficiency, and product quality while adapting to evolving consumer preferences.

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