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The Impact of Market Dominance by Quick Commerce on Stakeholders

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Abstract: ***Quick commerce (Q-commerce) has reshaped retail through rapid delivery of daily essentials, generally within 10-30 minutes, using hyperlocal fulfilment centres, digital platforms and flexible delivery networks. This paper examines how the expansion and concentration of Q-commerce services affect consumers, local retailers, employees, investors, technological innovation, the economy and environmental sustainability. The study is based on the supplied research project, including its survey of 85 respondents and reported interviews with five delivery personnel. The evidence suggests a combination of benefits and pressures. Consumers gain speed, convenience and access to products, while smaller and more frequent orders may encourage impulse purchases. Large platforms stimulate innovation in logistics and digital payments, yet smaller retailers can struggle to match heavily funded pricing and delivery networks. The sector creates jobs while also raising concerns about unstable gig earnings, worker safety and social protection. Survey respondents additionally identified packaging waste, delivery emissions and limited transparency as significant issues. The central conclusion is that quick commerce can generate economic and consumer value, but continued growth needs to be balanced with fair competition, stronger worker safeguards, responsible pricing, transparent disclosure and more sustainable operations. Survey findings in this paper describe respondent perceptions; they do not, by themselves, establish a causal or legal finding of market abuse.***

Keywords: Quick Commerce, Market Dominance, Consumer Behaviour, Gig Economy, Small Retailers, Competition, Sustainability

1. Introduction

Quick commerce is a technology-enabled retail model that seeks to meet immediate demand rather than planned, large-basket shopping. Platforms position fulfilment inventory near residential neighbourhoods and use forecasting, digital ordering and last-mile delivery to shorten the time between purchase and receipt. In the Indian context, the original project focuses especially on Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, BigBasket Now and Dunzo.

Growth is associated with changing expectations around convenience, wider use of digital payments, urban density, improved routing and demand analysis, and the acceleration of doorstep delivery during the COVID-19 period. These factors have brought Q-commerce into direct competition with traditional supermarkets, small kirana stores and conventional online grocery services.

2. Quick Commerce: Business Model and Industry Context

How the model operates

Unlike conventional e-commerce, quick commerce centres its operations on small baskets, nearby inventory and immediate fulfilment. Dark stores, demand prediction and tightly coordinated delivery partners are designed to make short delivery windows commercially possible. Its speed creates a clear service advantage, but it also adds costs in warehousing, delivery and customer acquisition.

Feature	Traditional e-commerce	Quick commerce
Delivery window	Typically hours or days	Often 10-30 minutes
Typical purchase	Planned, larger orders	Frequent, smaller orders
Fulfilment	Large warehouses and broader inventory	Hyperlocal dark stores
Primary appeal	Selection and planned shopping	Speed and convenience
Workforce	Warehouse and scheduled delivery	Time-sensitive picking and last-mile riders

Major platforms discussed in the study

Blinkit shifted from online grocery towards rapid delivery following its Grofers phase. Zepto expanded around a fast-delivery proposition supported by inventory and demand systems. Swiggy Instamart uses the established Swiggy ecosystem and loyalty features. BigBasket Now connects faster delivery with an existing grocery platform, while Dunzo illustrates the financial pressure that can arise when growth outpaces sustainable operating economics.

These businesses do not all follow exactly the same strategy. Some compete on delivery speed and density; others leverage procurement, user relationships, category range, loyalty programmes and existing infrastructure. The paper therefore considers dominance as a range of potential advantages rather than assuming all firms have equivalent market power.

Growth and investment

Investor funding and the willingness to subsidise early orders accelerated expansion in several markets. Discounts, free delivery and wide promotional campaigns can build a customer base rapidly. However, low basket values, rider payments and last-mile costs can make profitability difficult. The project treats the durability of customer incentives, market consolidation and the possible reduction in consumer alternatives as recurring long-term questions.

Market Dominance in Quick Commerce

Market dominance refers to the ability of a firm to exert significant influence over market conditions. In quick commerce, such influence can develop through dense delivery networks, control of inventory and consumer data, brand loyalty, investment capacity, strategic alliances and acquisitions. Holding a strong commercial position is not automatically evidence of anti-competitive conduct; the issue is how that position is achieved and used.

Types of dominance

Type	Mechanism	Principal implication
Monopoly-related	One provider becomes the main viable choice	Higher dependency and fewer direct alternatives
Oligopoly	A small number of well-funded providers account for most use	Difficult entry conditions for new platforms
Technological	Superior forecasting, fulfilment and route optimisation	Better service, but higher capability barriers
Network / ecosystem	Loyalty programmes, data and repeat purchases reinforce adoption	Greater retention and platform influence

Strategies identified in the source study

1) Introductory discounts and free-delivery offers can attract first-time users and encourage repeat purchases.
2) Hyperlocal expansion increases delivery coverage and shortens the last mile, while requiring substantial capital.
3) Supplier partnerships, integrations and acquisitions can consolidate logistics networks or access to customers.
4) AI-based forecasting, inventory control and optimised routes may reduce waste and improve delivery reliability.
5) Subscriptions, app notifications and loyalty schemes can deepen dependence on a particular platform.

The study also raises concerns that prolonged losses, reduced competition and increasing charges could shift the balance of power away from consumers, small retailers and suppliers. These outcomes are risks to assess rather than inevitable consequences of scale. A balanced evaluation must weigh operating efficiencies and innovation against barriers to entry, pricing transparency and supplier bargaining power.

3. Impact on Consumers

Convenience and changing shopping behaviour

The most direct advantage of quick commerce is faster access to groceries, household products and other everyday necessities. The convenience is particularly valuable for last-minute requirements, working professionals and consumers who find travelling to physical stores time-consuming. Digital payment, order tracking and on-demand support further simplify the buying experience.

The same convenience can change the frequency and size of purchases. Rather than completing one large shopping trip, users may make several small orders each week. The survey found that 35.3% of respondents reported buying in smaller quantities more frequently and 17.6% said they shop impulsively because purchasing is easy. Another 27.1% reported no major change. These responses demonstrate varied behaviour rather than one uniform effect.

Pricing, choice and dependence

Discounts and low delivery charges can make early use attractive. Over time, consumers may face minimum-order conditions, delivery fees, handling fees or fewer promotions. The original study points to these possibilities as concerns linked to concentration. Digital shopping also removes the opportunity to inspect produce before purchase or negotiate at the point of sale, although it offers the convenience of remote ordering.

Consumer benefit	Related concern
Rapid access and time savings	Possible dependence on very short delivery windows
App convenience and tracking	Impulsive and repetitive ordering
Promotional pricing	Unclear final costs or changing delivery fees
Reliable availability	Limited in-person product inspection

What the respondents indicated

In the project survey, 15.3% reported daily ordering, 40.0% a few times a week and 32.9% a few times a month. At the same time, respondents did not abandon local commerce universally: 48.2% said they would definitely support local shops that offered similar convenience, and another 43.5% might do so if prices were competitive. Consumer loyalty therefore appears sensitive to the mix of speed, value and accessibility.

4. Traditional Retail, Competition and the Economy

Pressure on kirana stores and local retailers

Quick commerce places small retailers in competition with businesses that have centralised procurement, large technology budgets and access to investor capital. The original project describes pressures from discounted essentials, broader delivery coverage and changes in customer footfall. Independent shops may face narrower margins when customers compare app prices with local stores, although they retain advantages in personal service, familiarity, credit facilities and direct product inspection.

Survey results reflect widespread concern: 45.9% of respondents believed quick commerce significantly reduces opportunities for small businesses and 44.7% thought it has some effect. Only 2.4% saw no impact, while 7.1% believed it helps small businesses grow. These are perceptions gathered from consumers and should not be equated with independently measured closures or revenue losses.

Adaptation and market access

The source study discusses digital payment adoption, neighbourhood delivery, participation in online networks such as ONDC and partnerships with larger platforms as potential responses. Local retailers may strengthen their position through customer relationships, tailored products, flexible credit, product knowledge and service that is hard to reproduce through an app.

Retailer response	Potential value
Accept digital orders and payments	Access customers who prefer remote purchasing
Work with platform and network partners	Add channels without building an entire delivery system
Offer personal service and local credit	Retain customers through trust and convenience
Focus on quality and curated offerings	Compete on differentiation rather than discounts alone

Wider economic effects

Quick commerce can generate demand for warehousing, software, payments, packaging, transport and other supporting services. It can expand distribution for some local brands while displacing sales for other stores. Accordingly, its economic impact cannot be reduced to either job creation or disruption: the distribution of gains and costs across different types of businesses matters. In the survey, 44.7% believed the sector significantly boosts the economy, while 45.9% believed it contributes somewhat.

5. Employment, Investment and Commercial Sustainability

Opportunities and conditions in gig work

Fast fulfilment creates roles in delivery, dark-store operations, customer support, inventory management and technology. Flexible delivery work may provide entry to earnings for workers who want adaptable schedules. At the same time, the gig model raises concerns about variable per-order pay, working hours, social protection, occupational safety and income predictability.

The project reports interviews with five delivery personnel and records concerns relating to job stability, compensation and high-speed delivery requirements. It also highlights the 2023 Blinkit delivery-partner protests as an example of disputes over remuneration. The paper does not reproduce individual interview transcripts, so the qualitative evidence should be interpreted at the level reported by the original project.

Investment and profitability

An ultra-fast service can have substantial fixed and variable costs: close-proximity storage, picking, short-haul dispatch, customer acquisition and delivery incentives. The source study notes that early expansion often depended on heavy funding and discounts. These strategies can rapidly attract users, but higher order volume does not automatically imply sustainable unit economics. Limited basket sizes make the relationship between order value and cost particularly important.

Operating factor	Commercial significance
Dark-store density	Shortens delivery times but adds fixed operating cost
Average basket size	Determines revenue available to cover fulfilment
Promotions and discounts	Builds demand but may reduce order contribution
Rider compensation and insurance	Affects labour welfare and operating expense
Demand prediction	Helps minimise unsold inventory and inefficient trips

Investor and worker interests

Investors seek expansion, efficiency and a pathway to profitability; workers need fair, predictable remuneration and safe conditions. Sustainable growth requires both objectives to be addressed together. The survey found that only 14.1% of respondents considered delivery-worker treatment completely fair, 47.1% somewhat fair and 38.8% felt workers were overworked and underpaid.

6. Innovation, Sustainability and Social Effects

The role of technology

Predictive analytics, inventory systems, route planning, order tracking and automated fulfilment help Q-commerce platforms coordinate small orders at high frequency. In the survey, 57.6% said these businesses significantly encourage innovation in logistics and supply chains, while 38.8% said they contribute somewhat. Respondents were more divided about the motives for research and development: 47.1% believed platforms continuously innovate and 49.4% believed profit receives more attention.

Environmental effects

The model raises questions about packaging for repeated small orders, transport emissions and wastage from demand forecasting errors. The project survey recorded 46 selections each for packaging waste and rapid-delivery emissions, 36 for food and product wastage and 15 for no significant environmental impact. These responses identify areas of concern but are not measurements of a platform actual carbon footprint.

The source proposes reusable or recyclable packaging, efficient routes, electric vehicles and combined or scheduled deliveries. Consumer willingness is also relevant: 25.9% would definitely accept slower deliveries if they reduced environmental impact, and 52.9% might do so if the reduction was significant.

Transparency and societal behaviour

Quick commerce may reduce the need to visit neighbourhood shops, changing local shopping routines and encouraging frequent consumption. In the survey, 42.4% considered its social impact significantly negative and 41.2% saw some negative impact; 7.1% believed the overall effect was beneficial. Separately, 31.8% thought platforms hide important details about pricing, labour or sustainability, while 51.8% regarded them as somewhat transparent.

Balancing innovation with accountability

The project calls for clear pricing, responsible promotion, fair employment practices, consumer awareness and practical oversight of competition. These measures aim to preserve the advantages of fast delivery without passing hidden economic, social or environmental costs to other stakeholders.

7. Review of Literature

The original study draws on literature in digital platforms, retail competition, supply chains, stakeholder ethics and sustainability. The principal themes are outlined below as represented in that source.

1) Chen and Zhang (2019) discuss legitimacy building in e-commerce platform development. The source study connects this theme with how digital platforms build recognition and trust before expanding their market position.
2) Gupta and Mehta (2022) examine the role of aggressive customer-acquisition expenditure and cash-burning strategies, which the project uses to frame the tensions between rapid growth and financial sustainability.
3) Patel and Sharma (2020) discuss supply-chain practices and performance. The original paper links such work to fulfilment efficiency, inventory control and operational barriers faced by smaller competitors.
4) Brown and Wilson (2018) address corporate social responsibility under competitive pressure. The quick-commerce project applies the issue to worker welfare and the need to balance growth with responsible business conduct.
5) Harrison (2021) provides a stakeholder-oriented ethical perspective. The original paper uses this approach to consider the interests of workers, smaller retailers, suppliers, consumers and investors together.
6) Rao and Kapoor (2023) discuss digital transformation and sustainability in the source bibliography; their themes are used to connect innovation with changing skills, job requirements and environmental consequences.
7) Joseph (2023) describes e-commerce in an Indian setting. The project uses this background when explaining developments in rapid online retail and shifts in consumer purchasing behaviour.
8) Cherunilam (2021) addresses the broader business environment, relevant to the interplay of policy, infrastructure, digital adoption, investment and industry competition.

Research gap

Taken together, these themes highlight why quick commerce should be assessed beyond delivery speed alone. The present project combines perspectives on consumer welfare, local retailers, workforce conditions, innovation and sustainability. Its distinctive contribution is a stakeholder-oriented synthesis supported by the perceptions of 85 survey respondents.

8. Research Methodology

Objectives of the study

- Assess the effects of quick-commerce market dominance on consumer welfare, affordability, accessibility and purchasing behaviour.
- Examine competitive pressure, barriers to entry and the consequences for traditional retailers.
- Evaluate employment generation alongside gig-worker pay, working conditions and security.
- Consider the relationship between platform scale, innovation, investment and profitability.
- Explore economic, environmental and wider societal consequences, and identify practical improvements.

Hypotheses

H0 (null hypothesis): Market dominance by quick-commerce companies does not significantly affect consumer welfare, employment, competition, innovation, economic growth or environmental sustainability.

H1 (alternative hypothesis): Market dominance by quick-commerce companies significantly affects one or more of these outcomes, positively or negatively.

Research design and sampling

The source project describes a descriptive and exploratory design using quantitative questionnaires and qualitative enquiry. Its consumer survey comprises 85 responses. The reported delivery-personnel component comprises five structured interviews. The intended population covers quick-commerce consumers, delivery workers and small businesses affected by the industry development. The study describes stratification of consumer perspectives and convenience-based access to delivery personnel.

Data sources and analysis

Primary evidence comes from survey responses and the reported worker interviews. Secondary discussion draws on industry analysis, company information, academic literature, news and policy materials cited in the original report. This condensed paper presents the survey results through descriptive percentages, counts and comparisons across stakeholder themes; it does not estimate market shares, test the hypotheses statistically or prove causation.

Limitations

The 85 respondents are not necessarily representative of the national consumer population; students account for a large majority of the sample. Findings may vary by city, income, shopping habits and exposure to local retailers. Worker interviews are few, self-reported views can be subjective, and some company-level operating and financial data are not independently established in the project. The results should therefore be treated as exploratory evidence rather than an exhaustive assessment of market power.

9. Data Analysis and Findings

Respondent profile and purchasing frequency

The survey included 85 respondents. In the reported gender distribution, 58.8% were male and 41.2% female. Students accounted for 85.9%, salaried workers 9.4%, self-employed respondents 3.5% and unemployed respondents 1.2%. The high concentration of students is an important sampling limitation when interpreting buying habits.

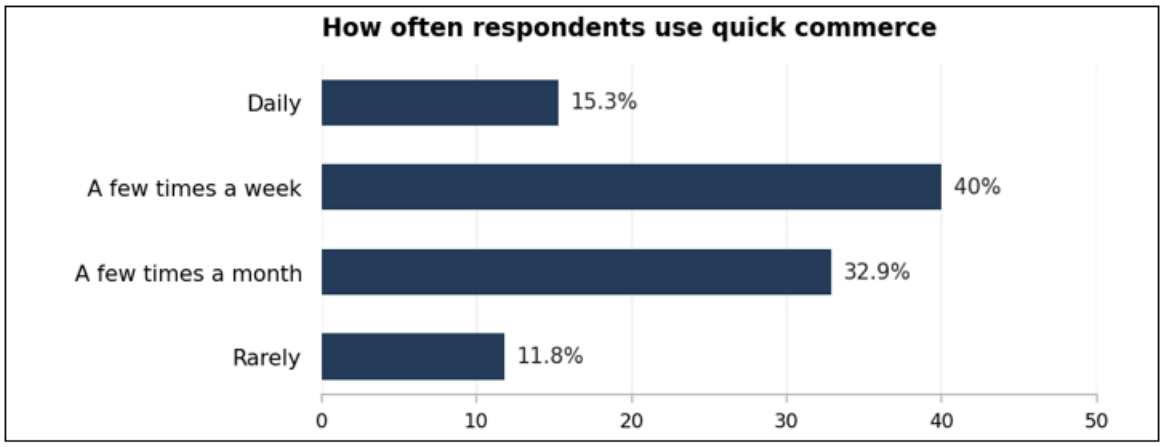


Figure 1: Survey responses on ordering frequency (percent; n = 85).

Daily and weekly users together accounted for 55.3% of responses. A further 32.9% ordered several times a month, indicating that the service was part of regular shopping behaviour for many participants.

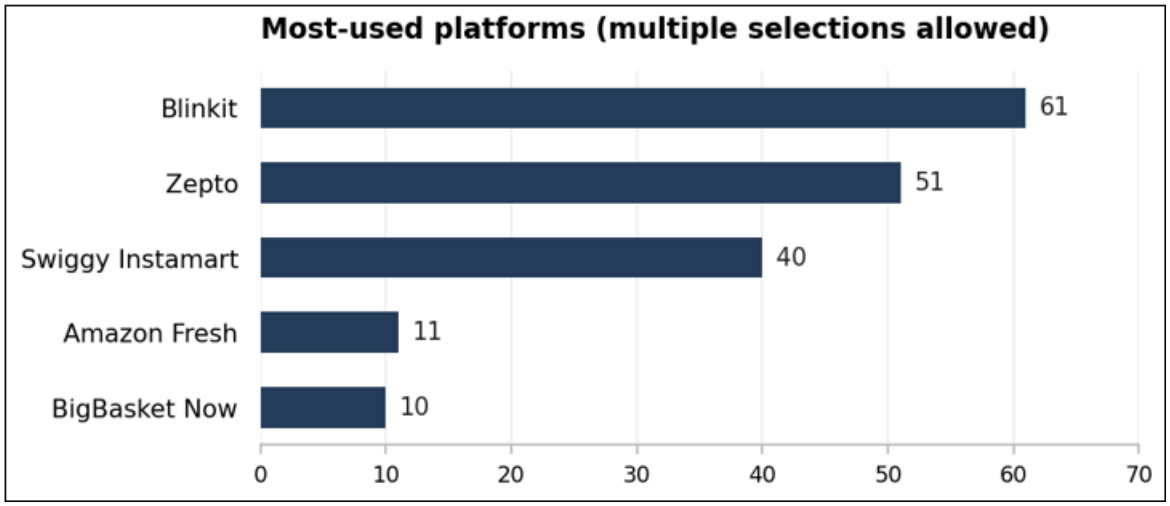


Figure 2: Reported platform use; respondents could select more than one service.

Blinkit was selected by 61 participants, Zepto by 51 and Swiggy Instamart by 40. Amazon Fresh and BigBasket Now were selected by 11 and 10 respondents, respectively. Because multiple platforms could be chosen, these figures represent the sample rather than overall industry market share.

Data Analysis: Competition and Innovation

Survey responses broadly acknowledge the economic contribution and technological impact of quick commerce while also identifying pressure on small retailers. The following chart combines the positive or negative response categories identified in the supplied questionnaire; it is a summary of opinions, not a measure of actual economic outcomes.

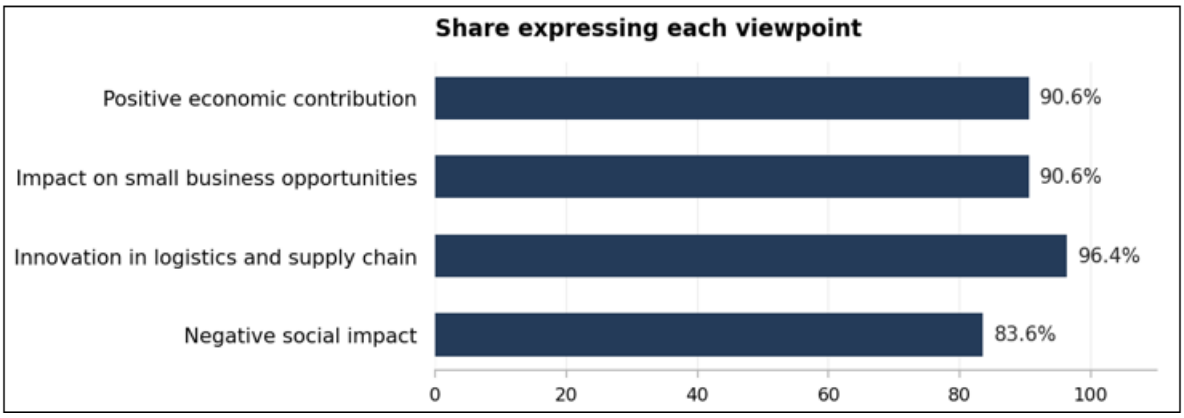


Figure 3: Combined percentages: significant + some effect in each survey question.

Selected results on shopping and market behaviour

Area	Reported survey outcome
Shopping habits	35.3% buy smaller amounts more often; 17.6% report impulse shopping; 27.1% report no major change.
Local-retailer choice	48.2% would definitely support comparable local options; 43.5% might if prices were competitive.
Small-business opportunities	45.9% perceive a significant adverse impact; 44.7% some impact.
Research and development	47.1% believe firms continuously innovate; 49.4% believe they focus more on profits.
Technology satisfaction	Ratings: 1 = 1.2%; 2 = 4.7%; 3 = 38.8%; 4 = 35.3%; 5 = 20.0%.

The results point to a trade-off rather than a single verdict. Respondents value innovation and availability, but many would switch back to local sellers if convenience and price were comparable. The technology-satisfaction responses cluster toward the middle and higher end of the reported five-point scale.

Data Analysis: Environment, Labour and Society

Packaging and delivery-related emissions were the two most frequently selected environmental concerns in the survey. The question allowed more than one selection; the counts therefore do not sum to the 85 respondents.

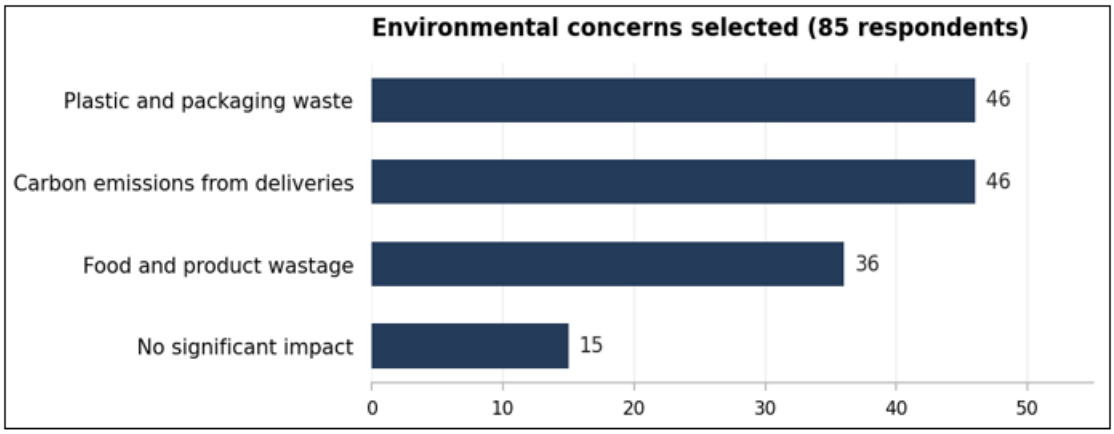


Figure 4: Environmental concerns selected by survey participants (response counts)

Stakeholder sentiment

Question	Key result
Slower, greener delivery	25.9% yes; 52.9% maybe if the benefit is significant; 21.2% prefer speed.
Fairness to delivery workers	14.1% completely fair; 47.1% somewhat fair; 38.8% overworked and underpaid.
Pricing/labour/ sustainability transparency	16.5% very transparent; 51.8% somewhat; 31.8% believe important details are hidden.
Negative societal consequences	42.4% significant; 41.2% some; 9.4% none; 7.1% believe the net effect is beneficial.
Environmental concern rating	40.0% rated concern 3/5; 22.4% rated 4/5 and 22.4% rated 5/5.

These results show that concerns about consumerism, labour conditions, transparency and environmental impact coexist with appreciation for convenient delivery. The study cannot quantify operational emissions or establish the actual employment conditions of the entire industry from these responses alone.

10. Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 Principal findings

- Quick commerce has become a frequent purchasing channel for many respondents, with smaller and more frequent orders replacing some planned shopping.
- Consumers benefit from speed and convenience but also report impulse purchasing and concerns about pricing transparency.
- Most participants perceive pressure on small retailers; nevertheless, many would use local businesses if service and prices were comparable.
- Respondents recognise logistics innovation and an economic contribution while remaining concerned about gig-work conditions.
- Packaging waste, delivery emissions and changing social habits are prominent sustainability and social themes.

10.2 Recommendations

- Make full order costs, delivery fees, minimum-value conditions and refund practices clear before checkout.
- Support fair market access for small sellers, encourage partnerships and monitor potentially exclusionary conduct.
- Improve worker safety, compensation transparency, grievance processes and access to appropriate social protection.
- Reduce packaging and delivery impacts through better forecasting, route consolidation and optional scheduled delivery.
- Use technology to improve order accuracy, customer service and demand efficiency without encouraging excessive purchases.
- Promote consumer education so purchasing decisions consider total costs, sustainability and available local alternatives.

11. Conclusion

Quick commerce represents a meaningful innovation in retail distribution. Its competitive advantages can benefit households, workers, businesses and the digital economy, but its long-term legitimacy depends on how those gains are shared. A balanced strategy combining efficient fulfilment

with fair competition, responsible employment, transparent pricing and sustainability is more durable than reliance on aggressive expansion alone.

12. Future Scope

Further research could follow the same retailers and consumers over time, compare different cities, examine verified worker income and employment outcomes, and measure packaging and delivery emissions directly. Larger, more diverse samples and tested financial data would strengthen conclusions about actual market power and stakeholder welfare.

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Survey instrument overview

The original questionnaire covered demographic characteristics, purchase frequency, commonly used platforms, changes in shopping habits, economic and competitive perceptions, local-retailer preferences, innovation, environmental concerns, delivery-worker treatment, transparency and wider social effects. All descriptive percentages in this paper are drawn from the supplied survey analysis (n = 85).