

Sustainable Consumption Patterns of Gen Z Consumers in the Age of Quick Commerce

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Abstract

The rapid growth of quick commerce (Q-commerce) has redefined the retail industry by providing ultra-fast delivery of groceries and daily needs within minutes. Despite an extremely high convenience promise to the customers, sustainability issues such as packaging waste and carbon emission as a result of frequent delivery services arise. Generation Z (Gen Z), being a digital and eco-conscious group, is one of the key consumer segments on quick commerce platforms. However, a sustainability awareness and consumption behaviour gap often exists in the convenience-dominant environment. The present study looks at sustainable consumption behaviour of Gen Z consumers on quick commerce platforms. The present study is conducted on primary data collected through structured questionnaire from 100 respondents by employing simple random sampling technique. Mean score analysis was applied to analyze the data. Findings of the present study imply that Gen Z consumers are quite conscious about environmental sustainability, however various factors such as convenience and price have a strong influence on their buying decision. The present study implies that quick commerce platforms should work on sustainable packaging and eco-friendly delivery to promote responsible consumption behaviour.

Keywords: Quick Commerce, Generation Z, Sustainable Consumption, Consumer Behaviour, Digital Commerce

Introduction

The development of digital technologies has transformed consumer buying behaviour across the globe. Quick commerce (Q-commerce) is one of the most disruptive innovations that allow grocery and daily essentials' delivery within 10-30 minutes. Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart and BigBasket are some of the well-known instant delivery companies that provide services through the hyperlocal distribution centres. Quick commerce has become popular among the urban masses due to the convenience, speed and accessibility. Quick commerce is particularly appealing to Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers as they are digital natives. Generation Z (1997-2012) are the consumers who have grown up in a highly digital age and use mobile applications and web portals for their day-to-day activities. Apart from the digital behaviour, Gen Z consumers also show interest in social and environmental concerns. However, there is a strong notion that this interest does not reflect in their sustainability behaviour. Even though consumers are concerned about environmental issues, their purchasing behaviour shows preoccupation with price and convenience. The rapid rise of

quick commerce has also raised concerns about packaging waste and delivery emissions. This gap between intention and behaviour shows that while consumers may be concerned about sustainability issues, the concern does not translate in their purchasing behaviour. Therefore, it is important to understand the consumption behaviour of Gen Z consumers in quick commerce platforms.

Review of Literature

Theocharis, D., & Tsekouropoulos, G. (2025).

The role of brand authenticity and transparency for Sustainable Consumption of Gen Z. The study explores how the authenticity and transparency of a brand influences Gen Z's purchase intentions for sustainable products, and how credible sustainability messaging could foster trust and loyalty in digital commerce.

Prashar, A. (2025). Nudging Sustainability: Experimental Evidence on the Use of Nudges by Gen Z.

The author empirically demonstrates that eco labels, green defaults and visual cues promote the purchase of more sustainable products, and discusses the implications for the Q-commerce industry in using interface nudges to influence consumer behavior.

JM Financial. (2024). DEEP-DIVE: Quick Commerce in India

This article discusses the Q-commerce sector in India, exploring its market trends, operational challenges and environmental implications.

KPMG. (2023). Quick Commerce Sustainability

This report discusses the sustainability challenges and issues facing the Q-commerce industry such as the increase in packaging, plastic waste, and carbon emissions, and proposes solutions such as route optimisation and reusable packaging.

Von Zahn, M., et al. (2024). Smart Green Nudging: Reducing Product Returns, Sustainability and Emissions by Means of Personalised Nudges.

It proposes and empirically tests a model that explores the relationship between sustainability and AI based personalised nudges via an experimental design, presenting empirical evidence that the implementation of a personalised nudge could reduce product returns and the associated emissions.

Schechner, F. J. (2025). Enhancing the uptake of eco-routes by using digital nudging elements.

This research explores the effect of different forms of information on consumers' decision-making regarding eco-delivery, and presents the results of an experiment that demonstrates that consumers are more likely to choose an eco-delivery option when it is presented in a clear and straightforward manner.

D'Acunto, D. (2025). Gen Z Attitude–Behaviour Gap: Moderating Factors in Sustainable Purchase Behaviour.

This study investigates how different factors can moderate Gen Z's sustainable purchase intention and behaviour. Specifically, it demonstrates how price visibility, price sensitivity, time pressure and price comparison behaviour moderates the attitude–behaviour gap.

First Insight. (2024). Gen Z Shoppers Want to Buy From Sustainable Retailers.

This article discusses the findings of a survey on Gen Z's attitudes towards sustainability and retail, and highlights how Gen Z is more likely to buy from sustainable retailers if they are simply convenient and affordable.

Cyfert, S. (2024). A Study on Generation Z Competencies and Value of Green Consumption.

This paper discusses and explores the competencies of Generation Z and their underlying sustainability values, and presents the results of a survey that show how Gen Z's digital literacy, social influence and self-expression influence their green consumption behaviour.

Ćwiklicki, M., Buffagni, A., & Varese, L. (2023). Does Environmental Labelling Still Matter.

The research demonstrates that eco-labels significantly influence consumer behaviour when credibility and visibility are ensured, kind of findings this research will be particularly relevant to Q-commerce design strategies.

Gomes, M. (2023). Gen Z and Sustainable Consumption.

The study finds that despite Gen Z being conscious of sustainability, convenience, and price, are more influential in the actual purchase.

Kara, S., Min, J. (2025). Sustainable Consumption among University Students.

The research finds that peer influence and sustainability knowledge are influential in green purchasing behavior among young consumers.

Research Gap

The sustainability related research on consumption behaviour of quick commerce platforms is limited as most existing research focuses on sustainable consumption behaviour in traditional retail sectors such as fashion, food and general e-commerce. Secondly, the number of studies which have specifically focused on Gen Z consumers in India, who form one of the biggest user groups of quick commerce platforms is limited as well. This study attempts to bridge this research gap by analyzing the sustainable consumption behaviour on quick commerce platforms of Gen Z consumers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the level of sustainability awareness among Generation Z consumers.
2. To identify the factors influencing purchasing behaviour in quick commerce platforms.
3. To analyze the influence of convenience and price on sustainable purchasing decisions.
4. To understand the relationship between sustainability awareness and actual purchasing behaviour.

Scope of the Study

The present study examines sustainable consumption behaviour of Generation Z consumers using quick commerce platforms. It investigates the effect of sustainability awareness, convenience and price sensitivity on their purchasing behaviour. The study is limited to Generation Z respondents only.

Research Methodology

The research methodology employed in the study is descriptive in nature. The primary data was collected through the structured questionnaire technique from 100 Gen Z users who are in the age range of 18-28 years and are quick commerce users. The respondents were selected through simple random sampling method. The data collected was analyzed through percentage analysis technique and mean score method.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18–21	30	30%
22–25	45	45%
26–28	25	25%

The table above reveals that 45% of the respondents are from the age group 22–25, meaning that the young adults are the most frequent users of quick commerce platforms.

Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	54	54%
Female	46	46%

The table above shows that the majority of respondents are males (54%) and females (46%).

Preferred Quick Commerce Platform

Platform	Respondents	Percentage
Blinkit	30	30%
Zepto	25	25%
Swiggy Instamart	28	28%
BigBasket	17	17%

The data suggest that Blinkit is the most popular quick commerce platform chosen by respondents, followed by Swiggy Instamart and Zepto

Frequency of Quick Commerce Usage

Usage Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	25	25%
2–3 times per week	40	40%
Once a week	20	20%
Occasionally	15	15%

The results suggest that the majority of respondents use quick commerce platforms two to three times a week which shows the increasing reliance on instant delivery services.

Mean Score Analysis

Statement	Mean Score
I am aware that quick commerce increases packaging waste	4.10
Environmental sustainability is important in my purchase decisions	3.95
I prefer eco-friendly products while shopping online	3.85
Convenience influences my quick commerce purchases	4.30
Price influences my purchasing decisions	4.05

The results suggest that while Gen Z consumers are highly aware of sustainability issues, price and convenience factors have a major impact on their decisions to purchase

Findings

- Generation Z consumers have a relatively high level of environmental sustainability awareness.
- Convenience and time-saving benefits lead to the frequent use of quick commerce platforms.
- Price sensitivity is also a significant factor in the purchase decisions of Gen Z consumers.
- Convenience is the dominant factor for the use of quick commerce.

There is an intention–behaviour gap between sustainability awareness and sustainability purchasing behaviour.

Implications of the Study

The study findings have several implications for businesses, policy makers, and researchers. Eco-friendly packaging materials and sustainable delivery options can be adopted by quick

commerce companies to promote sustainable consumption. Eco-labels and environmentally conscious product offerings can also be introduced by such companies to promote responsible purchasing behaviour. From the policy standpoint, the government can promote the adoption of sustainable logistics practices and encourage companies to minimize packaging waste. Awareness programmes can also educate consumers about the environmental impact of their purchasing choices. The study also enhances academic knowledge about sustainable consumption behaviour among Generation Z consumers on digital retail platforms.

Limitations of the Study

The present study is constrained to a sample of 100 respondents, which does not encompass the entire population of Generation Z consumers. The current study mostly focuses on respondents that use quick commerce, and as such does not encompass consumers that use traditional retail channels. Future studies can consider a larger number of respondents and investigate sustainable consumption behaviour across geographic locations.

Conclusion

Quick commerce has been considered as an innovation in the digital retail market due to the fast and convenient delivery services it provides. Despite the benefits provided by this model, it also brings sustainability issues such as packaging waste and delivery emissions. The results of the current study suggest that Gen Z consumers are highly conscious about environmental sustainability, but their purchase behaviour is strongly driven by convenience and price. This implies that an intention–behaviour gap persists in sustainable consumption. Sustainable packaging and delivery systems should be considered in quick commerce platforms to inculcate responsible consumption behaviour. Therefore, awareness activities and responsible business behaviour can help bridging the gap between sustainability awareness and consumer behaviour.

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