

Clicks to Cash: Understanding Loyalty's Impact on Platform Economics

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ABSTRACT

Quick commerce platforms have made rapid delivery of food and groceries routine, yet their route to sustainable profitability remains uncertain. This study examines whether customer loyalty contributes to financial stability and unit economics in the quick commerce sector. We employ a mixed-methods design that combines a literature review, a survey of 100 customers conducted in August 2025, and regression analysis to examine the relationship between loyalty drivers and customer satisfaction. Results show that loyalty, convenience, and promotions are positively associated with satisfaction, emotional attachment is the strongest predictor, and repeated usage is negatively associated with satisfaction, suggesting friction for heavy users. Triangulated with industry evidence, the findings indicate that loyal customers can increase order density and reduce reliance on costly acquisition discounts, thereby improving cost efficiency. Companies should shift resources from broad discounting toward retention levers such as reliable service, faster delivery, and personalized engagement. The study contributes to the sustainability debate by connecting consumer behavior to operational and financial outcomes in quick commerce.

Keywords: Customer loyalty; Financial sustainability; Service Quality; Company operations; Quick commerce

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, quick commerce platforms (apps like Gopuff, DoorDash, and Instacart) have revolutionized restaurant and grocery store delivery, changing customers' expectations for convenience (1). However, despite their impact, customer loyalty to these platforms remains questionable. During the pandemic, the sector experienced rapid growth, offering efficient delivery that allowed customers to stay at home while still providing access to their favorite restaurants, groceries,

and more. While these platforms are extremely popular, they struggle to remain profitable with companies, with for instance DoorDash averaging an operating margin of -9.34% over the past 5 years, the closure of quick commerce businesses such as ASAP (formerly known as Waitr), and foreign quick commerce companies like Getir withdrawing from the US (2-4). Companies rely too heavily on promotions, using them to lure in customers while ultimately losing money as customers begin to use promotions (5) excessively. In this high-cost, low-margin environment, where loyal customers order frequently, spend more per purchase, and order exclusively off one platform, they could create financial stability for the business.

This study examines the impact of customer loyalty on the financial sustainability and unit economics of quick commerce platforms, specifically whether loyal

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customers who engage exclusively with one platform contribute to profitability through reduced marketing costs, higher order frequency, and improved operational efficiency. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, comprising a literature review, a survey, and financial data analysis. The literature review provided qualitative insights into market trends and research gaps, while the survey captured consumer preferences and the drivers of loyalty. Financial performance data was analyzed to assess how customer loyalty influenced stability and long-term viability. A triangulation strategy integrated these perspectives to ensure the robustness and consistency of findings.

While prior research on quick commerce has examined pricing strategies, promotional behavior, and determinants of customer loyalty, few studies have directly connected behavioral metrics with financial indicators such as unit economics, cost efficiency, and profitability (5, 6, 13). Customers represent a central driver of any business model (8), and this study provides empirical evidence on whether loyalty serves as a measurable determinant of operational efficiency, profitability, and long-term sustainability. Overall, the findings offer new insights into how customer behavior influences the financial stability of quick commerce platforms.

The findings of this research have practical implications for both industry practitioners and policymakers. For managers, understanding the financial impact of loyalty can inform resource allocation, shifting budgets from short-term acquisition incentives to long-term retention strategies, such as loyalty programs, personalized services, and reliability improvements (9). For policymakers, the results provide insight into the broader economic dynamics of the quick commerce ecosystem, supporting the design of fair labor and regulatory frameworks that balance consumer convenience with sustainable employment practices. By promoting steady demand, predictable scheduling, and improved wage structures, loyalty-driven stability can enhance both worker welfare and firm performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The growth of technology and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have digitized the world. The rise of e-commerce and quick commerce platforms has transformed how consumers interact with and access everyday goods, redefining the concept of convenience in the new digital age. These apps were integrated into everyday lifestyles through mobile technology, app-

based ordering, targeted promotions, and convenience. As competition and cost rose, customer loyalty emerged as a key factor determining a platform's longevity and ability to thrive. Customers' purchasing patterns influenced repetitive usage, and therefore, these companies' financial health and ability to continue in business. Customer loyalty also held greater implications as the quick commerce industry continued to change retail economics, which impacted on labor models, pricing, and the sustainability of a profitable business in a highly competitive space.

Prior research on quick commerce revealed three recurring themes that linked customer behavior and firm performance (Table 1). Theme 1: Service Quality and Satisfaction: Studies consistently showed that perceived service quality, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy significantly influenced satisfaction and repeat usage. While some studies highlight that high service quality promotes loyalty, other work emphasizes delivery speed and order accuracy as equally critical determinants (6). Yet even satisfied customers have displayed weak loyalty, relying on platforms primarily for convenience rather than brand preference.

Theme 2, Promotional Strategies: Promotions and discounts effectively stimulated repeat purchases in the short term; however, they undermined long-term value and profitability when overused. Promotions attract and retain customers in the short term, but over-reliance can harm margins and long-term value (1, 5). Together, these findings suggest that while promotions attract and retain customers, a reliance on discounts poses risks to unite economics.

Theme 3, Operational Efficiency and Financial Outcomes: Research suggests that loyalty contributes to stronger operational performance by increasing order density, lowering delivery costs, and reducing reliance on promotions. Garin *et al* linked loyalty to labor and delivery efficiency, while Agnihotri and Bhattacharya (2024) state that consistent purchasing patterns enhance profitability and platform longevity (1, 11). Both studies underscored that loyalty benefits both revenue and cost structures.

Despite these contributions, few studies have explicitly examined how customer loyalty translates into financial sustainability and unit economics. Existing research tends to treat loyalty as a marketing outcome rather than a driver of economic performance. The present study addressed this gap by integrating insights from service quality, promotional strategy, and operational efficiency research to analyze how

Table 1. Summary of prior studies and theoretical frameworks examining customer loyalty, service quality, convenience, and emotional attachment in quick commerce and related service industries

Reference	Methods	Country	Factors	Findings
(1)	Quantitative	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount customers spend per order Efficiency How far drivers travel and the orders they do Labor costs Promotional spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profitability depends on density and repeat usage Loyalty matters because it impacts sustainability Strong customer loyalty reduces the need for expensive discounts and improves efficiency.
(5)	Quantitative	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion value/habits After promotion habits, customer value increases Repeat purchases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers are exposed to promotions for a long time, leading to habits Promotions increase short term sales but harm long-term value and margins
(6)	Quantitative	Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer satisfaction and loyalty Focus on tangible reliability, assurance, and empathy for an online Food-delivery service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumers are not loyal to a restaurant or an online food delivery system Refer to the app for meal ideas Reliability, responsive ness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles from OFDs influence loyalty and satisfaction
(8)	Quantitative	Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer loyalty Brand-switching behavior Retention strategies Pricing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pricing is important for consumers when deciding what platform to use Good service, quality, speed, and engagement contribute to long-term customer retention The businesses focusing on how customers are treated while maintaining competitive pricing are best positioned for sustainable growth
(11)	Quantitative	USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor Supply/wages Pricing, delivery Cost breakdowns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rising labor and logistics cost pressure leads to high margins Loyalty can help optimize demand and routing
(12)	Quantitative	Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service quality (safety, reliability, convenience, responsiveness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive relationship between service quality dimensions, customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction
(13)	Mixed methods	India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer behavior Pricing models Operational efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick commerce businesses prioritize optimizing app navigation to enhance usability and improve the overall customer experience. Competitive pricing, improving delivery performance, and extending their product offering to establish long-term consumer loyalty and increase market share
(14)	Mixed-metho ds	Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction and loyalty Hedonic motivation Pricing Information quality Promotion Usability factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usability factors are insignificant to customer satisfaction and loyalty in Online food delivery services. Hedonic motivation, price, information quality, and promotion impact customer satisfaction

customer loyalty influenced financial sustainability in quick commerce platforms. Given the sector’s rapid expansion and thin margins, understanding the economic implications of loyalty is essential for both scholars and industry practitioners. This research contributed new evidence showing how loyalty enhances operational efficiency, reduces dependence on promotions, and supports long-term profitability and sustainability. It also established a foundation for future comparative studies exploring loyalty-profitability dynamics across different global markets and economic contexts.

Hypothesis Testing

Prior research has indicated that loyalty programs offering personalized or tiered benefits can enhance customer satisfaction and foster long-term loyalty. Exceptional customer experiences—encompassing emotional, cognitive, and sensory—further amplify these effects.

Hypothesis 1a: Loyalty rewards and promotions positively influence customer satisfaction. A regression analysis tests this relationship, linking loyalty and promotional incentives (independent variables) to customer satisfaction (dependent variable).

Hypothesis 2b: Convenience, emotional attachment, and repeat usage positively influence customer satisfaction. Building on these findings, this study proposed the following hypotheses to empirically examine how different drivers of customer behavior influenced satisfaction and financial outcomes in quick commerce platforms.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Study Design

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, to

investigate the impact of customer loyalty on the financial stability of quick commerce platforms. Qualitative data is drawn from literature and economic reports to identify industry trends, while quantitative data is obtained through a structured survey and analysis of financial performance indicators. Customer loyalty was operationalized through measurable constructs, including order frequency, satisfaction rating, perceived value, and customer lifetime value. All survey participants were active users of quick commerce platforms and provided informed consent before participation.

Sampling and Participants

The sampling process involved randomly selecting participants from a group of individuals who used quick commerce platforms. Individuals from different age groups, regions, and states participated, as well as individuals with varying levels of user engagement. This random selection allowed for minimal bias, thereby improving the reliability of the findings.

Triangulation and Ethical Considerations

A triangulation approach was adopted by integrating multiple data sources—survey results, literature findings, and financial metrics—to enhance validity and reduce bias. This method ensured that different perspectives converged on consistent conclusions. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed: participants remained anonymous, no personal identifiers were collected, and participation was entirely voluntary.

Survey

The survey was conducted over two weeks in August 2025 with 100 participants who had previously ordered from quick commerce platforms (Table 2). Respondents completed the questionnaire online or in person. The survey included items measuring loyalty drivers

Table 2. Survey Questionnaire used to collect participant responses and measure key factors related to customer experience and satisfaction in quick-commerce platforms

Hello! My name is Ava Gordon, and I am a rising senior! Through this research, I aim to understand how customer loyalty drives the financial stability and unit economics of quick commerce platforms, such as DoorDash, GoPuff, and Instacart. In addition to measuring financials, I aim to gain a deeper understanding of what drives customer loyalty to specific quick commerce platforms. Please complete the survey form for academic purposes. I assure the confidentiality and security of your data. Thank you!

1. Customer Satisfaction: Are you satisfied with the quick commerce platform(s) you most often use?	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree	3% 4% 26% 12% 51%
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Continued Table 2. Survey Questionnaire used to collect participant responses and measure key factors related to customer experience and satisfaction in quick-commerce platforms

2. How often do you order from a quick commerce platform?	1. Daily	7%
	2. Several times a week	11%
	3. Once a week	25%
	4. A few times a month	30%
	5. Rarely	27%
3. Customer Loyalty: Would you continue using a platform even if competitors offered better prices or promotions?	1. Strongly disagree	16%
	2. Disagree	31%
	3. Neutral	31%
	4. Strongly agree	7%
	5. Agree	15%
4. Do promotions and discounts influence your decision to choose a platform?	1. Never	5%
	2. Rarely	12%
	3. Sometimes	36%
	4. Often	30%
	5. Always	16%
5. When choosing a platform, do you rely more on convenience than customer loyalty?	1. Never	1%
	2. Rarely	5%
	3. Sometimes	25%
	4. Often	50%
	5. Always	19%
6. Promotions: Do frequent promotions or discounts increase your tendency to order repeatedly?	1. Strongly disagree	12%
	2. Disagree	12%
	3. Neutral	25%
	4. Agree	36%
	5. Strongly Agree	14%
7. Loyalty Rewards: Does being a loyal customer help receive faster or more efficient service?	1. Strongly disagree	10%
	2. Disagree	31%
	3. Neutral	35%
	4. Agree	18%
	5. Strongly Agree	6%
8. Does your customer experience impact the likelihood of a reorder from the same quick commerce company?	1. Strongly disagree	0%
	2. Disagree	2%
	3. Neutral	13%
	4. Strongly agree	50%
	5. Agree	35%
9. How would you rate the reliability and quality of service (delivery accuracy, timing, product condition)?	1. 1 = Very poor	
	2. 5 = Excellent	
10. Do you switch between quick commerce platforms?	1. Never	3%
	2. Rarely	24%
	3. Sometimes	48%
	4. Often	19%
	5. Always	6%

Continued Table 2. Survey Questionnaire used to collect participant responses and measure key factors related to customer experience and satisfaction in quick-commerce platforms

11. Which factors influence your decision to stick to a particular platform?	(Select all that apply)	
	• Delivery speed	62%
	• Product variety	44%
	• Promotions/discounts	44%
	• Ease of app use	51%
	• Customer service	32%
	• Recommendations/friends' use	10%
	• Other: _____	7%
12. Emotional Attachment: Do you feel emotionally attached to the quick commerce platform you use most frequently?	1. Strongly disagree	24%
	2. Disagree	30%
	3. Neutral	31%
	4. Strongly agree	6%
	5. Agree	8%
13. What keeps you returning to a platform?	Open response	
14. When ordering from these quick commerce platforms, is the order volume usually high?	1. Strongly disagree	7%
	2. Disagree	28%
	3. Neutral	43%
	4. Strongly agree	7%
	5. Agree	14%

(promotions, convenience, and emotional attachment), order frequency, and satisfaction, all of which used a five-point Likert scale. The study’s purpose was clearly communicated, and participants provided informed consent. No identifying information was collected, ensuring anonymity.

Data Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted using SPSS v29. Customer satisfaction served as the dependent variable, while loyalty, promotions, convenience, emotional attachment, and repeat usage were independent variables. Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis summarized survey data.

RESULTS

The survey responses were analyzed statistically using the percentage frequency response for each option to identify overall patterns in participants’ perceptions. The survey results indicate that most participants were satisfied with the quick commerce company they used, with 51% strongly agreeing and 12% agreeing. Only 7% of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, demonstrating high customer satisfaction. The survey also indicated that platforms were not consistently part

of individuals’ daily routine. 37% ordered once a week or more often, 57% a few times a month or rarely, and 7% daily. The survey provided significant insight into customer loyalty, as shown in Figure 1, which demonstrated platform usage despite competitors having offered a better price or promotion. The results showed that 22% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they would continue using a platform despite the availability of cheaper competitors. In comparison, 47% strongly disagreed or disagreed, and 31% were neutral. This demonstrated that loyalty was weak when competitors offered better pricing.

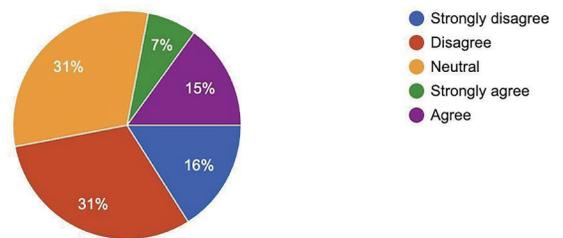


Figure 1. Would you continue using a platform even if competitors offered better prices or promotions?

The survey also highlights significant results regarding promotions and discounts. According to the study, 82% reported that promotions sometimes, often, or always influenced their choice. 50% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that frequent promotions increase their tendency to order repeatedly. This demonstrated that promotions were key drivers of platform usage. As shown in Figure 2, on the topic of convenience vs. loyalty, results indicated that customers prioritized convenience over loyalty, with only 6% of participants claiming to rarely or never rely on convenience. These results showed that customers valued speed over brand loyalty. Regarding the benefits of being loyal, the survey demonstrated that only 24% of individuals strongly agreed/agreed that being loyal resulted in better service. According to the data, customers did not recognize the benefits of being loyal.

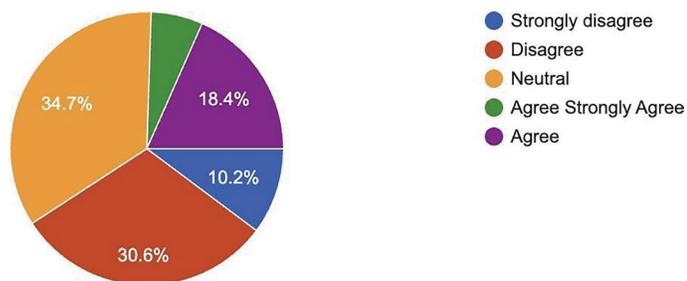


Figure 2. Does being a loyal customer help receive faster or more effective service?

The survey provided valuable insights into customer experience. The results emphasize that 85% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that a positive experience increased the likelihood of reordering, demonstrating that the experience was a powerful driver of repeat usage. These results suggested that companies had to offer excellent customer service and provide a positive customer experience to foster customer loyalty through repeat business. Furthermore, the survey revealed that 73% of users always/often/sometimes switched between platforms, highlighting low platform loyalty. The survey showed participants' emotional attachment. 54% of participants strongly disagreed/disagreed that they felt emotional attachment, while 14% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt emotionally connected to their preferred quick commerce platform. This suggests that most individuals view quick commerce platforms in a transactional rather than emotional manner.

Regression Analysis

This section presents the regression analysis results conducted to investigate the impact of various factors on customer satisfaction within quick commerce platforms. Two distinct models were developed to assess the effect of customer loyalty, promotions, convenience, emotional attachment, and repeat usage on overall customer satisfaction. The findings from this analysis are mentioned in Table 3, which provides quantitative insights into the drivers of satisfaction, offering empirical support to the hypotheses and complementing the qualitative data gathered through the literature review and survey.

Table 3. Statistical output summarizing the relationships between customer satisfaction and its key predictors based on the survey data analysis

Variables	Dependent Outcome: Customer Satisfaction	
	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept	1.157	1.992
Customer loyalty	0.372** (0.001)	
Promotions	0.541** (0.002)	
Convenience		0.586** (0.003)
Emotional Attachment		0.685*** (9.683E-05)
Repeated Usage		-0.590* (0.012)

Note: p-values in parentheses. *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001. Two-tailed tests.

Model 1 demonstrated the positive correlation between loyalty and satisfaction. The coefficient was 0.37, and the p-value was 0.001, indicating a direct relationship between loyalty and satisfaction. Furthermore, the p-value demonstrated statistical significance, showing that these results were not due to chance. This data showed that loyalty was a major cause of customer satisfaction. Model 1 also reflected the relationship between promotions and satisfaction. The coefficient for promotions was 0.54, indicating that promotions had a significant and immediate effect on satisfaction. The p-value of 0.002 confirmed the

statistical significance. This information suggests that while discounts and deals produce short-term boosts in satisfaction, it is crucial to note that promotions reduce the price barrier in the moment, meaning customers feel satisfied because they paid less, rather than because their experience has significantly improved. Once promotions stop, there is no evidence that satisfaction remains high; customers driven by low prices are shown to stop using platforms when promotions end (5). This demonstrated that loyalty was a more sustainable driver of satisfaction than promotions.

Model 2 illustrated the importance of various factors, including convenience. The coefficient of convenience was 0.58, which highlights that higher convenience was associated with higher customer satisfaction. The low p-value of 0.0037 shows statistical significance. This suggests that convenience plays a significant role in enhancing customer satisfaction. This data also shows that customers valued quick and easy delivery. For emotional attachment, the coefficient was 0.68, demonstrating that emotional attachment is the strongest positive driver of satisfaction.

Furthermore, the p-value was less than 0.001, indicating statistical significance. An emotional connection also built resilient loyalty, protecting platforms from losing customers. The negative coefficient of -0.590 for customer behavior suggested that increased repeat usage was linked with lower satisfaction.

The p-value of 0.01 indicated that this was statistically significant. This demonstrated that customers might have become dissatisfied if they frequently used the service and felt that the experience was inadequate or that the costs were too substantial.

DISCUSSION

Economic Interpretation

Emotional attachment is the strongest positive driver: a one-point increase was associated with a 0.685-point rise in satisfaction, accounting for approximately 17% of the full scale. Convenience followed at 0.586 points, about 15% of the scale, and promotions followed at 0.541 points, about 14%. Loyalty was smaller but still meaningful, at 0.372 points, which is approximately 9% of the scale. Repeated usage had a negative impact, with a score of -0.590 points, equivalent to approximately 15% of the scale, indicating that heavier users in this sample reported lower satisfaction.

To make the magnitudes concrete, a two-point change in the predictors was considered. Moving two points

higher on the emotional attachment scale corresponded to approximately 1.37 points higher satisfaction, which was more than one-third of the entire 1–5 range. A two-point gain in convenience implied about 1.17 points higher satisfaction, and promotions about 1.08 points. Even the smaller loyalty coefficient implied a roughly 0.74-point shift for a two-point change. By contrast, a two-point increase in repeated usage was associated with about 1.18 points lower satisfaction.

Managerially, the most significant levers were emotional attachment and convenience (16). Investments that deepened connection to the service and removed friction in discovery, checkout, and delivery had the most significant impact, with promotions delivering shorter-lived boosts. The negative repeated usage coefficient uncovered potential pain points among heavy users, such as unmet expectations or accumulating frictions. That suggested a proper follow-up: auditing high-frequency journeys, tracking issue rates for power users, and testing fixes like faster support, more straightforward value prompts, or tailored bundles.

Figure 3 illustrates the “*Process Framework for Customer Loyalty impacting Company Finance and Sustainability in Quick Commerce.*” It is a comprehensive model designed to capture the intricate dynamics that drive customer loyalty in the rapidly evolving Quick Commerce (q-commerce) sector. This framework is grounded in insights from an extensive literature review and validated through survey results. By integrating theoretical perspectives with empirical data, the framework highlights the critical processes and factors that influence loyalty in this high-speed commerce domain, including customer experience, trust, personalization, and convenience. It highlights the importance of cultivating strong customer relationships to boost retention and drive sustainable growth in a competitive market. This discussion framework provides a structured approach for understanding and leveraging these loyalty drivers to maximize the value of q-commerce for both businesses and consumers.

Consumer habits discuss consumer behavior. A survey reveals that consumers frequently switch between quick commerce platforms. It also shows that the order volume varies; customers do not necessarily order large or small amounts. Furthermore, consumers stated that frequent promotions increase their likelihood of ordering from specific quick commerce platforms, which in turn impacts their decision to choose a particular one.

Company operations refer to the processes and resources a company utilizes to manage its business and

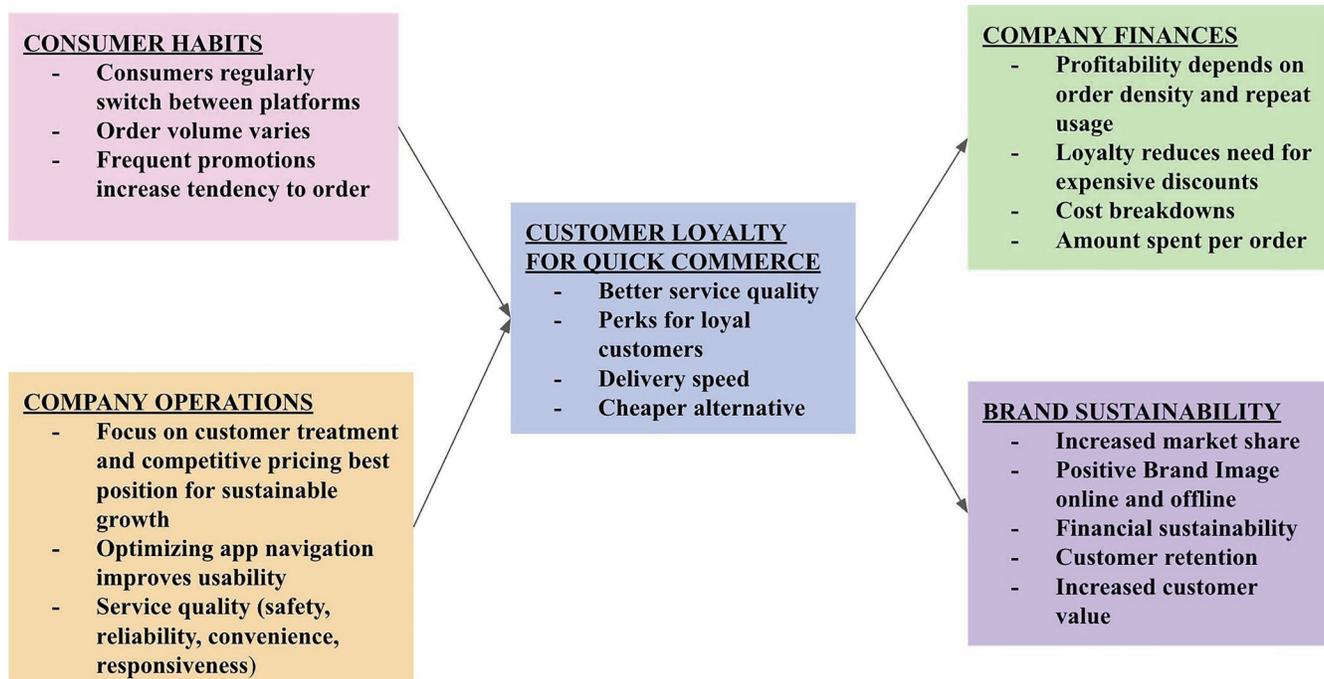


Figure 3. Process Framework for Customer Loyalty impacting Company Finance and Sustainability in Quick Commerce.

achieve operational efficiency (7). Company operations impact consumer loyalty. The survey and literature review reveal that a focus on customer treatment and competitive pricing results in the best position for sustainable growth for the company. Further research indicates that optimizing app navigation enhances its usability, attracting more users and maintaining their satisfaction. The way a company navigates service quality is also significant. The survey and literature review results demonstrate that a company's increased service quality (safety, reliability, convenience, and responsiveness) translates to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer loyalty impacts a company's finances, referring to the management of a company's financial resources, including capital raising, investment, and other economic activities. Literature reviews demonstrate that profitability for quick commerce platforms relies on order density and repeat usage. Studies reveal that loyalty reduces the need for expensive discounts, fosters higher-value customers, and saves the company money. Company finances include detailed cost breakdowns, such as operational costs, marketing expenses, and margins. Company finances rely on the amount spent per order.

Customer loyalty impacts a company's brand sustainability, which is its commitment to creating long-term value. Customer loyalty is a key driver of brand sustainability, as it increases market share and enhances financial sustainability. Brand sustainability is rooted in a positive brand image, both online and offline. Other factors of brand sustainability include customer retention and increased customer value.

Implications

This study contributes to the existing knowledge that customer loyalty is a crucial driver of revenue stability and operational efficiency in quick commerce and online food delivery platforms (6, 12, 14). A key factor was that service quality factors, including reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangible delivery experience, and promotion habits, influence customer loyalty in quick commerce. While promotions can contribute to short-term sales, a habitual reliance on discounts can reduce long-term customer value and profitability. Loyalty supports efficiency by improving order density and delivery routes, and reducing the need for promotions, strengthening sustainability and unit economics (12). This contribution is empirical because it utilizes quantitative data from multiple sources to

demonstrate that loyalty drives revenue and reduces costs through operational efficiencies. This view advances understanding by linking different sectors, consumer behavior, marketing strategy, and cost structures into a model for evaluating sustainability.

While prior research has examined customer loyalty in quick commerce platforms, many studies do not focus on how loyalty influences financial sustainability and unit economics in the quick commerce sector. Existing research treats loyalty as a marketing outcome rather than an economic performance driver, and it does not account for behavioral patterns of loyalty. This study bridges the gap by linking measurable loyalty behaviors with financial outcomes, utilizing customer survey data and platform financial analysis. This study uses empirical evidence to understand how loyalty drives revenue, reduces costs, improves efficiency, and minimizes reliance on discounts, providing a comprehensive picture of the importance of loyalty in the sustainability of quick commerce.

As technologies continue to improve and the world transitions into the digital age, these findings are significant for business owners, policymakers, shareholders, and other stakeholders. Specifically, for business leaders, these results underscore the importance of investing in customer loyalty to enhance operations, deliver high-quality service, foster personalized engagement, and reduce reliance on promotions. This can strengthen unit economics and lower per-order costs, showcasing a pathway to consistent profitability. For investors, loyalty metrics, purchase rate, and average order value should be considered as indicators of financial performance, alongside traditional economic indicators, when evaluating long-term viability. For policymakers, a deeper understanding of operational efficiencies tied to a loyal customer base can inform discussions on urban delivery, infrastructure, labor policies, and planning, ensuring regulations support fair labor conditions and sustainability (5-7). This study offers educators and researchers a new perspective on quick commerce. It combines disciplines with a more integrated approach to studying digital platform economics.

Beyond their academic and managerial relevance, these findings also have broader societal implications. If platforms shift from blanket discounting toward loyalty-led retention, demand may become more predictable, enabling fairer scheduling and more stable earnings for workers. Higher-order density and better routing could reduce wasted trips and, by extension, emissions and resource utilization. More reliable, affordable service can

also improve access for time-poor households, people with disabilities, and residents of underserved areas. These are plausible pathways suggested by the results rather than outcomes directly measured in this study.

CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the impact of customer loyalty on the financial stability and unit economics of quick commerce platform companies. This study examined the relationship between consumers and the company.

The results show that customer loyalty, convenience, and promotions each contribute to increased satisfaction, with emotional attachment emerging as the strongest positive driver. Promotions lift satisfaction in the short term by lowering the price barrier, but they are unlikely to sustain it once discounts end, which makes loyalty a more durable level. The negative association with repeated usage points to pain points among heavy users, suggesting diminishing returns when expectations outpace the experience or perceived value. For platform managers, the path forward is clear: invest in loyalty-building levers such as reliable service, faster and more predictable delivery, and personalized engagement, while reducing reliance on blanket discounts and fixing friction in high-frequency journeys. By shifting from acquisition spend to retention quality, platforms can enhance order density, reduce per-order costs, and move closer to achieving sustainable unit economics.

The framework diagram expands on these results by placing customer loyalty at the center, illustrating how it is linked to consumer habits, company operations, company finances, and brand sustainability (7). The regression analysis provides statistical evidence to support this framework by revealing that customer loyalty and emotional attachment have a positive impact on customer satisfaction, which, in turn, benefits quick commerce companies. The linear regression also provides evidence that promotions and convenience function as short-term boosters for companies, showing that they increase satisfaction but require operational and financial trade-offs that are not sustainable. These results indicate that customer loyalty is closely tied to financial outcomes, which can contribute to sustainable economic growth in quick commerce companies.

However, this study was limited by its focus on a geographically restricted area, which did not encompass all quick commerce platforms, potentially leading to generalization and inapplicability to other regions.

Furthermore, every quick commerce platform is different and has its own algorithm, making it challenging to track each app evenly.

Future research could explore cross-sector comparisons by comparing loyalty to quick commerce platforms to mobile and service commerce. This research could be further investigated by observing how consumer loyalty impacts mobile and service commerce. Additionally, future research could investigate whether platforms with higher customer loyalty can offer more stable and long-term employment opportunities for delivery workers.

Practitioners can utilize these insights to refine how these companies interact with customers. They can improve their companies by providing better customer service and more perks to keep customers loyal. Furthermore, this information provides a more in-depth explanation of the core of quick commerce finance, which is incredibly useful for practitioners.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to this work

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