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AN ANALYSIS OF BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF INDIAN CONSUMERS DURING THE PANDEMIC COVID-19

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Abstract: *The COVID-19 pandemic has elicited individuals' psychological defence mechanisms, resulting in a heightened sense of prudence in purchasing behaviour. Consumers exhibit not just an increased sensitivity to prices but also an elevated expectation for superior quality and greater product reliability. When it comes to purchasing items, people prioritise the quality of the products they buy. The surge in online shopping activities has concurrently heightened consumers' inclination to divulge their personal information. COVID-19's impact on consumers around the world has profoundly affected both their behaviour and their demand. The COVID-19 epidemic has radically altered the global landscape. Individuals are adopting distinct lifestyles, making purchases in unique ways and exhibiting altered patterns of thinking. The aim of the study article is to analyse the extent to which the purchasing behaviour of customers has been altered as a result of the epidemic. The primary objective of this study is to examine how the global pandemic has impacted customers' purchasing behaviours.*

Keywords: *COVID-19, Consumer Behaviour, E-Commerce, Indian Retail Market*

INTRODUCTION

The global outbreak of COVID-19 necessitated the implementation of lockdown measures around the globe. Various governments implemented travel restrictions in order to mitigate the transmission of the virus. International borders were sealed, and only vital services were allowed to function within the country. A significant portion of the labour force saw salary reductions as a result of decreased economic activity, while a considerable number of individuals became unemployed. Strict lockdown laws resulted in the closure of businesses, suspension of product manufacturing and disruption of transportation. Nevertheless, E-Commerce operations were permitted. Several discretionary items, including books, furniture, electronics and footwear, could only be acquired via E-Commerce platforms, while the production of cars was entirely halted. Several industries have transitioned to a work-from-home culture, with some opting for permanent arrangements. These occurrences elicit noticeable alterations in customer behaviour, which will be examined over the duration of this study article. The global COVID-19 epidemic posed a significant menace not just to public health but also to the majority of economies (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020). In an effort to control the spread of this disease, governments have undertaken various solutions, ranging from strict measures such as complete confinement to partial lockdowns of the economy. In this circumstance, a significant concern has emerged for both companies and governments: determining how consumer purchasing behaviour would be impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the media provided constant surveillance and extensive reporting, intensifying the perceived level of risk and ultimately prompting consumers to promptly modify their behaviours. The proliferation of specific misinformation via the Internet and social media had minimal effect in alleviating individuals' apprehension, particularly if they were preoccupied with variables impacting their personal well-being (Moorman & Matulich, 1993; Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020), such as the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite the attention given to the impact of unforeseen occurrences on consumer behaviour (Sheth et al., 1991), none of these viewpoints were discussed in relation to a crisis of the magnitude and nature of the COVID-19 disaster.

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Therefore, the unique and unparalleled features of the COVID-19 issue, in terms of its impact, media coverage and public attention, have created a new area of research that has not been previously investigated. The primary objective of this research was to comprehend the alterations in consumer purchasing behaviour and motivation in reaction to the COVID-19 crisis and to determine how these changes were influenced by exposure to COVID-19-related news and information. This study was constructed by conducting a comprehensive assessment of academic and practitioner sources. It included both qualitative and quantitative analyses to achieve the stated objective. The report concluded with a final section that focused on a comprehensive discussion and conclusions, encompassing both theoretical and managerial aspects. The present consumer behaviour is not novel but rather a consequence of a crisis, which has revealed various aspects of consumer behaviour. The fear of the unfamiliar and the imposition of lockdown measures compelled many to accumulate necessary supplies within their residences. Consumers' inclination to prioritise critical purchases and postpone non-essential ones, such as clothing, vehicles and trips, seems to be driven by panic and dread. Consistent with this concept, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a sudden and significant shift in consumer behaviour. Customers are now prioritising essential items like hand sanitisers, hair dye and Netflix subscriptions, while neglecting non-essential purchases such as cars, business travel, movie tickets and luxury products.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour.
- To study the pattern of E-Commerce market in India before during and after COVID-19 pandemic.
- To investigate what products consumers are purchasing more online following the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To conduct this analysis, we relied on secondary data, such as public reports (Ibef, Neilsen) and scientific studies published in various journals, as well as existing literature on the subject matter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic had a favourable impact on consumers' conduct by imparting the importance of financial prudence and savings. Consumers acquired knowledge of their spending habits, realising that not all products that pique their attention should be purchased. In reality, discretionary spending was reduced during the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, their conduct is currently focused on vital commodities, encompassing not just food, hygiene and health-related items but also placing importance on non-essential items. Furthermore, price and quality are currently the primary criteria taken into account, particularly for non-essential items.

In their study, Mehta et al. (2020) discovered that lockdowns have had a significant impact on consumer behaviour, leading to a redefinition of social spheres and individual orientation. From my standpoint, it is not solely the lockdown itself but rather the entirety of the pandemic as a whole. If we were to go back to the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, when people were still fearful of getting infected, it becomes evident that consumer behaviour underwent significant redefinition in various dimensions. Consumers underwent significant dietary changes, increased their focus on basic commodities, acquired knowledge about the importance of hygiene and developed strategies for saving money, among other things. Essentially, every facet was redefined under the crisis. Regarding social realms, it has become customary for customers to no longer frequent films, cinemas and concerts as they did in the past. Their behavioural disposition towards these pleasures and even towards items has been reinterpreted.

Gustav and Alexandra (2020) observed that amidst the crisis, customers prioritised purchasing essential items rather than indulging in indulgences. Additionally, they opted for more affordable brands, favoured local products over foreign ones and showed a preference for smaller packaging. The shift in behaviour has led to a redirection of attention towards vital commodities, causing a significant decrease in demand for non-essential goods. This decline in demand has prompted providers to reduce the supply of non-essential items throughout the crisis. Consumers are currently prioritising vital commodities, such as food, hygiene, medication and health supplements, among other necessities. Nowadays, the act of buying anything is not solely based on the transaction itself but also takes into consideration factors such as the reputation of the brand, the recognition of its emblem and the quality of the goods.

The topic of consumer behaviour is a highly debated subject that is carefully considered by researchers and advertisers both in the past and currently. Analysts offer different explanations for why the study of shopper behaviour has attracted the attention of many scholars and experts. Rabolt and Solomon (2004) have examined consumer behaviour, which refers to the cognitive and behavioural processes involved in the selection, utilisation, or disposal of products, services, ideas, or experiences to fulfil desires and needs.

Presently, only a limited number of firms have the chance to engage in advertising due to the extensive impact of COVID-19 measures, such as stricter social distance, quarantine, isolation, curfew and lockdown, which significantly affect the markets. In his essay, Webster (2020) said that Americans encountered depleted grocery store shelves and witnessed a surge in panic buying of toilet paper and hand sanitiser over the period of March 12-15, 2020. Consumer behaviour has been altered by COVID-19 in two significant ways: firstly, there has been a shift in the choices consumers make regarding their purchases, and secondly, there has been a change in the manner in which they acquire needed items. Webster stated that individuals maintain a safe distance from each other, and stores also implement precautionary measures.

In their study, Whistle, Ho et al. (2020) examined the attitude of Chinese consumers in the post-COVID-19 period. They found that Chinese consumers are expected to rebuild their confidence and increase their spending in some categories in the upcoming months. A total of 2,500 Chinese consumers were examined during the period of February to March 2020. Buckle also elaborated on the discussion of consumer behavioural change and attitude, emphasising the significance of optimism as a pivotal role in guiding individuals through a crisis.

The COVID-19 epidemic has led to widespread consumer panic, which has significantly influenced purchase behaviour. The literature review on COVID-19 remains limited due to a range of issues, including economic, societal and financial constraints. As stated by King (2020), consumer behaviour has undergone an abrupt and extensive transformation. Consumer behaviour was anticipated to shift as a result of panic and worry regarding the scarcity and availability of essential goods.

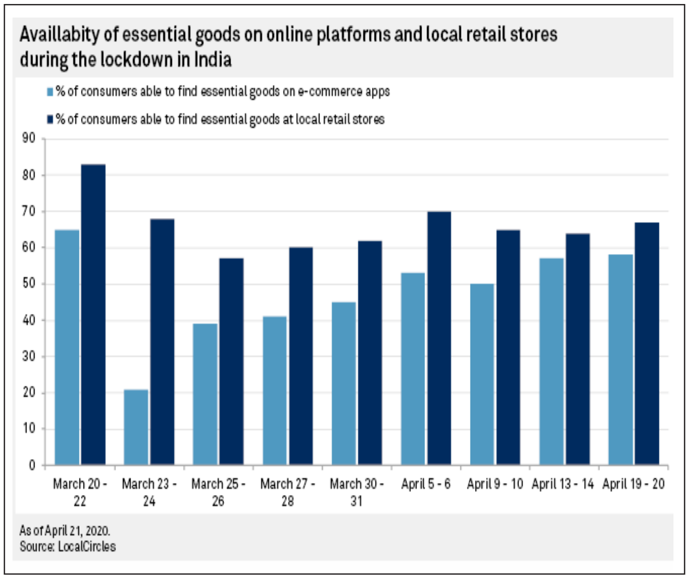
Accenture (2020) research on COVID-19 7448 Journal of Positive School Psychology © 2022 JPPW. All rights reserved and consumer behaviour change shows that "Consumers are responding to the crisis in a variety of ways. Some feel anxious and worried, fuelling panic-buying of staples and hygiene products." Recent research on consumer panic in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region reveals that social media exerts a substantial influence on panic buying. Specifically, the study highlights the quick and extensive impact of fake news and misinformation on individuals. Global outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, both consumer purchasing preferences and quantities have undergone significant shifts. Tam (2020) states that in the current situation, 56% of customers have a preference for spending less and just purchasing essential items. These concerns are linked to anxieties such as the enduring consequences of unemployment, insufficient financial resources, salary reductions, joblessness and other financial apprehensions that customers take into account.

Based on a survey conducted by Shopkick, consumers are exhibiting increased awareness regarding their spending and shopping habits. As a result, they intend to reduce their spending throughout the year. Specifically, 52% of consumers expressed a cautious approach and plan to keep their spending at a minimum, while 19% of individuals reported being significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Ferrell et al. (2021) highlighted that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on customer behaviour and preferences in daily life.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown and social distancing mandates have disrupted consumer habits of buying as well as shopping. Consumers are learning to improvise and learn new habits. For example, consumers cannot go to the store, so the store comes to home. While consumers go back to old habits, it is likely that they will be modified by new regulations and procedures in the way consumers shop and buy products and services. New habits will also emerge by technology advances, changing demographics and innovative ways consumers have learned to cope with blurring the work, leisure and education boundaries. All consumption is location and time bound. Consumers develop habits over time about what to consume, when and where (Sheth, 2020a, Sheth, 2020b). Of course, this is not limited to consumption. It is also true of shopping, searching for information and post consumption waste disposal. And consumer behaviour is highly predictable and we have many good predictive models and consumer insights based on past repetitive buying behaviour at the individual level. With lockdown and social distancing, consumers' choice of the place to shop is restricted. This has resulted in location constraint and location shortage. We have mobility shift and mobility shortage. Working, schooling and shopping all have shifted and localised at home. At the same time, there is more time flexibility as consumers do not have to follow schedules planned for going to work or to school or to shop or to consume.



Source: Local circles.

Fig. 1

The scarcity of space at home is giving rise to fresh predicaments and disputes around the allocation of tasks in specific areas of the household. As members of the Homo sapiens species, we tend to be territorial and value our own space. We all face challenges in maintaining our privacy and ensuring our convenience in consumption. The world order was undergoing significant changes prior to the COVID-19 crisis. The coronavirus epidemic has expedited three significant geopolitical tendencies that will determine the structure of our future global order. Consumers have shifted their purchase behaviour towards fundamental needs as a result of rising unemployment and declining salaries. Their objective is to minimise waste, expenses and procure more environmentally-friendly necessities.

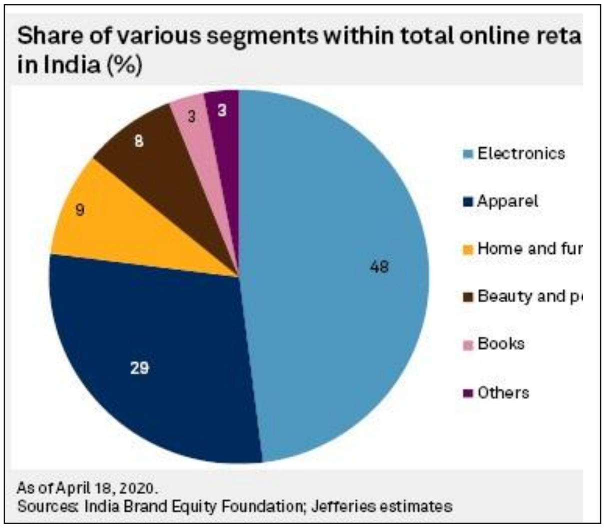
As a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, numerous stores have transitioned to operating remotely, leading to improved ease in shopping and home delivery of consumer products, benefiting both customers and sellers.

The choice of digital strategy employed by an organisation can provide significant benefits or result in disastrous consequences. They must prioritise adopting digital transformations in order to achieve their goals and objectives and maintain a competitive advantage. There is a surge in the demand for domestically produced goods. Hence, localisation has become an essential strategy for corporations and industry organisations to entice consumers in order to achieve a point of financial equilibrium. However, it remains questionable if customers' shopping patterns will undergo permanent changes or not.

E-COMMERCE MARKET IN INDIA BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly be regarded as a pivotal moment in numerous sectors in the forthcoming decades. Despite the world's successful survival of the epidemic, it has inevitably brought about significant changes in people's perspectives on several parts of their lives. The pandemic has brought about a total transformation in various sectors such as physical health, mental health, entertainment diversity, social connections, cashless transactions, supply chain and E-Commerce. Despite the significant negative effects of COVID-19 on economic activity, including the entire closure of certain sectors, it undeniably facilitated the rapid growth of E-Commerce and the heightened use of digital transactions. The proportion of internet users engaging in online transactions rose significantly from 33% in poor nations prior to the epidemic to over 60% after the pandemic began, encompassing 66 countries with accessible data. Official statistics from seven countries, which collectively represent approximately 50% of global GDP, reveal a significant rise in online retail sales. In these countries, sales increased from approximately $2 trillion in 2019, just before the pandemic, to around $2.5 trillion in 2020 and $2.9 trillion in 2021. With the adoption of social distance as the prevailing practice, businesses underwent a steady transformation in tandem with the global changes. The rise of online enterprises coincided with an increasing number of consumers who began purchasing their everyday essentials through online platforms and websites.

Multiple social networking networks capitalised on increased online retail demand by incorporating additional E-Commerce functionalities, allowing users to explore and buy products from participating online stores without having to exit the platform. These platforms are usually tightly connected with ecommerce platforms, enabling ecommerce operators to effortlessly advertise their products across several channels. Significant advancements were achieved throughout the duration of the epidemic in diverse contactless payment alternatives. According to E-Marketer, the global usage of proximity mobile payments increased by 22.2% in 2020 compared to the previous year. This led to the emergence of E-Commerce platforms. An increasing number of individuals began seeking platforms that could meet their diverse requirements, ranging from groceries to medical supplies to beauty and wellness products. They began to anticipate the availability of all these items in a single location.



Source: India Brand Equity Foundation.

Fig. 2

Specialised platforms targeting certain market categories, such as beauty, wellness and medical platforms, started to appear. This presented a chance for smaller firms to advertise their products and generated optimism in them. This has facilitated the exponential expansion of E-Commerce platforms. E-transactions constituted 17% of global retail transactions in 2020. With the increasing acceptance of digital payments, E-Commerce platforms have emerged as a more favourable option than visiting physical stores. E-Commerce offered customers a wide range of options for their choices. Despite a consumer's preference for a certain product, they have alternative brands to choose from that offer the same item. India has become a notable market where local enterprises are gaining more focus in comparison to foreign and global brands. There is a growing number of players who are also coming forward.

Based on the 2021 industry research, the Indian E-Commerce sector is expected to achieve a growth rate of 84% in the next four years. The report further suggests that the primary catalyst for this growth is the escalating adoption of mobile commerce for the acquisition of goods. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the Indian retail market has not experienced a complete shift. Instead, it has embraced a mixed strategy and no longer depends exclusively on conventional websites for generating revenue. Offline retail stores have merged with online ones, giving rise to a hybrid digital ecosystem. Although commercial patterns have returned to normal after the outbreak, there are lasting changes in consumer behaviours that will last for future generations.

The imposition of social isolation, lockdowns and other measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has led consumers to increasingly rely on online commerce, social media usage, web-based communication and teleconferencing, as well as streaming of videos and films:

This has resulted in a significant increase in sales between businesses and customers (B2C) and a rise in E-Commerce between businesses (B2B). The rise in B2C transactions is particularly evident in the online retail of medical supplies, food products and other vital home items.

The E-Commerce industry, which involves the interchange of products and services, has been adversely impacted by the same forces that have disrupted overall demand and supply. These disruptions have resulted in delays in delivery and the cancellation of orders. Several new challenges pertaining to internet commerce have arisen or been exacerbated during this pandemic. These factors encompass an increase in product costs (such as the expansion of product prices to a higher level), apprehensions regarding online payment protection, concerns about product safety, the need for enhanced data transfer capacity and concerns related to development.

ACTIONS WERE TAKEN TO ENCOURAGE E-COMMERCE OF GOODS IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS

In order to effectively implement social distancing measures aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19, several governments worldwide have authorised online purchasing as an alternative to in-person shopping. As a result, consumers have adapted their shopping habits and behaviours to minimise the risks of contracting the virus. As an example, local governments have gathered and disseminated the contact information of organisers of various food commodities at different markets through social media and other means to promote the online purchase of essential food items. This enables buyers to call and place orders for goods. At that juncture, purchasers make payments using mobile money, such as through their mobile devices and receive their purchases via bicycle or taxi, such as through Uber, Ola, or other options. This expansion of the delivery service has had a good influence on increased business and jobs, even if these effects may be transient.

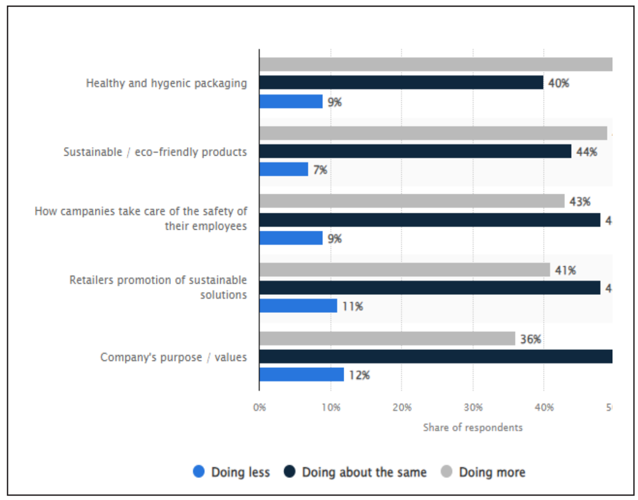
IMPORTANCE OF E-COMMERCE POST-COVID-19

Notwithstanding the several hurdles and problems, COVID-19 has altered the purchasing patterns of the Indian populace. Due to the implementation of the lockdown, individuals were compelled to remain in their residences.

Subsequently, E-Commerce platforms reached out and provided essential commodities to individuals. By engaging with online platforms and digital technology, individuals begin to cultivate their confidence and reliance in these mediums. Nowadays, individuals have developed a routine of frequently placing online orders and avoiding going outside. It is widely acknowledged that the COVID-19 epidemic is expected to endure for an extended period, necessitating ongoing adjustments within the E-Commerce sector to accommodate the new circumstances. The epidemic has fundamentally altered the general framework of the online business. Currently, internet ordering has become the prevailing standard for purchasing various items such as food needs, clothing and more. Despite the gradual reopening of physical businesses, people continue to exhibit online purchase behaviour due to the convenience of shopping from their homes. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that E-Commerce can serve as a crucial solution for consumers in times of crisis and also as a sustainable motivator, particularly for small firms. However, the pandemic has not only highlighted the importance of digital technologies but also exposed certain vulnerabilities worldwide. Nevertheless, the E-Commerce industry has emerged as the most optimal choice for entrepreneurs due to the uncertainty surrounding the long-term impact of the epidemic and the lack of evidence regarding its duration. The increasing preference for online buying and selling of various products, accessories, appliances and services has significantly impacted the profitability and operations of the E-Commerce industry.

PRODUCTS CONSUMERS ARE PURCHASING MORE ONLINE FOLLOWING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Indian retail market is characterised by a significant division between the unorganised sector, comprising over 13.8 million traditional family-owned local establishments and internet shopping platforms. Although the B2C e-commerce sector in India is experiencing significant growth, a large majority of Indians still place greater trust in local physical establishments for purchasing. They appreciate the ability to physically interact with products and negotiate discounts in person before making a purchase. In India, the bulk of B2C e-commerce retailers attract clients to shop online by providing incentives such as complimentary shipping, price reductions, buy-one-get-one-free deals and exchange offers. Nevertheless, a significant number of Indian consumers, who are known for their frugality and traditional values, tend to refrain from making impulsive choices influenced by promotions and commercials. Furthermore, online consumers often encounter issues related to the timeliness of product delivery and the quality of customer care services. Customers' feeling of risk towards online websites is exacerbated by the substandard IT infrastructure employed by numerous E-retailers, leading to the compromise of personal information through hacking. The new coronavirus, known for its high infectivity, is responsible for causing a highly contagious sickness. The coronavirus sickness has affected over 400,000 individuals globally. The most effective measure to protect oneself against the virus is to remain at home, as it typically transmits through direct contact with an infected individual (such as through coughing or sneezing) or by touching contaminated surfaces. There has been a global surge in the utilisation of internet purchasing. In India, there has been an increase in the number of first-time-ecommerce-users (FTUs) due to the removal of barriers that previously prevented them from shopping online.



Source: Statista.

Fig. 3

The surge in B2C ecommerce in India is primarily a result of current online buyers hoarding necessary items in response to the coronavirus outbreak and the government-enforced lockdown. Additionally, it comprises of maybe two other divisions, aside from the one that makes frequent online purchases. One portion of the population refrained from purchasing online due to the restricting factors mentioned earlier in this article. Another segment, until now, either lacked knowledge about online shopping or did not possess the necessary gadget or data plan. The COVID-19 pandemic and government restrictions exerted a dual influence on consumer behaviour. Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, consumers across all age groups shown a greater inclination towards purchasing products and services through digital means. In general, there was a notable transition towards the expenditure on E-Commerce. There was a rise in the frequency of shopping. Key drivers of online consumer behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic are the notable and continuous expansion of Internet users, heightened awareness of online purchasing, the growing frequency of online product launches and the availability of discounted prices resulting from bulk purchases, among other factors. Consumers are anticipated to shift towards online shopping because to the COVID-19 epidemic, implementation of social distancing measures and the requirement to stay at home. Nevertheless, the E-Commerce industry may be impacted by unpredictable consumer demand and supply chain challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic may also impact major retailers, since they are witnessing a decline in non-essential buying, disruptions in their supply chains and a spike in the demand for vital hygiene and disinfection items, groceries and other goods. Online purchases did not experience a significant increase during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in India. Based on a poll performed by Rakuten Insight in May 2020, around 59% of respondents reported engaging in online purchasing during the pandemic in order to adhere to social distancing measures and reduce their time spent outside of their residences. The frequently acquired items included food and groceries, personal hygiene products and household cleaning products. Consumers are likely to sustain their increased online shopping habits, which were developed during the lockout, due to their positive experience. This study aims to elucidate the variables that account for the likelihood of continued engagement in online purchasing. The study revealed that ease, efficiency and security, particularly for some females, are significant characteristics that contribute to the perceived usefulness of online shopping and, thus, influence the desire to continue shopping online. Furthermore, enhancing the online purchasing experience contributes to the persistence of these goals.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Following the onset of the epidemic, there have been nuanced shifts in consumer purchasing demographics. Male purchasing patterns have seen significant changes. For instance, they will augment the acquisition of certain essential items (Vázquez-Martínez et al., 2021). During a crisis, people's utilitarian drive becomes more prominent (Voss et al., 2003). Consequently, there will be a significant rise in people's need for essential items on a daily basis. Furthermore, the aged population has now embraced the use of mobile methods for making purchases, leading to a significant growth in online shopping activity. This necessitates life service firms increasingly segment the market based on population demographics in the future. For instance, they can introduce more exclusive incentives for online services targeted at the elderly, thereby facilitating their inclination to make purchases. The behaviour of consumers when making purchases has a substantial and beneficial influence on the design of a business model. This influence signifies that customers, having seen the repercussions of the COVID-19 outbreak, have raised their expectations for the marketing strategies employed by life service providers. The study's findings indicate that alterations in the buy item, purchase purpose, and purchase timeframe significantly influence the design of a novelty-centered business model. This demonstrates that consumer services companies should promptly implement measures in response to the epidemic and engage in business model innovation that aligns with the specific characteristics of the COVID-19 outbreak and shifts in consumer purchasing behaviour. These measures may include adopting online sales models, expanding target markets, implementing social and fragmented marketing strategies, implementing unmanned retail systems, providing contactless services and integrating enterprise platforms.

Below are the indicators I propose to sustain consumer behaviour within the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses must prioritise the ability to adapt to change. Regardless of the market structure, consumers play a crucial role in driving the company's model. Hence, firms must adjust to the prevailing circumstances and begin integrating high-demand products into their product portfolio. Furthermore, it is imperative for firms to prioritise the optimisation of digital marketing. This is particularly crucial, as several governments throughout the world have mandated work-from-home regulations. Therefore, it would be highly advisable for firms to adopt digital strategies, encompassing marketing and online retail options, in order to facilitate home deliveries for clients. This approach is feasible because it has not been employed previously. Furthermore, businesses must devise strategies to distribute products to consumers, targeting specific segments, particularly those with high demand. Finally, firms must cultivate the ability to be innovative in order to adapt to the present circumstances. Given the difficulty of the task, business owners must devise innovative strategies to maintain their firm, as failure to do so may leave them vulnerable to being overtaken by competitors in the market. If we adhere to these guidelines, we can all thrive despite the ongoing crises. The findings indicated that consumer behaviour research during the COVID-19 pandemic mostly focused on investigating the shifts in customer demands, product preferences and priority of needs following the pandemic. Conversely, there is a need for further research on how online consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by psychological factors, particularly in relation to the purchase of fresh food and staple items. Additionally, there is a need to understand how changing consumer habits affect consistency, as well as the awareness and consideration of consumer risks and behaviour during times of crisis.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 epidemic is believed to have impacted global consumer behaviour, health and economic issues through a decrease in consumption, company activity and an increase in the unemployment rate. The consumption of various commodities has decreased as a result of employment losses, leading to a drop in consumers' purchasing capacity. Consequently, consumers now prioritise vital goods. An increasing number of people are now participating in internet shopping. Consequently, numerous enterprises have emerged to adhere to the recent modifications, and an increasing number are allocating resources towards developing online infrastructure. Businesses must adopt the practice of optimising digital marketing and online business operations in order to facilitate home delivery to consumers. The COVID-19 pandemic had a good influence on consumers' conduct by instilling in them an appreciation for the importance of financial prudence and saving. Consumers have become aware of their spending habits, realising that not all products that pique their interest should be purchased. In fact, discretionary spending has decreased significantly throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Furthermore, their conduct is currently focused on vital commodities, encompassing not just food, hygiene and health-related items, but also placing importance on non-essential things. Furthermore, price and quality are currently the primary criteria taken into account, particularly for non-essential items. One strategy for consumers to adapt to the pandemic is to practise frugality and prioritise purchasing needed items to maintain their livelihoods. Furthermore, in order to mitigate the spread, consumers can opt for online digital payment, which is more cost-effective. From a business standpoint, it is evident that the depletion of supermarket stock during the pandemic can be attributed to a diminished supply during the crisis. Nevertheless, businesses have the opportunity to take over from that point and build dependable and trustworthy providers to fulfil both present and future requirements in the event of a similar occurrence. Governments should maintain readiness for natural disasters, as they are inherently unexpected. Hospitals must ensure that important medical supplies are always adequately stocked to prevent shortages. Moreover, consumer conduct is beyond anyone's control. Consumer behaviour is dynamic and will persistently evolve over time. Consumer behaviour has a significant impact on market dynamics, so it is imperative for firms to adapt to the new normal. It is crucial for businesses to recognise that we are currently facing a worldwide crisis. It is unfair to excessively raise prices on vital commodities, as this affects everyone impacted by the crisis. This article clearly demonstrates that the purpose of this study has been effectively addressed.

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