A Descriptive Study on Effect of Covid-19 on Consumer Apparel Buying Behaviour

Muskan Wadhwani
Institute of Management Studies,
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore (M.P), India
muskanwadhwani20@gmail.com

Rajiv Gupta
Institute of Management Studies,
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore (M.P), India
rajivgupta40@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The pandemic Coronavirus has seriously influenced the Global economy. The emergency has changed the consumer behaviour for purchasing apparel. So, the research was directed to investigate the effect of Coronavirus emergency on customer apparel purchasing behaviour during the post pandemic time frame. Online survey based on questionnaire was used as the method of conducting research study. Convenience sampling was used as the method of Sampling. The respondents of age 18 to 70 living in Indore city participated in this study. A descriptive research method was applied for the research. Testing of Null hypothesis was done at 0.05 level of significance. The results show that respondents experienced varied level of the spending on apparel, switching of brands and the mode of buying apparel post covid-19 crisis. The results also showed the influence of various demographic variables on consumer apparel buying behaviour during post pandemic period. The findings of the research study can be implied by the marketers to understand the new buying behaviour of the customer post covid-19. The marketers can use this information and adopt some strategies to beapply in retailing and marketing activities.

Keywords- Consumer, apparel, buying behaviour, post covid-19, ANOVA

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously influenced the global economy. It has shaken all the sectors and industries across the world. One of the most adversely affected sectors is the retail sector. Consumers plan to move their expenditure on essentials and cutting back on various non essentials. Consumer's behaviour and business's actions have drastically changed because of this pandemic (Donthu

and Gustafsson, 2020). Retail managers as well as marketers have to develop a strategy to comprehend the switching of consumer's purchasing behaviour and habits (Verma and Gustafsson, 2020). So, it is imperative to understand retail and customer services to have the option to all marketers so as to respond to such comparable circumstances later on. Identifying new customer trends will likewise help presently enduring retail industry to manage the evolving COVID-19 pandemic outcomes. It will also provide knowledge of consumer behaviour transition and retail services which will emerge post Coronavirus pandemic (Laato et al., 2020). The motivation behind this study is to inspect the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on consumer apparel buying behaviour and elements of apparel buying patterns post pandemic.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of pandemic flare-ups have occurred in late world history, for instance, Ebola, SARS, MERS, pig influenza, and dengue fever (Balinska and Rizzo, 2009). In response to this, changes in customer's shopping habits are possible in the long haul.

According to Sheth (2020),four significant factors are recognized which control or disrupt consumer patterns. Social context, the implementation of new technology, the effect of consumption patterns because of new rules, and less predictable context are the factors identified.

According to the survey conducted by McKinsey (2020),all consumers exhibit switching of loyalty towards buying in an unexpected way.

According to Pantano et al. (2020), once the crisis passes, the customers will actually want to buy just those brands or from stores who were sympathetic and accommodating during the pandemic.

According to (Ahmed et al., 2020), hedonic and utilitarian stimuli drive the cognizant or impulsive buying trends.

According to (Addo et al., 2020), impulsive purchasing bahaviour has expanded remarkably across the globe.

Reviewing the above literature, a research gap was identified as to how the consumer reacts towards apparel buying post pandemic. On the basis of literature review, research hypothesis were designed.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The pandemic has influenced the purchasing habits of consumer. The aim of the research is to inspect how consumers apparel buying behaviour is influenced by the pandemic covid-19. The objective of the research is to explore the profile of consumers purchasing apparel (clothes) post Coronavirus emergency. The conducted study throws light on recent trends of consumer apparel buying habits. It also tries to analyse the shift in customer's apparel purchasing behaviour post coronavirus emergency. The study also focuses on analysing the difference in apparel buying habits across various demographic variables post pandemic.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Following research hypothesis are developed to be
tested:

1.There is no significant difference between male and female   consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic.

2.There is no significant difference in consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic across ages.

3.There is no significant difference in consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic across monthly income level.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was descriptive in nature. Convenience method of sampling was adopted. Collection of primary data was conducted through a structured survey. Collection of primary data was conducted in the month of January 2021.The questionnaire was administered as a Google form. The Google link was shared with around 100 targeted respondents but 64 people responded and filled the questionnaire. The population of the study was respondents of age 18 to 70 years from the city Indore of Madhya

Pradesh in India. The questionnaire consisted of demographic details and shift in consumer's apparel consumption habits post pandemic.   The primary data collected for the study was analysed through SPSS version 16. The descriptive statistics was performed to explore the the characteristics of various demographic variable and buying habits.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through the primary research was analysed by chi square test, T test and ANOVA.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE-The demographic profile of respondents was as follows:

1. The respondents in the given study include 54 female respondents and 10 male respondents.

2. Around 70% of respondents belong to the age group of 24-39. 20% respondents belong to the age group of 40-55. 6% and 3% respondents belong to the age group 18-23 and 56 -75 respectively.

3. Majority of the respondents i.e.,45.3% were from low monthly income group of below

20,000.32.8% of respondents were from the monthly income group of 20,000-50,000. 10% respondents constituted the both monthly income group of 50000 - 100000 and 1 lakh and above.

4. 92% of respondents were married and 8% of respondents were single in the study.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H0 - There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic.

Following sub hypothesis were tested at significance level of 95%

HYPOTHESIS	SIG. VALUE	RESULT
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's monthly spending on apparel purchasing post pandemic.	0.197	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's buying transition towards cheaper clothes post pandemic.	0.235	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's brand loyalty post pandemic.	0.096	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's shift towards online apparel purchasing post pandemic	0.167	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's frequency of apparel buying from physical stores post pandemic.	0.190	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between male and female consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing post pandemic.	0.225	ACCEPTED

Interpretation

To test the above null hypothesis independent sample T test was conducted between all the dependent variables and gender as grouping variable. The significant value came to be more than 0.05. so, all the null hypothesis were accepted. It can be summarised that male and female do not exhibit any significant difference in consumer's monthly spending on apparel purchasing, consumer's buying transition towards cheaper clothes, consumer's brand loyalty, consumer's shift towards online apparel purchasing, consumer's frequency of apparel buying from physical stores and consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across gender.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H0 - There is no significant difference in consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic across ages.

Following sub hypothesis were tested at significance level of 95%

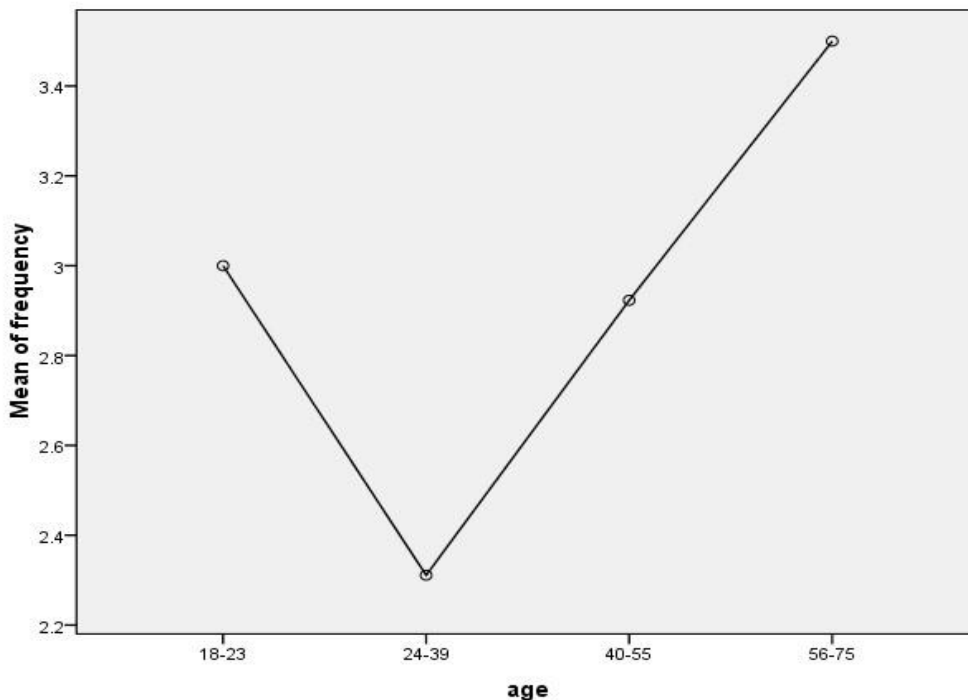| HYPOTHESIS	SIG. VALUE	RESULT
There is no significant difference in consumer's monthly spending on apparel purchasing across ages post pandemic.	0.154	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's buying transition towards cheaper clothes across ages post pandemic.	0.347	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between in consumer's brand loyalty across ages post pandemic.	0.398	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's shift towards online apparel purchasing across ages post pandemic.	0.475	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's frequency of apparel buying from physical stores across ages post pandemic.	0.419	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across ages post pandemic.	0.029	REJECTED

Interpretation

To test the above sub null hypothesis ANOVA test was conducted between all the dependent variables and age. the significant value came to be more than 0.05 in five test and came below 0.05 in one test. so, all the null hypothesis were accepted except one. It can be concluded that there do not exist any significant difference in consumer's monthly spending on apparel purchasing, consumer's

buying transition towards cheaper clothes, consumer's brand loyalty, consumer's shift towards online apparel purchasing and consumer's frequency of apparel buying from physical stores across ages post pandemic. Only the significant difference exists in consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across ages post pandemic.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
monthly spending	Between Groups	4.693	3	1.564	1.814	.154
	Within Groups	51.744	60	.862		
	Total	56.437	63			
cheaper clothes	Between Groups	3.403	3	1.134	1.123	.347
	Within Groups	60.597	60	1.010		
	Total	64.000	63			
same brand	Between Groups	3.715	3	1.238	1.003	.398
	Within Groups	74.035	60	1.234		
	Total	77.750	63			
online shopping	Between Groups	5.413	3	1.804	.844	.475
	Within Groups	128.337	60	2.139		
	Total	133.750	63			
store shopping	Between Groups	.913	3	.304	.957	.419
	Within Groups	19.071	60	.318		
	Total	19.984	63			
frequency	Between Groups	6.917	3	2.306	3.212	.029
	Within Groups	43.068	60	.718		
	Total	49.984	63			

Table showing ANOVA test conducted between all the dependent variables and age

Graph showing consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across age groups post pandemic.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H0 - **There is no significant difference in consumer's apparel buying behaviour post pandemic across monthly income level.**

Following sub hypothesis were tested at significance level of 95%

| HYPOTHESIS	SIG. VALUE	RESULT
There is no significant difference in consumer's monthly spending on apparel purchasing across monthly income level post pandemic.	0.267	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's buying transition towards cheaper clothes across monthly income level post pandemic	0.206	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference between in consumer's brand loyalty across monthly income level post pandemic.	0.023	**REJECTED**
There is no significant difference in consumer's shift towards online apparel purchasing across monthly income level post pandemic.	0.872	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's frequency of apparel buying from physical stores across monthly income level post pandemic.	0.332	ACCEPTED
There is no significant difference in consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across monthly income level post pandemic.	0.230	ACCEPTED

Interpretation

To test the above sub null hypothesis ANOVA test was conducted between all the dependent variables and monthly income groups. The significant value came to be more than 0.05 in five test and came below 0.05 in one test. so, all the null hypothesis were accepted except one. It can be concluded that there do not exist any significant difference in apparel buying habits across monthly income post pandemic. Only the significant difference exists in consumer's brand loyalty across monthly income level post pandemic. It was identified that consumers of income level20,000-50,000 do not exhibit brand loyalty and switched their brands. Whereas consumers of high income do not exhibitany brand switching. Consumers of income below 20,000 also do not exhibit any brand switching. Here it may be estimated that the low-level income respondents used to buy local brands which are not so costly so they do not show any transition in brands.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
monthly spending	Between Groups	3.564	3	1.188	1.348	.267
	Within Groups	52.874	60	.881		
	Total	56.438	63			
cheaper clothes	Between Groups	4.654	3	1.551	1.568	.206
	Within Groups	59.346	60	.989		
	Total	64.000	63			
same brand	Between Groups	11.297	3	3.766	3.400	.023
	Within Groups	66.453	60	1.108		
	Total	77.750	63			
online shopping	Between Groups	1.546	3	.515	.234	.872
	Within Groups	132.204	60	2.203		
	Total	133.750	63			
store shopping	Between Groups	1.098	3	.366	1.162	.332
	Within Groups	18.887	60	.315		
	Total	19.984	63			
frequency	Between Groups	3.436	3	1.145	1.476	.230
	Within Groups	46.548	60	.776		
	Total	49.984	63			

Table showing ANOVA test conducted between all the dependent variables and monthly income groups
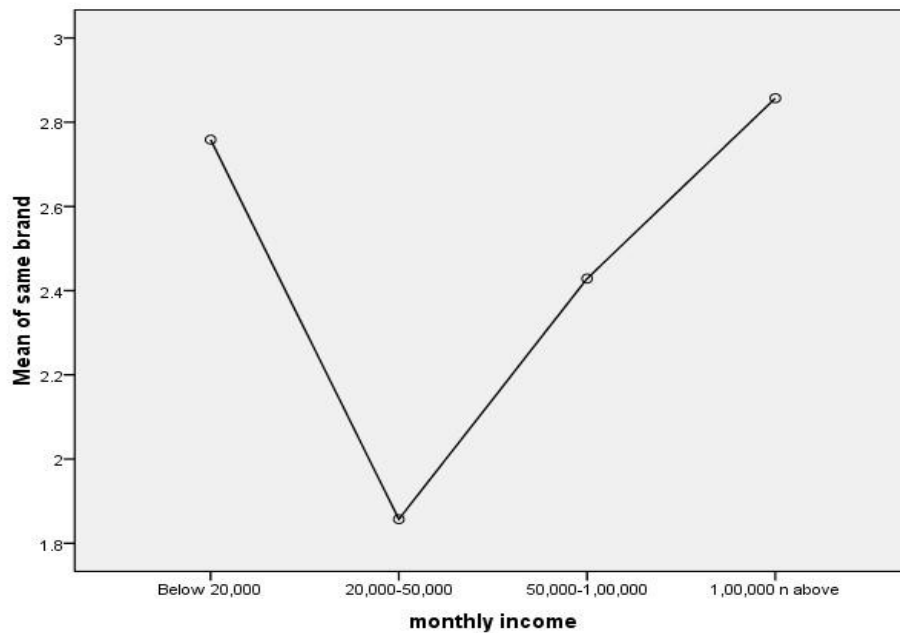
Graph showing consumer's brand loyalty across monthly income level post pandemic.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

37.5% respondents mentioned their monthly spending on apparels has somewhat decreased.

So, the retail sectors need to establish their marketing strategies to bring back the customers.

50% of respondents agreed that they have switched their brands post pandemic crisis. As we all know, covid 19 has influenced people's economic condition, so to cope up with that people are trying to cut down their expenses. So, the marketers can target these customers by offering a low-priced range, sales, discounts, coupons etc. 44% of respondents agreed that they have started purchasing online.54.7% respondents agreed that they buy less from physical stores now. So, the retailers should launch their virtual showroom. They can also market their products through social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp etc. The difference exists in consumer's brand loyalty across monthly income level post pandemic. It was identified that consumers of income level20,000-50,000 do not exhibit brand loyalty and switched their brands. Whereas consumers of high income do not exhibit any brand switching. Consumers of income below 20,000 also do not exhibit any brand switching. Here it may be concluded that the low-level income may be representing homemakers, who not earning that's why they do not show any transition in brands. So, middle income people should be targeted by the brand marketers. A low range of brands can be introduced for these customers to avoid them from switching brands. To attract these customers sales, discounts or coupons can be introduced in the marketing strategy. The consumer's overall frequency of apparel purchasing across ages differs post pandemic. Middle age consumers of 24-39 years exhibit transition in their purchase frequency of apparel. So, the markers can target this age group to increase their sales. As this is the age group which shows maximum sales in respect to apparel, so it would be very beneficial for marketers to target this age group with customized marketing strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

This study contributes to both researchers and practitioners in apparel retailing and marketing. Retailers and marketers need to take action as soon as possible for their survival in the market. According to (Laato et al.,2020), Retailers and suppliers should get new information about consumer behavioural changes, their evolving needs, and execute it into correspondence to their customers. Retailers

and advertisers need to adopt an alternate strategy for lower income consumers and middle age consumers. The research provides evidence of what trends customers exhibit during apparel shopping post COVID-19 pandemic and how their shopping behaviour differed across different age group and different income group. This finding ought to be implied in various retailing exercises and marketing moves.

LIMITATIONS

1. The current study tried to explore apparel buying customer behaviour post coronavirus pandemic crisis in the Indore city of India in January 2021. The researchers can conduct in their city.

2.The sample size in the study was 64 respondents with majority of female respondents. In future research can be conducted with big sample.

REFERENCES

- Addo.P.C., Jiaming.F., Kulbo.N.B. &Liangqiang.L., (2020). COVID-19: Fear appeal favoring purchase behavior towards personal protective equipment. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2021, from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02642069.2020.1751823

- Ahmed, R., Streimikiene, D., Rolle, J.-A., & Pham, D. (2020). The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Antecedants for the Impulse Buying Behavior of US Citizens. Journal of Competitiveness, 12, 5–27. https://doi.org/10.7441/joc.2020.03.01

- Balinska, M., & Rizzo, C. (2009).Behavioural responses to influenza pandemics. (n.d.). Retrieved March 22, 2021, from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2762764/

- Donthu, N., & Gustafsson, A. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on business and research. Journal of Business Research, 117, 284–289. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.008

- Eger, L., Komárková, L., Egerová, D., &Mičík, M. (2021). The effect of COVID-19 on consumer shopping behaviour: Generational cohort perspective. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 61, 102542. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102542

- Laato, S., Islam, A. K. M. N., Farooq, A., &Dhir, A. (2020). Unusual purchasing behavior during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic: The

stimulus-organism-response approach. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 57, 102224.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102224

- McKinsey .(2020). Consumer sentiment and behavior continue to reflect the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis Retrieved March21, 2021, from: https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/a-globalview-of-how-consumer-behavior-is-changing-amid-covid-19#(2020)

- Oana, D. (2020). The Impact Of The Current Crisis Generated By The Covid-19 Pandemic On Consumer Behavior. Studies in Business and Economics, 15(2), 85–99.

- Pantano, E., Pizzi, G., Scarpi, D., & Dennis, C. (2020). Competing during a pandemic? Retailers' ups and downs during the COVID-19 outbreak. Journal of Business Research, 116, 209 – 213. https://doi.org/ 10.1016/j.jbusres. 2020.05.036

- Sheth, J. (2020). Impact of Covid-19 on consumer behavior: Will the old habits return or die?

- Journal of Business Research, 117, 280–283. https://doi.org/ 10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.059

- Verma, S., & Gustafsson, A. (2020). Investigating the emerging COVID-19 research trends in the field of business and management: A bibliometric analysis approach. Journal of Business Research, 118, 253–261. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.0

- www.numerator.com