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CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS SHOPPING POST LOCKDOWN: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The pandemic has changed customers' shopping behaviour. The shopping basket has changed. Whether the changes will be permanent, or everything will return to its original state will be shown in the coming months and will be the subject of research that will follow the research mentioned in this article. The study finds excitedness; Things likely to buy; Mode of Shopping; Precautions preferred; Expenditure; and Shopping in retail stores among the consumers. The study was carried out with the objective to identify the Post lock down consumer attitude toward shopping. Further to know the things that consumers are likely to buy, and the mode of shopping, the consumers' precautionary attitude. The study's other objectives are to know their opinion on Expenditure towards post lockdown shopping and opinion towards shopping in retail stores. The data collected through an online questionnaire from 104 respondents shows that there exists excitedness during post-lockdown shopping. The changes in consumer behavior often represent self-protective strategies aimed at managing depressive states and negative emotions by restoring a positive sense of self

KEYWORDS: *Consumer Attitude, Pandemic, Buying Behaviour, Post Lockdown*

INTRODUCTION

The period of crisis can and is often perceived as an impetus for significant transformations in society and recommend paying attention to consumer behaviors in each of these three phases: reacting, coping, do-it-yourself behaviors, and then also longer-term adapting. The need for buying necessities takes precedence. The pandemic has changed customers' shopping behaviour in addition to the pandemic itself, there were also influences based on Consumer confidence; and economic factors. The shopping basket has changed the routine of running households; the reasons for purchasing and the availability of goods and services have changed.

Whether the changes will be permanent, or everything will return to its original state will be shown in the coming months and will be the subject of research that will follow the research mentioned in this article.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Changes in the consumer behavior can occur for different reasons, including personal, economic, psychological, contextual, and social factors. However, Consumer behaviours were influenced by internal and external factors. Among the external factors, the marketing macro environment is mentioned, which influences the implementation and development of marketing activities that are aimed at target customers. Zamazalová (2008).

The most important factors influencing consumer, which Douchova et al. (1993), considers, were objective, conditions of consumer behaviour (individual economic, environment and objective economic situation) and consumer personality, social environment and situational tuning.

The pandemic has significantly dramatically changed both the businesses acting and consumers behaving (Donthu and Gustafson, 2020; Pantano et al., 2020) leading to panic buying. Panic buying has been defined as a herd behavior that occurs when consumers buy a considerable number of products in anticipation of, during, or after a disaster (Steven, 2014)

- According to Sheth (2020), there are four major contexts which govern or disrupt consumer habits.
- They are social context (e.g., changes in the workplace and in interaction with neighbors and friends),
- The implementation of new technology (including online shopping and delivery),
- The impact of consumption habits due to new rules (the COVID-19 pandemic regulations), and less predictable context (the development of the global COVID-19 pandemic).

Sneath et al (2009) highlighted those changes in consumer behavior often represent self-protective strategies aimed at managing depressive states and negative emotions by restoring a positive sense of self.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were

- To identify the Post lockdown consumers' attitude toward shopping
- To know the things that consumers likely to buy
- To know the mode of shopping
- To identify the consumers' precautionary attitude
- To know their opinion on Expenditure towards post lockdown shopping
- To know the consumers' opinion towards shopping in retail stores

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated based on the objectives

- There exists excitedness during post-lockdown shopping
- There exist significant differences towards thinks likely to buy
- Mode of Shopping among the consumers exist
- There exists a sense of precautions preferred
- The opinion on Expenditure towards post-lock down differs
- The views on the shop in retail stores exhibit their opinion on lockdown fear

DATA CAPTURE

The data were collected online by providing the questionnaire in Google form. About 120 respondents responded from customers of different types who thrive on fashion apparel in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. After pruning the data, out of 120, 104 were selected. The response rate works out to 86.66%.

Table 1: Demographic Details

S. No.	Description	Respondents	
Marital Status			
1	Single	79	76.0
2	Married	25	24.0
Gender			
1	Male	34	32.7
2	Female	70	67.3
Age			
1	Below 30	76	73.1
2	31 – 50	22	21.2
3	Above 51	6	5.8
Household Income			
1	Up to 5 lakhs	41	39.4
2	5 – 10 lakhs	36	34.6
3	Above 10 lakhs	27	26.0
Nativity			
1	Urban	63	60.6
2	Semi urban	26	25.0
3	Rural	15	14.4
Qualification			
1	Graduate and Below	73	70.2
2	PG and Above	31	29.8
Overall			
Total		104	**100.0**

Table 1 reveals that almost 67.3% of the respondents belong to the female community as only 32.7% were male. Nearly 73.1% are in the age group below 30 years. The remaining 21.2% are in the age group between 31 and 50 years and 5.8% were above 51 age group. 73 (70.2%) respondents were graduates and below and the remaining 31(29.8%) werePG and qualification. Nearly 79 (76.0%) were unmarried and the remaining 25 (24.0%) were married. Out of 104 respondents, 39.4% (41) were having income upto 5 lakhs; 34.6% (36) were having income between 5 and 10 lakhs; 26.0% (27) were having income above 10 lakhs. 60.6% (63) of respondents were from urban. It is followed by 26 (25.0%) semi-urban nativities and 15 (14.4%) Rural nativity It is quite obvious that visits to fashion apparel stores are from the urban community rather than rural communities which is due to various reasons.

DATA ANALYSIS

- The data thus obtained were analysed based on
- Excitedness
- Things likely to buy
- Mode of Shopping

- Precautions preferred
- Expenditure
- Shop in retail stores

Excitedness

The opinion on post-lockdown consumer attitudes towards shopping was obtained using 5-pointopinion scale such as Not at all, Somewhat, Moderately, Excited and Very excited and the same has been shown in Table 2

Table 2: Excitedness On Shopping

S. No.	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Not at all	28	26.9
2	Somewhat	14	13.5
3	Moderately	29	27.9
4	Excited	18	17.3
5	Very excited	15	14.4
Total		104	100.0

Only 26.9% of the consumers indicated that they have not existed towards the lifting of lockdown. The remaining 73.1% were excited whereas the level of excitement differs. 14.4% (15) indicated that they were very excited. It is followed by 17.3% (18) indicated excited; 27.9% (29) moderately and 13.5% (14) indicated somewhat.

Things Likely to Buy

The things those are likely to buy when the lockdown is lifted across the country were ascertained using nine variables. The opinion on these aspects was obtained using a three-point verbal scale such as not at all; likely and essential with a weightage of 1 to 3. The mean and standard deviation were calculated based on the respondent's opinion. The ranks were assigned based on mean and standard deviation. The same has been shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Things to Buy

S. No.	Description	Not at all		Likely		Essential		Mean	Std	Rank
		No	%	No	%	No	%			
1	Apparel and clothing	18	17.3	58	55.8	28	26.9	2.10	.661	2
2	Food and Grocery	3	2.9	21	20.2	80	76.9	2.74	.502	1
3	Footwear	41	39.4	46	44.2	17	16.3	1.77	.714	6
4	Consumer durables/electronics	38	36.5	46	44.2	20	19.2	1.83	.730	5
5	Jewellery, watches, other personal accessories	63	60.6	36	34.6	5	4.8	1.44	.588	8
6	Furniture and furnishing	76	73.1	24	23.1	4	3.8	1.31	.541	9
7	Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books	29	27.9	51	49.0	24	23.1	1.95	.716	4
8	Beauty, wellness, personal care	25	24.0	52	50.0	27	26.0	2.02	.710	3
9	QSR and restaurants	48	46.2	34	32.7	22	21.2	1.75	.785	7

The mean value of all the variables ranges between 1.31 and 2.74 which indicates that all the variables lean towards either likely or essential. The standard deviation ranges between 0.502 and 0.785 which indicates that there was not much deviation in the respondents' opinion. Accordingly, the first preference was indicated toward Food and groceries. It is followed by Apparel and clothing and Beauty, wellness and personal care. The least preference was indicated towards Furniture and furnishing and Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories.

A correlation test has been administrated to know the correlation between the variables and the same has been shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix on Things to Buy

	Apparel and Clothing	Food and Grocery	Footwear	Consumer Durables/ Electronics	Jewellery, Watches and Other Personal Accessories	Furniture and Furnishing	Sports Goods, Entertainment Equipment, Books	Beauty, Wellness, Personal Care	QSR and restaurants
Apparel and clothing	1								
Food and Grocery	-.012	1							
Footwear	.562**	.048	1						
Consumer durables/electronics	.236*	.115	.333**	1					
Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories	.339**	-.002	.292**	.383**	1				
Furniture and furnishing	.161	.011	.186	.308**	.361**	1			
Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books	.112	.046	.111	.170	.282**	.189	1		
Beauty, wellness, personal care	.244*	.150	.085	.063	.374**	.187	.288**	1	
QSR and restaurants	.122	.080	.173	-.008	.305**	.137	.203*	.270**	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In a vicariate correlation analysis majority of the variables were Correlated significantly either at the 99% level or 95%. Further, closely correlated variables and distinctly correlated variables were identified and the same has been shown below:

Closely Correlated Variables

- Footwear and Apparel and clothing
- Jewellery, watches, other personal accessories and Consumer durables/electronics
- Furniture & furnishing and Consumer durables/electronics
- Beauty, wellness, personal care and Consumer durables/electronics

Distinctly Correlated Variables

- Food and Grocery and Apparel and clothing
- Jewellery, watches, other personal accessories and Food and Grocery
- Furniture and furnishing and Food and Grocery
- QSR and restaurants and Consumer durables/electronics

Mode of Shopping

The mode of shopping preferred after the lockdown was ascertained using nine variables. The opinion on these aspects was obtained using a three-point verbal scale such as Don't buy; Visit online and Both visit & online with a weightage of 1 to 4. The mean and standard deviation were calculated based on the respondent's opinion. The ranks were assigned based on mean and standard deviation. The same has been shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Mode of Shopping

S. No.	Description	Don't buy		Visit		Online		Both Visit and Online		Mean	Std	Rank
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%			
1	Apparel and clothing	28	26.9	18	17.3	26	25.0	32	30.8	2.60	1.187	3
2	Food and Grocery	25	24.0	5	4.8	44	42.3	30	28.8	2.76	1.119	1
3	Footwear	41	39.4	23	22.1	20	19.2	20	19.2	2.18	1.156	6
4	Consumer durables/electronics	40	38.5	28	26.9	26	25.0	10	9.6	2.06	1.013	7
5	Jewellery, watches, other personal accessories	62	59.6	19	18.3	16	15.4	7	6.7	1.69	.966	8
6	Furniture and furnishing	73	70.2	16	15.4	7	6.7	8	7.7	1.52	.924	9
7	Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books	27	26.0	19	18.3	26	25.0	32	30.8	2.61	1.178	2
8	Beauty, wellness, personal care	24	23.1	24	23.1	38	36.5	18	17.3	2.48	1.033	4
9	QSR and restaurants	38	36.5	28	26.9	13	12.5	25	24.0	2.24	1.186	5

The mean value of all the variables ranges between 1.52 and 2.76 which indicates that all the variables lean towards either visiting or online. The standard deviation ranges between 0.924 and 1.187 which indicates that there was not much deviation in the respondents' opinions. Accordingly, the first preference was indicated toward Food and groceries. It is followed by Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books and Apparel and clothing. The least preference was indicated towards Furniture and furnishing and Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories. In other words, consumers prefer to buy the items such as Food and groceries; Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books, Apparel and clothing online whereas Furniture and furnishing, Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories prefer to buy by visiting the shop.

Precautions Preferred

Precautions preferred after the lockdown was ascertained using five variables. The opinion on these aspects was obtained using the opinion scale and the same has been shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Precautions Preferred

S. No.	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Body temperature checks every day	90	86.5
2	Sealed products	100	96.2
3	Regular sanitization	102	98.1
4	Minimal interaction	102	98.1
5	Home pick-up and returns	84	80.8
Total		104	100.0

The first preference was indicated toward Regular sanitization (98.1%) and Minimal interaction (98.1%). It is followed by Sealed Products (96.2%); Body temperature checks every day for all. The least preference was indicated towards home pick-up and returns. In other words, the consumers have more sense of precautions.

Expenditure

The expected shopping expenditure in post lockdown was ascertained using four variables. The opinions on these aspects were obtained using a five-point verbal scale such as Strongly disagree; Disagree; No Opinion; Agree and Strongly Agree. The mean and standard deviation were calculated based on the respondent's opinion. The ranks were assigned based on mean and standard deviation. The same has been shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Expenditure

S. No.	Description	Strongly disagree		Disagree		No Opinion		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Std	Rank
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%			
1	Decrease slightly	9	8.7	11	10.6	33	31.7	32	30.8	19	18.3	3.39	1.161	1
2	Decrease Substantially	11	10.6	16	15.4	38	36.5	26	25.0	13	12.5	3.13	1.150	2
3	Remain the same	24	23.1	26	25.0	34	32.7	17	16.3	3	2.9	2.51	1.106	4
4	Higher	25	24.0	18	17.3	32	30.8	20	19.2	9	8.7	2.71	1.267	3

The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.51 and 3.39 which indicates that all the variables lean towards either disagree or no opinion. The standard deviation ranges between 1.106 and 1.161 which indicates that there was not much deviation in the respondents' opinion Nearly 30% of the respondents have not provided any opinion on the four concepts as Decrease slightly; decrease substantially; remain the same and higher. On the contrary, nearly 40% of respondents disagree that the expenditure remains the same or higher the expenditure. Nearly 49.1% of the respondents indicated that the expenditure decreased slightly and 37.5% of respondents indicated that the expenditure decreases substantially.

Shops in Retail Stores

In regard to how soon the respondent's willgo shopping in retail stores/malls using an optional scale and the same has been shown in table 8.

Table 8: Shopping in Retail Stores

S. No.	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	As soon as all stores open	7	6.7
2	In the next 3 months	31	29.8
3	In the next 3-6 months	45	43.3
4	In the next 6-12 months	17	16.3
5	After a year	4	3.8
Total		104	100.0

Nearly 43.3% of the respondents indicated that they will shop in the next 3-6 months and 29.8% in the coming months. Only 6.7% of the respondents indicated that the respondents will shop as soon as all stores open and 3.8% indicated that they will shop after a year.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study were

- Consumer attitudes towards shopping during a pandemic are Excitedness; Things likely to buy; Mode of Shopping; Precautions preferred; Expenditure and Shop in retail stores.
- 73.1% were excited whereas the level of excitement differs as Somewhat; Moderately; Excited and Very excited.
- Only 26.9% of the consumers indicated that they have not excited about the lifting of lockdown.
- In the case of thinks to buy the first preference was indicated towards Food and Grocery. It is followed by Apparel and clothing and Beauty, wellness and personal care. The least preference was indicated towards Furniture and furnishing and Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories.
- Consumers prefer to buy the items such as Food and groceries; Sports goods, entertainment equipment, books and Apparel and clothing online whereas Furniture and furnishing, Jewellery, watches and other personal accessories prefer to buy by visiting the shop.
- The preferences for Precautions were Regular sanitization (98.1%) and Minimal interaction (98.1%). It is followed by Sealed Products (96.2%); Body temperature checks every day for all. The least preference was indicated towards home pick-up and returns. In other words, the consumers have more sense of precautions.
- Nearly 30% of the respondents have not provided any opinion on the four concepts such as Decrease slightly; decrease substantially; remain the same and higher. On the contrary, nearly 40% of respondents disagree that the expenditure remains the same or higher the expenditure. Nearly 49.1% of the respondents indicated that the expenditure decreased slightly and 37.5% of respondents indicated that the expenditure decreases substantially.
- Nearly 43.3% of the respondents indicated that they will shop in the coming months.

CONCLUSIONS

The study was carried out with the objective to identify the post-lockdown consumer attitude toward shopping. Further to know the things that consumers are likely to buy, and the mode of shopping, the consumers' precautionary attitude The study's other objectives are to know their opinion on Expenditure towards post lockdown shopping and opinion towards shopping in retail stores. The data collected through an online questionnaire from 104 respondents shows that there exists excitedness during post-lockdown shopping. Similarly, the study shows the significant differences in things likely to buy; opinion on Expenditure towards post lockdown differs and mode of Shopping among the consumers. The study also shows that there exists a sense of precautions that is preferred. The study also shows that the consumers were not willing in visiting retail stores since the pandemic set rights fully. The changes in consumer behavior often represent self-protective strategies aimed at managing depressive states and negative emotions by restoring a positive sense of self.

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