

## Impact of Covid-19 on Marketing Strategies of Retailer's for Enhancing Profitability and Customer Satisfaction

**\*Dr. Monika Khatri**

### **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic which emerged during the beginning 2020 has influenced the world-wide Economy and human life. The goal of this study is to find out the impact of COVID-19 in the retail sector with the various aspects. The research highlighted use of digital tools to enhance profitability and customer satisfaction. There was a wide scope in the retail sector which can be explored. Therefore the study recommended the use of various rethink strategies such as growth, expansion, diversification, product renewal and up gradation strategies. By personalized experience and target marketing the consumer attention can be attracted which will eventually result in higher profitability and enhanced customer satisfaction. This study is based on quantitative approach resulting in fact

**Keywords:** Pandemic, Covid-19, Research Methodology, Retail Marketing, Strategies, Digitalization, Social Media, ChatBot.

### **Introduction**

The COVID -19 pandemic which started in 2020 has spread in all over world, has affected and changed the whole world scenario. The Global Economy as well as human life both got affected. The impact of this crises was seen in various sectors including retail sector. This crises compelled us to think differently and select various strategies according the need of the hour. During the COVID-19 phase online shopping has boost 74% in all over world. In India Digitalization of retail sector also boost up. After Lockdown mostly retailers were also aware and precautious about digitalization and went on digital platform, and wants to go to every social media platform.

According to ASSOCHAM 300-400 million retail consumer digitally influenced by 2020.

The Retailers belief strengthened that E-commerce, Digital Marketing are strong method to survive in Lockdown situation in Pandemic. They adopt new and different type of strategic methods, technologies in this situation on ground level.

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Multiple retailers were already digitalized but in this situation most retailers adopted new techniques. The retail industry got adversely affected by these crises. There was a large scale economic impact on the retail sector which resulted in accumulated loss of 90,000 crore in the organized sector during the first two months of lockdown . In the lock down several parts of the country essential and non - essentials shops faced huge losses. The Pandemic changed the consumer behaviour and compelled people to live and think differently. Online adoption continued to accelerate sharply. The consumer mind-set was more diverted and inclined from offline to online market and e-commerce activities.

While staying at home consumers focused mostly on groceries, medicines and other essential things. In this challenging time every business had affected as well as retail industry also got affected so that they need to mitigate the disruption cause by this crisis. Retailers need to devise and implement new strategies for survival and profitability with customer satisfaction in this adverse scenario of pandemic.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Objectives of Study**

- To find out the retailers new strategies and model in the Pandemic situation.
- Adoption of Business continuation strategies and new techniques by the retailers.
- Finding out the rethinking strategies adopted by retailers to increase profitability.
- Adoption of digitalization techniques for customer satisfaction.
- To study new market segmentation and adopting techniques which are used by retailers.
- To study about their survival techniques to improve their business in this disruption phase.
- To study about the safety techniques along with flexible and agile business.

#### **Research Approach**

Research approach refers to the techniques or methods which are used by the researcher to solve the problem. For this study, quantitative approach was used.

#### **Sample Size**

A sample of 80 retail respondents was taken in India (Grocery's, Medical stores, Clothing and Accessories Store)

#### **Data Collection**

There are two data sources which were used for data collection Primary data and Secondary data.

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**Sources of Data Collection**

Primary and Secondary data has been used to collect the data. Primary data were collected by surveys while, the secondary data were collected through various published authentic newspapers, research papers and websites.

**Finding & Recommendations**

In this pandemic situation Retailers adopted many strategies which include the effective use of digital and E-commerce techniques. The use of online platform increased their business, Online platform provides different tools of digitalization like: customer support services, personalised offers and effective use of Chatbot, SMS, Telesales, Websites, Google Ad Etc. They are using cloud strategy. They used different types of shopping and business software's, AI, Navigation System for tracking, Social Media, Whatsapp In store facility, In store Kiosks etc. for expanding their business. Help of these tools they can cover large scale of market segment.

Any Retailers can adopt more strategies for enhancing the profitability, extend , scope , customers satisfaction and achievement in the pandemic situation by the following

**Recommendations:**

- By adopting various growth and expansion strategies with effective use of digital platforms
- Diversification of the product and factor market
- By product Renewal and upgradation for wider coverage
- By entering into segments like Fitness products, Home gym equipment, organic products, home décor, plantation and health products
- Retail merchant needs to streamline their delivery channels and models to ensure a safe delivery experience
- Creation of PIM (Product Information management) System for systematic , sustainable and structured selling
- To identify the imperative need so that customer can plan their need accordingly which will helpful in boosting sales and overall engagement
- Proper time management to ensure to timely delivery to retail products

The above recommendation will certainly help the retailers to recreate the online experience equipped by technology to enhance profitability and customer satisfaction in an effective and efficient manner.

The retailers must study the frame of mind of customers by provoking emotional shopping. This will enhance sales and profit both. Further proper demographic study will diversify the retail product

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beyond boundaries.

### Conclusion

At this time of pandemic and lockdown time most of people and businessmen are available on social media. Due to the social media, Internet services customer are more aware about the essential products and medicines and new products, safety products (like sanitizer, mask PPE kit) and new brands. Every small or large entrepreneur, retailers wants to connect their business with social media, shopping sites, own websites. Facebook and Instagram are the most popular social media platform .The study shows that 90% people believe that it is the most effective solution of brand promotion and business. The Retail sector profitability is increased many times due to the adoption of various strategies of growth, modification, expansion and renewal. The effective and efficient use of digital platform has eased out the whole scenario and worldwide coverage is now possible.

Retailers need to sense the demand and effectively manage the supply chain by proper use of technology tools to enhance profitability and customer satisfaction remarkably.

**\*Associate Professor  
Head of Department  
Bachelor of Business Administration  
Poornima University  
Jaipur (Raj.)**

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