

Caucasus International University



Chirag Kumar

Ethnic Peculiarities of International Marketing in Indian and
Georgian markets

International Marketing

The master's thesis has been completed to obtain the academic degree of Master
of Business Administration in Marketing

Supervisor of thesis: Nino Rukhaia-Mosemgvdlishvili

PhD in economics

Tbilisi

2020

Abstract

The presented paper is dealt with the concept of marketing as a science as well as factors/ aspects which are in relation to it in a broader sense. The master's thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of a newly developing scientific study i.e. marketing which is employed as a technique by companies/firms/ businesses to achieve economic growth. It discusses the historical advances within this field, some important definitions and the marketing mix concept. Discusses the most important method of formulating decisions by collecting information i.e. by conducting market research. An effective market research can be conducted by following certain specific steps which are mentioned in the chapter.

The second chapter underlies the importance of identification of consumer behavior and its elements for effective and successful marketing. An attempt to explain the concept is done using two important case studies, one from Georgia and one from India. How culture affects consumerism? What role it plays in consumer's lives? Has social media affected our purchasing choices? Is branding on websites a necessity for small businesses or large firms? These questions are answered by the third chapter which throws light on the Ethnic Marketing and the Digital Marketing techniques which can be perceived as an alternative to the traditional marketing methods (through TV, newspaper, pamphlets etc).

The last chapter throws light on the emerging industries in the global market. Again, one research study of each country i.e. Georgia and India has been taken up. While emerging Auto Business Sector in Georgia has been analyzed as a form of secondary research, Emerging Online Grocery Sector in India has been taken up as a primary research which is covered in the last section of the thesis. The purpose of the current research is to explore the Online Grocery market trends in relation to consumer attitude and behavior as well as to understand its dynamism in terms of COVID-19 pandemic.

საერთაშორისო მარკეტინგის ეთნიკური თავისებურებები ინდოეთის და საქართველოს ბაზრებზე

ჩირაგ კუმარ

ანოტაცია

წარმოდგენილ ნაშრომში განხილულია მარკეტინგის კონცეფცია, როგორც მეცნიერება, ასევე ის ფაქტორები/ასპექტები, რომლებიც მას უფრო ფართო გაგებით უკავშირდება. სამაგისტრო ნაშრომი შედგება 4 თავისგან. პირველ თავში მოცემულია ახლად განვითარებული სამეცნიერო კვლევის მიმოხილვა, ანუ მარკეტინგი, რომელიც კომპანიების / ფირმების / ბიზნესების მიერ გამოიყენება როგორც ტექნიკა, ეკონომიკური ზრდის მისაღწევად. თემაში მოცემულია ამ სფეროში ისტორიულ მიღწევები, მნიშვნელოვან განმარტებები და მარკეტინგის მიქსის კონცეფცია. მსჯელობს გადაწყვეტილების ფორმულირების ყველაზე მნიშვნელოვან მეთოდზე ინფორმაციის შეგროვებით, ე.ი. ბაზრის კვლევის გზით.

მეორე თავში მოცემულია მომხმარებელთა ქცევისა და მისი ელემენტების იდენტიფიცირების მნიშვნელობა ეფექტური და წარმატებული მარკეტინგისთვის. კონცეფციის გაანალიზება ხდება ქართული და ინდოეთის ბაზრის მაგალითებზე. ძირითადად განხილულია, თუ რა გავლენას ახდენს კულტურა მომხმარებლებზე, რა როლს ასრულებს ის მომხმარებელთა ცხოვრებაში, იმოქმედა თუ არა სოციალურმა მედიამ შესყიდვებზე, არის თუ არა ვებსაიტებზე ბრენდინგი მცირე ბიზნესის ან მსხვილი ფირმების აუცილებლობა და სხვა. მესამე თავში, მოცემულია ეთნიკური და ციფრული მარკეტინგის ტექნიკა, რომელიც შეიძლება აღვიქვათ, როგორც ალტერნატივა ტრადიციული მარკეტინგის მეთოდებისთვის.

ბოლო თავი შეისწავლის ინდოეთში სასურსათო ბაზრის ახალ ტენდენციებს კოვიდ-19-ის პირობებში. როგორ აისახა ვირუსი ეთნიკურ და კულტურულ მახასიათებლებზე და როგორ შეცვალა მომხმარებელთა ქცევა, ახალმა მსოფლიო გამოწვევამ.

List of Figures

Fig.1.1: Age composition.

Fig.1.2: Gender composition.

Fig.1.3: Occupational composition.

Fig.1.4: Employment sector composition of participants

Fig.2.1: Widely used online market websites for grocery purchase. (in percentage)

Fig.2.2: No. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig.2.3: No. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig.2.4: No. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig.2.5: The percentage of users and the source of knowledge about their respective brands.

Fig.2.6: The frequency of purchase of groceries online before COVID-19 lockdown

Fig.2.7: Frequency of purchase of grocery online during COVID-19 lockdown (March 23 onwards till present month of May)

Fig.2.8: The time taken by customer's respective company to resolve complaints/ issues faced by them.

Fig.2.9: Widely used third party applications for E-payments during online grocery purchase

Fig.2.10: The importance of 9 aspects rated on a 5 point Likert scale that should be undertaken by companies/ firms for its growth.

Fig.2.11: The likelihood of change of purchasing attitude from a trusted brand to a new brand that favors your preferences marked on previous item by participants/users.

Fig.2.12: The experience of customers of online grocery purchases over local shops/ vendors.

Fig.2.13: No. of people and their level of preference of COD over E-payments in the times of lockdown.

Fig.2.14: The level of resentment in customers of online grocery market due to company's policy of not entertaining for orders below a certain amount.

List of abbreviations

COD: Cash on delivery

No.: Number

OGC: Online grocery service

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Abstract | 2 |
| Introduction..... | 7 |
| CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW OF MARKETING, AS A SCIENCE | 9 |
| 1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND..... | 9 |
| 1.2 MARKETING AS A CONCEPT | 11 |
| 1.3 MARKETING RESEARCH | 13 |
| CHAPTER 2. BEYOND TRADITIONAL MARKETING | 17 |
| 2.1 ETHNIC MARKETING | 18 |
| 2.2 DIGITAL MARKETING | 21 |
| CHAPTER 3. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR..... | 24 |
| 3.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN INDIA. CASE STUDY 1 | 24 |
| 3.2. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN GEORGIA. CASE STUDY 2..... | 25 |
| 3.3 AUTO BUSINESS SECTOR (A GEORGIAN CASE ANALYSIS) | 29 |
| CHAPTER 4. ROLE OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR IN INDIAN ONLINE GROCERY INDUSTRY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INVOLVING ITS DYNAMISM IN TIMES OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC | 33 |
| 4.1. Models of online grocery market..... | 33 |
| 4.2 COVID-19 AND ONLINE GROCERY MARKET : CURRENT SCENARIO..... | 37 |
| 4.3 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY | 38 |
| 4.4 .RESULTS AND ANALYSIS..... | 43 |
| CONCLUSION | 64 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 67 |

Introduction

Marketing as a field or a study is never static rather is characterized by the mobilization of human capital, ideas that take the forefront towards revolutionizing the marketing strategy. Print media like newspapers, magazines, electronic media like radio, televisions and mouth word advertising may be important mediums to advertise but not sufficient neither a necessary one in current scenario where competitiveness between businesses as well as nations have shaped its way.

Ethnic marketing is defined as the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for ethnic identified customers, clients, partners, communities and for society at large. (American Marketing Association, 2013)

Also known as the multicultural marketing⁶, it is a practice which is focused on specific audiences belonging to a certain ethnic background, typically other than the majority's culture. It makes use of the specific languages, traditions, celebrations, religion and any other concepts to influence audience. It acknowledges perception differences as well as motive and belief differences among special groups of ethnicity and utilize their traditions, norms in order to maximize their access of business's products and services within population's minds by showcasing interest and appreciation of different cultures.

Emerging industries are entirely new or restructured industrial sectors, growing at a rate faster than the overall economy. Such industries usually come into being when customers need change, new technologies replace older ones, or when new socio-economic conditions emerge. Emerging industries, therefore, promises to significantly grow at a faster rate than the long-run trend of economic growth. This chapter proposes to highlight one of the major emerging industries, taking the case of two countries: Georgia and India.

current thesis fostering basic discussion and understanding of marketing as a science as well as a technique employed by persons, businesses, organizations etc for economic growth as well as popularity. Also, we want to study phenomena of consumer behavior used as a

marketing strategy. It also outlines the influencing factors of consumer behavior. This is explained by taking up two case studies, of India and Georgia each.

The purpose of the current research is to explore the online grocery market trends in relation to the consumer attitude and behavior and to understand its dynamism in times of covid-19 pandemic. The growing online grocery industry in the digitalized world is gaining importance and preferred by many people across the country where still local kirana/ ration shops are dominant in the present socio-economic condition of people. In India, the online grocery market is at a nascent stage. Currently, only ~0.15% (~ 2Mn out of ~1.35Bn) Indians make purchases through online channels, mainly due to abundant presence of physical grocery stores across the country. However, the market is anticipated to expand at a high compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of ~68.66% during the 2018-2023 period, to reach a value of INR 1,034.13Bn by 2023, from its 2018 value of INR 62.01 Bn. Due to increasing scope and popularity of industry in near future, the study is conducted to dwell on some factors relating to consumer and the industry trends also taking into consideration the current situation of COVID-19 lockdown where economy as well as human life is at stake.

LIMITATIONS: The data collected was less enough for good validity of results. Gender proportion as well as occupational proportion was not equal. This might have acted as an external factor to the results.

Also, since sample was taken from Delhi-NCR having an urban lifestyle, the findings will be in certain limitations while generalizing on Indian population where 68.84% live in villages, according to 2011 census of India, having minimum to no digital availability for grocery purchases.

The research paper's scope is limited in providing a detailed analysis and employ reliability and validity tests for better standardization.

CHAPTER 1. OVERVIEW OF MARKETING, AS A SCIENCE

Meghan Keaney Anderson¹² said, “Don’t push people to where you want to be, meet them where they are!”

(Baker, K, 2019)

1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The statement above brings our attention to a technique, frequently and indispensably employed as far as business is concerned, which has the potential for creation of transformation of the minds; not only for their benefit but for generating more profits. This is the power of *marketing*. Now, before moving any further so as to gain the conceptual understandings of the term and its current essentiality and potential, we must retrospect the history and the major footsteps taken in the field, some even before its conception.

Following is the timeline, of historical advances and developments in the field of marketing, from when the first newspaper advertisement was published to when the first social media site was created. (Jennovativem, 2017)³

1. 1704: First Paid Newspaper Ad- This was a real estate listing published in the Boston News- Letter seeking a buyer for an Oyster Bay, Long Island, Estate.

2. 1835: First Billboard Ad- This was a large format circus poster in New York measuring 50 square feet printed by Jared Bell. Leasing of billboards is recorded to have started in 1867.

3. 1836: First Paid Magazine Ad- French newspaper La Presse was the first magazine to include paid advertising in an effort to lower the price, extend readership, and increase profitability.

4. 1920: First Radio Ad Station- KDKA aired the nation’s first commercial broadcast. It was election day and the results of the presidential election for Harding vs. Cox was announced.

² M.K Anderson: VP of marketing @HubSpot; Host of @TheGrowthShow

³ Jena Ehlers: Owner of Jennovative Marketing LLC/ Jennovativem

5. 1941: First TV Ad- It was a 10 second TV commercial for Bulova clocks and watches during a Brooklyn Dodgers game against the Philadelphia Phillies on station WNBT (later became WNBC).

6. 1978 First Email Campaign- Gary Thuerk at Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC) created an email campaign advertising new computers sent to 400 email users on ARPANET. Although he confirmed making a net \$13 or \$14 million in sales the email received a mostly negative response. Instead of being known for the “Father of Email Marketing” he is known as the “Father of Spam.”

7. 1991 First Webpage- The first webpage was made by Tim Bernes-Lee and it was dedicated to information on the worldwide web. It ran on a NeXT computer at the European Organization for Nuclear Research, CERN.

8. 1993 First Video on the Internet- The first video online was a live feed performance by Severe Tire Damage, a garage band with employees of DEC Systems Research Center, Xerox PARC Company, and Apple Computer.

9. 1994 First Web Ad- On hotwired.com the first banner ad went live. It promoted seven art museums and was sponsored by AT&T. In four months, 44% of people who saw it clicked on it.

10. 1994 First Web Blog- Justin Hall created the first blog on Links.net while attending Swarthmore College. However, it wasn't until 1997 that the term “weblog” was established.

11. 1997 First Social Media Site was called Six Degrees. It allowed users to upload a photo profile and make friends with other users. However, it wasn't until 1999 blogging sites became popular creating the social media world we have today.

1.2 MARKETING AS A CONCEPT

A term coined by Dr. Philip Kotler⁴ was first introduced as a concept in an article published in the Harvard Business Review (1972). Marketing, as defined by Kotler is like “Satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process.” A decade later, he defines it as “a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they want and need through creating, offering, and exchanging products of value with others.”

The American Marketing Association defines marketing as “the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.” (October, 2007).

The Chartered Institute of Marketing (2017) refers to marketing as “the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably”. Marketing, thus becomes a study so as to foster the management between exchange of relationships. It refers to a process of generating attraction between business-to-business (B2B) or business -to-consumer (B2C) which would turn into sales and profit for any business providing goods or services. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2020)

For this, companies/ brands/ businesses make use of the ‘marketing mix’ a term coined by Prof. Neil H. Borden in 1953 which is essentially needed to market any good or service.

According to Prof. Borden, *“The marketing mix refers to the apportionment of efforts, the combination, the designing and the integration of the elements of marketing into a program or mix which on the basis of an appraisal of the marketing force will achieve the best objectives of an enterprise at a given time.”* (GKToday, 2016)
Original marketing mix was proposed by American marketing professor and author E. Jerome

⁴ Dr. Philip Kotler: S.C. Johnson & Son distinguished professor of International Marketing at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management

McCarthy⁵ in 1960. It is also called as 4 P's : Product, Price, Place and Promotion which helps in the process of marketing decision making. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2020)

Where four Ps are focused on a business-oriented marketing strategy, we also can't negate the importance of equally valuable idea of *four Cs*, consisting of Consumer wants & needs, Cost, Convenience, and Communication, which focuses more on consumer-based strategy of marketing. This model of 4 C's marketing mix is given by Lauterborn who wrote an article in Advertising Age stating about how present 4 C's model has replaced original 4 P's model of marketing mix. (Lauterborn, 1990, p. 26)

In this era of modernity, a number of mediums are available to us in order to promote our products and services with much ease like advertisements in newspapers, in TV's, digital marketing, network marketing and via social media influencers now-a-days and so on . This help in shaping the consumer behavior.

Marketing is a process of management which acts as a strategy used by companies to reach prospective customers and making them the customers of those services which the business or company provides. They focus on product, price, promotion, place and work on to deliver a customer value, cost, convenience and communication to customers.

⁵ McCarthy : American marketer and professor proposed concept of 4 P's marketing mix in his book 'Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach' (1960).

1.3 MARKETING RESEARCH

Marketing research consists of two words marketing and research. It is a process of organized and systematic collection of data, its analysis and the interpretation of the gathered information relating to marketing of products and services in accordance with the problem-solving purpose with respect to production and consumption.

According to Philip Kotler, “Marketing research is a systematic problem analysis, model building and fact finding for the purpose of improved decision-making and control in the marketing of goods and services.” (Akrani, 2011)

Marketing research should undergo these mentioned steps in the same order presented below. One can also find the following steps that are included in a formal research.

1. Defining the problem and opportunity.
2. Assessing available information
3. Reviewing internal record and files and interviewing employees
4. Collecting outside data (also told as primary research)
5. Organizing and conducting interpretation of data
6. Formation of marketing a decision and taking Actions.
7. Assessment of the results of the actions.

Step1 : Definition of problem

Now if we talk about step one that is defining the problem, it has found over the course of time that this first crucial step has often overlooked but it is one of the most important step. One must have the sight to look beyond the affects and symptoms casted by the problem in order to address its cause, labeling the given problem as a reduction in sales is not defining a cause but identifying the symptom. One must establish an outline of the problem that includes causes that can be evaluated objectively and also which can be examined too.

Step 2: Assess the information

Assess the information which is currently available to you. You may acquire already all the information which you need to determine, if the hypothesis is true. Solution of the

problem may have become obvious in the process of defining it. In cases where you are uncertain whether you need additional information to determine, you must weigh the cost of that information against its use fullness. The more localized figure you can find from published sources the better. One can also find many published material and much of it as free, you can through online sources, libraries, newspapers, magazines and in trade and general business publications. It is often noticed that trade and government resources are more rich.

Market research may also come from secondary resources. This information is what others have acquired and have already published, access to this secondary market research data may become accessible to you by asking on email, letter, phone call or perhaps a nominal fee for copying and postage. However, much of it is totally free. These are:

1. Trade association
2. Government information
3. Educational resources
4. Chamber of commerce
5. Market research firms

Step 3: Reviewing internal record or interviewing employees

May be you can find the most valuable source of information as your own employee, they know about the likes and dislikes of your customers. They hear customer complaints about you policies and services, they are aware of what customer are looking for and you are not offering moreover they can probably supply good customer profiles from their day to day contacts, whether its face to face contact or on the phone or that could be online.

Step 4: Collection of information

Research that you conduct may result you in having a direct contact with your customer or public which could be your future customer. You can collect information via:

Focus Groups: In this you gather a small group of people with an assigned leader, the leader will hold the discussion and this could be monitored and observed by you and your company's management team.

Customer Survey: In this you must conduct a survey in your existing customers and must also focus on potential customers.

Step 5: Conducting interpretation of data

You must organize this collected data from different sources and should convert it into meaningful information, one must go back to definition of the problem, should compare it with the findings and data should be prioritized and must be ranked according to its importance.

- What marketing strategies are suggested?
- How they can be accomplished?
- How are they different from what I am doing now?
- What current activities should be increased?
- What current activities must I drop or decrease in order to devote adequate resources to new strategies?

Step 6: Formation of market decisions and under taking actions

The next step is to prioritize each possible tactic from the stand point of determining the following:

- Immediate goal to be achieved
- Cost of implement
- Time of accomplish
- Measurement of success.

Step 7: Assessment of the results and actions

Out of all possible strategies select best two or three that appears to have greater potential impact or are most easily achievable and begin them into action.

For each strategy develop tactics, which may include

- Staff responsibilities
- Necessary steps
- Budget allocations
- Time with deadlines for accomplishing strategic steps.
- Progress measurement should be taken.

Based on this information, make a final decision on strategies and go to work on the tactics. Assessing the result of your actions analyze your progress against success measures. And if adjustments are appropriate take them. At conclusion of the time you have allotted for accomplishing your goal, take a hard look on the results.

- Did you achieve your goal?
- Should the decision be renewed on larger scale?
- If you are disappointed with the result, determine why the plan went wrong.

CHAPTER 2. BEYOND TRADITIONAL MARKETING

Marketing as a field or a study is never static rather is characterized by the mobilization of human capital, ideas that take the forefront towards revolutionizing the marketing strategy. Print media like newspapers, magazines, electronic media like radio, televisions and mouth word advertising may be important mediums to advertise but not sufficient neither a necessary one in current scenario where competitiveness between businesses as well as nations have shaped its way. This chapter focuses on the two recent and the popular becoming ways of marketing especially in 21st century.

1. Ethnic Marketing
2. Digital Marketing

No doubt that these forms of marketing act as an alternative yet innovative style to market one's product and services, these are also cost-effective, profit yielder and a public engager mode of marketing. This is widely now taking pace in formulating strategies from small businesses to bigger brands, helping them to achieve their respective goals. This becomes possible in the present times where amalgamation of science & technology as well as cultural ethics is influencing the way we live and thus affecting directly our purchasing attitudes and consumer behavior.

2.1 ETHNIC MARKETING

Ethnic marketing is defined as the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for ethnic identified customers, clients, partners, communities and for society at large. (American Marketing Association, 2013)

Also known as the multicultural marketing⁶, it is a practice which is focused on specific audiences belonging to a certain ethnic background, typically other than the majority's culture. It makes use of the specific languages, traditions, celebrations, religion and any other concepts to influence audience. It acknowledges perception differences as well as motive and belief differences among special groups of ethnicity and utilize their traditions, norms in order to maximize their access of business's products and services within population's minds by showcasing interest and appreciation of different cultures.

Important aspects: Two important needs to be considered in any ethnic market.

- i) needs of population belonging to a certain ethnic, religion based, linguistic group etc.
- ii) ii) recognition of products and services that have capability to satisfy needs in their lives that arise from people's perceptions, beliefs and value systems present in and as a result of culture. (Demangeot, Broderick, & Craig, 2015)

As a result of globalization, societies are getting diverse in terms of not only race, religion and culture but also beliefs, customs, opinions and value system which has a role in impacting lifestyle of the individual; thus a need for a multicultural marketing approach to marketing strategies. The saying '*one size fits all*', no longer can be applied and therefore strategies for recognition of different ethnic backgrounds must be considered while formulating marketing techniques.

1. New opportunities in competitive markets: Due to increased competitive pressure among industries, companies seek for novel ways to earn profit and seek customer loyalty.

Thus, ethnic marketing seeks to represent an opportunity to differentiate a company's offering in saturated market places and to develop new products.

2. Size and buying power: Ethnic minorities are 30% of US population, and African Americans are expected to rise by 20% in next 20 years, Asian Americans by 68% and Hispanic Americans by 64%. The combined buying power of these minorities along with Native Americans exceeds \$1.5trillion, gain of 231% from 1990. Thus, ethnic groups are a sizable segment that has the ability to buy.

3. Breakdown and concentration: Ethnic groups tend to live in more tightly knit communities, where referrals carry even more weight than in general population. In top 10 US Hispanic markets, you can reach about 45 % of Hispanic population. In top 10 African Americans markets contain about 39% of population. The top 10 Asians markets contain 64.6% of population. This shows that ethnic marketing segments are actionable and identifiable.(Brannan, Costa, Decarne, Gardner, & Heymans, 2014)

4. Culture and consumer behavior: Culture has a large influence on marketing strategies as it affects communication channels, consumer behavior, and advertisings norms and standards.(de-Mooij, 2014)

The marketing mix and the 4P's (product, price, promotion and place) play a role in establishing a marketing strategy. (Kotler, 2013) Several factors are employed to achieve growth and profit levels.

1. TARGETING

- Focusing on psychographics is the key i.e. recognizing people's attitudes, opinions, customs that shape consumer behavior.
- The three R's: Respect, Relevance, and Recognition is important.
- Contacting ethnic groups for marketing purposes.
- Cultural cues in advertising like 'Namaste' (Indian word)-joining hands to greet used by Asians can be shown in Georgian ads to attract Asian customers towards a product.

- Word of mouth and networking

2. USE OF MEDIA

- Newspaper ads, billboards and bus boards wherein same message is conveyed in direct mail campaign without a call to action.
- Radio as a useful tool to reach younger crowd.
- Visibility is achieved when involved in community events in areas with high concentrations of ethnic markets targeted.
- Contact with associations since each nationality has unique differences even among speakers of same language.

For example: When in 2002, Heineken was losing its market share. The marketing team observed that Hispanics and Africans will be much bigger in size than Caucasians by 2030. So they started a campaign featuring Jay-Z, an African American rapper who became a trend setter and an opinion leader. Soon, 30-50 million people, 50% of them were not living in cities collectively had \$300B of buying power. This showed that African-American was an under penetrated market for Heineken. Thus, ethnic marketing is a trend to correct previous failures is marketing strategy. (Brannan, Costa, Decarne, Gardner, & Heymans, 2014)

1. Innovation: Both marketers and companies have to be creative constantly to find novel ways to find solution and develop strategies and new products.

2. Growth: It refers to increase in profits and market share for companies or brands.

3. Collaboration: This will bring minorities as well as general population together in order to promote brand and company. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2020)

Ethnic marketing represents an indispensable focal lens for the purpose of international marketing and cross cultural consumer research in regard to growing economic demands. Apart from that, changes in infrastructure, technology, economic development, consumer mobility resulted in cultural interactions giving rise to cross cultural market demand. Ethnic marketing or the multi cultural marketing is becoming a focal point of marketing

research, since marketing is now viewed as more dynamic and not based on static values anymore.

2.2 DIGITAL MARKETING

In the high tech era of competitive markets, a number of digital strategies, tactics and channels are utilized by the companies to connect with the customers where they spend most of their time online. It is a component of marketing that utilizes internet and online based digital technologies such as desktop computers, mobile phones and other digital media and platforms to promote products and services. The online branding assets such as digital advertising, email marketing, online brochures and a spectrum of tactics fall under the umbrella of 'Digital Marketing.'

It is vital for one's business and brand awareness. Almost every brand has a website. They have a social media presence or a digital ad strategy. And this is the type of marketing on which consumers rely as a way to learn about brands.

Digital marketing as an instrument provides with so many options and strategies to be creative and allows the company to experiment with a variety of marketing tactics on a budget.

Not only this, it provides them to use tools like analytics dashboards to monitor success and ROI of advertising campaigns which is an edge over traditional promotional mediums like print ads or billboard.

TYPES OF DIGITAL MARKETING

- 1) ***Search Engine optimization:*** This is a process of optimizing website to rank higher in search engine page results, thereby increasing amount of organic traffic for website.

2) ***Content marketing:*** This defines the creation and promotion of content assets for purpose of generating brand awareness, traffic growth, lead generation and customers. Eg. Blog posts, E-books, info-graphics

3) ***Social media marketing:*** This is about promotion of brands and their content on social media channels to increase brand awareness, drive traffic and generate loads of business. It happens in Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest.

4) ***Pay per click:*** It is the method of generating traffic to one's website by paying publisher every time their ad is clicked. Common type of PPC is Google Ads.

5) ***Affiliate marketing:*** It is a performance based advertising wherein one receives commission for promoting other's products on their website. For Example. Hosting video ads through YouTube Partner Program

6) ***Email marketing:*** This is used by companies to connect with audiences, to promote content, discounts and events and direct people toward business's website. Email marketing campaign includes blog subscription newsletters, follow up emails to website visitors, customer welcome emails etc. Other types include native advertising, marketing automation, online PR, inbound marketing and sponsored content.

It works for all businesses regardless of what company sells. Two types of marketing are explained below:

i) ***B2B Digital Marketing:*** Here, strategy is to be centered around online lead generation, with the goal being for someone to speak to a salesperson. Thus, it strategy has to attract and convert highest quality for your salespeople via your website or supporting digital channels like LinkedIn.

ii) ***B2C Digital Marketing:*** Here, goal is to attract people on your website and have them become customers without communication with salesperson. Thus, strategy must focus on building an accelerated buyer's journey from

visiting your website to making a purchase. Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest are more appropriate than business focused LinkedIn.

BENEFITS OF DIGITAL MARKETING:

It allows marketers to see accurate results in no time. It allows them to measure the ROI of any aspect of your marketing efforts.

It helps in viewing website traffic by digital analytics software, and number of pages visited by which device apart from other digital analytics data. Attribution Modeling It allows marketer to identify trends in way people research and buy your product, helping to make more informed decisions about strategies. Content performance and lead generation. This is done by collection of demographic information of people who downloaded the online brochure.

Digital marketing, therefore, can't be ignored. And as Bill Gates suggests, "The internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow". Thus, beyond traditional marketing, we approach the business worlds from perspectives of ethnicity and digitalization. (Alexander, 2020)

It is concluded that ethnic marketing is necessary in expanding the consumer market base as well as retaining customer loyalty coming from that particular ethnicity, race, community etc. Digital marketing is beneficial in assessing numbers, which helps in making informed decisions about market trends, is cost effective and reduces time. Thus, these two types of marketing should go hand in hand with traditional methods of marketing for high growth achievements.

CHAPTER 3. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

3.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN INDIA. CASE STUDY 1

Before entering into any market arena, one must work on understanding the behavior of consumers before selecting product, deciding price, setting marketing goals and assuming position in the market as well as calculating or predicting any profit. Since the examination of consumer in relation to its purchasing behavior and making choices is very crucial, we must study the customer/consumer on the basis of four major factors that are :

- (i) Psychographic
- (ii) Demographic
- (iii) Ethnographic and
- (iv) Geographic. (Bindra, 2019)

In psychographic, we talk about splitting consumer on personality traits, values, attitudes, interests, motivation and lifestyles shared by them. In demographic, we tend to classify consumer on the basis of biological age, marital status, education expense beyond high school and on the basis of combined family income. In ethnographic, we divide the consumer on the basis of their culture and moral ethic, religious beliefs. In geographic, we divide consumer on the basis of the location of their residence, and position of the terrain they live amidst. Understanding with the help of a case study gives a clear understanding about the concept.

In 2002, a 75-year-old Indian actor, Amitabh Bachchan became the UNICEF goodwill ambassador for the polio eradication campaign in India. During initial TV advertisements, he was seen as a polite person begging for people to have their young ones vaccinated, but nothing worked out for quite a long time. As a strategy to understand the target population's behavior, they started looking the consumer profiles (buying roles, initiator, influencer grandparents, decider grandparents, buyer mother, consumer baby) in the 3 cities and villages to look for the failure of their polio campaign. It was felt that the influencers or the decision

makers of Indian families, which are generally the elders above 50, couldn't relate to Bachchan's figure being of a polite man. They were more attracted and used to his role of an angry young man in the 1970s. Due to that positioning of the actor they were not convinced with actor's request. In this way, they learned about the psychographic and demographic aspects of consumer behavior and made changes in their advertisement campaign and asked the actor to promote the 'pulse polio campaign' with his older appearance of 'Angry young man' which finally worked and people started turning up on pulse polio booth in their nearby centers. (Bindra, Dr. Vivek Bindra: Motivational Speaker, 2018); And only on 27th March, 2014, India was declared a polio-free nation by World Health Organization. (Abrol, 2017)⁶

3.2. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN GEORGIA. CASE STUDY 2

A study⁷ was conducted by (Todua & Jashi, 2015) with the purpose of focusing on the attitude of Georgian consumers towards the social media and the influence of social media on consumer buying behavior. The aim was to find out how small business companies harness the platform of social media in Georgia. Since because of EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA) and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), 500 million consumer's market is going to be opened soon.

As of this situation, it is seen that the social media has drastically changed the role of consumers in business industry throughout the nation. Also with existing and new political and economic challenges, social media becomes an important innovative strategy to be utilized by the consumer as well as producers. No doubt social media has strengthened the confidence, familiarity within companies by allowing users to communicate with other users of different brands.

⁶ Abroi, S. (2017). #WorldPolioDay: How Amitabh Bachchan drove India to become polio-free. India Today

Thus, studying any marketing strategy without probing social media's impact on behavior aspect within the business is impossible. Therefore, companies are marketing through internet e-art chosen as a direction for fast guaranteed success. This is important in today's highly competitive environment where in consumer loyalty is affected by smallest of mistake. For the social media engagement, three reference groups of consumers are identified to be used by a marketer as an approach to influence consumer behavior.

(i) Primary group: It is in frequent contact with the potential customer and key influence in purchasing behavior.

(ii) Secondary Group: It has limited contact with customers, and may act as a reference during decision making situations.

(iii) Aspiration Group: It has no contact with customer, but has potential to pull out consumer attraction and can influence and recommend towards purchasing decisions.

Literature also reveals that there are two purposes for which social media are integrated into marketing mix.

i) It leads visitors and customers to the correct information or data. Companies that provide individual messages and content directly to customers interest them. A study conducted by a digital marketing agency ODM group, 74% of consumers rely on social networks to guide our purchase decisions.

ii) According to the media experts, from 2012 Georgian survey social media, Facebook is becoming a strong venue for marketing and PR. As per Georgian authorities, small business is recognized as one of the main priorities in nation's development as it encourages mobilization of human and material resources to create jobs and meet market demands. Thus, the initial challenge faced by them is to employ an effective advertising method to attract potential customer. Due to high cost of traditional media advertising, social media and word mouth marketing is the only option which becomes a service to satisfy customers.

iii) Social media allows customers to have an informal relationship with the company and their views, and attitudes can be used by the representatives of company for growth.

It was conducted in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital city with a group of 600 people who were social network users. This research was based on exploratory and descriptive research design. A five- point Likert scale, a ten-point staple scale and a seven-point semantic differential scale were used in the questionnaire. Results were analyzed through SPSS statistical software for windows.

Findings

- It reveals that all respondents agree that companies must have right social media marketing strategy to win customer loyalty of new customers. It also revealed that social network requires technical skills, computer literacy. Access to internet in rural areas is one limitation.

- Research shows the impact of different demographic background on purchasing behavior. Consumers of between 20-35 years mostly trust social media while making purchase than other segments. Consumers of age 40-45 make buying decisions twice in a year wherein 65%of them are being employed.

- 85% Georgian entrepreneurs acknowledge the importance of social media to increase partnership relation with customers. Not only this, social media is simple way to showcase unique qualities of their product and services. Tourism industry is best example wherein in recent years, steps have been made in tourism business, promotion of Georgian historical places, folk traditions, fantastic resorts and cuisine to foster Georgians tourism development.

- Only a small number of small businesses in rural areas ignore its importance and don't see feedback of social media activities.

Conclusions

- According to average Georgian consumers view, more fresh content posted daily better will be the chance a business has of getting on first page of search. Marketers see it as a medium for brand promotion by consumer engagement.

- Most of the consumers have A positive perception towards social media marketing practices. Research suggests significance of social media to have an impact on its marketing tools on consumer behavior.

- It is an effective instrument to develop small businesses which is helpful to access EU markets via business to business networking cluster cooperation and so on. The potential for dialogue about brands and products is good way to build partnerships, customer engagement inside and outside of Georgia.

- It is concluded that proper marketing technique is effective after identification of consumer in terms of psychographic, demographic, cultural and geographical factors.

Where in India, Polio eradication campaign became a success after consumer behavior identification, Georgia's consumer behavior influences the kind of marketing mode the companies/small firms or businesses can employ for their market growth and achieving profits.

3.3 AUTO BUSINESS SECTOR (A GEORGIAN CASE ANALYSIS)

Following is the case analysis of the document prepared by (Bochorishvili & Mamrikishvili, 2019) conducted by JSC Galt & Taggart⁸. The research conducted had Eva Bochorishvili as head of research and Tatia Mamrikishvili as analyst.

It has been seen that for over a decade, Georgia has managed to work out with simplification of rigidities in terms of customs procedures, trade costs and worked out for favorable reforms. Georgia has made import- export faster compliance possible and also upgraded infrastructure for trade. A very noticeable data comes out from World Bank Doing Business Report of 2019, according to which Georgia ranks 43 out of 190 nations on grounds of ease in trading across borders. According to the report, time taken by Georgia to export goods from its boundaries is only six hours, which is far below from 12.5 hours needed in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in high income nations. In this way, successful reforms that took place in Georgia have enabled it to becoming a car exporting country even without having a car producing units/ industries.

Auto-business : An important industry

Basically, there is a strategy adopted for carrying out auto-business. The automobile sector in Georgia is about importing cars from various countries and then re-exporting them to neighboring countries. The vehicles that are imported are generally second hand ones, mostly used by other customers. These are repaired in Georgia and then sold out in the domestic and foreign markets. The result of this economic activity is that Georgia is able to create and develop a strong domestic auto parts and auto servicing sectors.

Sub-sectors and turnover

The Auto Industry of Georgia consists of three major sub-sectors.

1. Sale of automobiles
2. Automobile parts
3. Automobile servicing and repair

⁸ ("Galt & Taggart") is a member of Bank of Georgia Group PLC

Sale of automobiles is the largest sub-sector that has the turnover that accounts for 64.7% of the total in 2018, which is followed by auto parts (31.9%) and auto servicing (3.4%). Also, the turnover for Auto business posted impressive growth of 14.8% CAGR over 2010-18, achieving GEL 2.6bn in 2018.

Cars : second-largest export and import product

In 2018, car exports accounted for 12.2% of the total country's exports and 6.6% of total imports. Talking about car re- exports, it stood at US\$ 408.9mn whereas car imports reached US\$ 598.2mn, up 74.1% y/y and 25.4% y/y, respectively in 2018. With this, cars have been the second largest export and import product in Georgia.

CAR TRADE: The US became the largest car shopping market for Georgians since 2017 replacing Japan, affected by tax policy.

1. Over 2012-2016, Japan was Georgia's largest source of car imports which accounted for nearly half of its share of total car imports.
2. In the meantime, 2017 onwards, there were 60% lower excise taxes on hybrids and an increase in excise taxes on fuel. This policy spurred hybrid car imports from the US. And as a result, imports from the US skyrocketed (rising 54.3% y/y to US\$ 198.1mn in 2017), surpassing Japan in 2017-18. Increased Demand for Toyota hybrid cars were increased as a result. This boosted imports from Belgium (US\$ 125.4mn) also where Toyota's European Head Office is located.
3. Most of the cars that were imported from Belgium were actually new 2017-18 models. In 2018, Japan still was in third position, with US\$ 49.5mn of import value (-58.5% y/y).

Government measures shifted demand to more expensive cars.

In 2018, the average price of imported cars almost doubled to US\$ 9.5K from US\$ 5.4k which was in 2016. This was a result of reforms in excise taxes, which ignited the import of new, eco-friendly cars, along with flourishing re-exports.

Car importers are companies as well as individuals

- Majority of cars (53.9% or 33.7k cars in 2018) are imported by individuals for personal use or for the purpose of resale, in 2018.
- By worth, legal entities become larger (64.9% in 2018) since they traditionally import more expensive automobiles.

Car exports from Georgia rebounded in 2017 after three consecutive years of contraction

The improved economic environment in the area (particularly in Azerbaijan and Armenia) as well as a gradual improvement in car import standards to meet Azerbaijan's minimum requirements supported the recovery of exports.

New standards introduced in Azerbaijan – Georgia's largest export market (57.0% of total) in 2013 – hit car exports in 2014-16: Azerbaijan introduced Euro-4 regulations in April 2014. This was done so as to allow imports of cars that were manufactured only after 2005. Regional economic slowdown of 2015-16 further weighed on Georgia's car re-exports. As a result, in 2014-16, exports to Azerbaijan fell significantly, before recovering since 2017.

Azerbaijan is top car export destination by value and Armenia by quantity

Before 2014, Azerbaijan used to be Georgia's top car re-export market by both value and quantity. But, this changed since 2014; while Azerbaijan is still top re-export destination by value (46.5% of total in 2018).

Armenia is top car export market by quantity. Average price of car exports in Armenia stood at US\$ 3.5k in 2018 – 4.2 times lower than Azerbaijan and 1.8 times lower than Ukraine.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is one of the richest markets for Georgia at an average price of US\$ 56.3k per exported car in 2018, with nearly 450 cars exported annually in 2010-18.

Ukraine: Third largest re-export destination from 2017.: Ukraine emerged as third largest re-export destination for Georgia as it was supported by the significant reduction in Ukraine's excise tax rates from August 2016 on used vehicles manufactured after January 2010.

As a result, the export value to Ukraine reached US\$ 49.9mn, grabbing 12% market share in Georgia's total car exports in 2018.

With good trade infrastructure and knowledge of car trade, Georgian car dealers need not be excluded in order to grab new export markets if possibilities arise.

AUTO BUSINESS SECTOR PERFORMANCE

- Auto business turnover has been recovering since 2016 following the contraction in 2014-15.
- The sector posted a 17.4% CAGR over 2016-18. Automobile sales have largely supported this growth, posting a 19.9% CAGR over the same period.
- Automobile sales totaled GEL 1.7bn in 2018 which was possible because of increased re-exports and a shift to more expensive car sales on the domestic market. Net profit margin of auto business sector shown in figure. See appendix.

Auto business net profit margin averaged 5.1% in 2015-17 – in line with the total trade sector's average of 5.2%.

The auto business is characterized by low profitability despite large turnover. Sales of automobiles and auto parts constitute 97% of the sector's revenue; both of these have high cost of sold goods. This puts pressure on their margins.

Therefore, auto servicing sector is the most profitable sector, among the sub-sectors in the auto sector, with an average operating profit margin of 23.1% in 2018 followed by auto parts at 7% and auto sales at 4.5%.

Conclusion

It is concluded that among the three sectors of auto industry working in Georgia, the most profitable one is the auto servicing and repair sector with a profit margin of 23.1% in 2018. The takeaway point which is to be learned in this section is that the easing of rigidities in terms of trade barriers, costs, government policies, custom procedures etc turned out to be a good step towards building an infrastructure in order to flourishing this type of trade across borders.

CHAPTER 4. ROLE OF CONSUMER ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR IN INDIAN ONLINE GROCERY INDUSTRY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INVOLVING ITS DYNAMISM IN TIMES OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

4.1. Models of online grocery market

In India, the online grocery market is at a nascent stage. Currently, only ~0.15% (~ 2 Mn out of ~1.35 Bn) Indians make purchases through online channels, mainly due to abundant presence of physical grocery stores across the country. However, the market is anticipated to expand at a high compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of ~68.66% during the 2018-2023 period, to reach a value of INR 1,034.13 Bn by 2023, from its 2018 value of INR 62.01 Bn. (BusinessWire, 2019)

Online grocery sector along with the companies, marketers shapes the consumer attitude which influences the consumer behavior. The next chapter attempts to provide the reader with the understanding of trends in online grocery market with the help of a primary marketing research conducted for Indian population.

The online grocery market in India, which is a segment of the e-services industry, operates with the help of grocers either in the form of a supermarket, e-commerce platform, or a brick-and-mortar grocery store that provides its customers with the facility of ordering grocery online.

Market Insights

- Sandeep Aggarwal, Co-founder, Pinkcitykirana says, “The Indian food and grocery market ranks 6th in the world. As compared to other developed countries that are already sitting at online grocery market in billions of dollars, Indian online grocery market has managed to reach a size of \$150-200 million in the past 4-5 years.” (Entrepreneur Contributors, 2015)

- In India, the online grocery market is at a nascent stage. Currently, only ~0.15% (~2Mn out of ~1.35Bn) Indians make purchases through online channels, mainly due to abundant presence of physical grocery stores across the country. However, the market is anticipated to expand at a high compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of ~68.66% during 2018-2023, to reach a value of INR 1,034.13Bn by 2023, from its 2018 value of INR 62.01 Bn.
- The Indian Online Grocery Market is projected to grow from around \$569 million in 2018 to \$3.6 billion by 2024 (BusinessWire, 2019)

This market is classified into Packaged Food & Beverages, Personal Care, Household Products, Fruits & Vegetables, and Others. The largest market share is held by Packaged Food & Beverages segment, while the Personal Care and Household Products segments are expected to grow at the fastest pace in the coming years. Packaged Food & Beverages category is expected to continue its dominance because of increasingly fast-paced lifestyles, rising per capita income levels and growing working women population. (Research & Markets, 2020)

There are superficially 2 models based on which this OGC works: Inventory based model and Hyper local model. (Paul Monalisa, 2018)

1. Inventory based model

It involves managing its warehouse with cold storage and fleet of refrigerated trucks offering quality fresh groceries by delivering to the customer. This is expensive, integrated e-model in terms of high working capital, wastage cost of perishable items, higher operation cost (procurement, quality check, storage, inventory planning).

Example: Big Basket directly purchases inventories from suppliers like P&G, HUL, farmers, mills and stores and store them in their own warehouses.

2. Hyper local model

In this, companies do not own up their own infrastructure. They tie up with local shops / kirana shops or order fulfillment. There is zero inventory and storage costs, thus the average expense from debt shoulder decreases by 70%.

Example: Grofers, Peppertap are delivery apps having their own delivery boys and ties up with local merchants to source ordered items.

For new start-ups, hyper local model is convenient to gain customer attraction with less of challenges than inventory model.

Key drivers to growth:

Major significant reasons for such a remarkable growth of Indian OGS is accounted for:

i) Growing customer acceptance

This has been increasing in recent years in terms of increased awareness about convenience of process and digital literacy and increasing internet and smart phone penetration.

High investment on customer retention by investors because grocery is an indispensable commodity for households.

ii) Favorable policies

Indian union government has developed smart cities with a state of the art infrastructure for setting up different models of E-business and online transactions.

Due to this, online grocery retail market witnesses a growth rate of approximately 25-30% in Indian metropolitan cities and other emerging cities.

iii) New market entries

Increased focus of online marketplaces like Flipkart, Amazon in grocery segment also boosted the sector.

iv) Changing mindsets

This is accounted for by a number of factors like rise in number of working women, the technically advanced millennial and secure payment infrastructure are major boosters for this type of market in India. (Business Wire, 2019)

Key deterrents to the growth of the market

- Maintaining inventories for perishable items is a difficult task which leads to losses in monetary terms. Furthermore, delivery charges, handling and packaging are costly.
- Difficulty in maintaining a loyal customer especially in India where people tend to switch between different companies with inclination towards those providing discounts, special offers, less delivery charges etc. Thus, this market is highly competitive.
- The Indian grocery market is dominated by ~12Mn local physical grocery stores. Most of the Indian families still prefer purchasing grocery from the 'kirana' stores, because of lack of trust, thus hindering generation of revenue for online grocers. (BusinessWire, 2019)

4.2 COVID-19 AND ONLINE GROCERY MARKET : CURRENT SCENARIO

2020 had not been a very favorable year from its starting due to the occurrence of Corona virus pandemic. Not only did it affect the mortality rates, but its impact could be seen in majorly all the industries.

Shortly after PM of India, Narendra Modi announced nationwide 21 day lockdown on March 24, the online grocery delivery's demand had gone through the roof.

With COVID-19 lockdown, people try to stay home as much as possible. Due to this, the already established companies like Big Basket and Grofers initially had to face hardships in keeping up with the exorbitant consumer demands as well as shortage of workforce due to contagion of virus.

While six warehouses of Grofers were shut down due to which they had to reschedule over 260k orders, on the other hand Big Basket's warehouses were locked down by authorities in Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Patna, Pune and Kochi due to which its 100k orders were impacted. It lead to cancellation of orders and refunding money to company's wallet.

Almost all the firms and companies had to suspend their services temporarily, due to misinterpretation of lockdown guidelines by local authorities and police (which explicitly allowed for essential services like groceries), as a curfew, shutting down warehouses, stopping trucks with supplies at state borders and harassing delivery boys in neighborhood areas. (Shashidhar, 2020)

Furthermore, E-commerce companies and mobile wallet apps even real estate rental portals shifted their focus towards groceries. Even food delivery apps like Swiggy and Zomato also started considering Grocery to put in their cart. In these times, all delivering groceries so as to help people cope up with lockdown through their grocery delivery services and acting as a savior. (TechDesk Contributors, 2020)

Presently, all established grocery companies have been able to resolve their issues by hiring new executives, enhancing supply chains and partnering with other companies.

Even though the services are now operational, due to the fear of contagion as well as lack of trust towards these companies, the pandemic has impacted the behavior of consumer significantly.

4.3 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study was conducted to find out the affect of delivery charges and three other situational factors on consumer's grocery channel choice. Findings suggested that all the four situational factors affect consumer's shopping channel preference. It further established that delivery charges are not the most important factor. (Huang & Oppewal, 2006)

Another study was conducted (Sharma, Nair, & Jyotishi, 2014) to identify various patterns of buying grocery online and factors affecting the process of buying. The results showed that the quick delivery process is the most favorable and positive odd for people. Younger people prefer online grocery shopping more than older one. However, this relation is not significant.

An extensive framework based research was published by (Sriram, Kesharwani, & Desai, 2017) which aimed to conceptualize and test an integrated model of online grocery buying intention by extending technology acceptance model by adding several antecedents of online grocery shopping behavior. Results found to have a significant impact on perceived ease of use and usefulness supporting the proposed model. Findings also suggested importance of entertainment value and economic value as key variables which shape the buyer's satisfaction and purchase loyalty behavior.

In a Consumer Behavior Survey, conducted by Capgemini Research Institute (2020), 59% of consumers worldwide said they had high levels of interaction with physical stores

before COVID-19, but now only 24% see themselves in that high-interaction level. Amazon website had 2.54 billion visitors in March 2020, representing a 65% jump compared to the same period in 2019. Walmart Grocery app saw a record download representing 460% growth in average daily downloads amid COVID-19, which is 20% more than Amazon. (Tech Crunch, 2020)

Also, an article was published in Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics to assess the long lasting effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the nature of food supply chains including growth of online grocery delivery sector and extent to which consumers will prioritize local food supply chains. The paper suggests that an element of food distribution that is undertaking significant change during COVID-19 pandemic is the expansion of online grocery deliveries which would be beneficial for those practicing stay at home and social distancing orders as well as older people due to risk of contagion. This represents an opportunity for the food retailing sector to service an important community need and to build reputational capital with customers. The expansion of online grocery services would receive a sustained upward shift in adoption even post-COVID-19. (Hobbs, 2020)

RATIONALE OF STUDY

Since the marketing field, in post-modern world, is one of the key aspect for any business or service / government activity as strategy to growth and development as well as a platform for generating employment, studying it as a research subject provides us with the conceptual understanding beyond the conventional sources of knowledge like books, magazines, reports used as a second person/observer. Thus, the purpose of conducting a research is to gain a hands-on experience of what has been studied and learnt so far as well as to find out the insightful experiential with respect to the field.

In the digital world, amidst Covid-19 pandemic, when almost all the services are shut down, one such growing industry especially in India comes to the notice i.e. OGS providing essentials to the people in the crisis. The fact that not many studies have been conducted over its relationship with the consumer behavior and the potential of this soon-to-be booming

industry actually makes it more needful to be researched. Since all the economies are witnessing massive slowdown, this industry stands to mark its contribution. In a developing country like India, where digitalization is still in the process of making a substantial pace in comparison to other more developed nations, conducting in the times of crisis like COVID-19 and documenting the findings for the concerns of safety, minimizing expenditure would be high in relevance for foreseeing the future challenges that might awaits us.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the current research is to explore the marketing trends in relation to the consumer attitude and behavior and to understand its dynamism in times of covid-19 pandemic. The objective and research questions/ hypothesis stated below would define itself as a guiding force for the present study.

Objectives

1. To explore the consumer behavior towards the OGS. This is in terms of:
 - (i) Widely used online grocery brand
 - (ii) Largest medium for advertising
 - (iii) Company's understanding of consumer behavior (duration for resolution of complaints)
 - (iv) Widely used third party app for e-payments
 - (v) Consumer's resentment towards company policy (of not entertaining orders below certain amount)
2. To explore the consumer attitude towards the OGS. This is in terms of:
 - (i) Convenience of using website/app
 - (ii) Quality of goods and services
 - (iii) Delivery worker's services
 - (iv) Essentiality of aspects to be undertaken by company/brand for growth.
 - (v) Change of preferences from trusted brand to strategic one
 - (vi) Preference over local vendors/ shops

3. To understand the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on consumer's choices.

- (i) Frequency of purchase before covid-19
- (ii) Frequency of purchase during covid-19
- (iii) Preference of cash on delivery over E-payment

Hypothesis

- (i) Covid-19 affects the frequency of consumer's purchasing behavior from online grocery companies.
- (ii) The approximate time taken is 3 to 7 days for any company to fix customer's complaints/ issues.
- (iii) Consumer's preference towards a trusted brand can be changed with the incoming of another brand's favorable strategies.
- (iv) A decrease in preference for cash-on-delivery practice in times of COVID-19.
- (v) Company's policy of not entertaining for home deliveries below a certain amount of order leads to resentment in customers.

Instrument used

The instrument used is a self-created survey which has 2 sections of questionnaires. First section aims to tap the demographic details of each participant which includes email address, age, gender, occupation and the employment sector. The second section contains the list of questions which the respondent has to answer. It has 14 No. of items with a combination of Multiple choice questions, Likert scale based items.

Likert scale is a measuring scale of scores which the participant has to rate its responses. Item No. 1,5,6,7,8,9,13 consist of MCQs whereas item No. 2,10,11 use a five point Likert scale, item No. 4 use a four pointer Likert scale and item No. 3,12,14 use a three point Likert scale. Those items based on MCQs are given so, as per the demand of the question asked like 'what brand do they use', 'which source the knowledge of brand come from' etc. Those items based on 5 point Likert scale are given so since the question requires a wide range of

responses to be recorded; as in 'how likely are you to rate the particular brand in terms of convenience of using app'. Those items based on three point Likert scale are given so since the question asked doesn't require a wide range of degree of responses rather than it perhaps needed to record two positions of the response and one neutral, middle one. It is to be noticed that the item number 4 has been placed under the 4 point Likert scale as opposed to 3 point and 5 point Likert scale, since it asks about rating the delivery worker's services (behavior, body language, communication and personality) where the possibility of participants to give a neutral response is higher in case of dilemmatic question like this. So a four point Likert scale would thus eliminate the score of neutral responses, and would give a clear picture.

Sample

In the current research, the sample size is 175. A primary research where in data is collected from residents of Delhi who are above the age of 16 and are customers of online grocery services. Out of this number of participants, 128 are females and 46 are males.

Design of study

The current study is a type of quantitative research involving primary source of data collected. It involves a descriptive research design and is a form of cross-sectional study. This is an exploratory research since no such studies have been conducted with such a wide scope the current research aims to offer.

Also, the data was collected from the sample of 175 through a self- created survey made on Google forms and was circulated online via different social media platforms like Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram to those meeting the sample requirements. Thus, it was a non-probability sampling in general and a convenience method of sampling in particular.

4.4 .RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the current research, data was analyzed after the collection of 175 responses from customers which provide us with insightful results with respect to the objectives and the hypothesis formulated.

Section1: Demographic Details

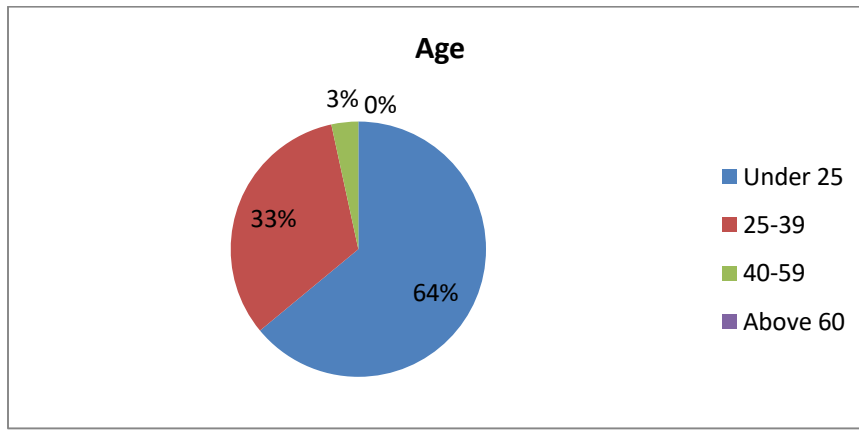


Fig 1.1 shows age composition.

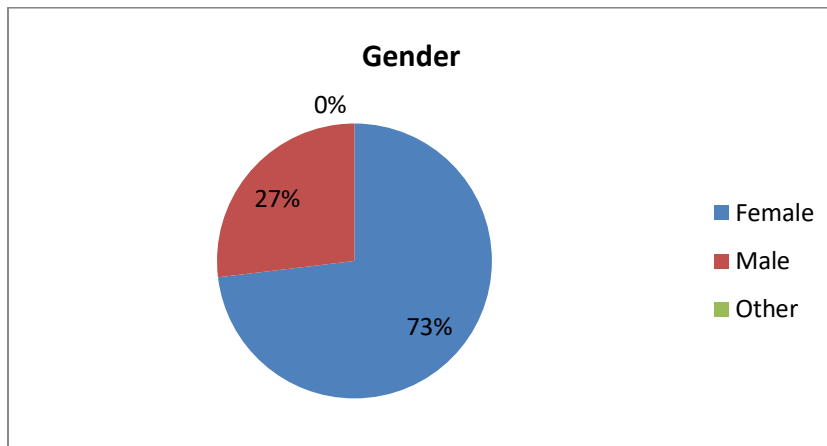


Fig. 1.2 shows gender composition.

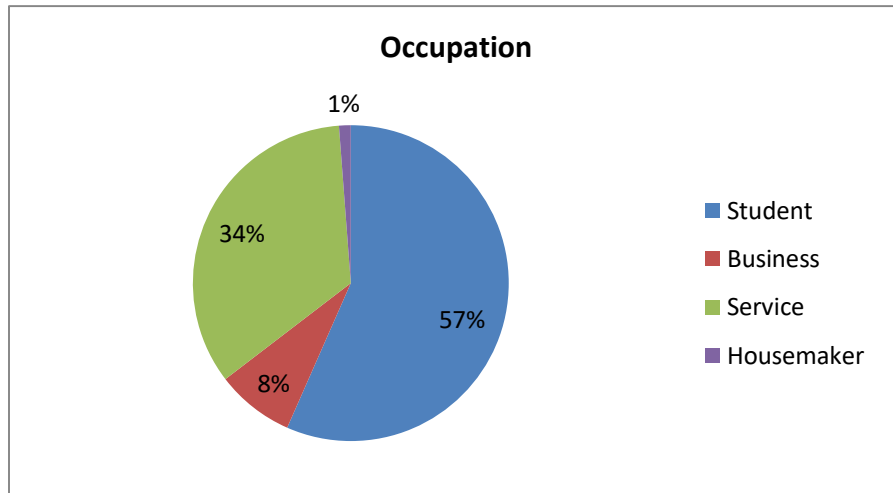


Fig. 1.3 shows occupational composition.

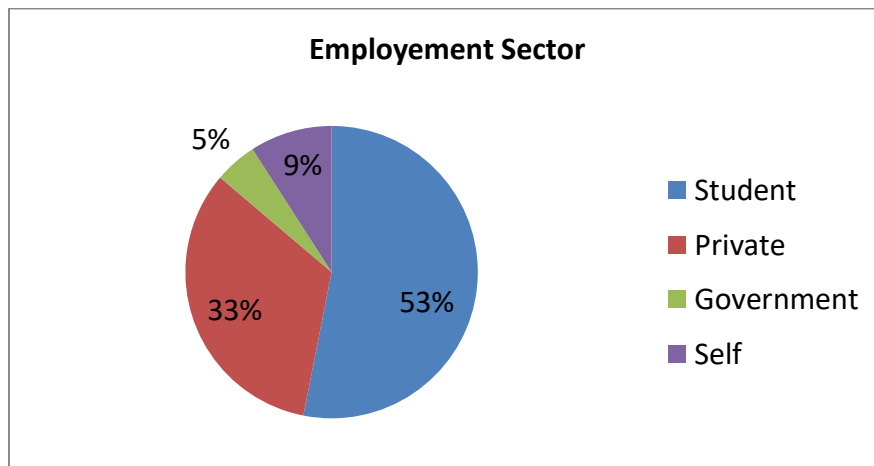


Fig. 1.4 shows employment sector composition of participants.

Section 2: Questionnaire Responses

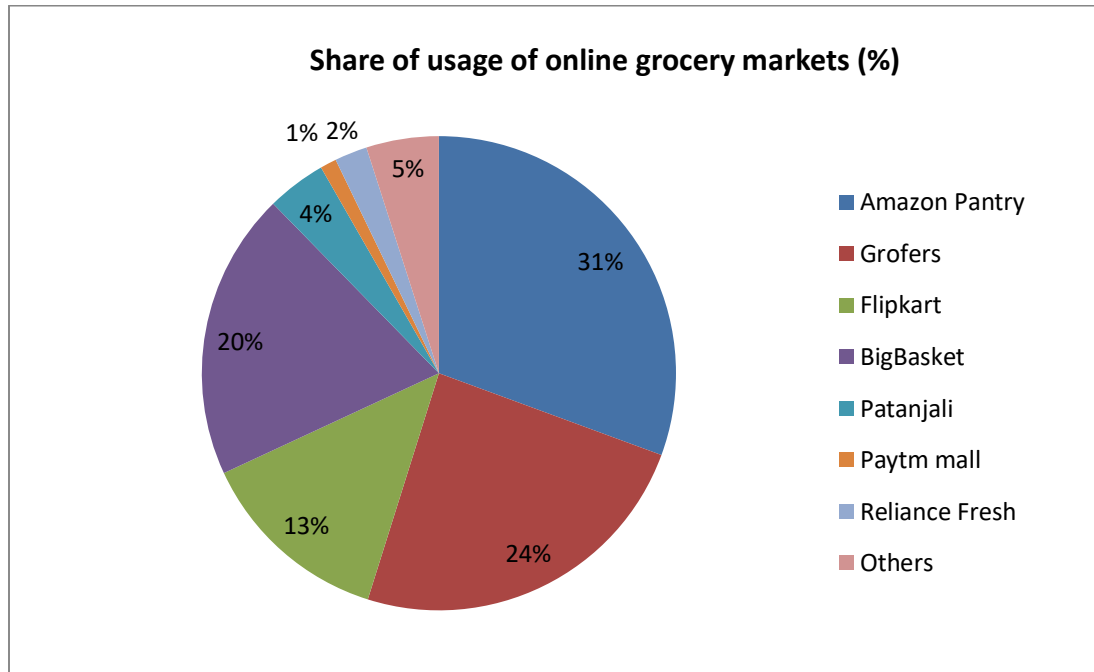


Fig. 2.1 shows widely used online market websites for grocery purchase. (in percentage)

Fig.2.1 shows that the majority of customers selected Amazon Pantry as the most used online grocery brand with a 30.3% of total responses. This is followed by Grofers with 24% and then Big Basket with 19.4% of total responses and then Flipkart with 13.1%.

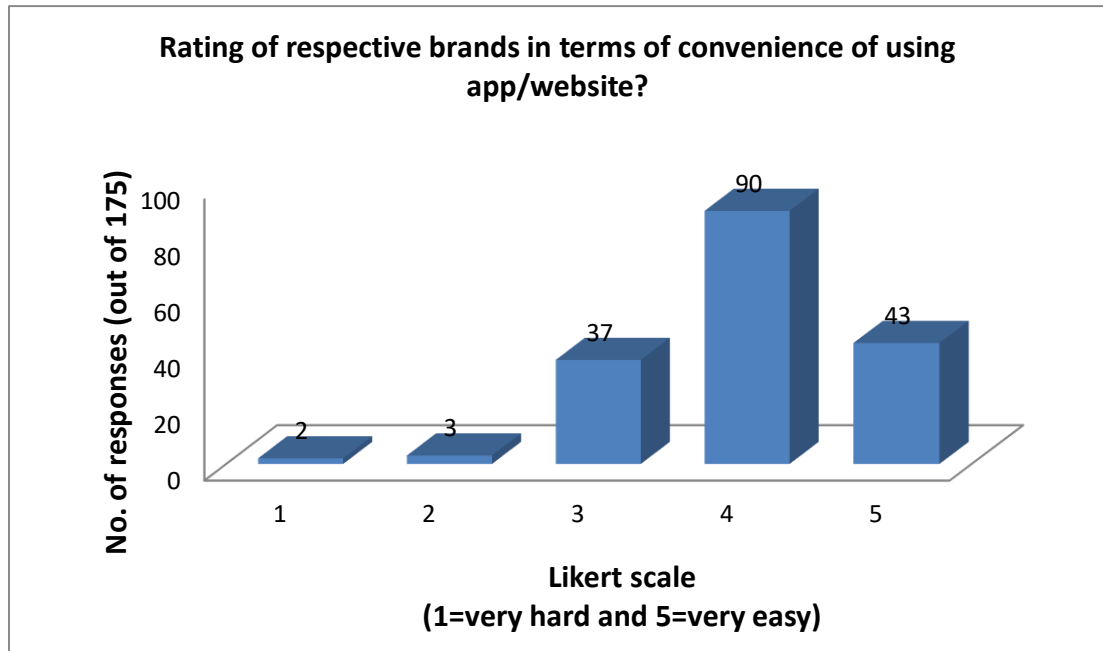


Fig. 2.2 shows the no. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig. 2.2 shows that the 51.4 (90 responses) % of customers rated 4 on a scale of 1 (very hard) to 5 (very easy) for their particular brands in terms of convenience of using the company's app. Similarly, 24.6% people (43 responses) rated the company at score of 5 whereas 21.1 % (37 responses) rated at score of 3. 1.7% (3 responses) rated for score 2 whereas as 1.1% (2 responses) felt the degree of convenience of application as very hard. Rating of 4 would imply that majority consider it easy or convenient to use its application/website.

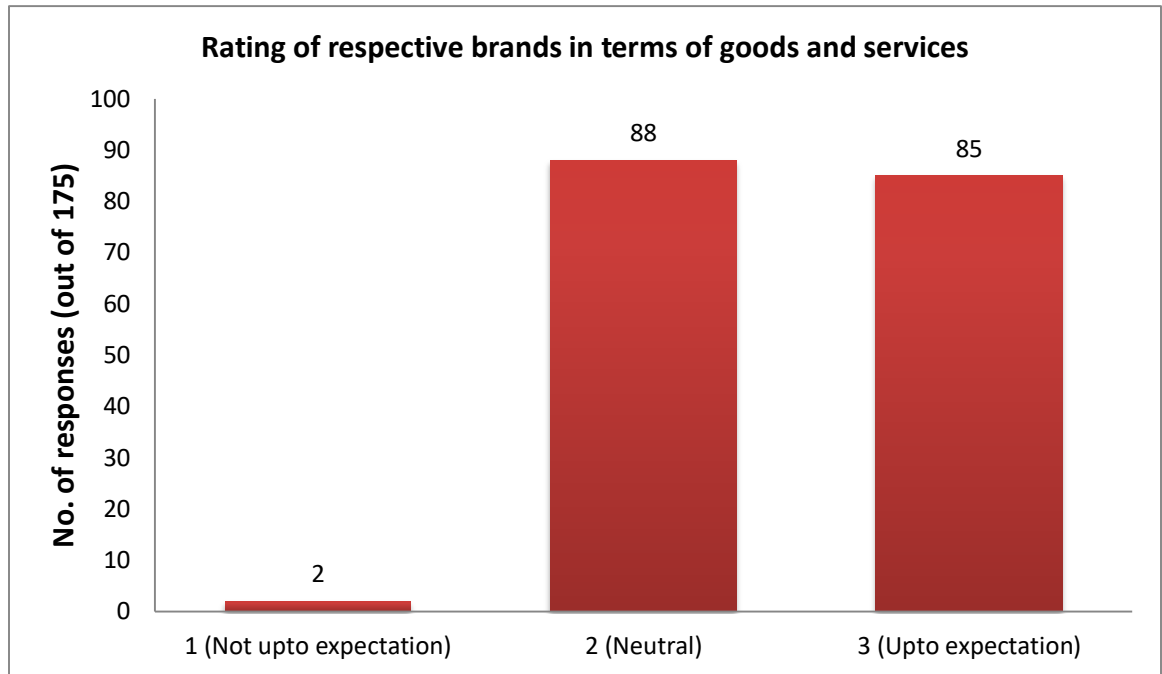


Fig. 2.3 shows no. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig. 2.3 shows that 50.3% (88 responses) of customers find the quality of goods and services neither 'up to the expectation' nor 'not up to the expectation', but somewhere in middle of the two states of expectations. 48.6% (85 responses) rated it as up to the expectation whereas 1.1% (2 responses) rated it as not up to the expectation.

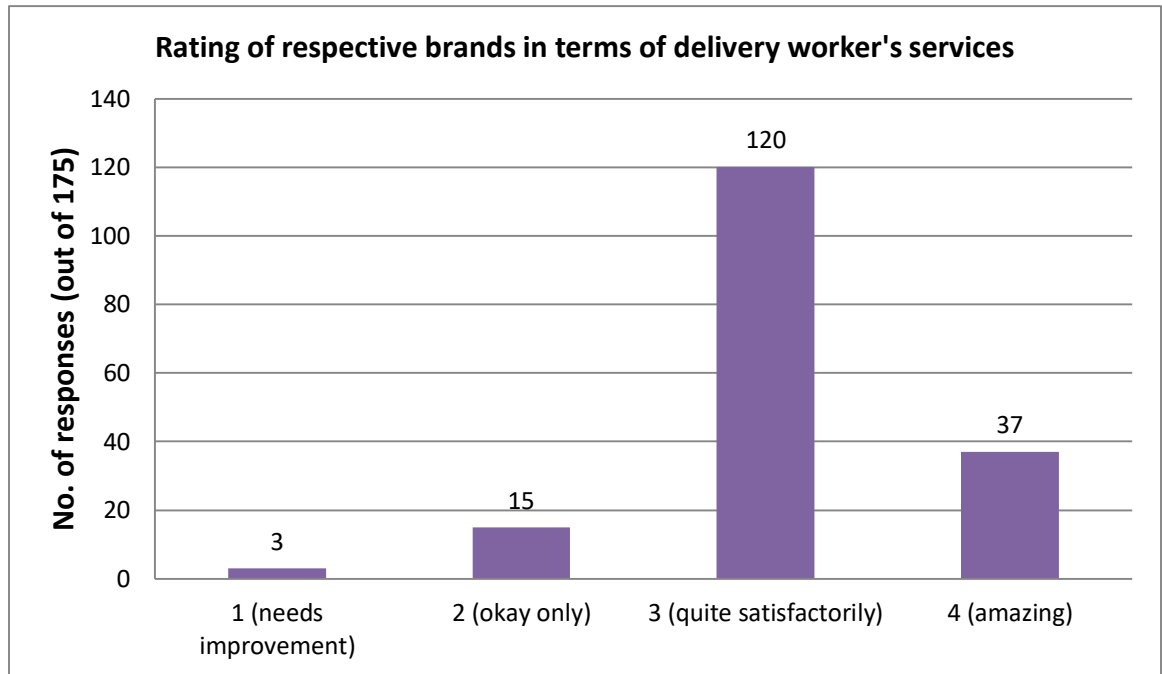


Fig. 2.4 shows no. of responses (out of 175) rated on each score.

Fig. 2.4 shows that 68.6% (120 responses) of total participants of the research find the company's delivery services in terms of worker's behavior, communication, overall body language and personality as quite satisfactorily, thus, rating of 3. Similarly, 21.1% (37 responses) rated for score of 4 i.e. amazing, 8.6% (15 responses) rated for score of 2 i.e. okay only whereas 1.17% (3 responses) rated score of 1 i.e. needs improvement.

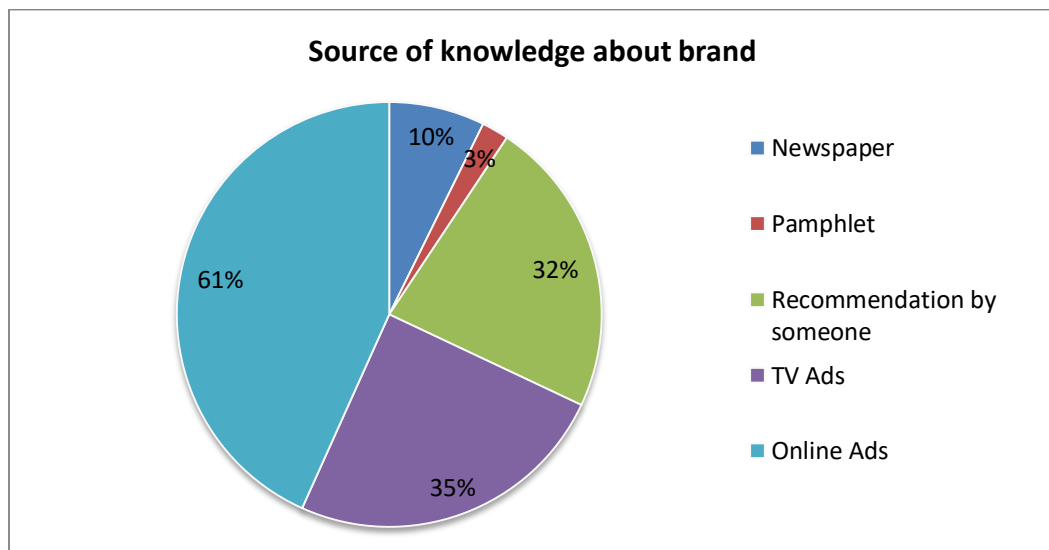


Fig. 2.5 shows the percentage of users and the source of knowledge about their respective brands.

Fig. 2.5 shows that the largest source of knowledge about the brand comes through the medium of online advertisements constituting 61.1% (107 responses) of total sources mentioned. This is followed by TV ads (34.9% i.e. 61 responses) and recommendations from friends, family, colleagues etc (28% i.e. 49 responses).

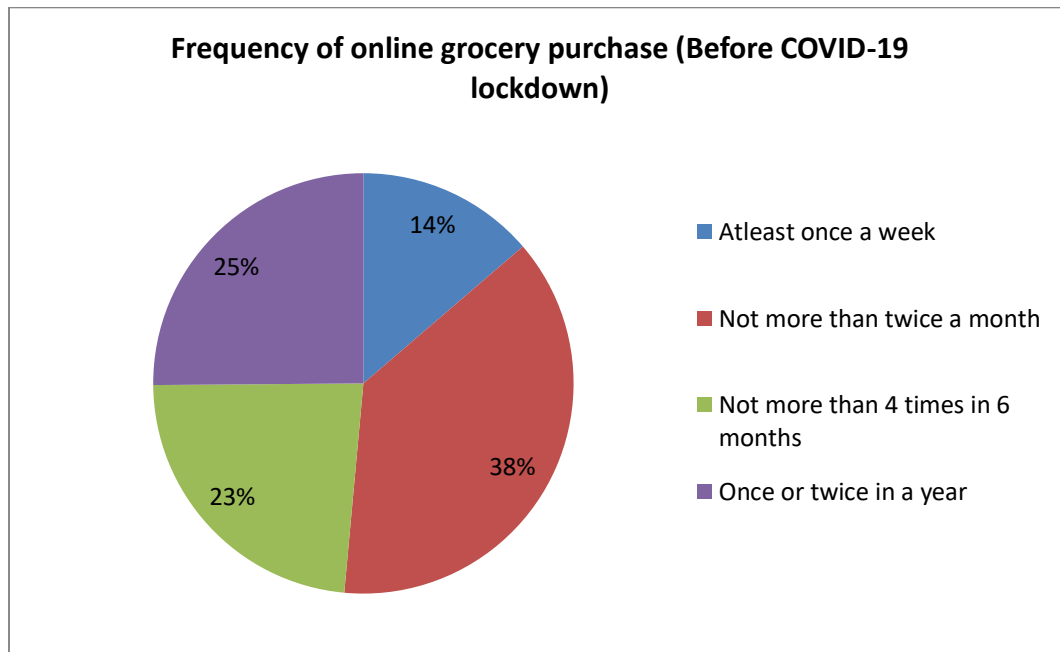


Fig. 2.6 shows the frequency of purchase of groceries online before COVID-19 lockdown (Before March 23, 2020 onwards)

Fig. 2.6 shows that majority of customers i.e. 37.7% (66 responses) of total ones used to buy groceries from online grocery stores not more than twice a month before lockdown due to covid-19 pandemic. 23.4% (41 responses) rated for not more than 4 times in 6 months and 25.1% (44 responses) rated for once or twice in a year. A minority section constituting 13.7% (24 responses) bought items at least once a week.

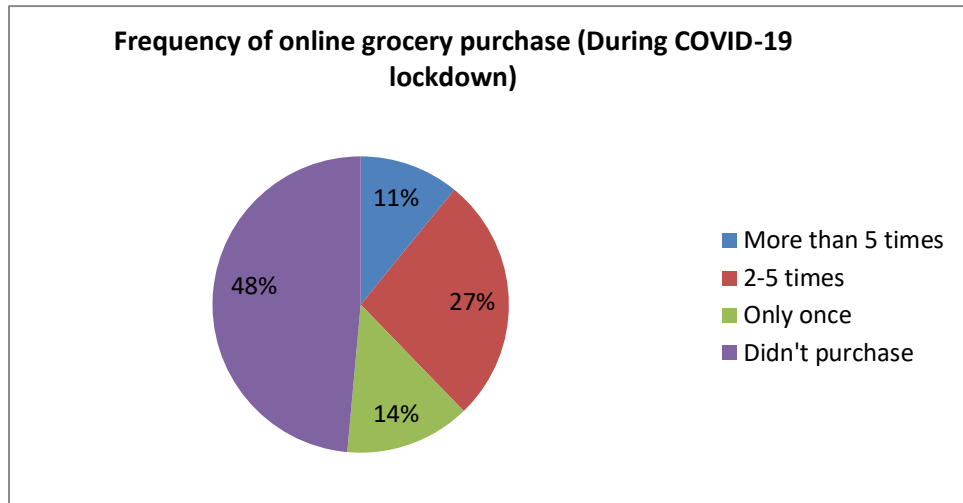


Fig. 2.7 shows frequency of purchase of grocery online during COVID-19 lockdown (March 23 onwards till present month of May)

Fig. 2.7 shows that 48.6% (85 responses) being the majority section of total customers did not purchase from online grocery websites during covid-19 when the city is under lockdown (march-may). 26.9% (47 responses) purchased 2-5 times, 13.7% (24 responses) purchased for only once whereas 10.9% (19 responses) purchased groceries online more than 5 times.

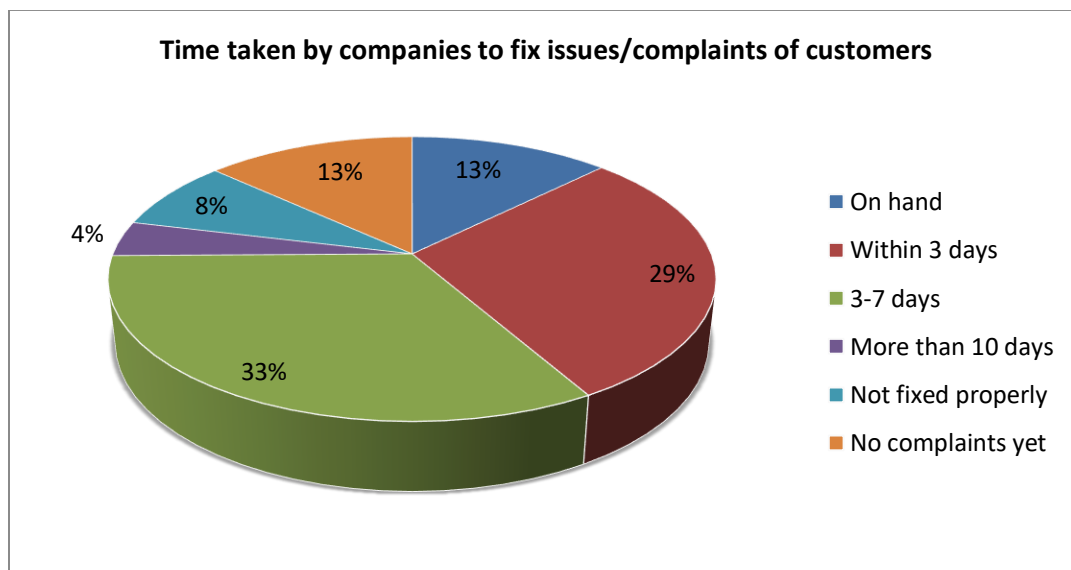


Fig. 2.8 shows the time taken by customer's respective company to resolve complaints/ issues faced by them.

Fig. 2.8 shows that it takes within 3-7 days for any company to fix the issues/complaints regarding service/product as responded by the majority people i.e. 33.1% (58 responses) who participated in the survey. 12.6% (22 responses) resolve it on hand whereas 29.1 % (51 responses) resolve within 3 days. 8% (14responses) reported that the problems had never been fixed.

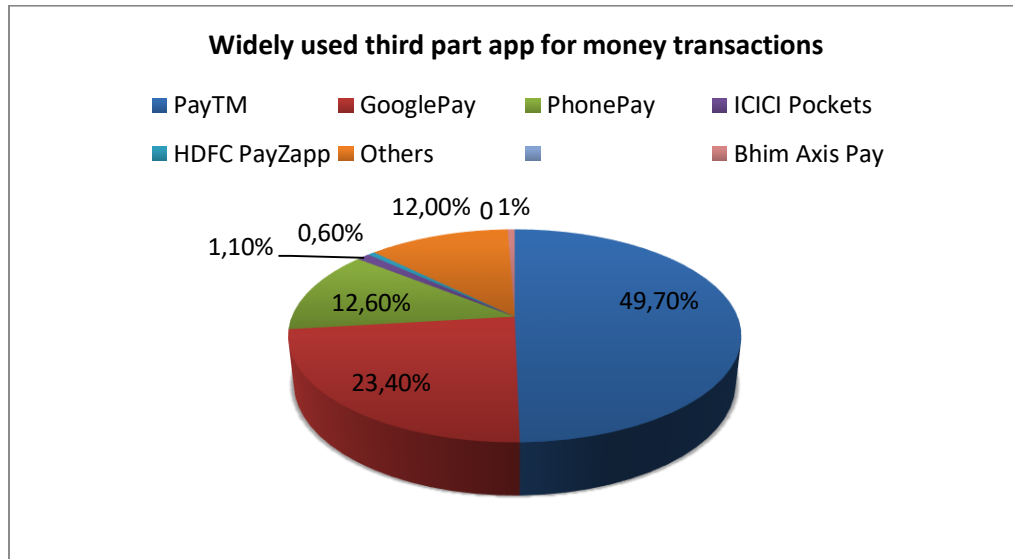


Fig. 2.9 shows widely used third party applications for e-payments during online grocery purchase

Fig. 2.9 shows that the Paytm, (responded by 49.7% i.e. 87 responses) is the most often used third party application to make e-payments and other online transactions in the process of online grocery purchase. After that, comes Google Pay with 23.4% i.e. 41 responses and then the PhonePe with 12.6% i.e. 22 responses.

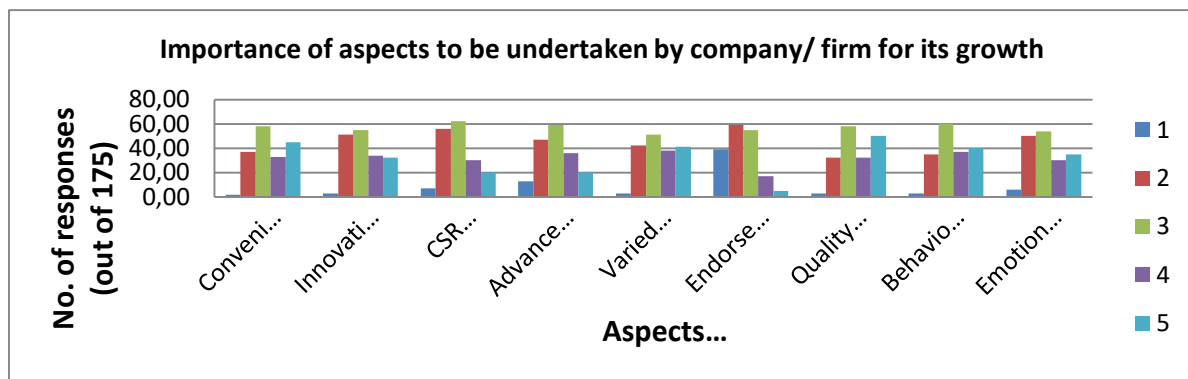


Fig.2.10 shows the importance of 9 aspects rated on a 5 point Likert scale that should be undertaken by companies/ firms for its growth.

Fig. 2.10 shows the respective degree of importance of aspects that should be undertaken by any firm for its growth. Out of 175 participants in the study, in a scale of 1 (least essential) to 5 (most essential), all the 9 aspects are given score of 3 by the majority except 5th aspect i.e. endorsements by celebrity. The aspects of ‘convenience of using application/website (58 responses), innovations in buying offers and variety of goods (55 responses), CSR practices (62 responses), advanced tools like automated responder system (59 responses), varied payment modes (51 responses), quality of product (58 responses), behavior and personality of staff/ delivery workers (60 responses) and emotional appeal/public trust (54 responses) are rated at score of 3, whereas dimension of celebrity endorsements responded by 55 people is rated 2 on scale of 1 to 5.

Fig. 2.10 also shows that the score of 5 on a 5 point likert scale (shaded in purple color) is rated by 45 people for the dimension of ‘convenience of using application/website’. Similarly, it is seen that 32 people for innovations in buying offers/variety of goods, 20 people for both CSR practices and advanced tools like automated responder system, 41 people for varied payment modes, 5 people for celebrity endorsements, 50 people for quality of product, 40 people for delivery worker’s behavior and personality, and 35 people for emotional appeal/public trust gave score of 5 respectively.

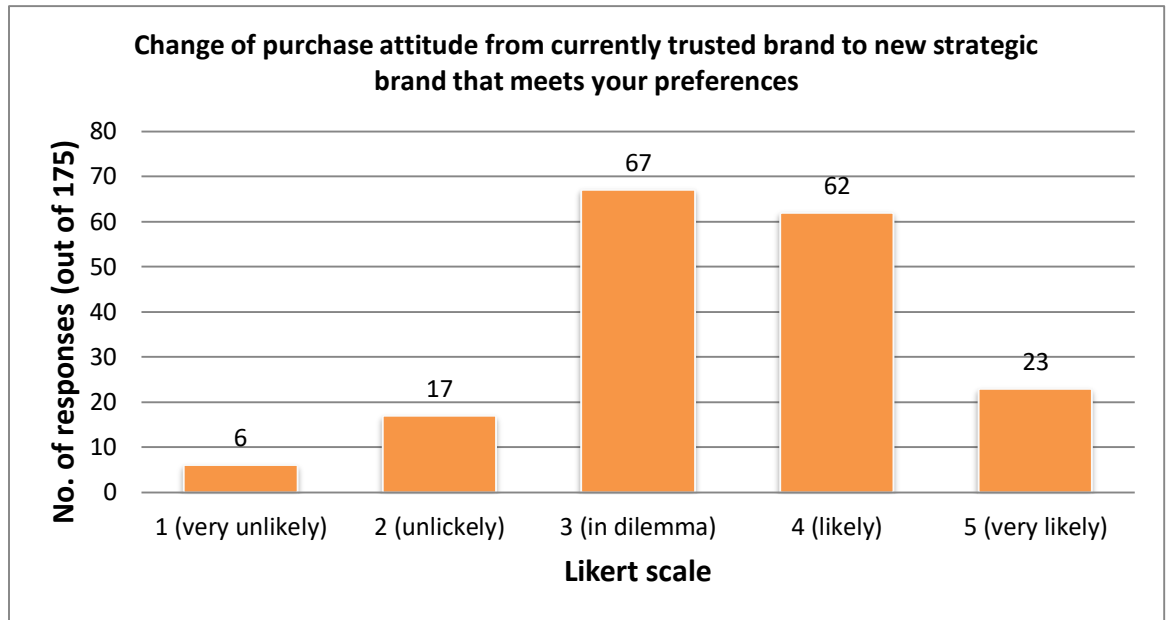


Fig. 2.11 shows the likelihood of change of purchasing attitude from a trusted brand to a new brand that favors your preferences marked on previous item by participants/users.

In fig. 2.11, it can be observed that 38.3% (67 responses) of total customers rate for option 3 (in dilemma) on a five point likert scale with respect to their likelihood of changing their purchasing attitude in favor of another company/ firm which matches their preferences responded in previous item from a company they had been trusting for quite a long time. 35.4% (62 responses) rated for option 4 whereas 13.1% (23 responses) rated for option 5. 9.7% (17 responses) rated for option 2 whereas only 3.4% (6 responses) people responded that it would be very unlikely for them to change their preference from a trusted brand to another brand with favorable strategies.

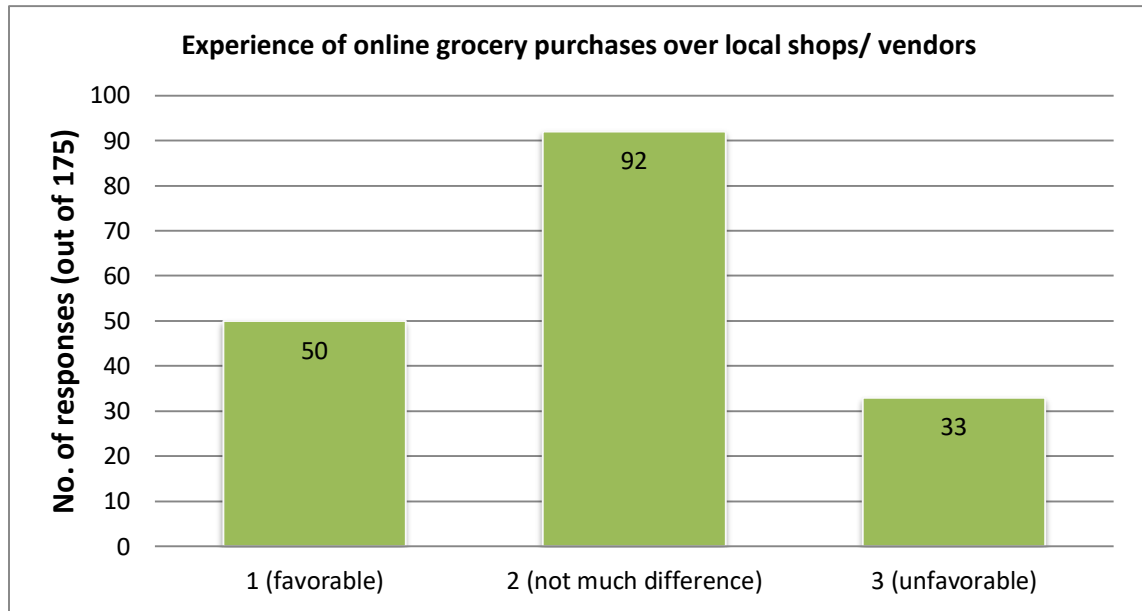


Fig. 2.12 shows the experience of customers of online grocery purchases over local shops/ vendors.

In fig. 2.12, it is shown that 52.6% (92 responses) of people rated their experience of online grocery purchases over local vendors/shops at a score of 2 i.e. no difference. 28.6% (50 responses) rated at score of 1 i.e. being favorable whereas 18.9% (33 responses) rated the experience at score of 3 i.e. unfavorable one.

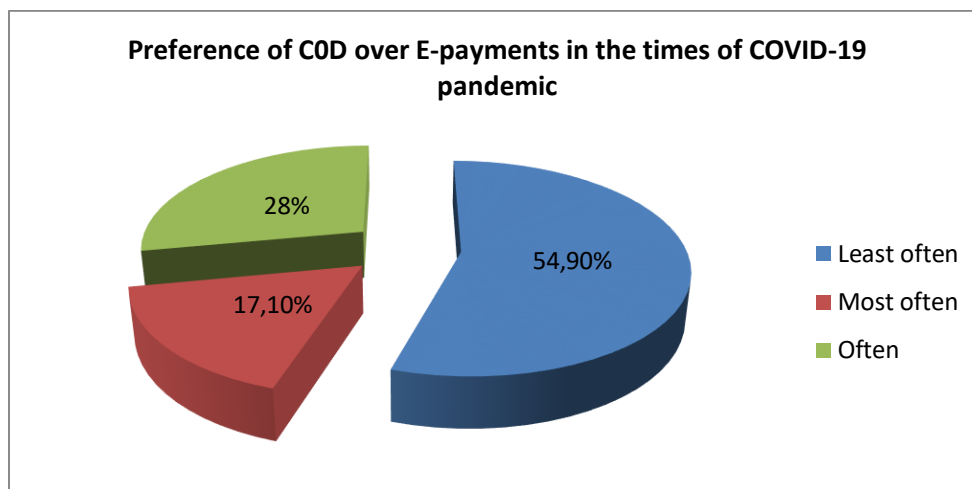


Fig. 2.13 shows no. of people and their level of preference of COD over E-payments in the times of lockdown.

Fig.2.13 shows that 54.9% (96 responses)of people prefer cash on delivery least often over e-payment in the times of covid-19. 28% (49 responses) would often prefer cash on delivery whereas 17.1% (30 responses) people prefer cash on delivery most often in times of covid-19.

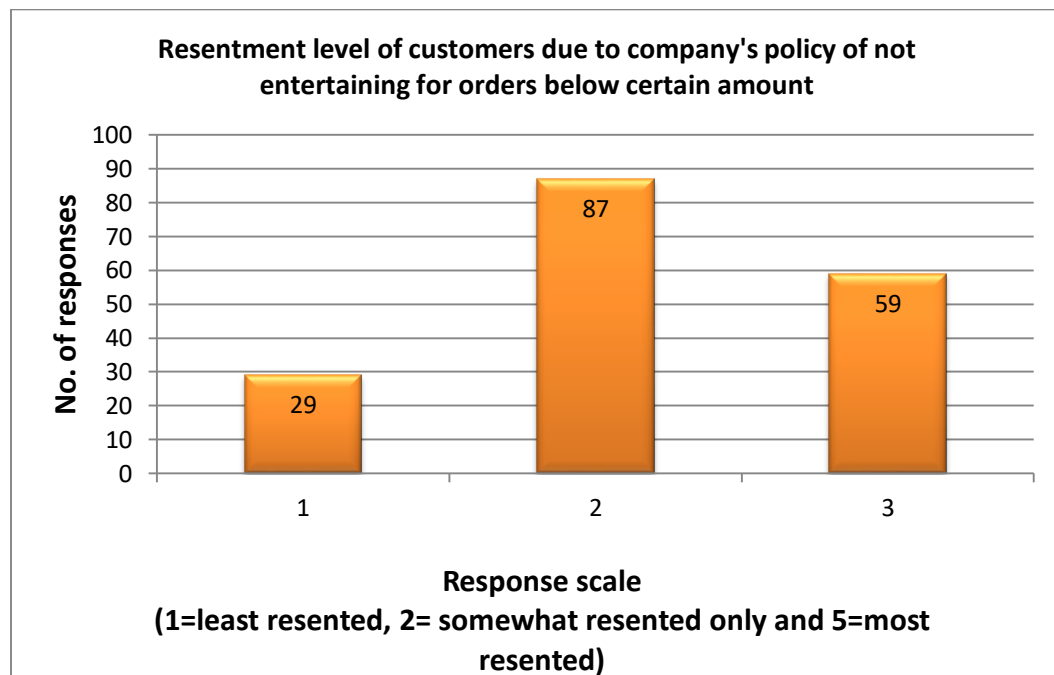


Fig. 2.14 shows the level of resentment of customers of online grocery market due to company's policy of not entertaining for those orders that are below a certain amount.

Fig. 2.14 reveals that 49.7% (87 responses) customers of online grocery companies rated at score of 2 with the respect to their feeling of resentment towards company's policy of not entertaining for home deliveries below a minimum order/amount of purchases. On similar dimension, 16.6% (29 responses) rate for score 1 i.e. being least resented and 33.7% (59 responses) rated score 3 i.e. being most resented.

DISCUSSION

In the current research, the purpose is to explore the online grocery market trends in relation to the consumer behavior and to understand its dynamism in times of covid-19 pandemic. The market which has been chosen for the study is the online grocery companies/ brands.

After formulation of a research topic, certain objectives and hypothesis were set. The instrument used is a self-created survey with 5 demographic detail based questions and 14 research topic based items. After collection of data, data processing and analysis was carried out. Since it was a convenience based sampling, the demographic composition is as follows. 64% of overall participants were under the age of 25, 33% aged 25-39 and 3% aged 40-59. Gender composition reveals 73% females and 27% males participating in the research. Regarding the occupation, students comprise of 57%, 8% people are involved in businesses, 34% work in service sector and mere 1% comprise of house-makers/ housewives. Also, among them 53% reported as students, 33% work in private sector, 5% are in government jobs while 9% have their own work/ self. The first objective attempts to explore the consumer behavior towards OGS which is covered by item number 1,5,8,9,14 of section 2 of the survey. The aim of item 1 is to find out the mostly used online grocery website/brand. The results show that out of 175 customers, 53 customers use Amazon Pantry to purchase groceries online. The next widely preferred brands are Grofers and big baskets. A study was published (Redseer, 2019) in an online grocery market updates website which revealed that grocery specialists like Grofers and Big basket have the 80% share in comparison to large horizontals like Amazon or Flipkart with a share of 5% in India's E-grocery market in 2019. Perhaps the most used online grocery market is found out to be the Amazon pantry due to the fact that it is one of the biggest online stores with a global presence offering a variety of product choices with a great user experience and customer service till date. According to an online website, Amazon pantry is now available in 110 cities. Its extension of grocery services is under great expectation by customers regarding quality, offers, and convenience, as it

aspires to deliver the variety of products up to 15kg the very next day of ordering with variety of buying offers. Saurabh Srivastava, Director of Consumables and FMCG at Amazon India says that Amazon Pantry has become popular with customers as it offers savings and convenience of doorstep delivery. (Nair, 2019)

Next, results of item number 5 show that the largest source from where the knowledge of the brand comes, as responded by participants, aka the widely used mode of advertising turns out to be online advertisements with 61.1% share of total advertising mediums. Advertising acts as a strategy to pull out the attraction towards brand and helps in shaping a positive consumer attitude, validating the popular Indian saying: “*Jo dikhta hai vahi bikta hai*” which means whatever is most visible/ noticeable gets sold the most. This is based on the exposure effect, a psychological phenomenon due to which people tend to generate favorable preference for things, merely because of their familiarity with the stimuli like the advertisement in this case. This becomes possible due to the increasing preference for technological/ virtual worlds where on an average, Indian users spent 2.4 hours on social media in line with the global average. (Krishnan, 2019)

Whatever brand customers use, a large part of its knowledge comes from online ads since the brands are able to harness the consumer’s online availability to generate online engagements through Ads via SEO techniques or be it collaborating with the social media influencers on platforms like Youtube, Instagram, Facebook etc. Also with respect to the current research, majority of the customers constitute student generation; which is obvious that they will be more tech-savvy and spend maximum time online than other traditional modes, than other elder age group customers. Also, is seen that online medium for ads is followed by TV ads (34.9%) which again shows the existence of creating more consumerism via electronic medias, and recommendations from friends, family , colleagues etc (28%) as a result of socialization towards building influences or pressures. Item number 8 basically taps the understanding of consumer’s behavior from the side of companies so as to attract more customers and retain those who already are. The question asked is about the duration of time

taken by companies to fix the issues/ complaints of customers regarding a product and service. Since all the customers would prefer that their brands resolve the issues as early as possible, a large part of influence is created by companies itself to have maximum customers via appropriate service strategy to solve queries in order to achieve customer satisfaction. This is in line with the finding as well, in current research, that the majority i.e. 33.1% customers report that their respective online grocery companies resolve their issues or complaints regarding any product or service within 3-7 days. 29.1 % report that the duration for resolution of any complaint of product takes place within 3 days, whereas 13.4% report having no issue or complaint so far. A study conducted by (Ahmad, 2002) found that failure to institute adequate complaint management and service recovery systems contributed to customer defection. The second hypothesis : “The approximate time taken is 3-7 days for any company to fix customer’s complaints/ issues” is thus accepted”. Item number 9 attempts to find out the widest in-use third party application for making online transactions or e-payments. Findings suggest that it is Paytm which is widely used by 49.7% participants. This statistics is followed by Google Pay with 23.4% users and then the PhonePe with 12.6% users. Paytm is India’s biggest mobile payments and commerce platform which helps user to transfer payments instantly to anyone at no cost of transfer. While using the Paytm wallet, user cannot only buy groceries from Paytm application, one could also pay utility bills of electricity, water, and LPG usage etc. User might book travel tickets or movie tickets among other things on the Paytm app. (Paytm, 2017) Whereas Google pay is a mobile payment application which can add credit cards and loyalty cards etc. Google has used this app to replace old Android pay and Google wallet apps and services. (Google Pay, 2018) People are widely using this application after Paytm in India because Google is having a good brand name and people rely on it which is followed by PhonePe app which is also having considerable market share in India. PhonePe is a payment application that allows user to use BHIM UPI, user’s credit card and debit card or wallet to recharge your mobile phone, to pay all the utility bills and also process instant payments to your favorite offline and online stores.

(Google Play, 2020) Item number 14 attempts to discover consumer's resent towards company policy of not entertaining orders below a certain amount. As per the research it has been found that 33.7% of the participants with 59 responses felt most resented and 49.7% consumers with 87 responses are somewhat resented only with such policy while 16.6 % participants with 29 responses feel least resented. In this research we have found that companies are unable to entertain fully their potential customers by the use of such policies of not entertaining orders below a certain amount. In spite of this knowledge, companies happen to be not able to do much because of its sales promotion; although firms like Litwin, Shinik and other hesitate to impose minimum purchase requirements due to competition in the market. (MCM staff, 2007) Thus, by giving some more relaxation for the consumers in such policies, firm can generate consumer loyalty and alternatively increase their market share. The fifth hypothesis: "Company's policy of not entertaining for home deliveries below a certain amount of order leads to resentment in customers" is therefore retained in this research study.

The second objective attempts to explore the consumer attitude towards OGS which is covered by item number 2,3,4,10,11,12 of section 2 of the survey. The aim of item 2 is to find degree of convenience in using the application of brands used by the customers. It was found out that 24.6% i.e. 43 of the total participant consumers feel most convenient while using the application, also 51.4% (90 responses) told that they feel only convenient while using the app. With 21.1% i.e. 37 gave average response in terms of convenience, 1.7% (3 response) felt less convenient and 1.1% (2 responses) felt that the application is totally inconvenient to use. According to a research, majority of users being younger than 55 years of age reported convenience for buying groceries online as a reason for making purchases. (Morganosky & Cude, 2000) This is also seen in the current research. Also, transaction convenience is associated with simplicity and ease of online payment. (Hanus, 2016) Thus, convenience becomes a critical factor in any brand's reputation too. Item 3 is to rate the quality of goods and services of the company by the consumers. It is found that 50.3% (88 responses) rated

quality of goods and services as okay. On the other hand, second most favored response was that the quality was up to expectation given by 48.6% (85 responses) followed by minority of 1.1% (2 responses) suggesting that quality of goods and services was not up to expectation. We can say clearly from the results that most of the consumers who participated in the survey were either somewhat satisfied or completely satisfied. A contradictory research done by Frank Liu, Business professor of Illinois University suggests that there's a negative effect of online shopping on the quality of product since a middle-men is responsible for choosing the product, and not the customer directly. (Ciciora, 2012) Also, it is also to think of the last thing a company wants to hear from customer which is the complaints from dissatisfied ones regarding the product quality. It's therefore a good practice for the company to send them fresh and good quality product to them at first place, and in case of dissatisfaction, a well reputed store is expected to make a refund. Item 4 attempts to explore people's response towards their brand in terms of delivery worker's services including communication, body language, overall personality etc. Results show that 68.6% (120 responses) rated the workers services as quite satisfactorily, only 21.1% (37 responses) were in the favor that their experience with delivery workers has been amazing. Also for 8.6 %, (15 responses) their experience was okay only and 1.7% (3 responses) suggested to have needed improvement in delivery services. According to a research, frontline service employee personality traits (extroversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness) affect interaction quality and thus increases customer satisfaction. (Ekinci & Dawes, 2009) Results of current research shows that more than 68% of people rate delivery services as satisfactorily. Item 10 attempts to explore the essentiality of aspects that must be undertaken by the company/brand for its growth. Results show that majority of people rated their response for each aspect as moderately important except celebrity endorsement where in majority rated it 2 on a scale of 1= least essential to 5-most essential. It can be concluded that celebrity endorsement can't be considered an important factor for its growth and promotion. Also, it suggests that quality of product (50 responses) remains most essential factor followed by convenience of using

application/website (45 responses) and then varied payment options/modes (41 responses). Analyzing further, behavior and personality of staff (including delivery worker's services) has been able to gather 40 responses, emotional appeal/ public trust with 35 responses, innovations in buying offers with 32 responses, CSR practices and advanced tools with 20 responses and at last the celebrity endorsements with only 5 responses has been rated the least important aspect to be considered by brands for their promotion and growth. The dimension of emotional appeal is generally put into use while making advertising campaigns to generate public loyalty. According to a research study of 1400 successful campaigns that compared the profit boost from 'emotional' ads to that of rational information-based ones, showed that emotional campaigns reported large profit gains nearly twice as often as rational ones (31% Vs 16%). Ads containing mix of both had 26% share.(Frenay, 2016) The dimension of 'innovations in buying offers' includes special discounts, loyalty programs, customer bonus points on purchases, provision of green card etc things giving more privileges to purchase etc. 90% of Americans actively participate in some type of loyalty program including credit card, retail store, and airlines rewards programs.(Berman, 2006) Corporate Social Responsibility practices haven't been given much priority by the participants. This can be in contrast with a research that has found that stocks of companies with the best social performance outshine the worst social performers by as much as 6.24% annually. (Schrieberg, 2018) Talking about advanced tools, research conducted by Bain & Company revealed a strong correlation between the amount of effort a company puts into adopting tools and the consequent customer satisfaction.(Pinkney, 2018) Research on celebrity endorsement and customer satisfaction are positively correlated but still comes on fourth priority among brand, cost, quality and experience ranking aspects on a study conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal. (Pokharel & Pradhan, 2018) Item 11 attempts to explore the customer's tendency of change of preferences from trusted brand to strategic one which favors their marked preferences in item 10. The results of the survey are as follows: 38.3% (67 responses) consumer felt dilemma to switch to other brand, 35.4% (62 responses) are likely to switch to other brands and

13.1% (23 responses) stated that they would very likely switch to other brand if it is providing better and attractive goods and services, 9.7% (17 responses) suggest that they are unlikely to switch to other brand in such condition and 3.4% (6 responses) said that they are very much unlikely to switch brand under above stated circumstances. According to a Edelman's latest research, even if a customer has heard of a brand and it seems to have a good reputation, it isn't enough to turn them into a repeat customer. The research shows that 67% of customers say that a good reputation may get them to try a product, but they don't come to trust the company behind the product. (Expert commentator , 2019) Thus, consumer perception is never stagnant and companies must constantly strive to improve and innovate to retain customers in competitive market. In current research, the third hypothesis: "Consumer's preference towards a trusted brand can be changed with the incoming of another brand's favorable strategies" is therefore accepted. This means that business strategy surpasses the company's emotional appeal in long run. Item number 12 aims to identify consumer's experience of online grocery stores over local vendors/shops. Results suggest that 28.6% (50 responses) felt that online grocery shops are favorable over local shops/vendors, 52.6% (92 responses) did not experience much difference in both, 18.9% (33 responses) has shown that they found online grocery store be unfavorable as compared to local vendors/shops. Even when online grocery services are becoming popular in Indian cities, much of population finds no difference between local vendors and online grocery deliveries. This could be due to the fact that the survey was conducted during a time when nation was under complete lockdown, when majority switched from vendors to online purchase causing heavy load on the companies resulting in delays, cancelation etc. In an online survey conducted by Local Circles, 79% people said delivery of groceries ordered online has been either delayed or cancelled. (Rawat, 2020)

The third objective is to understand the impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on consumer's choices. Items 6, 7 and 13 cover this objective. Item 6 attempts to find the frequency of grocery purchases before lockdown. Results suggest that 37.7% used to buy not more than

twice a month, 25.1% once or twice in a year, 23.4% not more than four times in six months and only 13.7% bought online grocery at least once a week. This also shows that online grocery even being popular still hasn't succeeded over local ration shops/vendors. Item 7 aims to find frequency of grocery purchases during lockdown i.e. march-may. Findings reveal that 48.6% didn't purchase, 26.9% had purchase 2-5 times in 3 months, 13.7% only once whereas only 10.9% purchased more than 5 times in 3 months. This fairly shows a downfall in purchasing frequency of online groceries. The results of pre-lockdown and post-lockdown frequency show a considerable decline since after lockdown 48.6% of people didn't purchase groceries from online stores. Even when the online grocery shopping is the new norm for many citizens in urban India given the corona virus lockdown, many were unable to enjoy the privilege of convenience due to fear of contagion, issues concerning of safety, packaging etc, sudden heavy loads on companies for deliveries, reducing staff due to virus attack. Therefore, the first hypothesis formulated: "COVID-19 affects the frequency of consumer's purchasing behavior from online grocery companies" is accepted since there is a negative effect of COVID-19 on purchases. Item 13 attempts to identify customer's preference for COD over E-payment in times of COVID-19. Findings suggest that 54.9% would prefer COD least often than E-payment, 28% would often prefer COD, and 17.1% would still prefer COD most often over E-payment in times of COVID-19 pandemic. According to one survey conducted by Nielsen's Global Connected Commerce Survey, about 83% of Indian shoppers in India favored utilizing COD since they are hesitant to input card information because of different extortion dangers.(iThink Logistics, 2019) Current results of study are in support with a recent poll of senior E-commerce industry professionals done by Click Post where in 76% of professionals said that the share of cash-on-delivery orders will go down post-COVID. (IANS, 2020) This fall in COD payments can be attributed to the fear of contagion of virus, thus digital payment modes have a huge advantage over paper/ coin money in pandemic time. The fourth hypothesis: "A decrease in preference for cash-on-delivery practice in times of COVID-19" is thus retained in the present research.

CONCLUSION

As according to the research objectives and its findings, it suggests that:

1. Amazon Pantry (30.3%) is widely used online grocery company followed by Grofers (24%), BigBasket (19.4%) and Flipkart (13.1%).

2. Majority people (51.4%) feel their respective brands as convenient in using their website/ application which shows companies are working towards creating ease of using technology for customers.

3. Majority people are either okay (50.3%) or rate their respective brands up to expectation (48.6%) in providing quality of goods and services which shows brand's efficient constant effort in providing quality products & services to their customers.

4. Majority people (68.6%) feel the delivery staff and worker's services as satisfactory and 21.1% rate it as amazing shows that the online grocery companies are also working in enhancing customer satisfaction by working on soft skills, body language, personality and behavior of delivery staff who come in direct contact with the customer.

5. The largest medium/ platform employed by these online grocery companies for advertising are the online advertisements (61.1%) followed by TV ads (34.9%) and recommendations (28%).

6. Online stores has not succeeded much over local shops/ vendors, only a small chunk of participants (13.7%) purchased groceries online on a regular basis. (Before COVID-19 lockdown)

7. Majority people (48.6%) didn't purchase groceries online after the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown was imposed in March.

8. Since either people (33.1%) report to have their issues resolved within 3-7 days or within 3 days (29.1%) whereas 13.4% don't have any complaints, we may conclude that companies are actually working constantly to serve their customers by solving out their issues regarding product or services.

9. Paytm (49.7%) is the widely used third party application followed by Google Pay (23.4%) and PhonePe (12.6%).

10. All 10 aspects given in item 10 are felt as moderately important to be undertaken by firms/ brands for their growth except celebrity endorsements. It is found that quality of product is most essential aspect followed by convenience of using application/ website and then varied payment options. After that, come delivery services, emotional appeal/ public trust, innovations in buying offers, CSR practices and lastly the celebrity endorsements.

11. Even though many people are in dilemmatic state towards changing their purchasing preferences from trusted used brands to new good ones, majority are open to new choices and options that seem tempting or favorable to them.

12. Majority people's experience of online stores hasn't been of much difference than local shops/ vendors. Even though many have favorable experience, still some people find online grocery purchases not favorable than local kirana shops.

13. While majority (54.9%) prefers E-payment over COD in pandemic lockdown, still a major proportion also prefers to use COD often over E-payments.

14. Majority people (49.7%) are somewhat resented over company's policy of not entertaining orders below a certain amount and a major section (33.7%) feels most resented due to policy like these.

Further it is also concluded that all five hypothesis that were formulated were retained/ accepted in this research.

FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

The data should be comprised of more samples for good validity of results. Equal proportion of gender may be taken to draw on other comparisons, and a similar group be taken to study the market trends as influenced by age factor, or employment sector etc. The sample should cover other areas of India (especially rural parts) as well, so as to generalize the results more authentically. Future researchers are thus recommended to study each aspect in detail as to gain in-depth understanding and reasons for such market trends since the research paper's scope is limited in providing a detailed analysis and employ reliability and validity tests for better standardization.

As marketing suggestions for the companies, in current scenario, it is recommended that companies must strive for constantly investing in providing quality products and services (including that of delivery staff), easing the usage of app/website for order placements, giving alternative payment modes and new buying offers (discounts, sales etc) and resolving customer's complaints in minimum time possible. Also, companies may also do some changes in their minimum order purchase policy for more customer loyalty and sales.

As in times of pandemic, the companies must ensure safety while strategically packaging the items and training the assembling and delivery staff especially to ensure hygiene and least physical contact with the items as well as customers to control spread of corona virus. In these times, building trust among customers becomes of utmost importance. For people who still prefer COD over E-payments should switch on to digital payment modes to control the virus that may spread from circulation of paper money/ coins.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Ahmad, S. (2002). Service failures and customer defection: A closer look at online shopping experiences. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 12(1), 19-29.
DOI: 10.1108/09604520210415362
- [2] Berman, B. (2006). Developing an Effective Customer Loyalty Program. *California Management Review*, 49(1).
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166374>
- [3] Bochorishvili, E. & Mamrikishvili, T. (2019, July 10). Regional Hub For Car Trade: Georgia's Auto Business Sector. Galt & Taggart Co.
- [4] Demangeot, C., Broderick, A.J., Craig, C.S. (2015). "Multicultural marketplaces". *International Marketing Review*, 32 (2), 118
DOI: [10.1108/IMR-01-2015-0017](https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-01-2015-0017)
- [5] de Mooij, M (2014). Global marketing and advertising: Understanding cultural paradoxes (4 ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- [6] Ekinçi, Y., & Dawes, P.L (2009). Consumer perceptions of frontline service employee personality traits, interaction quality, and consumer satisfaction. *The Service Industries Journal*, 29(4), 503-521
DOI: [10.1080/02642060802283113](https://doi.org/10.1080/02642060802283113)
- [7] Hanus, G. (2016). Consumer Behavior During Online Grocery Shopping. *CBU International Conference Proceedings*, ISE Research Institute, 4(0), pp. 010-013
DOI: 10.12955/cbup.v4.737
- [8] Hobbs, J.E. (2020). Food supply chains during the COVID 19 pandemic. *Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1-6
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cjag.12237>
- [9] Huang, Y., & Oppewal, H. (2006). Why consumers hesitate to shop online: an experimental choice analysis of grocery shopping and the role of delivery fees. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 34 (4/5), 334-353 <https://doi.org/10.1108/09590550610660260>
- [10] Kotler, P; Burton, S; Deans, K; Brown, L & Armstrong, G (2013). Perspectives: Multicultural marketing in Australia. *Journal of International Marketing*, 7(3), 106–125.

[11] Lauterborn, B. (1990). New marketing litany; four P's passe; C-words take over, *Advertising Age*, 41, 26.

[12] Morganosky, M. A. & Cude, B. (2000). Consumer Response to Online Grocery Shopping. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 28(1), 17-26. DOI: 10.1108/09590550010306737.

[13] Pokharel, A., & Pradhan, B. (2018). Influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumers' Buying Behavior of Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Kathmandu. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, 2(1-2), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jbssr.v2i1-2.20954>

[14] Sharma, P., Nair, V., & Jyotishi, A. (2014). Patterns of online grocery shopping in India: an empirical study. *Proceedings of the 2014 International Conference on Interdisciplinary Advances in Applied Computing*, (pp.1-5) <https://doi.org/10.1145/2660859.2660939>

[15] Sreeram, A., Kesharwani, A., & Desai, S. (2017). Factors affecting satisfaction and loyalty in online grocery shopping: an integrated model. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, 9(2), 107-132 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIBR-01-2016-0001>

[16] Todua, N., & Jashi, C. (2015). Some Aspects of Social Media Marketing (Georgian Case). *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic and Management Engineering*, 9(4). 10.13140/RG.2.1.1140.5529.

Website Links

[1] Abroi, S. (2017, Oct 24). *#WorldPolioDay: How Amitabh Bachchan drove India to become polio-free.*India Today.<https://www.indiatoday.in/lifestyle/health/story/amitabh-bachchan-world-polio-day-eradication-india-virus-pulse-polio-bill-gates-lifest-1070241-2017-10-24>

[2] Akrani, G. (2011, July 19). *What is Marketing Research? Meaning Definition Features.* Retrieved from Kalyan City Life: <https://kalyan-city.blogspot.com/2011/07/what-is-marketing-research-meaning.html#:~:text=According%20to%20American%20Marketing%20Association,marketing%20of%20goods%20and%20services.%E2%80%9D>

[3] Alexander, L. (2020, March 5). *The Who, What, Why and How of Digital Marketing.* Retrieved from HubSpot: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/what-is-digital-marketing>

[4] Baker, K. (2019, April 12). *The Ultimate List of Marketing Quotes for Digital Inspiration.* HubSpot. Retrieved from HubSpot: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/marketing-quotes>

- [5] Bindra, V. (2019, August 1). *Tips for understanding consumer behavior*. Retrieved from Bada Business: <https://badabusiness.com/articles/tips-for-understanding-consumer-behavior/>
- [6] Bindra, V. (2018, Feb 3). ***Secret Formula of Sales and Marketing-C, onsumer Behaviour***. <https://youtu.be/Jxe8Tgnz2SA>
- [7] Brannan, M., Costa, A., Decarne, S., Gardner, E., & Heymans, V. (2014, May 20). *Ethnic Marketing*. Retrieved from SlideShare: <https://www.slideshare.net/alsaraf1/ethnic-marketing>
- [8] BusinessWire. (2019, July 29). *Indian Online Grocery Market Outlook (2019-2023) with Historic Analysis (2016-2019)*. Retrieved from Business Wire: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20190729005605/en/Indian-Online-Grocery-Market-Outlook-2019-2023-Historic>
- [9] Ciciora, P. (2012, June 9). ***Study: Online retail contributes to decline in product quality***. Retrieved from Illinois News Bureau: <https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/205030>
- [10] Entrepreneur Contributors. (2015, June 8). *Online Grocery Business is Yet to Be Cracked!*. Retrieved from Entrepreneur India: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/248541>
- [11] Expert Commentator. (2019, September 30). *Consumers are increasingly trusting brands that take a stance*. Retrieved from Smart Insights: <https://www.smartinsights.com/online-brand-strategy/consumers-are-increasingly-trusting-brands-that-take-a-stance/>
- [12] Frenay, D. (2016, July 11). *The Importance of Emotions in Advertising*. Retrieved from Emolytics: <https://blog.emolytics.com/trends/importance-of-emotions-in-advertising/>
- [13] GKToday. (2016, April 14). *Marketing Mix*. Retrieved from GK Today: <https://www.gktoday.in/gk/marketing-mix/>
- [14] Google Pay. (2018, August 28). *Support Google Pay for in-app payments*. Retrieved from Google Pay: <https://developers.google.com/pay/india/api/android/in-app-payments>
- [15] Google Play. (2020, June 19). *PhonePe – UPI Payments, Recharges & Money Transfer*. Retrieved from Google Play: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.phonepe.app&hl=en_IN
- [16] IANS. (2020, April 22). *Cash on delivery' orders likely to go down post Covid*. Retrieved from ET Retail: <https://retail.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/e-commerce/e-tailing/cash-on-delivery-orders-likely-to-go-down-post-covid/75289950>

[17] iThink Logistics. (2019, September 10). *How Cash on Delivery Dominates Indian E-commerce?*. Retrieved from iThink Logistics: <https://ithinklogistics.com/blog/how-cash-on-delivery-dominates-indian-e-commerce/>

[18] **Jennovativem.** (2017, August 11). *History of Marketing Timeline*. **Jennovative Marketing**. Retrieved from **Jennovative Marketing**:

<https://www.jennovativemarketing.com/2017/08/history-marketing-timeline/>

[19] Krishnan, V.B. (2019, August 21). *How much time do Indians spend on social media?*. Retrieved from The Hindu: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/how-much-time-do-indians-spend-on-social-media/article29201363.ece#:~:text=About%20three%20out%20of%20five,line%20with%20th e%20global%20average.>

[20] MCM staff. (2007, May 1). *Minimum Purchase Requirements: Yea or Nay?* Retrieved from MultiChannel Merchants: <https://multichannelmerchant.com/marketing/minimum-purchase-requirements-yea-or-nay/>

[21] Nair. A. (2019, May 30). *Amazon Pantry will now deliver grocery in 110 cities in India*. Retrieved from Yourstory: <https://yourstory.com/2019/05/amazon-pantry-doorstep-delivery-110-cities-grocery-flipkart>

[22] Paul Monalisa. (2018, August 8). *What are different business models of online grocery stores*. Retrieved from Quora: <https://www.quora.com/What-are-different-business-models-of-Online-Grocery-stores>

[23] Paytm. (2017, January 17). *How to use Paytm*. Retrieved from Medium: <https://blog.paytm.com/how-to-use-paytm-5613fda6956b#:~:text=Paytm%20is%20India's%20largest%20mobile,cost%20using%20the%20Paytm%20Wallet.&text=You%20could%20also%20use%20it,the%20Paytm%20app%20or%20website.>

[24] **Pikney, D. (Ed.).** (2018, August 1). *Emerging markets, particularly in Asia-Pacific, lead the way in adoption of advanced tools that enhance the customer experience*. Retrieved from **Bain & Company**: <https://www.bain.com/about/media-center/press-releases/2018/customer-experience-tools-and-trends-2018/>

[25] Rawat, M. (2020, March 25). *Coronavirus lockdown: 79% polled Indians say online groceries grocery orders getting delayed, cancelled, finds survey.* Retrieved from India Today: <https://www.indiatoday.in/business/story/coronavirus-lockdown-online-grocery-orders-getting-delayed-finds-survey-1659654-2020-03-25>

[26] Redseer. (2019, September). *Online Grocery Market Updates.* Retrieved from redseer: <https://redseer.com/newsletters/online-grocery-market-updates/>

[27] Research & Markets. (2020, March 4). *India's \$3.6B Online Grocery Market: Insights by Category, Platform, Region and Company (2014-2024).* Retrieved from Globe Newswire: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/03/04/1994880/0/en/India-s-3-6B-Online-Grocery-Market-Insights-by-Category-Platform-Region-and-Company-2014-2024.html>

[28] Schrieberg, E. (2018, September 5). *CSR and Your Marketing Strategy: Starbucks, Krogers, McDonald's Show Doing Good Is Good Business.* Retrieved from ToolBox Marketing: <https://marketing.toolbox.com/articles/csr-and-your-marketing-strategy>

[29] Shashidhar, A. (2020, March 25). *Amazon, Big Basket, Grofers locked down as local authorities misinterpret order.* Retrieved from Business Today: <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/trends/amazon-big-basket-grofers-locked-down-as-local-authorities-misinterpret-order/story/399134.html>

[30] Techdesk Contributors. (2020, April 14). *These apps are delivering groceries at your doorstep.* Retrieved from The Indian Express: <https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/tech-news-technology/zomato-swiggy-bigbasket-flipkart-amazon-online-grocery-apps-india-lockdown-covid19-coronavirus-6353475/>

[31] Wikipedia contributors. (2020, April 9). *Multicultural marketing.* Retrieved from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Multicultural_marketing&oldid=950041764

[32] Wikipedia contributors. (2020, June 8). *Marketing Mix.* Retrieved from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Marketing_mix&oldid=961500550

[33] Wikipedia contributors. (2020, June 21). *Marketing.* Retrieved from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Marketing&oldid=963806185>

[34] Wikipedia contributors. (2020, May 13). *Google Pay*. In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 18:53, June 19, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Google Pay&oldid=956499141](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Google_Pay&oldid=956499141)