

“FOOTPRINT OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ASPECT OF BRANDS GLOBALLY”

Dr. POOJA JAIN

Associate Dean & Facilitator, SMI-MAHE, Bengaluru, India.

Abstract:

Covid 19 has not only altered our lives but has also changed the complete market landscape especially for brands that we see and use. As this crisis has escalated market crashes across the globe, the brand value is at stake for most of the renowned brands. Although the risks are not uniform for all markets and brands, are seeking to articulate strategies that helps them to cope up with these tough times. Till date, many brand makers believes that forfeiting any crisis strategy in their communication will disturb their balance of production costs and expected profit. Therefore, to curb such preconceived notions, this paper would focus upon live examples of brands on the global front have stepped up with this new normal and are fetching profit and have altered consumers perception. This study aims to emphasize the undeniable impact of pandemic on brands in context of their socio-economic and cultural outburst. It will also lay grounds for the brands backed up with integrated research to derive its utmost potential with a change. The paper will lead to its conclusion by deriving results through both qualitative and quantitative research method approach to yield the desired level of analysis and interpretations. Conclusion draws connections with how brands have been dealing with economy driven market alterations, the social ‘new normal’, addressing sustainability, evaluating challenges in inadequate environment and focusing on creative and strategic brand communication to be future ready. Brands locally or globally must look up to such crisis with high optimism of reflecting positive values to be able to bounce back to their valuable customers and their self-glory.

Keywords: brand, communication, covid-19, new normal, pandemic, strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

We have spent almost a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and it won’t be wrong if we say that nearly every business in the world has been affected by it. It has not only altered our lives but has also changed the complete market landscape especially for brands that we see, and we use. As this crisis has set off local and global markets, the brand value is at stake for most of the renowned brands. This tough time has forced all brand businesses to re-evaluate their operations and re-articulate their marketing strategies in sync with the transforming external stimuli that laid a huge impact.

According to the World Bank surveys the data gathered between October 2020 to January 2021,in comparison to pre-pandemic times showed the following results:

- Almost quarter size of brand businesses all around witnessed a downfall in sales their sales to 50%.
- 34% of brands have increased their advertising on digital media channels.
- 17% of firms initiated their investment into software that may provide them appropriate digital solutions.

John F. Kennedy once stated that the word “crisis” could be interpreted with its two characters opportunity and danger. His sentiment was true enough to support the notion that a crisis does give a choice. This is what is prevalent today. Now brands across the world had to come up with tailor-made messaging, keeping in mind how well they can connect with their loyal consumers. With strict lockdown all around, people were seen active more online, either working from home, doing an online fitness regime, watching Netflix, or connecting over social media. Being digital became the summary of this new normal life of everyone. So, the brands knew exactly where and how to reach out and interact with their consumers. 2020-2021 has been an unfortunate year which will have its repercussions for long. This time had seen many brands reshaping their marketing strategies just to fit in the new reality keeping all its brand building activities stand still. A move was evident where brands were seen investing in marketing on digital channels by being conscious of the need of the time. Constant visibility and continuity in producing content were the two most important thing for any brand irrespective of the changing landscape of the world. Reaching out to the people adversely affected by Covid-19 was the only idea brands could implement to establish a branding strategy may lead to results in the long-term. During this pandemic, overall, the tone of voice changed and became more somber. The economic distresses, inaccessibility, unemployment, and deaths completely washed away how consumers used to talk about brands. Also, how brands speak about themselves. Right now, brands across the globe must respond to this rapidly changing market and consumer segment where all are grappling with the immediate implications of the pandemic, and its social and economic ramifications. At such a time of precariousness, it is difficult than ever for most of the brands to have a long-term vision. This paper brings together insights from an online survey and a review of some brand research and case studies.

Many businesses were seen thriving to cater to the society’s transformed lifestyle, as their present actions could define their future trajectory. Big brands like Zoom, Vodafone, and Amazon fit appropriate as example into this category. But this doesn’t mean that these brands did not face any challenge. Water was not still for them either. However, these examples perfectly showcased that one can manage its reputation through scrutiny which guarantees profits over a long term. Some other brands are striving and are hastily showing their reaction, either by looking at new business plans, products, and services to capitalize on fresh altered prospects, or by extending their production merely for social needs in emergency. For instance, Cabify, a Spanish ridesharing company introduced an online grocery delivery service during these hard times just to ensure everybody gets everything needed. Few brands that are neither thriving nor surviving fully, are the ones who have come to a standstill since they cannot operate on online mode. Mostly hotel and airline brands fall in this category with their core brand value at stake. It was seen that brands were adapting and figuring out ways to accelerate publicity and sales of their products and services in between COVID-19 crisis, under supervision of government agencies to ensure ethical business practices. Brands have been seen carefully curating their campaigns content by evaluating the visuals and the narrative to be appropriate for media platforms, especially social media. Under all these unintended circumstances, brands have been left with some larger questions to analyze for themselves. It

has become difficult for them to decide whether they continue their advertising, or they should cut down their media budget. To envision the positive results in the long term, many brands stucked to their plans of keeping a balanced communication strategy that is distinguished by the viewers confidently. For a brand, positioning involves branding on a higher level which may not necessarily focus on just the product or its offering but much beyond that. With this objective, it becomes essential for a brand to connect with its consumers through emotionally driven communication which encompasses solidarity and belief in positive values.

As brands cope with what their future will look like, quite a few concerns stands out regarding:

- Sustainability of the brand on reshuffling of the global markets
- Development of new products in sync with ‘new reality’
- Addressing the competition when consumers' purchase behavior has been altered
- Promotion of a product or service that echoes with consumers needs
- Effective communication to rebuild confidence and strength over all fears and anxiety
- Brand engagement to encourage sales

1.1 Social Impact

With restrictions on consumers in almost every major market during the pandemic, the ‘at home’ way of living was looked upon by many brands as the new prospect. For which they may have to explore effective ways to reach out to their existing as well as new consumers with utmost priority. Brands thus decided to make ‘COVID socializing’ a better experience especially healthcare and hygiene brands who switched the face to face interactions in to completely social engagement sitting at home. However, the biggest challenge was to figure out how, where and when to advertise and to assess its worth. It was also seen that a high range of brands have stepped into the category of health and wellness, keeping in view the needs, desires and priorities of consumers to support their holistic wellbeing. Healthcare industry have always been a personalized engagement, but this pandemic has seen a new face of it being totally digital, which has led brands become more aware and conscious about their services built on trust. According to Dr R S Sodhi, MD-Amul India “During the pandemic there was a rise in customers call for products that helps in boosting the immunity and as a result company had to launch 11 new products within a span of 5 months which included turmeric as the main ingredient of their quintessential product range of milk and ice cream ensuring all immunity-boosting elements reaches to the consumers body.” Covid-19 brought out an opportunity for several brands across the world to showcase genuine efforts of compassion towards its consumers. The following brands made efforts to modify their messaging to align with the situation of a pandemic:

Case studies Examples:

Lego is an international brand that is loved by consumers of varied age groups, all over the world. During the pandemic the company sustained their recognition in the market, being one of the brands loved and purchased during the period. The company’s turnover rose close to 10 lakhs from 8 and a half lacks before pandemic [Fig 1 (a)]. The critical factor for the rise in sales can be credited to the factor of nostalgia. Lego gave way to bonding time for varied

relationships, bringing the feeling of togetherness in testing times. Lego supported this with numerous brands led campaigns, connecting with the pain-points consumers were feeling at the time [Fig 1(b)]. Through its social media campaign Lego has laid a very strong message that don't let a crisis stop you from doing what has worked so well.

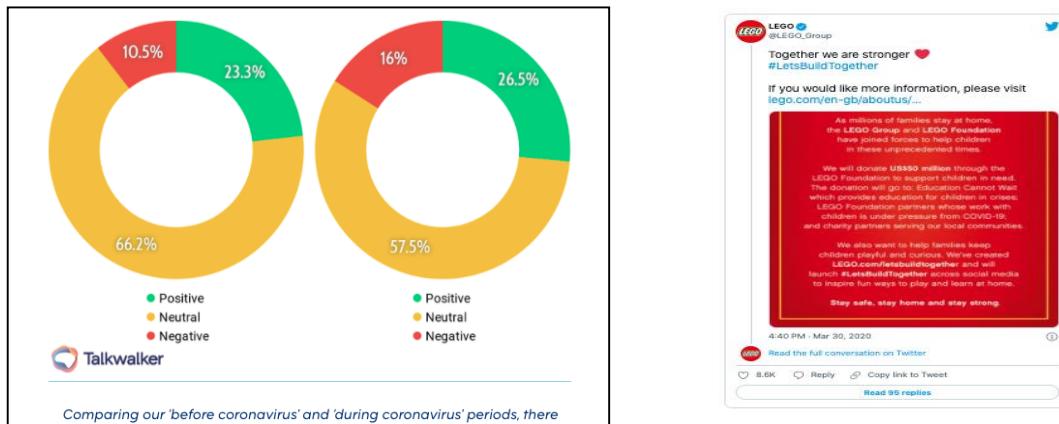


Fig. 1(a) Left: Comparison of Lego's "before covid" & "after covid" sales. Fig. 1(b) Right: Lego's #Lets Build Together campaign

Nike Catering to the anxiousness to stay fit among people during the pandemic, Nike opened their 'Nike Training club app' subscription, making it a free availability, appealing to their loyal consumers as well as newer audiences. To align with the increased online and digital presence of consumers, Nike made way for apps, podcasts and other social channels, to engage them. The company released their 'Play for the World' campaign that showed how famous athletes stayed fit during the crisis, effectively capturing the spirit of unity and enthusiasm, without coming across as insincere.

Heinz Partnered with Magic Breakfast in Europe, committing to provide twelve million free breakfast meals for children across schools that needed it the most. Benefitting these children with one proper cooked meal a day, Heinz adapted to the pandemic through a thoughtful initiative for the times.

Taco Bell released an ad campaign announcing their plan to keep the drive-thru service open with sticker-sealed bags ensuring safety, for consumers looking for helpful services with a sense of safety at the time of crisis. Their tagline stated, 'let our drive-thru help you get through'.

Scribd Understanding the pressure of continuously going through pandemic related news, Scribd opened a 30-day free service to a collection of their digital library with e-books, audiobooks, and magazines, with no credit card or commitment required. [Fig. 2]

Coca Cola has also altered its advertisement and packaging out of Covid consciousness by saying 'Staying apart is the best way to stay united'. [Fig. 3]

Fig. 2 (Left): Scribd social media post



Fig. 3 (Right): Coca-Cola revamped outdoor advertisement



1.2 Economic Impact

The 2019 novel coronavirus has resulted in several unique and unintended economic and social concerns, which has altered the whole picture of businesses vision to operate in near future and also to how they plan to increase their customer base. It's evident and justifiable to say that no industry has been left out by the major upheaval COVID-19 has caused across the globe. However, from struggle comes strength so many brands were seen ready to surpass these critical times with liberality and smart creative thinking. From decisions about effectiveness of media to analyzing how viewers would be reacting to advertising, pandemic has sparked a lot of uncertainty. Observing the change in media choices, every brand that holds the capability to advertise is shifting its investment to in-home media. Brands started reassessing other touchpoints. Many of them prioritized emphasized on the areas where opportunities for advertising were limited. For instance, a brand in Brazil which dealt in personal care had to revamp their mission statement of keeping product experience, packaging and word-of-mouth publicity to understanding the "new normal" touchpoints. This shift has helped that brand able to strategically decide what is beneficial in the current time and in future. Economically, COVID-19 had led to an immense downfall in the market

with many stores been shut and shrinkage in revenue. Footfall at the retail counters had a strong impact with strict protocols on any public movement. Since, most of the consumers chose to stay at home and adapt the new online purchasing behavior, a boost in online retail became significant. Some brands have played it smart by refocusing their expenses to marketing with a strong intent in order to accommodate with their consumers' intensified media consumption sitting at home. Amongst many, one common strategy that grabbed everyone's attention was of Gift cards. Being empathetic towards their consumers tough times where many had loss of income, brands came up with the idea of gift cards where the potential consumers can make use of it anytime, they want. This step was taken envisioning that people may return to their actual buying habits once everything turns back 'normal' and then this gift card could also be like a complimentary welcome. Also, looking at the present these gift cards have enabled brands to continue generating some income in an otherwise slow time for business.

1.3 Cultural Impact

COVID-19 pandemic has proved to be a disaster for cultural rights with harsh, long-lasting implications on humans and society at large. According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, it "has shown demoralizing impacts throughout the world". The whole cultural paradigm has gone for a toss. Brands were observed seeking an effective response to the pandemic keeping in mind the holistic cultural wellbeing of their consumers and the society they live in. However, culture at the workplaces have held up surprisingly well during pandemic. Throughout the time, the concern was how would brands maintain the intangible but dominant aspect of their businesses? Many brands had a notion of struggling to figure out and analyze what they can or should do in such critical times and strategize for a future that's much more uncertain than usual. The economic consequences due to the pandemic has also shown disparate effects on culture. When it comes to economy and culture, it is undeniable how closely both are connected and is evident more in such times. It was seen that many brands had to look for other options besides what they have been peculiarly known for, engrossed in mix culture business.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Aim of this research is to dig deeper and scaffold the layers to find out

- the impact of pandemic on brands globally
- response of the brands as their survival strategy, and
- Their new or revised strategies for the future.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Naresh S and Sumita C (2021) stated, bringing any change in advertising appeals will certainly attract and influence more people especially millennials. During the pandemic it became very difficult for brands to understand the revised purchase behavior of the consumers amongst which millennials were hesitant to spend a lot of money on any product purchase. As a result, they switched to online buying due to lockdown and lucrative offers

being given. One more trend was visible at the time of Covid that almost every brand came up with advertisements supporting safety and immunity.

- R. Taylor (2020). Assessed the need for the brand advertisers to comprehend to the dramatically changed environment. For instance: of late, a spice company has moved its marketing strategy specifically to home cooks due to lockdown. Many other businesses had introduced a fresh pricing strategy with offering new package sizes and healthy flavors in their existing pallet.
- Vidya. M (2019). Observed and analyzed that consumer behavior is often a challenge for brand businesses to recognize, since they are evolving with times. As evident how traditional in-market shopping has been replaced with online purchasing. Study also highlighted as to how e-commerce websites should be safer ensuring a hassle-free purchase for consumers and giving away an experience which lasts longer.
- Rajesh (2018). Learned about the aspects influencing a consumer behavior while shopping online irrespective of their sex. Online marketing has gone uphill; and almost all brands are seen targeting their large audience through this tool. Online shopping involves research & purchase and as a result its growth is immensely visible with the change in consumers' thinking & lifestyles.
- Caesar, Larasati, Putri, Heripracoyo & Candra (2020). Studied that Covid-19 pandemic has majorly affected social lives and economic situations. In Malaka Sari, East Jakarta, housewives were involved in setting up home industries SMEs for essential materials. Because of pandemics, physical marketing was restricted, so their business could not flourish. Binus, a service agency helped these housewives gain exposure and literacy for digital marketing which changed the whole perspective of doing business and customer engagement for these women.

4. METHODOLOGY

Study setting and design

Secondary research including scientific articles, journals, literature and Internet sources compose the theoretical framework of the study. To analyze how brands have been influenced by the pandemic across the world a quantitative survey was conducted through an intensive questionnaire having 16 questions across four categories: demographic information (4 questions); pandemic impression on society and markets at large (7 questions); crisis communication strategy by brands in action (3 questions); and future perceptions (2 questions). The participants were invited to submit their responses on an online survey platform, total on voluntary basis. The purpose of the data collection, confidentiality of statistics, and other ethical factors were rightfully cited in the guidelines to bring in notice of each participant prior to filling the form. Further, SPSS was used to analyze the collected data and derive the descriptive statistics. Independent sample T-test has been applied to analyze and draw conclusion.

Table 1: Independent sample t-test (Age wise)

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		
Q1. How has your personal experience been with Covid-19 pandemic?	32	.298	.596	-.14229	.26554
	22.928	.288	.576	-.14229	.25087
Q2. As a consumer, do you think this pandemic has brought any change in the global consumer market?	32	.249	.498	-.04348	.06338
	22.000	.164	.328	-.04348	.04348
Q3. How many times in a day did you come across any advertisements (online/offline) of food/healthcare brand in this pandemic?	32	.278	.557	.21739	.36609
	22.836	.268	.536	.21739	.34639
Q4. Has the overall consumer perception changed towards the popular and most consumable brands locally & globally during this time of crisis?	32	.228	.456	.24901	.32994
	16.979	.244	.488	.24901	.35166
Q5. In your opinion, during the pandemic what mattered the most to the consumers in context of their loved and most used brands?	31	.182	.365	-.22727	.24695
	16.452	.204	.408	-.22727	.26752
Q6. To what extent do you think this pandemic has affected a food or healthcare brand development globally?	31	.442	.885	-.04545	.31141
	22.036	.441	.881	-.04545	.30089
Q7. Do you think during the pandemic brands of food & hygiene products took an unfair share of industry growth?	31	.391	.781	.09091	.32492
	20.292	.391	.782	.09091	.32379
Q8. Have you personally observed any transition in the strategy of any such brand during this time?	31	.430	.860	-.04545	.25648
	22.075	.428	.856	-.04545	.24766
Q9. Which amongst the following significant difference did you notice common in most brand advertisements during pandemic as opposed to pre-pandemic?	31	.142	.284	.36364	.33342
	22.391	.134	.268	.36364	.32025
Q10. How has most consumable brands responded to Covid-19 repercussions?	31	.352	.704	-.18182	.47491
	18.359	.358	.716	-.18182	.49189

Table 2: Independent sample t-test (Gender wise)

	df	t-test for Equality of Means			
		Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		
Q1. How has your personal experience been with Covid-19 pandemic?	36	.297	.595	.14815	.27583
	18.514	.299	.599	.14815	.27657
Q2. As a consumer, do you think this pandemic has brought any change in the global consumer market?	36	.124	.247	.19865	.16897
	12.991	.179	.358	.19865	.20857
Q3. How many times in a day did you come across any advertisements (online/offline) of food/healthcare brand in this pandemic?	36	.320	.639	-.16162	.34168
	19.966	.315	.631	-.16162	.33093
Q4. Has the overall consumer perception changed towards the popular and most consumable brands locally & globally during this time of crisis?	36	.448	.896	.04377	.33227
	18.735	.448	.896	.04377	.33131
Q5. In your opinion, during the pandemic what mattered the most to the consumers in context of their loved and most used brands?	35	.400	.799	-.06294	.24541
	14.813	.412	.824	-.06294	.27793
Q6. To what extent do you think this pandemic has affected a food or healthcare brand development globally?	35	.285	.569	.17832	.31015
	16.847	.297	.593	.17832	.32760
Q7. Do you think during the pandemic brands of food & hygiene products took an unfair share of industry growth?	35	.402	.805	-.08042	.32297
	18.721	.403	.807	-.08042	.32436
Q8. Have you personally observed any transition in the strategy of any such brand during this time?	35	.160	.320	.29021	.28794
	15.778	.185	.370	.29021	.31472
Q9. Which amongst the following significant difference did you notice common in most brand advertisements during pandemic as opposed to pre-pandemic?	35	.010	.019	-.79021	.32131
	21.487	.008	.017	-.79021	.30398
Q10. How has most consumable brands responded to Covid-19 repercussions?	35	.364	.728	-.16434	.46905
	15.392	.378	.756	-.16434	.51970

Table 3: Independent sample t-test (Occupation wise)

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		
Q1. How has your personal experience been with Covid-19 pandemic?	25	.060	.120	-.75000	.46637
	2.991	.068	.135	-.75000	.36901
Q2. As a consumer, do you think this pandemic has brought any change in the global consumer market?	25	.276	.552	.20833	.34551
	23.000	.048	.096	.20833	.12007
Q3. How many times in a day did you come across any advertisements (online/offline) of food/healthcare brand in this pandemic?	25	.335	.671	.25000	.58095
	2.335	.374	.748	.25000	.69309
Q4. Has the overall consumer perception changed towards the popular and most consumable brands locally & globally during this time of crisis?	25	.348	.697	-.20833	.52856
	2.268	.394	.788	-.20833	.68801
Q5. In your opinion, during the pandemic what mattered the most to the consumers in context of their loved and most used brands?	24	.389	.778	-.11594	.40756
	2.143	.440	.879	-.11594	.67829
Q6. To what extent do you think this pandemic has affected a food or healthcare brand development globally?	24	.065	.131	.78261	.49984
	22.000	<.001	<.001	.78261	.17734
Q7. Do you think during the pandemic brands of food & hygiene products took an unfair share of industry growth?	24	.207	.414	.44928	.54010
	3.446	.158	.315	.44928	.38277
Q8. Have you personally observed any transition in the strategy of any such brand during this time?	24	.295	.589	-.27536	.50347
	2.246	.362	.723	-.27536	.68635
Q9. Which amongst the following significant difference did you notice common in most brand advertisements during pandemic as opposed to pre-pandemic?	24	.234	.469	-.46377	.62995
	2.420	.282	.565	-.46377	.69938
Q10. How has most consumable brands responded to Covid-19 repercussions?	24	.366	.732	-.27536	.79391
	2.375	.395	.789	-.27536	.92081

Table 4: Independent sample t-test (Current Residence wise)

	t-test for Equality of Means				
	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p		
Q1. How has your personal experience been with Covid-19 pandemic?	28	.500	1.000	.00000	.32466
	7.335	.500	1.000	.00000	.33908
Q2. As a consumer, do you think this pandemic has brought any change in the global consumer market?	28	.253	.506	.12500	.18551
	23.000	.093	.185	.12500	.09153
Q3. How many times in a day did you come across any advertisements (online/offline) of food/healthcare brand in this pandemic?	28	.008	.016	1.08333	.42111
	6.118	.046	.092	1.08333	.54346
Q4. Has the overall consumer perception changed towards the popular and most consumable brands locally & globally during this time of crisis?	28	.302	.605	.20833	.39802
	8.204	.299	.597	.20833	.37900
Q5. In your opinion, during the pandemic what mattered the most to the consumers in context of their loved and most used brands?	27	.340	.680	.13043	.31327
	6.334	.374	.747	.13043	.38775
Q6. To what extent do you think this pandemic has affected a food or healthcare brand development globally?	27	.217	.434	-.30435	.38323
	7.366	.237	.474	-.30435	.40339
Q7. Do you think during the pandemic brands of food & hygiene products took an unfair share of industry growth?	27	.200	.400	-.34783	.40637
	7.763	.210	.421	-.34783	.40910
Q8. Have you personally observed any transition in the strategy of any such brand during this time?	27	.049	.098	-.49275	.28774
	6.359	.106	.211	-.49275	.35433
Q9. Which amongst the following significant difference did you notice common in most brand advertisements during pandemic as opposed to pre-pandemic?	27	.038	.076	.79710	.43168
	9.061	.035	.071	.79710	.38967
Q10. How has most consumable brands responded to Covid-19 repercussions?	27	.411	.823	.13768	.60933
	7.155	.420	.840	.13768	.65877

Table 5 (a): Sentiment analysis of Q11

Sentiment	Percentage
Positive	69.230769
Negative	7.692308
Neutral	23.076923

Table 5(b): Bar plot of responses in Q11

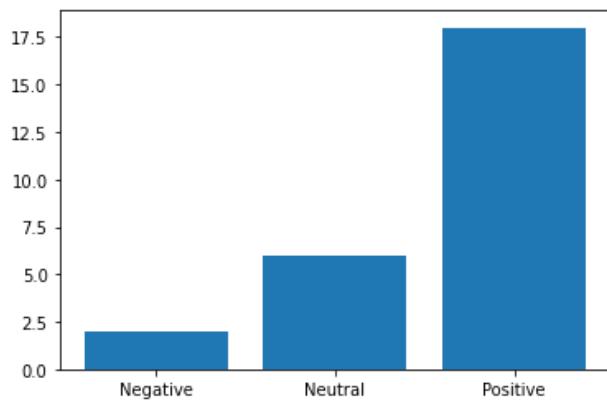


Table 5 (c) - Pie-chart of percentage of positive, negative & neutral sentiments in

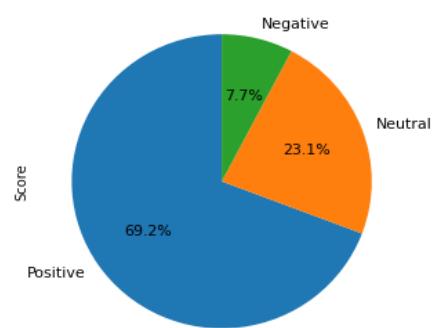


Table 6 (a): Sentiment analysis of Q12

Sentiment	Percentage
Positive	33.333333
Negative	18.518519
Neutral	48.148148

Table 6(b): Bar plot of responses in Q12

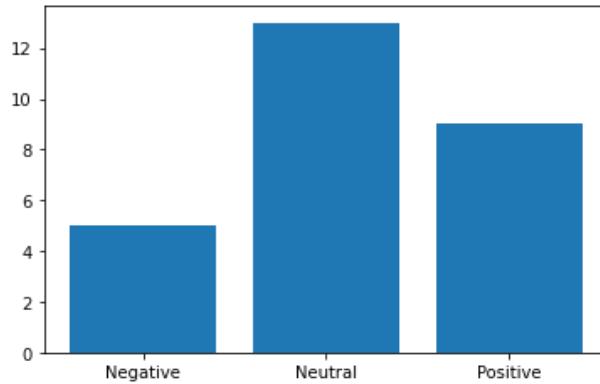
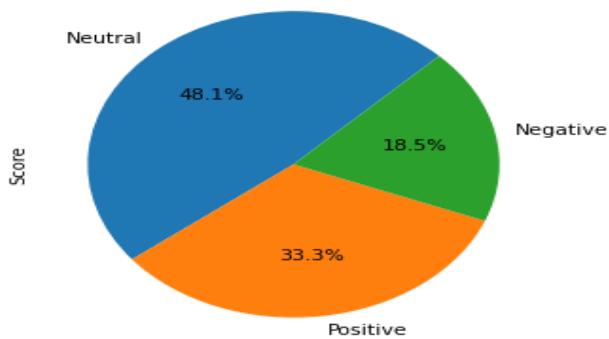


Table 6 (c) - Pie-chart of percentage of positive, negative & neutral sentiments in

5. RESULTS

After conducting independent sample t-test on all demographical variants [Table 1-4] it is seen that the significance value is more than 0.05 therefore similar kind of responses have been generated irrespective of age, gender, occupation, or place of residence. All the respondents have shown a consistent impact in context to the area of enquiry. In Q11 & 12, sentiment analysis also shows a similar overall impact [Table 5-6]. Therefore, it can be concluded that Covid-19 has shown a significant impact on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of brands throughout the world.

6. CONCLUSION

The way advertising and marketing has been propagated over the years has been drastically changed by the sudden arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic globally. It had compelled businesses and brands to re-invent and transform their pre-existing manner of advertising and marketing campaigns into a newer approach to maintain their income. It's almost 2 years now, the pandemic affected all aspects of marketing, be it advertising, media selection, or promotional spends. The alterations which currently the global emergency has brought into the world indicate future with increased competitiveness, and an urge for innovative marketing tactics. During the pandemic, Brands were smart enough to identify and solve the problems by investing their efforts into R&D and thereby creating the product/ service accordingly. Whereas a huge percentage of brands had already paved their way toward their consumers by online platforms, there are few brands that struggled to launch their products. Consumption trends are highly influenced by the pandemic especially the consumer psychology and consumer decision making ability. Being remote is the new practice used by the brands through social media platforms and live streaming such as YouTube, Facebook or Instagram. The unavoidable situation of pandemic had made brands more determined to achieve their goals turning their problems into opportunities along with pushing them to try new media. Though physical

presence or stores were not allowed to open still group buying, social marketing and live broadcasts were conducted to engage with consumers. Due to the major impact of the pandemic, Brands are facing major risks and limited their operation and production activities. It is crucial for brands to survive in this unimaginable and unavoidable period by adopting policies to lower the production costs for firms and return to the normal conditions. Impressive marketing tactics which engage with target audience such as contests and giveaways helps brands to maintain their relationship with consumers.

To alleviate the influence of pandemic even soon brands should-

- Communicate in more emphatic manner and invest in communication more mindfully.
- Considering stakeholder's lives, values and money as important as its own.
- Developing an unshakeable brand- consumer relationship and reputation.
- Keep creating right mix marketing elements as required in contemporary situations.
- Seek opportunity to Communicate and Collaborate along with being Reliable enough.

For a brand to keep its feet strong in the market during the time of a global crisis it must adopt contemporary social and marketing scenario modify its own content marketing strategy accordingly. The most important thing today is to spend money wisely on strategy which is vigorous enough and drives profits. Many established brands have proved their loyalty and compassion towards their consumer during this tough times even at the cost of loss of revenue but most importantly they won the trust of their consumer. This tactic will eventually help them build a strong brand- consumer relationship in the long run even after the economy gets stabilized.

The study has several limitations providing the scope for future research. It is an initial study and much more research can be conducted at different stages after the pandemic to notice its impact and responses of the brands. Also, this study focuses on globally renowned brands and more study can be conducted on nationalized/ local brands based on different countries, their culture, social and economic situations. Geographic factor can also be considered by conducting cross-sectional analysis to get more rational and specific results.

To conclude, brand love and loyalty really does make a difference to sustainability of a brand, be it facing unprecedented issues, or increased demand. In the present and coming times of economic anxiety and disturbed social stability, it will be integral to nurture ourselves as a loyal audience that connects with the brand and will effectively engages with their messages no matter what.

References

- 1) Barkur, G., Vibha Kamath, G. B. (2020). Sentiment analysis of nationwide lockdown due to COVID 19 outbreak: Evidence from India. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*. [Online]. 51. 102089. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102118> Google Scholar
- 2) Brooks, S. K., Webster, R. K., Smith, L. E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Greenberg, N., Rubin, G. J. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: Rapid review of the evidence. *The Lancet*. [Online] 395(10227), 912–920. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30460-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30460-8) Google Scholar

- 3) Christodoulides, G. (2009). "Branding in the Post-Internet Era". Marketing Theory, Sage Publications. [Online]. 9(1), 141-144. DOI: 10.1177/1470593108100071
- 4) Hennig-Thurau, T., Malthouse, E. C., Friege, C., Gensler, S., Lobschat, L., Rangaswamy, A., & Skiera, B. (2010). "The Impact of New Media on Customer Relationships". Journal of Service Research. 13(3), 311-330.
- 5) Impact of the Covid-19 crisis on short- and medium-term consumer behavior. Monitor Deloitte. [Online] (June 2020)
- 6) Marušić, T. & Vranešević, T. (2021). "Challenges of Navigating Brands through Social Media – Marketing Managers Point of View". In press. <https://doi.org/10.32910/ep.72.3.4>
- 7) M. Vidya, P. (2019). "Millennials Behavior towards Online Shopping". International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering.
- 8) R. Taylor, C. (2020). "Advertising and COVID-19". International Journal of Advertising. Vol. 39 (5), 587-589.
- 9) Rajesh, R. (2018). "Evaluating the factors influencing online shopping and its consumer satisfaction in Pune Area". PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences. 4(1), 54- 76
- 10) Sachdev, N. and Chahal, S. (2021). "Effect of advertisement on millennials perception & behavior". International Journal of Advanced Engineering, Management and Science (IJAEMS). Vol 7(11), ISSN: 2454-1311, 21-32
- 11) World Bank. (2020, March). "Educational challenges and opportunities of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic." <https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/educational-challenges-and-opportunities-covid-19-pandemic>
Google Scholar
- 12) <https://time.com/5870826/amazon-coronavirus-jeff-bezos-congress/>
- 13) <https://blog.scribd.com/a-letter-from-the-scribd-ceo-to-our-community/>
- 14) <https://www.growth-rocket.com/blog/how-brands-are-responding-to-covid-19/>