

Online purchase of textile products during Covid-19 crisis and the role of brand recognition – an empirical study

DOI: 10.35530/IT.073.06.202146

DHEENADHAYALAN ARUMUGAM

ADALARASU BALRAJ

ABSTRACT – REZUMAT

Online purchase of textile products during Covid-19 crisis and the role of brand recognition – an empirical study

Textiles and clothing have been considered major industries ever since Indian civilization was born. The demand for clothing and textile products had always been high among Indian consumers. Covid-19 and the lockdown restrictions imposed on account of it have forced them towards making a purchase of textile products online rather than the conventional physical stores. The relationship between online brand recognition in the textile sector and the purchase intention of textile products by consumers through online mode has been empirically estimated in this research. Online brand recognition has been measured using five constructs. The demographic factors of consumers namely age, gender and educational qualifications have been taken as moderators and the influence of these factors on the purchase intention has also been examined. Data collected from 457 respondents were collected through a closed-end questionnaire designed with standard instruments. The outcomes showed that online brand recognition created an impact on the online purchase decision of consumers post Covid-19. It also has identified that the female consumers in India between the age groups 40-59 years form a majority when compared with the male consumers when purchasing textile products online.

Keywords: *textile products, online brand recognition, online purchase post Covid-19, Indian consumers, demographic factors*

Achiziția online de produse textile în timpul crizei de Covid-19 și rolul recunoașterii brandului – un studiu empiric

Textilele și îmbrăcămintea au fost considerate industrii majore încă de la nașterea civilizației indiene. Cererea de îmbrăcăminte și produse textile a fost întotdeauna mare în rândul consumatorilor indieni. Covid-19 și restricțiile de izolare impuse din cauza acestora i-au forțat pe consumatori să cumpere produse textile online, mai degrabă decât din magazinele fizice convenționale. Relația dintre recunoașterea brandului online în sectorul textil și intenția de cumpărare online a produselor textile de către consumatori a fost estimată empiric în această cercetare. Recunoașterea online a brandului a fost măsurată folosind cinci indicatori. Factorii demografici ai consumatorilor, și anume vârsta, sexul și nivelul educațional, au fost luați ca moderatori și a fost examinată și influența acestor factori asupra intenției de cumpărare. Datele de la 457 de respondenți au fost colectate prin intermediul unui chestionar cu întrebări închise, conceput cu instrumente standard. Rezultatele au arătat că recunoașterea online a brandului a creat un impact asupra deciziei de cumpărare online a consumatorilor după Covid-19. De asemenea, s-a identificat faptul că consumatorii de sex feminin din India, încadrați în grupele de vârstă 40-59 de ani, formează o majoritate în comparație cu consumatorii de sex masculin atunci când se cumpără produse textile online.

Cuvinte-cheie: *produse textile, recunoaștere online a brandului, achiziții online post Covid-19, consumatori indieni, factori demografici*

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the pandemic has changed people to adapt to technology and its services where the basic necessities and daily-use products should be brought through “online shopping” whether the consumer intends to opt for e-retailers are not is an option. In this study, how the brand as a factor impacts the consumers’ intention towards online shopping in the retail industry would be examined and studied for better understanding.

E-commerce and E-retailing have been booming since digitalization has uprooted its advantages and convenience into people’s minds. It could be witnessed during the pandemic (Covid-19) that businesses and

companies that adopted online transactions and online shopping as their alternate source of product outlets have sustained their operations and gained profit, unlike traditional vendors and retailers. Though there are several advantages to e-shopping there are huge risks like fraudulent, late door deliveries, broken/damaged products, etc. hence people hesitate to opt for e-shopping, however, the impact of Covid-19 has altered this opinion and made people adapt towards online shopping [1].

The term/word “brand” was initially coined by the Romans and Greeks to promote their products and goods to the public. Though the modern Romans and Greeks introduced the concept of brands into

markets, it could be argued and witnessed that branding was introduced in the early 90s where an individual would name/ label his products under his “name”, “address” and other “contact information” to implicate the top quality and services rendered by him towards his customers. Initially, the term was “*brandr*” which literally meant *burn*, i.e. where people burn their logo, name, symbol, terms, designs, number, ID or License number, etc. onto their goods and products or where farmers burn their ownership marks onto their cattle. This later became a recognition mark and reputation for the owners and thus the “brand” came into existence by fulfilling the psychological and basic needs of the consumers [2].

The products consumed by people globally could be categorized into two broad aspects, utility-based and pleasure based. The products bought by utility-based consumers are termed “utilitarian” and the pleasure-based consumers are termed “hedonic” [3]. The consumers intend to purchase products out of the following factors: necessity, desire, social status, lifestyle, fun and pleasure of buying [4]. Though consumers’ purchase intention and brand factors differ from-one-another, the consumers either benefit themselves or benefit the sellers through profit. The necessity-based purchasing behaviour and decision by the consumers are termed *rational consumers* whereas the purchasing behaviour/decision of the consumers based on attraction, status, lifestyle and pleasure of buying/ shopping are termed, *emotional consumers*. Though consumption could be generally categorized as emotional and rational, there is also another factor that drives consumers towards purchasing products and that would be “ethical advertising/marketing” [5].

The factors or the determinants that attract consumers towards purchasing products could be summed up into three aspects: emotional need, basic need and status need [6] where the consumers’ purchasing behaviour and buying decision vary according to brand, individual perception, product features and information. The perception could be categorized under theoretical models of marketing into five classifications: pro-environmental consciousness perspective, sociological perspective, responsible perspective, attitudinal perspective and altruistic perspective. Though these theoretical perspectives explain the consumers’ general motivation towards purchasing products as beneficiary-based choices, it could also be argued that planned purchase is not necessarily always beneficiary and unplanned purchase is always not at loss [7].

The studies on the retail industry by authors [8–10] argued that the retail industry is an ever-booming industry where consumers’ perception of demand and marketers’ strategic ideas and products that would meet demands as supply will never diminish. However, the retail industry in every country could not be considered as a booming/ rising/ emerging factor that either directly or indirectly develops the economy of a country; for instance, due to Covid-19, many countries have stumbled to sustain within the

market and run their operation and supply-chains. For instance, Macy’s (an American high-end 160 years old store-chain: department that specialises in apparel, clothing and accessories: retailing) had gone to the gutter in the year 2019 had decided to cut the cost by closing-down 125 stores within 2024, cutting corporate jobs and offices around the globe. The loss of about US\$ 4 billion where sales have not been exceeding 1% for the last 3 quarters occurred at Macy’s, due to irrelevant demand and supply where the consumers’ intention is way off from the brand offered by Macy’s, especially during the pandemic Covid-19. The demands of the consumers were towards basic necessities and low-end clothing and apparel (since Covid-19 had made many jobless) which Macy’s failed to provide their consumers with. Thus when the consumers are dissatisfied with products and their brands the retail industry and its associated retailer will witness a huge loss, whereas the consumers would prefer alternate solutions and indirectly benefit the competitors who offer the demands. Thus brand (i.e. high-end, low-end and moderate) as a factor in the retail industry plays a unique role where it could assist the retailers towards profit or huge loss [8, 11]. Though ethical marketing had been gaining many consumers globally and attracting online shoppers towards their brands, recently the new trend in the market, especially the textile/ fashion industry is “emotional branding” where the sellers and the retailers target their consumers towards their brand emotionally. The theories of Planned Behaviour [12], Reasoned Action Theory [13], Responsible Environmental Behaviour [14], Means-End Theory [15], Buying Behaviour [16], Moral Decision-making Theory [17, 18], Self-Perception Theory [19], etc had focused upon consumers’ perception and necessity. However, in this research rather than just focusing on the consumer’s end, how marketers and sellers lure the consumers towards their products through strategic thinking would be analysed where “brand” as a factor would be studied.

Thus by analysing the brand, the researcher focuses on the retail industry and online shopping through emotional branding, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand recognition and purchase intention especially through Covid-19 as a factor and how the age, gender and education qualification as moderators impact each variable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on brand as a marketing strategy and consumer intentions along with the relevant factors and variables of branding and online consumers in India had been studied in this research.

In research, authors studied “Utilitarian motivation” through the online consumption model and found that youths and adults are the most common users of the internet that purchase necessity-based products, especially men of 30–50 years [20]. In the following year, a study by [21] where the Indian youths were targeted as the “target groups” who preferred online

shopping was conducted towards measuring utilitarian motivations. According to the study, India is considered the second largest country globally, where internet users are emerging rapidly succeeding the Chinese which indicates a huge opportunity for the digitalized and internet-based retailers and manufacturers, i.e. e-commerce. According to the author, youngsters (18–24 years) in India are the common internet users and thus the retailers and e-commerce firms advertise accordingly to grab the opportunity by attracting the youths of India. However, the youngsters are not the decision makers and thus deciding upon the final products would be made by the adults of age 30–50. Though the study found that young and adults are online consumers, it was also found by the authors that, the consumers opted for utilitarian-based products for their households and their elders than leisure and luxury products, where e-commerce offered: feature relevant information, monetary savings, assortment, convenience and anonymity.

In consumer behavioural research [22] hedonic motivations were measured and examined. According to the investigator's views and opinion, the hedonic values and approaches as benefits had not been thoroughly examined and analysed by researchers and thus partial information and unconfirmed facts have been in circulation among the literature and research. According to their perspectives, a hedonic product is termed as a "non-functional" value-based product that could be shopped/ purchased by consumers through the following factors: visual appeal, role shopping, sensation seeking, intrinsic enjoyment, hang-out, escape, socialise, self-expression and enduring involvement. The study was framed and organized upon the online consumers with focus groups and authors found that retailers must satisfy their customers with appropriate and rapid responses by offering the best services pre and post-purchase. Also, the retailers should concentrate on hedonic values along with utilitarian values and update themselves according to the market to sustain their position if not they could collapse and lose investments and the business without any returns and profits.

Pakistan's beverage industry and how the consumer intention was towards "brand" especially in fizzy drinks through trust and loyalty as variables were researched [23]. The study focused on 200 respondents through a survey as their "questionnaire" tool by examining the responses and analysing them with regression techniques. The study found that "emotional branding" as a strategic plan by companies and firms could attract more consumers where the customers could highly attach themselves to the brand to their past experiences. Though they concluded that the factors of consumers' buying decisions/behaviour and emotional branding have a strong relationship, they also argued that it might vary from consumers' age, gender and experience globally. Hence the authors concluded that consumer intention and perception is not stable factor that could offer researchers reliable outcome and hence the

researchers should study the same experiment with the same respondents years apart to prove their facts and theories.

"Emotional branding" in her research [24] by focusing on 105 youngsters in India and their purchase intentions. She found that youngsters were attracted towards five factors when "brand" is mentioned, they are trust, lifestyle, personality, relationship and attitude of the brand. According to her findings and analyses, emotional branding (relationship, trust, personality and lifestyle) and brand as attitude have a strong and positive relationship that correlates with purchase intentions, where the variables brand lifestyle and brand trust play a huge role in consumers' buying decisions and intentions.

To validate the study, the author [24] also examined emotional confidence and brand as factors that impact consumers' intention towards products. However, the author found that brand attitude where utilizes "belief" (trust) as an important variable between the brand and consumer decides upon the buying intention rather than other factors in brand as a strategy by firms and companies. The author also argued that brand as the belief was utilized and is being utilized by the companies and firms to attract more consumers and retain the existing consumers and thus they could sustain in the market. However once the trust/loyalty/belief was demolished through negative emotions (for instance: anger, fear, loss, dissatisfaction, etc.) then the consumers would eventually drag the company down-fall with their negative feedback, bad responses and negative recommendations to other consumers, especially through online shopping and internet as a medium for communication.

Online shopping consumers during and post Covid-19 in Vietnam were researched [25]. According to their findings, the in-stores that were not digitized took a hit especially the retail stores, since the online consumers opted for familiar brands with reasonable pricing and better quality and hesitated to purchase similar products online since they were attached to their retailers and street vendors than brands and e-commerce firms. Also, the study revealed that even through the lockdown and pandemic situations the Vietnamese preferred traditional in-store shopping to online shopping due to a lack of brand recognition and brand awareness. Thus the authors concluded that government and the relevant officials should take necessary and effective measures towards consumers' demands and needs and support local marketers rather than providing new business opportunities and online-based firms with higher investment, especially when it affects industries, like retail, fashion and apparel, etc.

[26] Survey upon the fashion and retail industry during and post Covid-19 and how it impacted the consumers' intention towards the brand and design practices of similar minds in the markets, where 31 designers as targets were aimed. According to their outcomes and findings materials, product longevity, sustainable designs, product recycling, social

responsibility and ethical practices of the companies are the most predominant factors that attracted customers. Hence the authors recommended that though the pandemic affected many companies and firms financially, people and consumers seek ethicality and brand value higher where they could feel comfortable.

Thus through the examined literature reviews, it could be understood that brand as visual appeal, brand ethicality as social reputation, brand emotion, brand awareness/familiarity and aesthetic attractions factors influence the consumers' purchase intentions of consumers with different ages, gender and qualification [27]. The following table (table 1) is a summarization of the reviewed literature in the research.

Research gap and contribution

The emotional branding strategies defined by Kim and Sullivan [28] state that, based upon the market trends the emotions of the consumers (refer to figure 2) could vary where the consumers are attracted by four factors: *stories* of the sellers and consumers through product experiences; *social causes* and the sellers' involvement in shaping-up the society and environment; *sensational branding* where the consumers are attracted through tastes, smell, vision (colour, pattern, features, design, etc), feel and sound; and *empowerment branding* where the sellers and consumers are directly involved as "us" rather than "we/me". Hence to bridge the existing literature/research gap on the impact of the brand as a strategy for evaluating the purchase intention of online consumers, the researcher will be attempting to

conduct this study towards examining the brand strategies (awareness, emotion, loyalty: *altogether as brand recognition*) in advertising or marketing products towards consumers. The study will be focusing on branding strategies adopted by the textile industry or fashion industry and how these strategies impact "online shopping" consumers.

The study's focus will also be on the factor "Covid-19" since the number of users for online shopping increased due to the lockdown drastically, for instance, one author [1] conducted a study on online consumers and their buying behaviour towards products pre and post Covid-19 in Iraq and found that overall the in-store sales was about 98% in 2019 whereas just 2% of online sales. However, post and during Covid-19 people were compelled to purchase online/websites which made the in-store sales drop from 98% to 84% while online sales went up to 16% in 2020. However, the researcher failed to examine the strategic factor that has impacted the consumers towards online shopping (i.e. brand awareness, brand emotion, brand loyalty) in Iraq. Thus by focusing on purchase intention, Covid-19, the textile industry and also brands as a factor, this study would be funnelling down the existing gap and will also contribute the future researchers with valuable and reliable information that could be adopted for the similar topic in later studies. In future, the same study could be broadened by focusing on other factors than purchase intention to have an in-depth analysis towards brand recognition and consumers' buying patterns online as a medium for shopping.

Table 1

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DETERMINANTS OF BRAND AND ONLINE CONSUMERS AND THEIR PURCHASE INTENTIONS			
S. No.	Author	Year	Findings
1	Martinez-Lopez et al. [20]	2014	The study found that youths and adults of 30–50 years are common users of online shopping sites towards "utilitarian" goods
2	Ahmed and Sathish [21]	2015	The study by authors revealed that Indian youths are more regular online shoppers than adults
3	Martinez-Lopez et al. [22]	2016	The study by authors examined youths and adult consumers towards "hedonic" goods and found that hedonic users are greater than utilitarian goods through brand recognition
4	Riaz et al. [23]	2017	Examined the "brand" as a factor towards beverages in Pakistan and found that consumers' intentions are impacted by emotional branding
5	Ankita [24]	2018	Studied the emotional branding upon youngsters in India and found brand as attitude impacts youngsters along with emotional branding
6	Rizvi and Oney [27]	2018	Emotional branding and consumers' intention towards purchase were examined by the author and found that negative emotions cause loss to retailers and positive emotions help retailers, especially in online shopping
7	Pham et al. [25]	2020	Examined online shopping during Covid-19 and how the brand as a factor impacted their decisions and buying behaviour and found that brands that satisfied "demand" through "supply" will flourish unlike trend-based retailers in pandemic situations.
8	Karell and Niinimaki [26]	2020	Examined the retail and fashion industry and how brand impacted consumer intention and found products' quality, longevity, material, sustainability and comfort made a brand recognized, unlike other competitors.

Theoretical framework

Figure 1 below represents the attributes of brand recognition as an independent variable impacting the online shopping of the textile industry during Covid-19 through consumer perception as the dependent variable.

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses are framed towards assessing the study's objective-based issues.

- H1:** *Online brand recognition* in the textile industry has an impact on the Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19
- H1.1:** *Online Brand Familiarity* creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19
- H1.2:** *Online Brand Emotion* creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19;
- H1.3:** *Online Aesthetic Attraction* creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19;
- H1.4:** *Online Social Reputation* creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19;
- H1.5:** *Online Visual Simplicity* creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19.
- H2:** The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the age of the consumers.
- H3:** The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the gender of the consumers.
- H4:** The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the educational qualification of the consumers.

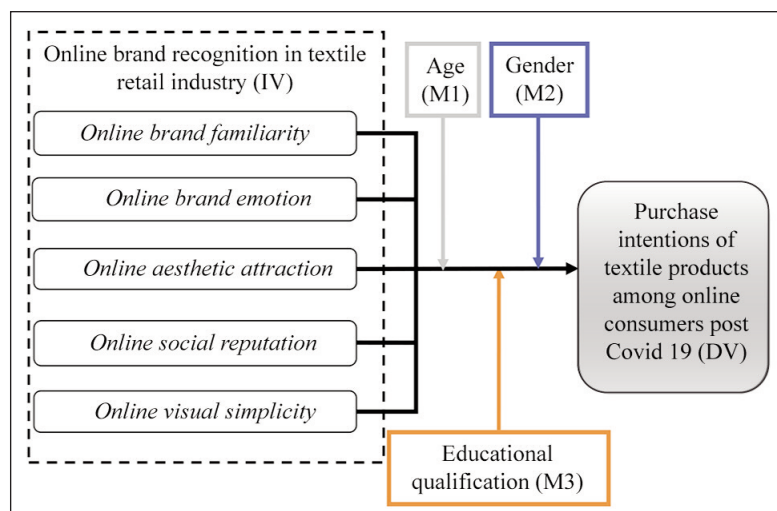


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of online brand recognition and purchase intention of consumers in online shopping in the retail industry

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In general, research methodologies include network pathways for machine learning-based studies and every other research consists of techniques, tools, paradigms, design, approach, analyses (statistical, numerical, lingual/contextual, historical, software and hypothesis testing), sampling, data gathering, development of a scale for analysing the datasets. Based upon these basic techniques research is weighed and analysed for its accuracy, reliability, validity and continuity through ethical considerations.

This study adopts the top-down approach where the researcher would gather data from the primary targets of *Indian textile consumers* and relevant literature and studies from secondary resources (journals, articles, books, internet: e-books, e-journals, e-articles and more). Research paradigms commonly adopted by the researcher would be interpretivism (seeking reality rather than accepting the truth/ facts as it is), positivism (evaluating, examining and investigating the facts) and mixed (of both) [29]. This research would adopt the *positivism paradigm* since the researcher aims to evaluate the impact of purchase intentions upon a brand by online consumers. Thus the study could be classified as a *quantitative study* since it will be adopting measures of statistical and numerical analyses along with the *deductive* approach to gather reliable data. When the research is framed or developed by the researcher it is normally based on a pattern or a design (causal, descriptive and exploratory) where the researcher adopts the relevant and suitable design [30]. The research would be adopting the *descriptive design* since the study involves targets of similar interests, experiences and knowledge and analysis of their experiences as consumer values to evaluate the variables.

Sample

Since the study would be aimed at online consumers, the targets would be undetermined 1000+ and thus the sample would be calculated under-sampling techniques. The calculations of samples from targets are done through a 99% confidence level with 50 population proportions and 1% margin-of-error (MOE). Before cleansing data from irregularities, repetitions, data redundancy and incompleteness of questionnaires, and irrelevant participants, the size was 1000+ and post data cleansing, the size was corrected as 469. The sample size would be 457 according to the regulations of sampling techniques [31]. The sampling techniques for e-commerce-based studies technically fall under random/probability sampling since the researcher doesn't manipulate the environment. In probability sampling: area, simple-random, stratified, systematic, cluster and multi-stage

are the common techniques utilized for required purposes; whereas in non-probability/non-random sampling techniques: quota, judgement, panel, snow-ball and convenience sampling as approaches are dealt with by researchers to gain estimated outcomes from datasets. Since the research is online consumer behaviour upon brands in the textile industry, “cluster sampling” is appropriate. Market analyses and researchers adopt cluster sampling due to an undetermined population and could gain cluster datasets to group similar tastes, preferences, assumptions, opinions, values, beliefs and decisions of participants to conclude the research with valuable factors favouring individuals.

Methods and ethicality

The statistical/numerical analyses in this study comprise *Structured Equation Modelling using AMOS*. The ethicality and validation measures would also be considered under studies design and approach and thus the relevant measures would be undertaken to keep the respondents’ information anonymous.

Data acquisition

The primary sources/data for the research would be gathered under the *closed-end questionnaire* model as the tool from the targets, which is considered a *survey* technique. Through closed-end, as a tool, the evaluation would be reliable/constant and valid instead of being vague or inconsistent. The secondary sources will be attained from relevant studies on brand, brand recognition, brand as emotion, purchase intention, online consumers, online shopping, e-retailing, etc. The targets were determined as online purchasers of different age groups (18–60+ years) and should know the brands in online ports and websites before participating; if not they would be discarded as invalid participants through oral confirmation.

Development of utilized scale

The scale was developed into two sections where online brand recognition factors that have 5 constructs (OBF, OBE, OAA, OSR and OVS) with every 5 items [32] totalling 25 items were adopted along with 3 items of purchase intentions (PI) [33] in [34], which totals to a 28 items scale, which is:

1. Online Brand Familiarity (OBF) with (5 items);
2. Online Brand Emotions (OBE) with (5 items);
3. Online Aesthetic Attractions (OAA) with (5 items);
4. Online Social Reputation (OSR) with (5 items);
5. Online Visual Simplicity (OVS) with (5 items) and
6. Purchase Intention (PI) with (3 items).

The demographic profile contains the consumers’ information where age, educational qualification and gender are the important factors since they are the moderators in this investigation that would be examined to study the relationship between the dependent variable (Online Brand Recognition: OBR) and independent variable (PI). The scale was 5 point Likert scale where Strongly Disagree values as 1 towards Strongly Agree values as 5. The study mainly examines the targets of Indian participants and thus other

geographical area-based responses would be rejected or discarded.

Justification of scale adoption

The brand as awareness and loyalty among online shoppers were examined in research [35] by adopting the scale developed by Rahman [32] and the outcomes were consistent and reliable; similarly, the researchers adopted the scale from [33] towards purchase decisions and intentions of online consumers and found their outcomes consistent too. Henceforth adoption of scales from [32] and [36] is justified since the research is on the purchase intentions of online consumers towards the textile industry in weighing brands as the primary factor.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Results

The demographic data was found through the analyses and it shows that respondents of age groups 50–59 years were the major users (35.8%) followed by 40–49 years (30.2%) than the elders and youths which contradicts the study by [21] and similarly the findings prove that “utilitarian motives” are higher during Covid-19 which in-turn supports the study conducted by [20] towards age as a factor in online shopping; however when the gender is considered it is observed that 69% are female shoppers and only 31% are male shoppers which again contradicts the study by [20]. It is found that during the Covid-19 Female shoppers were major shoppers who had purchased “utilitarian” products and had educational qualification levels of Post-Graduation (33.2%), Under-Graduation (32.8%) and high-schooling (23.7%).

As per the analyses and examination, it has been found that the brand as “visual simplicity” and “familiarity” in online shopping has attracted the respondents more, than social reputation, aesthetic attraction and brand emotion in online retailing through consumers’ purchase intentions.

Findings

The reliability of the developed concept was tested out with Cronbach alpha (refer to table 2) and the results pointed out that constructs are within the standard value (i.e. above 0.6–0.7) and thus it is reliable and valid to adopt the constructs to attain the objective.

Table 2

RELIABILITY TEST THROUGH CRONBACH'S ALPHA			
S. No.	Construct	Items	Alpha
1	Online brand familiarity	5	0.882
2	Online brand emotion	5	0.787
3	Online aesthetic attraction	5	0.919
4	Online social reputation	5	0.772
5	Online visual simplicity	5	0.926
6	Purchase intentions of the consumers upon online shopping	3	0.855

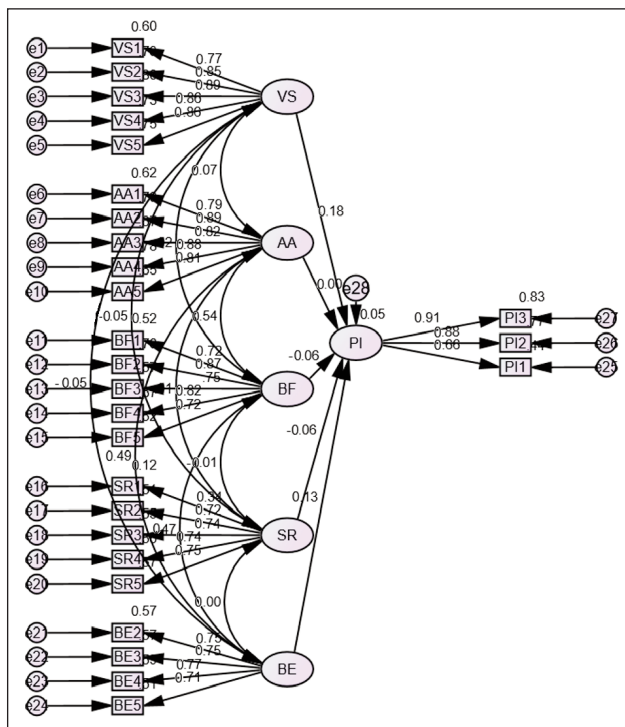


Fig. 2. Casual fit – Model fit

Figure 2 depicts that the values of OBF (0.882), OBE (0.787), OAA (0.919), OSR (0.772), OVS (0.926), and PI (0.855) are well within the acceptable and reliable ranges in alpha testing.

The model fit through the examination also shows a good fit (refer to figure 2) interpreting that the constructs and the variables correspond well together stating the facts that the sample and the variables are valid to conduct the study upon the developed aim. The casual model fit's interpretation (refer to table 3) states that the attained outcome and the estimated

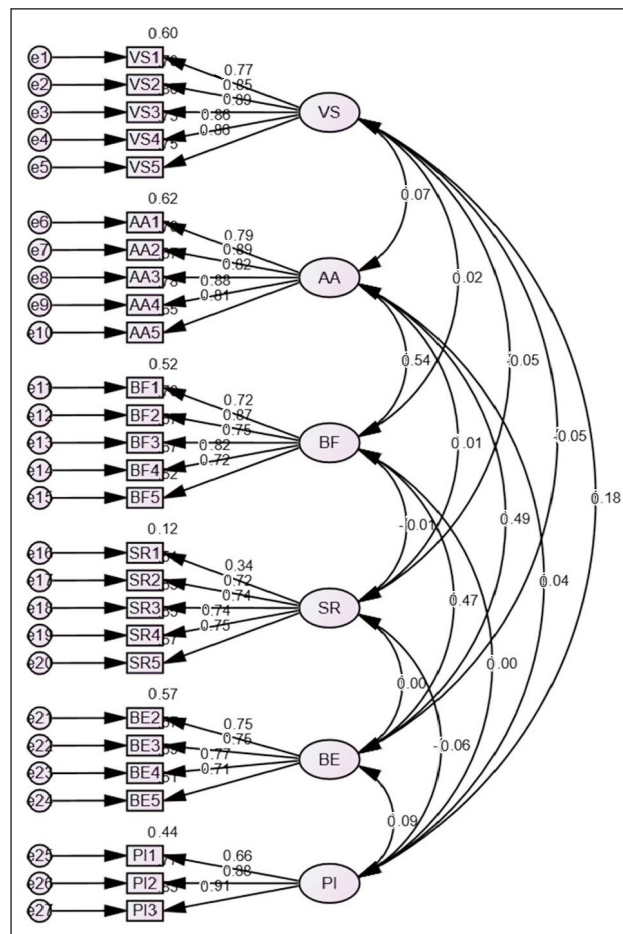


Fig. 3. Measurement fit – Structural fit

outcome are similar, which makes the fit valid. The values of the factors under the model test obtained are CMIN/DF (statistics of chi-square fit/degree-of-freedom) = between 1 & 3, (comparative-fix-index) CFI>0.95, (root-mean-squared-residual) SRMR<0.08, (root-mean-square-error of approximation) RMSEA < 0.06 and PClose is > 0.05.

Through the structural fit model (refer to figure 3) the relationships of the constructs and the reliability of the constructs are verified for better fitness through the highest likelihood estimation testing process towards achieving the pre-determined criterion.

The convergent reliability of research should be greater than 0.07, where "average variance extract" (AVE) should be 0.5 and greater and the maximum shared variance (MSV) should be eventually lesser than AVE. Through the structural fit it could be interpreted that, the CR values are above 0.07, AVE is greater than 0.5 and MSV < AVE (refer to table 4).

Table 3

MODEL FIT – INTERPRETATION			
Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN	503.712	-	-
DF	391	-	-
CMIN/DF	1.288	Between 1&3	Excellent
CFI	0.968	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.048	<0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.035	<0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.998	>0.05	Excellent

Table 4

CFA MODEL – INTERPRETATION										
Indicator	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	SR	VS	AA	BF	BE	
SR	0.739	0.783	0.002	0.831	0.719					
VS	0.893	0.607	0.005	0.933	-0.046	0.779				
AA	0.876	0.785	0.293	0.927	0.014	0.068	0.765			
BF	0.832	0.508	0.293	0.897	-0.011	0.019	0.541	0.713		
BE	0.778	0.748	0.237	0.835	0.004	-0.050	0.487	0.472	0.670	

The values of each construct of the brand as a variable are: SR with 0.719, VS with 0.779, AA with 0.765, BF with 0.713 and BE with 0.670. It could be inferred that constructs are above 0.6 and are reliable.

Thus it is examined and inferred that the developed model is a success, where the constructs, variables and samples are valid and reliable to conduct the study.

ANOVA regression for hypothesis testing

Regression analysis through ANOVA was carried upon the model to test the hypotheses to examine

the relationship between PI and OBF, OBE, OAA, OSR and OVS.

The developed hypotheses were examined and tested out with the sample and the outcomes were attained through statistical analyses results of the hypotheses were all accepted (refer to tables 5–10) since the significant level of “p-value” (0.000) in ANOVA regression testing was < 0.05. It is also well established that the OBR has an impact on PI where the moderators have a positive relationship between the variables (refer to table 10).

Table 5

ANOVA FOR PURCHASE INTENTION AND ONLINE BRAND FAMILIARITY					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.062	1	0.062	0.015	0.000 ^a
Residual	942.955	230	4.100		
Total	943.017	231			

Note: a – Predictors: (Constant), OBFTOT.

Table 6

ANOVA FOR PURCHASE INTENTION AND ONLINE BRAND EMOTIONS					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	7.613	1	7.613	1.872	0.000 ^a
Residual	935.404	230	4.067		
Total	943.017	231			

Note: a – Predictors: (Constant), OBETOT.

Table 7

ANOVA FOR PURCHASE INTENTION AND ONLINE AESTHETIC ATTRACTIONS					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2.939	1	2.939	0.719	0.000 ^a
Residual	940.078	230	4.087		
Total	943.017	231			

Note: a – Predictors: (Constant), OAAOT.

Table 8

ANOVA FOR PURCHASE INTENTION AND ONLINE SOCIAL REPUTATION					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.812	1	3.812	0.933	0.000 ^a
Residual	939.206	230	4.084		
Total	943.017	231			

Note: a – Predictors: (Constant), OSRTOT.

Table 9

ANOVA FOR PURCHASE INTENTION AND ONLINE VISUAL SIMPLICITY					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	30.266	1	30.266	7.627	0.000 ^a
Residual	912.751	230	3.968		
Total	943.017	231			

Note: a – Predictors: (Constant), VSTOT.

OUTCOMES OF HYPOTHESES TESTING		
S. No.	Hypothesis	Accepted/Rejected
H1	<i>Online brand recognition</i> in the textile industry has an impact on the Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H1.1	<i>Online Brand Familiarity</i> creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H1.2	<i>Online Brand Emotion</i> creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H1.3	<i>Online Aesthetic Attraction</i> creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H1.4	<i>Online Social Reputation</i> creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H1.5	<i>Online Visual Simplicity</i> creates an impact on the purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19	Accepted
H2	The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the age of the consumers	Accepted
H3	The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the gender of the consumers	Accepted
H4	The relationship between Online brand recognition and Purchase Intentions of textile products by consumers post Covid-19 is moderated by the educational qualification of the consumers.	Accepted

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The study primarily focuses on branding and its strategies to attract consumers through traditional and modern marketing as a tool. Recently digitized or computerized-based businesses and their operations are being identified as the most effective and helpful strategy where the consumers purchase what they intend to and retailers sell what the demand in the market is about [10]. Although there are several advantages to online shopping or digitized retailing, people who have lesser knowledge towards computers, technology, the internet, online shopping, online retailing and sorts and the illiterate are the ones who suffer greatly. There are several studies [11, 37–39] that had been focused on online shopping, online retailing, online shoppers, teenagers and e-shopping, etc. where the focus is mainly on the shoppers/consumers and how e-retailing has an impact on them. No studies or research have focused on multiple factors that impact the purchase intention of consumers, especially where brand as a strategy plays a unique and vital role in examining the consumers' purchasing behaviour and decision upon their intention of Utility and Hedonic attributes.

Though during Covid-19 people have adopted and adapted to the internet as a mode of shopping for utilities and goods, there are people (for instance: aged and illiterate people) who don't know Smartphones and online shopping. However, in this digital era, there would be at least one person in a family who would be interested in advanced or hi-tech mobile phones (androids and smartphones) and the internet where online shopping is a possibility, where they would not bother about product information or the brands that offer the goods. Hence to study the

impact of purchase intention versus the brand would be an ideal subject matter to find the usefulness of online shopping and how the brand as a factor has impacted people to purchase products rather than product availability, product placement and pricing strategies. The study would also be significant in future for researchers who seek information and facts through the brand as a strategy that impacts the consumers' decisions and behaviour as purchase intention.

Conclusion

The study aims at analysing the purchase intentions of online shoppers through the brand as a factor during Covid-19, in the textile industry. Though the study is based on consumer purchases where the brand plays an important role in examining the online shoppers' purchasing intention, it has certain limitations, such as the study: is conducted for examining the intention of the online shoppers; only focuses on Indian participants and respondents who have brand knowledge; doesn't concentrate or analyses the traditional shopping intention of consumers during Covid-19 and focuses on the impact of brand upon the consumers' purchase intention and thus other variables would be ignored if irrelevant. The research will be conducted for the Indian online consumers as our targeted respondents and thus the other country or non-India state-based responses would be rejected. It could be concluded that female purchasers or online shoppers during Covid-19 are major than male shoppers; the age (i.e. major users are 40–59 years shoppers) as moderator has a positive impact on the variables along with gender (i.e. female shoppers) and educational qualification (i.e. major users are from high school, UG, PG). The outcome proves that

the independent variable OBR (Online Brand Recognition) were the factors: online brand familiarity, online brand emotion, online social reputation, online aesthetic attraction and online visual simplicity has a positive impact on the dependent variable PI

(purchase intention) in the retail industry, in which the “online visual simplicity” and “online brand familiarity” attract the shoppers greatly, then online brand emotion, online social reputation and online aesthetic attraction.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ali, B.J., *Impact of COVID-19 on consumer buying behaviour toward online shopping in Iraq*, In: Journal of Economic Studies, 2020, 18, 3, 267–280.
- [2] Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Saunders, J., Wong, V., *Principles of marketing*, The European ed., Prentice Hall Europe, Hertfordshire, 1996
- [3] Kim, H.-S., *Using Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Motivations to Profile Inner City Consumers*, In: Journal of Shopping Center Research, 2006, 13, 1, 58–80
- [4] Rahman, M.T., Pial, T., *Influence of Rational and Emotional Appeals on Purchasing Through Online: The Case on Social Media*, In: International Journal of Financial Research, 2019, 11, 1, 34–42
- [5] Lee, J.-Y., Jin, C.-H., *The Role of Ethical Marketing Issues in Consumer-Brand Relationship*, In: Sustainability Report, 2019, 11, 6536, 1–21
- [6] Popovic, I., Bossink, B.A.G., Peter, C., van-der-Sijde, *Factors Influencing Consumers' Decision to Purchase Food in Environmentally Friendly Packaging: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go from Here?*, In: Sustainability J. Review, 2019, 11, 7197, 1–22
- [7] Steenis, N.D., Van-Herpen, E., Van-der-Lans, I.A., Ligthart, T.N., Trijp, H.C.M., *Consumer response to packaging design: The role of packaging materials and graphics in sustainability perceptions and product evaluations*, In: J. Clean. Prod., 2017, 162, 286–298
- [8] Huda, S.S.M.S., Zubayer, M., Faruq, O., *Marketing Strategies of Retail Stores: An Evaluation of Grocery Shops of Dhaka City*, In: Global Journal of Management and Business Research, 2011, 11, 7.1, 81–87
- [9] Suguna, P., Mathipoorani, V.B., *Strategies for Retail Marketing*, In: IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM), 2016, 18, 6, 21–29
- [10] De-Juan-Vigaray, M.D., Segui, A.I.E., *Retailing, Consumers, and Territory: Trends of an Incipient Circular Model*, In: Social Sciences, 2019, 8, 300, 1–15
- [11] Saha, S., Sharma, A., Kumar, A., *Factors That Influence Retail Store Preference and Impact of in-Store Digitization*, In: International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering (IJRTE), 2019, 8, 4, 8715–8722
- [12] Ajzen, I., *The theory of planned behaviour*, In: Organisation Behavioural and Human Decision Process Journal, 1991, 50, 179–211
- [13] Ajzen, I., Fishbein, M., *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behaviour*, Pearson: London, UK, 1980
- [14] Hines, J.M., Hungerford, H.R., Tomera, A.N., *Analysis and Synthesis of Research on Responsible Environmental Behaviour: A Meta-Analysis*, In: Journal of Environmental Education, 1987, 18, 1–8
- [15] Gutman, J.A., *Means-End Chain Model Based on Consumer Categorization Processes*, In: Journal of Marketing, 1982, 46, 60–72
- [16] Haines, G.H., Howard, J.A., Sheth, J.N., *The Theory of Buyer Behaviour*, Wiley: New York, NY, USA, 1969
- [17] Schwartz, S.H., *Elicitation of moral obligation and self-sacrificing behaviour: An experimental study of volunteering to be a bone marrow donor*, In: J. Pers. Soc. Psychology, 1970, 15, 283–293
- [18] Maslow, A.H., *A Theory of Meta-motivation: the Biological Rooting of the Value-Life*, In: Journal of Humanist Psychology, 1967, 7, 93–127
- [19] Bem, D.J., *Self-perception: An alternative interpretation of cognitive dissonance phenomena*, In: A. Psychol. J. Rev., 1967, 74, 183–200
- [20] Martinez-Lopez, F.J., Pla, C., Gázquez-Abad, J.C., Rodríguez, I., *Utilitarian motivations in online consumption: dimensional structure and scales*, In: Electronic Commerce Research and Applications, 2014, 13, 3, 188–204
- [21] Ahmed, K.A.A., Sathish, A.S., *Unleashing the Utilitarian Motivations of Online Shopping among Indian Youth*, In: Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, MCSER Publishing, Rome-Italy, 2015, 6, 2, 391–398
- [22] Martinez-Lopez, F.J., Pla-Garcia, C., Gázquez-Abad, J., Gázquez-Abad, J.C., Rodríguez-Ardura, I., *Hedonic motivations in online consumption Behaviour*, In: Int. J. Business Environment, 2016, 8, 2, 121–151
- [23] Riaz, H., Ahmed, H., Akhter, S., Hussain, M., *The Impact of Emotional Branding in Customer Buying Behaviour in Soft Drink Beverage Industry of Pakistan*, In: KASBIT Business Journal (KBJ), 2017, 10, 131–150
- [24] Ankita, N., *Emotional Branding: A New Way to Connect to Customers*, In: International Journal of Management Studies, 2018, 5, 4.2, 1–9
- [25] Pham, V.K., Thi, T.H.D., Le, T.H.H., *A study on the COVID-19 awareness affecting the consumer perceived benefits of online shopping in Vietnam*, In: Cogent Business & Management, 2020, 7, 1, 1–16
- [26] Karell, E., Niinimäki, K., *A Mixed-Method Study of Design Practices and Designers' Roles in Sustainable-Minded Clothing Companies*, In: Sustainability, 2020, 12, 4680, 1–25

- [27] Rizvi, W.H., Oney, E., *The influence of emotional confidence on brand attitude: Using brand belief as mediating variable*, In: Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja, 2018, 31, 1, 158–170
- [28] Kim, Y.-K., Sullivan, P., *Emotional branding speaks to consumers' heart: the case of fashion brands*, In: Fashion and Textiles, Springer, 2019, 6, 2, 1–16
- [29] Kivunja, C., Kuyini, A.B., *Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts*, In: International Journal of Higher Education, 2017, 6, 5
- [30] Kothari, C.R., *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*, New Age International publishers, New Delhi, 2013, 26–41
- [31] Al-Omari, A.I., Haq, H., *A new sampling method for estimating the population mean*, In: Journal of Statistical Computation and Simulation, 2019, 89, 11, 1973–1985
- [32] Rahman, M.S., Hossain, Md.-A., Rushan Hoque, M.T., Hassan, H., *Conceptualising online fashion brand recognition: scale development and validation*, In: Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC, 2020, 24, 1, 73–96
- [33] Ramayah, T., Ignatius, J., *Impact of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived enjoyment on intention to shop online*, In: ICFAI Journal of Systems Management, 2005, 3, 3, 36–51
- [34] Moon, M.A., Khalid, M.J., Awan, H.M., Attiq, S., Rasool, H., Kiran, M., *Consumer's perceptions of website's utilitarian and hedonic attributes and online purchase intentions: A cognitive-affective attitude approach*, In: Spanish Journal of Marketing – ESIC, 2017, 21, 2, 73–88
- [35] Henriksson, J., Eriksson, O.K., *Managing brand equity during an ongoing pandemic – A qualitative study in the tourism-and-hospitality industry during Covid-19*, Dissertation of Business and Economics, Masters, Lulea University of Technology, 2021, 1–72, Available at: <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1566529/FULLTEXT01.pdf> [Accessed on October 31, 2021]
- [36] Room, A., *History of Branding*, In: Hart S. and Murphy J. (eds.), Brands: The new wealth creators, Inter-brand McMillian Business, London, 1998, 13–23
- [37] Gandhi, B.M., Chinnadorai, K.M., *Retail in India*, In: International Journal of Engineering Development and Research: IJEDR, 2017, 5, 1, 433–435
- [38] Kumar, B.A., Rao, A.V.S., *Evolution of Retail Sector in India*, In: International Journal of Multidisciplinary: A Research Review Journals, 2018, 3, 5, 32–38
- [39] Butu, A., Bruma, I.S., Tanasa, L., Rodino, S., Vasiliu, C.D., Dobos, S., Butu, M., *The Impact of COVID-19 Crisis upon the Consumer Buying Behaviour of Fresh Vegetables Directly from Local Producers. Case Study: The Quarantined Area of Suceava County, Romania*, In: International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 2020, 17, 5485, 1–24

Authors:

DHEENADHAYALAN ARUMUGAM¹, ADALARASU BALRAJ²

¹Anna University, Research Scholar, Management, Centre For Research, Chennai, India

²R.V.S.Faculty of Management, Management Studies, Kumaran Kottam Campus, Sullur, Coimbatore, India
e-mail: Dr.adalarasu.b@gmail.com

Corresponding author:

DHEENADHAYALAN ARUMUGAM
e-mail: deenaadeens@yahoo.co.in