

# **Review Study About Marketing Strategies Implemented During Covid -19 Pandemic in Both Global and Sri Lankan Context**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Marketing strategies play a significant role in achieving an organization's long-term goals and short-term objectives. In order to access and involve with target audience in a dynamic global environment, marketing strategies should be developed in modern competitive business world.

Therefore, this research intends to clear the way to a review study about Marketing strategies implemented during COVID -19 pandemic in both global and Sri Lankan context. In fact, the importance of execution of proper marketing strategies as a driving force to gain competitive advantage during post COVID – 19 period in a dynamic business world primarily encouraged the researcher to conduct this study. As a result, investigation and critical review of previous and recent studies in line with the similar phenomena of research studies were conducted in order to absorb important details and findings. Through the review study, it was possible not only to have an understanding about marketing strategies implemented by different organizations under different industries in both Sri Lankan context and global context to combat COVID -19 pandemic to survive in the business but also it was possible to identify some challenges encountered by different organizations during COVID -19 pandemic.

As a summary, it was evident through the derived conclusions of the review study that interaction of consumers with online shopping became frequent due to social distance and less movement with physical visit to shops and super markets during COVID -19 pandemic. Further to above, online shopping becomes a main preference by majority of consumers has created a challenging barrier for retailers to encourage people to visit their retail stores although unique elements of visual merchandising are a powerful marketing tool in attracting consumers in various industries. It can also be concluded through the study that consumers prefer to pay a higher price for luxury items or luxury goods associated with good brand reputation while previous studies also reveal that consumer ethnocentrism causes customers to overestimate locally produced items or goods compared to imported items or goods resulting in the rejection of foreign brands.

When implementation of current marketing strategies of organizations under different industries both in Sri Lankan context and global context during post COVID – 19 period is considered, social media marketing strategy should be aligned by focusing on interacting more with customers by paying more attention to the aspects of creative content creation, correct targeting on influencers, localisation of brand based on location and proper data collection about consumer needs. Further visual merchandising strategy need to be integrated with online marketing and social media marketing of the organization by offering digitalized real time client experience on the website of the organization by utilising augmented reality concepts since consumers interact more with online shopping nowadays. When it comes to premium pricing strategy, it is vital for organizations to position the product or service in customers' mind price as a quality indicator specially for products associated with an excellent brand reputation among customers to convey a message

that high price indicates high quality. As per the derived conclusions, when consumer ethnocentrism is taken into consideration as a strategy, application of Indigenous Marketing is very useful to promote the requirement of manufacturing locally and buying locally to supplement ethnocentric ideals of citizens by making sure high-quality products and by reminding customers of the value of supporting domestic enterprises.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Many people have no idea about the real explanation of marketing and instead marketing is explained as advertising or selling. Although these ideas are correct, advertising or selling can only be applied to a subset of the entire concept of marketing. Other aspects of marketing consist of distribution, pricing, promotion, developing consumer experience and so on. Marketing is a wider concept that integrates every strategy that support an organization in attaining its objectives.

The pandemic of coronavirus (COVID-19) disease made severe impact on everyday lives (Soliman, Ivanov and Webster, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the space for consumers as consumers gradually alter from offline shopping to online shopping (Ebiary et al., 2021).

To prevent the extra spread of COVID-19 and to preserve the lives, many consumers in entire world have habituated to their purchasing habits. Most of the consumers improved online shopping because their families were socially distant. Shutting down physical businesses because of lockdowns, social distant measures and strict standard operating procedures resulted in an improvement in online purchasing by consumers. Therefore, it could be observed in an accelerating the rise in e-business markets. Sri Lanka can be considered as one of Southeast Asia's fastest-developing e-business marketplace which is nowadays driven by smartphone access and wider Internet penetration with a growing population in Information Communication and Technology (ICT) knowledge. Execution of diverse innovative marketing strategies has emerged as a trend among organizations in order to get competitive advantage profitably in the market. Consumers will no longer be considered as they are only with features of product, quality and pricing but also nowadays consumers are needed to be concerned with the organization's integrated marketing strategies, public relations and other approaches. A marketing plan of an organization should focus on its value creation, statistics on target consumer demographics, major brand message, and other high-level components.

During the COVID-19 pandemic most of the organizations utilized diverse marketing strategies to distribute and promote their product and services. Most of the organizations selects online platforms to deliver their products and services in both global and local context. On the whole COVID-19 pandemic made a huge impact on current economic activity than other natural and man-made calamities including global nuclear wars, local conflicts and climate change. In fact, the importance of execution of proper marketing strategies as a driving force to gain competitive advantage during post COVID – 19 period in a dynamic business world primarily encouraged to conduct this study.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This literature survey represents a comprehensive analysis of the current literature found on the topic related to study concentrating on a number of related aspects of marketing strategies during COVID – 19 pandemic such as Social Media Marketing, Premium Pricing, Visual merchandising and Ethnocentrism.

### **Social Media Marketing**

Social Media Marketing (SMM) can be considered as a type of internet marketing that employs social media

apps as a marketing strategy. These social media platforms provide opportunity for organizations to interact with their target market in the hope of enhancing brand value, increasing current sales and generating traffic to the website of organization. The utilization of websites and social media platforms to advertise a service or product is considered as social media marketing. Social media marketing is gradually gaining popularity among scholars and practitioners. Recommendation of Health authorities was to contain the epidemic of Covid-19 was to neglect personal contacts and keep the social distancing whereas e-shopping emerged. Therefore, e-services as online groceries decreased the people movements and increased the amount of time spent at house. Consumer trust became a most significant factor for e-services. Payment methods such as debit cards and credit cards enhanced the trust between customers during the Covid-19 pandemic (Gunawardana and Fernando, 2021).

Making use of social media has dramatically swollen in recent years and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated utilization of social media among U.S. adults. In addition, the increase of social media platforms has changed the dynamics of the electronic marketplace by socially fostering networks of opinion leaders, customers and subject matter experts (Thota, 2018).

Kumar et al. (2020) demonstrates the importance of social media marketing when they examined that promotional messages associated with integrated marketing might make impact on consumers' perceptions of brand image and lead to consumption habits. As per their findings, consumers are drawn to social media platforms for a variety of reasons. However main reason is to make consumers aware of the product and influence purchasing of the product.

Malik et al. (2016) examines the benefits that users of Facebook gained from social media involvement utilizing Uses and Gratification Theory. As per the study, six different forms of gratifications obtained were observed by uploading images through their online study of 368 users of Facebook. As per the analysis, all factors attention seeking, attachment, habit, disclosure knowledge sharing and social influence might lead to user delight.

Furthermore, Agarwal and Karahanna (2000) discover that when customers are deeply attached with information technology, customers experience a condition called cognitive immersion (CA). CA attracts users into the utilization of social media for various reasons. One reason is that social media provides opportunity for temporal detachment that decreases the perception of users of time passing. Further social media supports users to neglect harsh truths of life via intense immersion. Third, effective involvement between the software and the user on social media may bring more delight. Fourth, social media offers the user a sense of power. Finally, it might pique the interest of users by providing novelty and wonder.

Mason et al. (2021) states that social media is a salient source for persuading consumers' shopping and buying behaviours since they share tips of product usage, service experiences, and product reviews. The findings highlight the improving significance of social media as a marketing tool which has emerged since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings further emphasize the effect that social media can have on consumer decision-making processes. As per the analysis,

social media platforms are a significant marketing tool to build brands with regards to developing brand awareness and excitement. The study which paid attention to the United States of America due to the diversity and considerable impact of the American economy and culture on the world. Many cultures were included and addressed in American social media platforms. Findings revealed that COVID-19 seems to be pushing customers towards more online consumer behaviour activity.

Therefore, effective application of social media must be an integral part of marketing strategy of any organization.

## Premium Pricing

Kotler et al. (2009) reveals that “Premium pricing” is a widely used and low-cost method by sellers and manufacturers to improve profit by offering consumers with expected services and goods. The term “premium pricing” is about charging a higher price than the typical market price for a service or product in the expectation that consumers looking for more value will purchase it. Premium pricing strategy is utilized by a broad range of organisations including luxury goods such as automobiles, electronic devices and high-end clothing.

Some studies have been published that explain the relationship between Premium pricing and level of income, attitudes, Eco literacy, educational status, customer awareness, perceived importance, infrastructure, social pressure, subjective norms, social norms and the real effect on Premium pricing in both the global and Sri Lankan contexts.

When Premium pricing strategies are taken into consideration in Sri Lankan context, Fernando (2018) investigates the impact of external and internal signals of tea product characteristics on consumer willingness to pay a Premium pricing utilizing data from the medium high-end market. Study focused on all upper-income and moderate tea drinkers in Sri Lanka. As per the analysis, consumers place a high value on intrinsic tea characteristics when made-up tea is purchased whereas consumers place a high value on extrinsic characteristics when tea packets are purchased. Intrinsic characteristics such as scent and flavour have little impact, as do external characteristics such as promotion and packaging. As per findings, the brand name of tea products has the greatest effect on customer willingness to pay a premium price. Advertising of Tea vendors is not effective in stimulating purchasing intentions of customers.

When it comes to the study related to ethics about consumers’ willingness to pay for Fair – Trade Coffee, consumers’ desire to pay a premium price is influenced by various factors such as instrumental and terminal personal values, product qualities and socio-demographic considerations. Further product characteristics have a direct effect on consumer buying behaviour particularly at high price points (Pelsmacker, Driesen and Rayp, 2005).

During the Covid – 19 Pandemic (the lockdown time), consumers were ready to pay a premium price for consumer electronic items. Global consumer electronic market expanded by over 18% in the first half of 2021 due to the growth in the Online Studying system and work-from-home opportunities in comparison to other tea exporting countries (Bhatti et al. ,2020).

Vigneron and Jhonson (2004) state that luxury is the major reason for differentiating a brand in a product category. Therefore, it is vital for organizations to grasp additional value as a main factor of customer perception.

Ashraf, Li and Mahmood (2017) reveal through their study, income of customer has a significant effect on the demand for premium price. Brand image and Premium price products has a significant effect on the customer demand for premium price products. People perceive great convenience when they buy premium price products compared to other products in the same product category. Most customers regard own price of the product as key elements of premium pricing.

## Visual Merchandising

Visual merchandising is an offering strategy which decreases workload of staff and improves per square foot returns while also supporting to reduce marketing budget. Visual items need to be conveniently accessible, identifiable and offer a diverse option for the choose. Consumers are more likely to purchase

what they see. Therefore, visual merchandising is vital for merchants but the actual thing can also entice them (Deore and Fatangare, 2021).

When Visual Merchandising is taken into consideration in Sri Lankan context through previous studies, Visual merchandising is utilised as a marketing strategy by the majority of organizations to sell and promote their products. The supermarket organizations are one of the fastest growing industries in Sri Lanka. They have access to a huge number of consumers throughout the country. Now Super markets have established as a profitable industry in the country. Primary aim of Visual Merchandising is to attract many consumers by increasing sales. In this sense, visual merchandising is a powerful marketing tool which must attract customers into the store and keep them there for a long time in order to purchase a product. Visual merchandising is all the customer sees including both interior and exterior, it will result in interest, attention, desire, and action on the part of the customer as well. Therefore, visual merchandising is a crucial element for a supermarket in grabbing the attention of their consumers to buy their products to gain the competitive advantage (Gajanayake and Surangi, 2011).

Gajanayake and Suangi (2011) further reveal through their study about the supermarket industry, Sri Lankan fashion stores have developed as a rapidly growing and competitive industry. Fashion retailing in Sri Lanka is anticipated to grow dramatically due to increased disposable income, changing lifestyles and changes in demographic segmentation. As a result, those factors have an effect on consumer impulse purchases.

Mubarak and Mufeeth (2020) state through their findings that one of the significant factors affecting impulse buying behaviour of customer is visual merchandising. Many fashion organizations compete to increase their market share in Sri Lanka. Therefore, retailers need to present their offerings in the most attractive possible manner in order to attract customers. Some stores have variety of target markets. It should be certain that each should be unique or special among competitors specially with today's dynamic competitive environment and with the similarity of merchandise force. As a result, retailers are required to collect data to identify the effectiveness of resources designed to improve sales and possibly differentiate their stores.

When Visual Merchandising is taken into consideration in global context related to retail industry, Gudonaviciene and Alijosiene (2015) through their study state that Covid – 19 Pandemic has given tremendous effects to retail industry. The retail industry has been severely affected due to immerse competitive environments. Retailers initiated to strategize their visual merchandising effort in attracting new customers and retain them as long as possible.

In addition to above findings, Hung (2016) reveals that with the increase in customer demand, shopping behaviours and lifestyle, retail industry is currently facing tremendous changes because of technology advancement and globalisation that cause retailers to face severe competition in this industry. The effect of Covid – 19 pandemic not only affected the small and medium scale retailers but also large-scale retailers such as Tesco and Giants also encountered with huge losses. Further online shopping becomes a main preference by majority of consumers has created a challenging barrier for retailers to encourage people to visit their retail stores.

Therefore, it is an urgent necessity for retailers to implement effective strategies including visual merchandising in order to develop their retail performance and ensure sustainability in the long run.

### **Ethnocentrism**

Shimp and Sharma (1987) state that Ethnocentrism is a physiological concept which governs the way people purchase goods and services based on their country of origin. It indicates applying one's own culture to

evaluate other civilizations rather than using the criteria of the culture in question.

When ethnocentrism is taken into consideration, it would be fascinating to investigate the handloom industry as a developing industry in Sri Lankan context.

In the study, the independent variables are consumer ethnocentrism and consumer patriotism. The dependent variable is consumer preferences for handloom products. On the whole it can be concluded that elevated ethnocentric buyers have a strong preference for purchasing Sri Lankan handloom items over imported handloom products. Further, ethnocentric customers have acknowledged that imported handloom items would impair Sri Lankan economic development with the unemployment throughout the country (Costa, Fernando and Yapa, 2018).

When ethnocentrism is addressed in the coffee shop sector, a study report from Colombia mentioning about Starbucks as the world's largest coffee distributor and grower, may be utilized as an example.

The article is specially on hedonic services in Colombian region. Individualism, patriotism collectivism are referred as independent variables. However, the global loyalty image is the dependent variable as per the investigation concerning corporate image. The crucial issue is that ethnocentrism for hedonic services is appraised based on the effect of these independent and dependent variables. This study was quantitative research which utilized a structured questionnaire to gather 305 responses utilizing a convenient sampling method. Though individualism and ethnocentrism have a negative relationship, brand loyalty, image and ethnocentrism have a strong link. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship exists between collectivism, patriotic feeling and ethnocentrism. As a summary if they manage to worry emerging countries more and more, the influence on those markets will be significant (Padilla, 2020).

This ethnocentrism is very popular in the global context and paying attention on the fashion organizations in South Africa can be a fantastic thing once again. Villers et al. (2017) reveals that Customer expectations and desires are changing dramatically because of globalization and ethnocentrism is gaining traction. The study utilized the Theory of Planned Behaviour by considering variables customer sentiments and brand love. The effect of these two variables on customer buying intent was being examined throughout this study. A Likert scale questionnaire was utilized to choose 500 black middle-class women from the age group 22–27 category and the age group 28–33 category, the diploma category and the degree category for this study, presuming that the women are the most powerful and sensible consumers in the region. Finally, study shows that there is a little ethnocentrism for local companies, but there is a negative effect on worldwide brand opinions in South Africa. As per findings, more ethnocentric ideas result in negative opinions toward worldwide fashion organisations and a lower purchasing intention among consumers.

There are also crucial findings about ethnocentrism during COVID – 19 related to food consumption pattern of consumers in Italian Context

Results have shown that the choices of Italian consumers during the lockdown enforced in line with COVID-19 pandemic were closely linked to their ethnocentrism level. This is referring to a recent study on Italian customers showing that, during the lockdown they select to purchase national and certified foods due to the fact that they have a mistrust of all foods that are imported from abroad (Savarese et al, 2021).

Further, Migliore et al. (2021) reveal through their findings that COVID-19 pandemic has disappointed normal daily activities of all by creating psychiatric disorders and changing preferences of consumers. The agri-food sector has faced strong changes and during the lockdown, Italian consumers amended their buying habits in response to the uncertainty and fear generated by the spread of the virus. In order to understand the main reasons behind the shock suffered during the period and to identify which factors have influenced

purchasing decisions, an online survey was executed on 286 Italian consumers. The results reveal that ethnocentrism is the factor that most has affected customer behaviour during the lockdown and consumers will continue to prefer national agri-food products when pandemic will be over.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To draw conclusions and recommendations regarding marketing strategies implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly focusing on Social Media Marketing, Premium Pricing, Visual Merchandising, and Ethnocentrism, the following methodology is proposed:

### **Social Media Marketing Analysis:**

- Evaluate the impact of social media marketing on consumer behaviour during the pandemic, considering factors such as increased online shopping, consumer trust in e-services, and the role of payment methods.
- Assess the effectiveness of social media platforms in influencing purchasing decisions and building brand awareness, especially in the context of diverse cultural influences and changing consumer preferences.
- Analyse the use of creative content, localization strategies, engagement with influencers, and data collection techniques in optimizing social media marketing efforts.

### **Premium Pricing Strategies Examination:**

- Investigate consumer perceptions of premium pricing during COVID-19, focusing on the relationship between brand reputation, perceived quality, and willingness to pay higher prices for luxury items.
- Explore the impact of income levels, brand image, and product characteristics on consumer demand for premium-priced products, with a specific emphasis on the electronic items market.
- Discuss the implications of premium pricing strategies for different industries and the importance of aligning pricing strategies with brand value and customer expectations.
- Visual Merchandising Effectiveness Assessment:
  - Examine the role of visual merchandising in attracting consumers to retail stores, considering changes in consumer behaviour towards online shopping and the need for digitalized client experiences.
  - Evaluate the use of unique visual elements, omni-channel strategies, and augmented reality concepts in enhancing the digital presence of retail stores and delivering engaging customer experiences.
  - Discuss the challenges faced by retailers in adapting visual merchandising strategies to the post-COVID-19 era and propose recommendations for digital transformation and customer engagement strategies.

### **Ethnocentrism Impact Analysis:**

- Analyse the influence of consumer ethnocentrism and patriotic sentiments on purchasing decisions, particularly in relation to locally produced goods versus imported products.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of indigenous marketing strategies in appealing to ethnocentric consumer preferences and promoting support for domestic enterprises.
- Discuss the role of government initiatives and media promotion in fostering ethnocentric ideals and encouraging local manufacturing and consumption.

By employing a qualitative approach and synthesizing insights from the literature review, this methodology aims to provide comprehensive conclusions and actionable recommendations for organizations navigating marketing strategies during and post the COVID-19 pandemic.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This is one of the most crucial parts of the study where it will be attempting to draw conclusions to the important reviews conducted above *on the topic* while providing suitable recommendations which can be utilized by marketers and organizations in the future to align their marketing strategies during this post COVID – 19 period with insights for future researchers to discover further considering this study.

As mentioned above, marketing strategy can be considered as a comprehensive plan to attain the goals of organizations. Successful execution of marketing strategies helps organizations to get competitive advantage in the relevant industry that the organization is engaged with. It is evident through the reviews that almost all organizations in different industries used diverse marketing strategies to combat the COVID-19 pandemic both in global and Sri Lankan context to remain competitive.

### Conclusion and recommendations with regard to Social Media Marketing

As per the previous studies, organizations in different industries utilised social media for digital marketing with the introduction of new products or services, online booking methods, email marketing with discount strategies, online teaching/studying strategies by promoting an e-Learning environment through different platforms, search engine optimization which provided some benefits to the customers during the covid 19 period at the same time these societal marketing strategies were really helpful for surviving in the market for organizations during the COVID – 19 pandemic period. Further It was evident through previously reviewed studies that interaction of consumers with online shopping became frequent due to social distance and less movement with physical visit to shops and super markets.

It is suggested for marketers to move forward with below mentioned social media marketing strategies during this post COVID – 19 period.

**Creative Content** – Social media campaigns with powerful share appeal are more likely to spread excessively and have a greater impact. The content that organizations create should be useful. As well as making things convenient for readers which provide insightful or valuable information. It is general for people to share amusing or funny things that they find on the internet. The same must apply to content because people need to be recently inspired more than ever. It is better if organizations inspire that kind of feeling.

**Localising the brand through campaign on social media platform** – It can be beneficial for brand to be localized as area or state changes tend to be different. Further Creation of a separate account for each location or utilize hashtags to specify the location. Social media ads also let organization to target local audiences with location targeting. Service providers can also access the ‘e-commerce’ status by applying a suitable e-business strategy. It should be possible to test ads, content and offerings for new brands on platforms and to directly receive feedback from target consumers.

**Engaging with right influencers** – Brands should identify and target the right influencers as online traffic resumes to develop. Influencers are utilized to build authenticity and trust with followers. Therefore, social media managers will require to offer influencer training and building relationships. Involving influencers either in individual or in group discussions about updates of product will support building mutually beneficial relationships.

**Proper data collection** – **Data collection** is crucial to examine how well organizations meet the requirements of clients and accommodate the times.

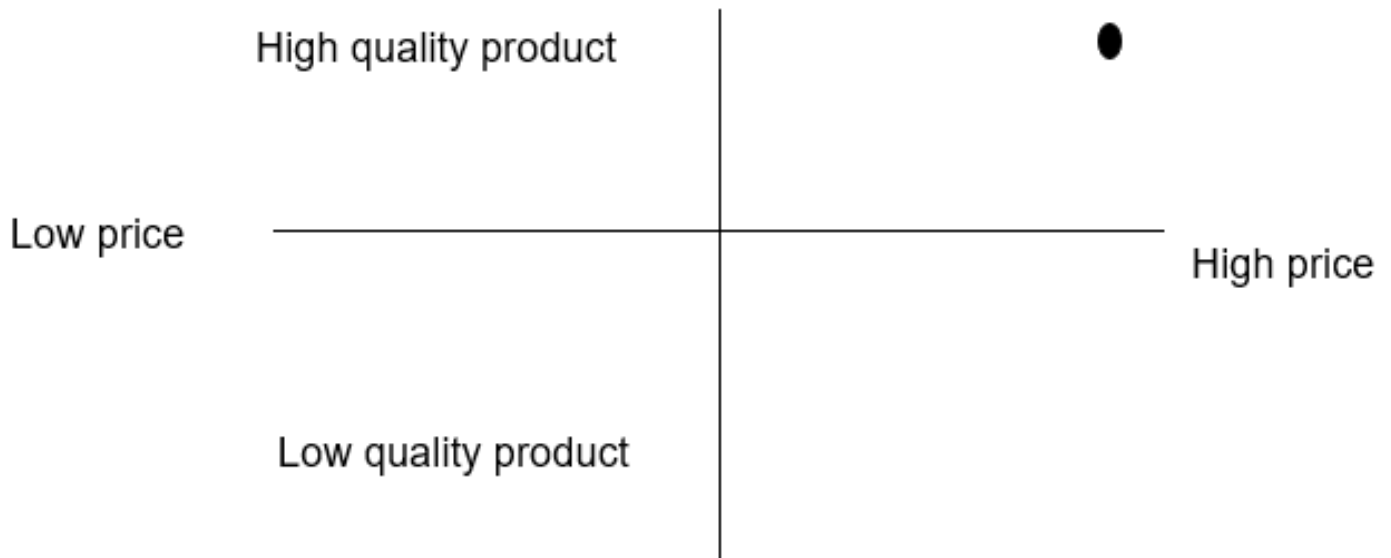


Therefore, to get the maximum benefits of above synergies in social media, organizations must make sure social media strategies are directly aligned with the overall integrated marketing strategies.

**Conclusion and recommendations with regard to Premium Pricing**

It is evident through the previous studies that consumers are willing to pay a high price for luxury items such as electronic items which indicate high quality. It was further evident through the review that It can be observed that brand name or reputation has a great effect on customer willingness to pay a premium price. Simply customers perceive high price as high quality.

On the whole executing the premium pricing strategy in all places would not be feasible. Brand awareness and quality must be prioritized when a premium pricing plan is persuaded. Further adhering to the accurate premium pricing approach for relevant industries might result in a win-win situation for both organizations and consumers. It is suggested for organizations to position the product or service in customers’ mind price as a quality indicator specially for products associated with an excellent brand reputation among customers to convey a message that high price indicates high quality as dotted in below perceptual map.



Source :(Adapted from Schiffman and Kanuk, 2011)

**Conclusion and recommendations with regard to Visual Merchandising**

As per previous studies, unique elements of visual merchandising are a powerful marketing tool in attracting consumers in various industries such as super markets, fashion stores and other retails. However, recent studies also revealed that online shopping becomes a main preference by majority of consumers has created a challenging barrier for retailers to encourage people to visit their retail stores both during COVID -19 period and during post COVID – 19 period.

Since consumers interact more with online shopping as mentioned above, it is suggested for organizations to pay their attention on providing digitalized, contactless client experiences. It is critical for retail store administrators and locations to transform into the digitization phase. To experience Visual Merchandising in a digitalized environment, store owners, store managers and retail store brand managers must think about developing an omni-channel and online media strategy by offering high-quality content with key brand messages including the creation of 3D models which leads to facilitate delivering physical store experiences to customers on digital platforms utilising augmented reality concepts.

## **Conclusion and recommendations with regard to Ethnocentrism**

As per the reviews, simply scholars prove that consumer ethnocentrism causes customers to overestimate locally produced items or goods compared to imported items or goods resulting in the rejection of foreign brands. According to studies, customer patriotic feelings have a significant effect on attitudes and buying intentions for ethnocentric items.

Since studies revealed that customers have a tendency to over estimate domestic goods or items over imported goods or items from another country, application of Indigenous marketing strategies aligning with the product or service is suitable to grab the attention of customers.

There is a necessity to make available the knowledge in “marketing” widely with the best practices in own country context. The government and media need to promote the requirement of manufacturing locally and buying locally to supplement ethnocentric ideals of citizens. On the other hand, organizations must make sure the delivery of high-quality goods or items that meet customer needs and remind customers of the value of supporting domestic enterprises.

## **CONSIDERATIONS AND INSIGHTS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHERS**

In the realm of Social Media Marketing, it’s clear that organizations across various industries leveraged social media platforms extensively during the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategies like introducing new products/services digitally, offering online booking options, utilizing email marketing with discount strategies, and promoting e-Learning environments were prevalent. Moving forward, marketers should focus on creating creative and useful content that resonates with their audience, localizing their brand for different markets, engaging with the right influencers, and ensuring proper data collection to tailor their social media strategies effectively.

Regarding Premium Pricing strategies, consumers showed a willingness to pay higher prices for perceived quality or luxury items, particularly those with a strong brand reputation. However, a blanket approach to premium pricing may not be feasible everywhere. Emphasizing brand awareness and quality perception can help justify premium prices. Organizations should position their products/services as indicators of quality, especially for items associated with excellent brand reputations, to convey that higher prices reflect higher quality.

Visual Merchandising remains a potent marketing tool, although the shift towards online shopping has posed challenges for physical retail stores. To adapt, organizations should focus on digitalizing and providing contactless customer experiences. This involves developing omni-channel and online media strategies, creating high-quality content with key brand messages, and utilizing technologies like augmented reality to deliver physical store experiences digitally.

Ethnocentrism plays a role in consumer perceptions, where local goods are often favored over imported ones due to patriotic sentiments. Aligning marketing strategies with indigenous themes and promoting local manufacturing and consumption can resonate well with ethnocentric customers. Governments and media can play a role in promoting domestic enterprises, while organizations must ensure high-quality products/services to reinforce the value of supporting local businesses.

These insights and recommendations can serve as valuable considerations for future researchers and marketers navigating the post-COVID-19 marketing landscape.

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