

Вестник МИРБИС. 2021. № 2 (26): С. 26–34.

Vestnik MIRBIS. 2021; 2(26): 26–34.

Original article

DOI: 10.25634/MIRBIS.2021.2.2

### How Emotional Marketing can help better understand the Behavioral Economic patterns of Covid-19 pandemic: Economic Judgments and Falsifications from India

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**Abstract.** The recent pandemic has shown the rise of Covid strains and variables which are fast depleting the various economic judgments and theoretical models to better create sustainability in the economic trends of marketing and positioning brands. Global academicians and cross sectional researchers are fighting a strong battle to better understand behavioral nudges and regrets behinds human actions and functioning of human endeavors over a fast collapsing global economic order amidst fighting relief measures and vaccine logistics. The need to include a cross section study of multidisciplinary approach has necessitate formulation of this study which has great impact on how and why we create brands during crisis and how to make it more resilient amidst a grim economic face in various economic geographies globally. The research work builds on previous literature works and substantiates it with vast filed experiments in India studying human costs and human behavioral patterns to create sustainable marketing during challenging times like Covid-19. The research work is based on exploratory research work employing modern research survey techniques like CATI and other cases from the very streets of India where the pandemic has created maximum effect. The population size taken was quite huge and judgmental interview was shown to create maximum error free surveys which can be utilized as policy measures by marketing strategists in their branding propositions.

**Aim of the research study:** This study is long awaited impactful research on understanding how emotions and other experiential marketing trends govern consumption during emergencies and crisis like Covid-19 which has been instrumental in taking many lives and leaving many unemployed. This study is created at the junctures of human despairs, hungers and its effect on consumption utilizing behavioral economic best practices. So on one hand there is human suffering and the other hand shows brand managers fighting responsible marketing policies through well designed ethical emotional heuristics.

**Key words:** Neuromarketing, Behavioral economics, Covid-19, Emotional marketing, National policy.

**Acknowledgments.** This Covid-19 pandemic with its various trains and waves has created insurmountable destruction in economic activities globally and in India. Due gratitude is extended to the various healthcare frontline workers and other economic agents contributing to our lives nationally who have taken their precious time out of busy schedule to respond to our queries and interview structures regarding understanding various nudges in economic decision making.

**For citation:** Ray S. How Emotional Marketing can help better understand the Behavioral Economic patterns of Covid-19 pandemic: Economic Judgments and Falsifications from India. S. Ray. *Vestnik MIRBIS*. 2021; 2(26): 26–34. DOI: 10.25634/MIRBIS.2021.2.3

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Научная статья  
УДК 339.972

### Как эмоциональный маркетинг может помочь лучше понять поведенческие экономические модели пандемии Covid-19: экономические суждения и фальсификации из Индии

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**Аннотация.** Недавняя пандемия показала рост штаммов и переменных Covid, которые быстро истощают различные экономические суждения и теоретические модели. Чтобы лучше обеспечить устойчивость экономических тенденций в маркетинге и позиционировании брендов, ведущие академики и параллельные исследователи ведут решительную борьбу за лучшее понимание поведенческих подталкиваний, стоящих за человеческими действиями и функционированием человеческих усилий в условиях быстро разрушающегося глобального экономического порядка, в условиях разработки мер по оказанию помощи и логистикой вакцин. Необходимость включения перекрестного исследования междисциплинарного подхода потребовала формулировки этого исследования, которое оказывает

большое влияние на то, как и почему мы создаем бренды во время кризиса и как сделать его более устойчивым в условиях мрачной экономической ситуации в различных экономических географических регионах мира. Исследовательская работа основана на предыдущих литературных работах и подкрепляется обширными полевыми экспериментами в Индии, изучающими человеческие издержки и человеческие поведенческие модели для создания устойчивого маркетинга в такие сложные времена, как пандемия Covid-19. Данная публикация основана на исследовательской работе с использованием современных методов исследования, таких как САТІ и другие случаи с тех самых улиц Индии, где пандемия дала максимальный эффект. Набранная численность населения была довольно большой, и было показано, что субъективное интервью позволяет максимально безошибочно проводить опросы, которые могут использоваться маркетинговыми стратегами в качестве мер политики в своих предложениях по брендингу. Цель исследования: это довольно протяженное по времени результативное исследование, направленное на понимание того, как эмоции и другие экспериментальные маркетинговые тенденции влияют на потребление во время чрезвычайных ситуаций и кризисов, таких как Covid-19, унесший много жизней и оставивший многих без работы. Это исследование создано на стыке человеческого отчаяния, голода и его влияния на потребление с использованием лучших поведенческих экономических практик. Итак, с одной стороны, это человеческие страдания, а с другой стороны, бренд-менеджеры борются с ответственной маркетинговой политикой с помощью хорошо продуманной этической эмоциональной эвристики.

**Ключевые слова:** нейромаркетинг, поведенческая экономика, COVID-19, эмоциональный маркетинг, национальная политика.

**Благодарности.** Пандемия COVID-19 с ее различными потоками и волнами привела к непреодолимым разрушениям в экономической деятельности во всем мире и в Индии. Выражаем должную благодарность различным работникам здравоохранения и другим экономическим агентам, которые вносят свой вклад в нашу жизнь на национальном уровне, которые выделили свое драгоценное личное время вне напряженного графика работы, чтобы ответить на вопросы нашего интервью относительно понимания различных подталкиваний при принятии экономических решений.

**Для цитирования:** Ray S. How Emotional Marketing can help better understand the Behavioral Economic patterns of Covid-19 pandemic: Economic Judgments and Falsifications from India / S. Ray // *Вестник МИРБИС*. 2021; 2(26): 31–38. DOI: 10.25634/MIRBIS.2021.2.3

JEL: O33

## Introduction

It is quite evident from studies into aesthetics of marketing and neurological researches that our brain functioning is quite complex and reacts to various economic platforms and decision making in quite unique proportions which are diverse and create nudges amidst various ambiances. Though year 2020 saw various economic catastrophe amongst rising inequality and poverty, global corporations though in major reshuffle stage has shown fast innovation tendencies which made few brands quite wiped out from market as well as seen in dire catastrophic scenario with challenges of health, sustainable finance, investments, mergers and diversity packages. Global economic policy makers across various disciplines fought tremendous stressed out reflexes showing insurmountable disastrous choices across economic judgments which saw various products to rise out to challenge and open innovation flora [Consoli 2010]. The present pandemic has urged the nexus of multidisciplinary study across various sciences building on new disciplines like health economics and its inclusion into behavioral patterns of economic and strategy allocations. In such scenario there were not many choices for global marketing gurus to keep it shut off from the disruptive innovation criteria but to fast innovate with cross sectional studies [Prentice 2019]. This holistic approach has been quite unique as it has jumbled upon various intricacies underlying corporate ethics and responsible management in the blue print for welfare economics and developmental agenda [Reka Pusztahelyi 2020]. Much before the crisis the global community was fighting hard to supplement its economic resources and balance the payments done by international organizations as part of its poverty reduction mechanism which has been widely criticized and questioned the validity of its best practices in a community undergoing disastrous climate changes, poverty, hunger and educational impairments [Lindstrom 2005]. Whereas the silent killer of poverty grows challenges for the big firms were to how best its positioning strategy can bring into its financial

inclusion the charters of bottom of the pyramid story and better include the bottom 1% into its strategic goals. In such scenario, Covid-19 has created vast opportunity for both small as well as big firms to create and think in a open liberal way to include behavioral human actions into brand positioning without creating unethical ambiances in business ecosystem [Skandalis 2019]. Once upon a time the restrictive scissors of marketing innovation which studied population in various stages from the great depression years to the baby boomers and the unhappy millennial saw a rapid change in how? when and what to see and perceive; the notion of various sensory impulses into creating strategic marketing funnels more over created resilient bodies where various market segments got highly populated with various trends and consumer choices and behaviors fast kept changing [Sadhna Shukla 2019]. In such scenario, marketers and global strategists were left with no choices but to explore novel dimensions of creating sustainable marketing amidst rising tensions and various crisis points. The rise of various senses inculcated inside the Pandora box of marketing has taken prominent place post 1990 with the rise of liberal policies and economic reforms [Dumitrescu 2021]. It took few years for global marketers to understand the notion of sensory marketing by creating a platform to study subconscious discourses which can trigger economic decision making. The economics of smell, touch and visual discourse amidst haptic sensations have created marketing tools which are quite innovative in understanding consumer behavior across various platforms and choice trends. Whereas various nudges and heuristics approach has necessitate human decision making falsifying rational behaviors of the economic man, the use of medical devices in neuromarketing has shown ethical concerns but not restrictive behaviors. Whereas neuromarketing challenged normative trends in marketing, researchers tried to study human behaviors and its implications on marketing through sensory and experiential marketing [Tichindelean 2018]. Such best practices were applied in big firms like Google, Apple and Singapore Airlines where various senses were tested on human actions and its triggering factors. In Singapore Airlines smell or olfaction was utilized to create strategy wherein a specific scent or perfume was utilized to create sustainable environment for consumers, it has shown a drastic increase in loyalty and brand equity [Sozuer 2020]. Such equity measures were also performed for Coffee brand chains in Starbucks wherein the aroma created a jump in human consumer sensation indexes. Though global firms repeat their increasing revenue allocations on various modern technologies, there still remains a huge gap which got exposed during the pandemic were the human face or marketing needed to be positioned. For understanding such human costs and emotions, marketers had to rely on best practices taking into account historical growths and fauna in society wherein great economic collapse created consumers to move back from their regular buying practices and consumer choices. To better evaluate ground reality, it is imperative as economist to rely on data which shows where and when the disaster of economic collapses in India has shown the mobility towards restrictive sales activity [Kotler 2020]. Huge job losses, rising poverty and migration economics needs to be well addressed to understand rationality behind selling and consuming as both the supply side as well as demand side has been greatly affected by the pandemic wherein millions have been left with no choices but to starve and die [Petit 2019]. Because without understanding and evaluating how the society and particular economic geography reacts to changing consumption it is not possible to trend new innovation in marketing [Krishna 2012]. Because extraordinary challenges do bring about innovation through creative destruction and underlying invisible hand but there needs to be different strategy for targeting society during crisis. Desires of human beings are immense across scarcity in pandemic situations so are the graphs of despair and hunger during trying times [Fayvishenko 2018]. In totality the society in itself changes on economic fight of survival which is very difficult to measure and apply. In such scenario ethical and emotional fronts of marketing has challenged normative tendencies in selling and buying in poor countries like India wherein there lies gross inequality, corruption and mismanagement during crisis. Smash the brand theory also lies defunct in countries like India where a pro poor marketing strategy can create ethical trends and differentiate brands with humanism [Kegoro 2020]. Do we regret not buying particular product? Why we buy? Do we buy for extensive choices? These are few questions which are to be evaluated during the second wave of Covid

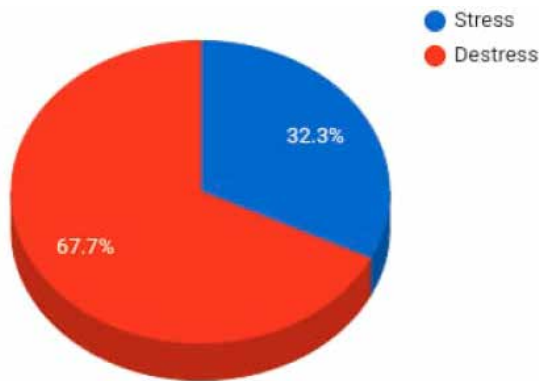
in India where huge population has been left with no choices but to reinvest in healthcare facility rather than surviving on leisure and consumer goods consumption [Zaif 2016]. On the build up to it are the rising costs, inflationary measures and labor mobility which has created huge burden on the poorer section of the society. Here the entire nation perceives brands holistically through emotions and how effective CSR policies are evaluated to reposition brands with concern [Dr Ritu Srivastava 2017]. R. Muliolytė (1998) has stated the social changes brings about subsequent behavioral patterns and creates in itself a change [Kakitek 2018]. A. F. Firat (1995) relates to the concept of illusionary marketing and hyper reality in perceptions [Aaker 1991]. R. B. Brandt (1996) states the hedonistic and pluralistic theories in pursuing consumption with pleasure sensation. Troester (2002) propounds the value creation externally on objects of consumption practices [Balanovska 2015]. Cognitive dissonance trends also showcase contradictions in economic decision making with cognitive biases and subsequent reflections. Nooteboom (1991) has stated that image creation, symbols are quite illusionary in judgmental practices [Isachi 2013]. Brown in 1993 has conceptualized the post modernist marketing best practices which starts from 1970 wherein the changing dimensions of society and consumption is guided by emotional and social factors and consumers are not mere rational beings but symbols and images also play pivotal judgmental tools [Gornostaeva 2017]. Such a phenomenon is quite relevant to current scenario of Covid-19 wherein the entire Diaspora of society around us have changed through extreme conditions of human despair [Raluca Nastase-Anysz]. In such scenario of course the normal marketing trends needs to be scrutinized further to disseminate information relevant to consumers. Until and unless such best practices are taken into account, marketing positioning of brands will not be flawless. Boin in 2009 has raised the issue of marketing practices during crisis which often gets neglected [Damgaard 2020]. Whereas Hall (1992) has questioned the reform process in branding strategy during crisis. Heding (1990) has stated that retrospective marketing mix is needed to create brand awareness and proper consumer choice perceptions during crisis [Wei 2020]. Parameswaran (2001) instigated the brand bubble concept of rationality and irrational behaviors in pricing decisions in brand formulations. In such circumstances pricing is not always rational and high prices may be more favorable in few regions than low prices which catapult selling proportions. In pandemic situation too, pricing is a big factor wherein the ecosystem of business environment is affected by economic choices and rationality [Thaler 2009]. Loomes (1992) stated about regret theory which is basically linked to underlying regrets stemming out of faltered decision making process [Kahneman 2011]. Few underlying concepts on such theory is pertinent during Covid-19 as it affects buying behavior amongst vast scarcity in varied dimensions and choices arising out of a paradoxical shift in market behavior [Bleichrodt 2015]. Regret avoidance and subsequent biases arising from purchasing decisions can also be calculated based on various factors which affect individual emotionally [Rosdiana Sijabat 2018]. The model linked to fear bias is a regenerative calculation to evaluate biases during extreme situations. Restrictive decision making strategy is allocated with proper mental accounting to channelize thoughts of unbiased behaviors [Barth 2017]. Such national policy making rationality is unbiased in decision formulation wherein analytics of learning are propounded to create sustainability [Altman 2017].

### Materials and Methods

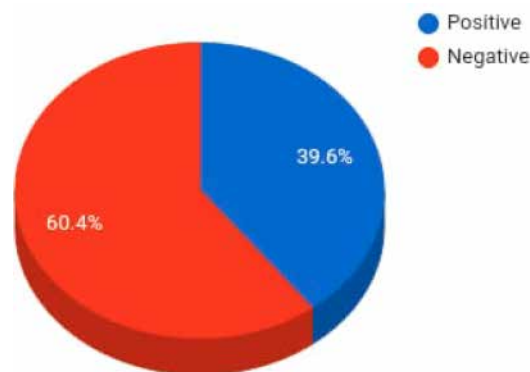
The research work has included in its plethora a vast population across diverse regions in India wherein CATI research methodology was practiced with various interview techniques and survey across various geography so as to reduce errors in judgments. Though it is quite difficult to measure behavior and rationality but control factor of human despair and anger were neglected to create stress free judgmental analysis and exploratory cases across streets and consumption zones in Indian hypermarkets. A population ranging from 800 to 1700 from both urban and rural areas was taken into account during Covid 2.0 peak time wherein restrictive measures imposed by national governments across various geographies obviously saw changing behaviors and psychological imperatives which affected economic decision making was taken into account which rightly displayed human choices in consumption and regrets. Human rationality has been rightfully taken into account which showed surprising trends in human choices.

Below figures showed that behavior plays pivotal role in marketing decisions and can create long lasting effect in human brains over consumption choices and rationality. Various extrinsic factors and intrinsic measurements were done which showed that emotional marketing has been instrumental in creating stability in brand equity and adding power to equity.

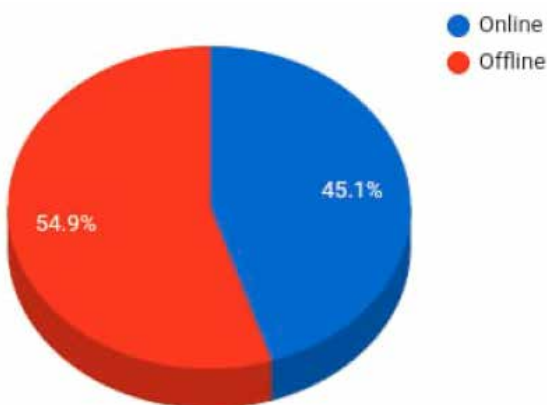
Digital propensity to change consumption patterns have also shown utilization of digitally linked emotions in buying behaviors.



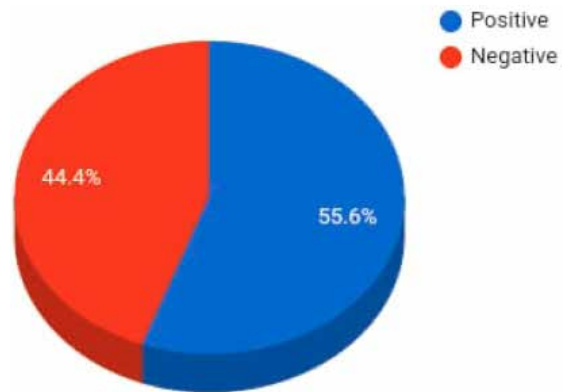
**Figure 1.** Behavioral economics trends  
Source: Author generated behavioral trends



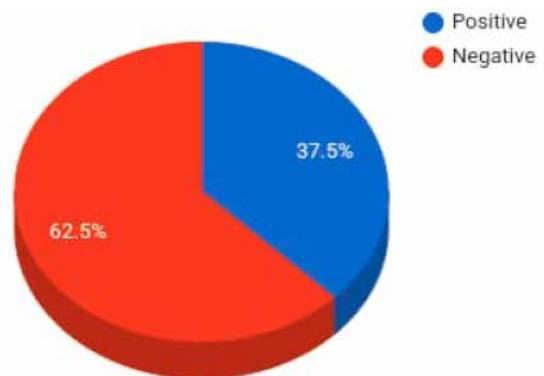
**Figure 2.** Cognitive Nudge  
Source: Author generated cognition in economic behaviors



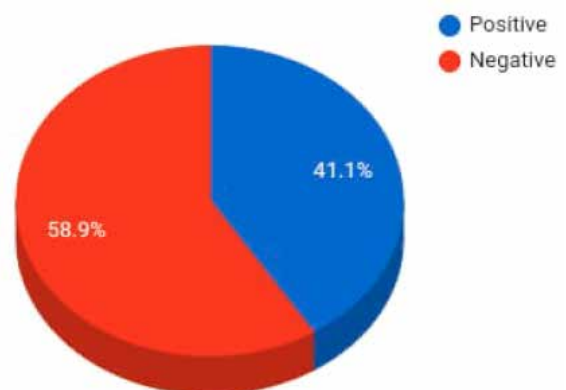
**Figure 3.** Consumer Behavior  
Source: Author generated consumer behavior



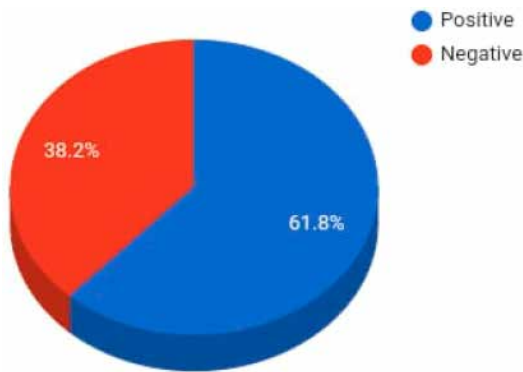
**Figure 4.** Emotional Intelligence  
Source: Author generated emotional intelligence trends



**Figure 5.** Employment indicator  
Source: Author generated employment trends on moving average

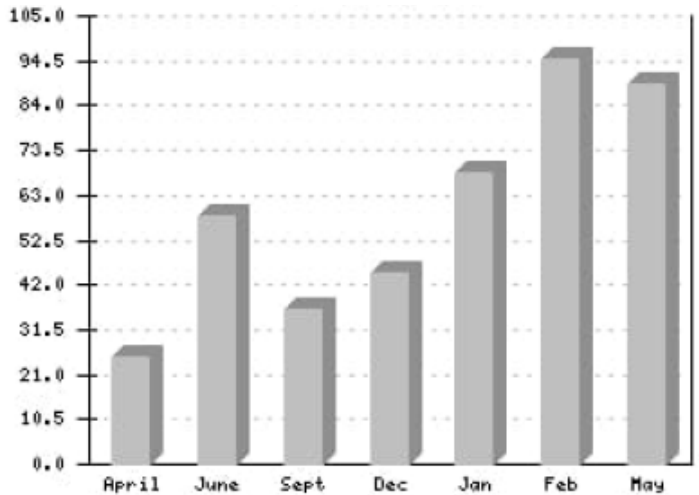


**Figure 6.** Motivation to consume  
Source: Author generated motivational factors trends



**Figure 7. Disruptive innovation marketing**  
 Source: Author generated disruptive marketing trends

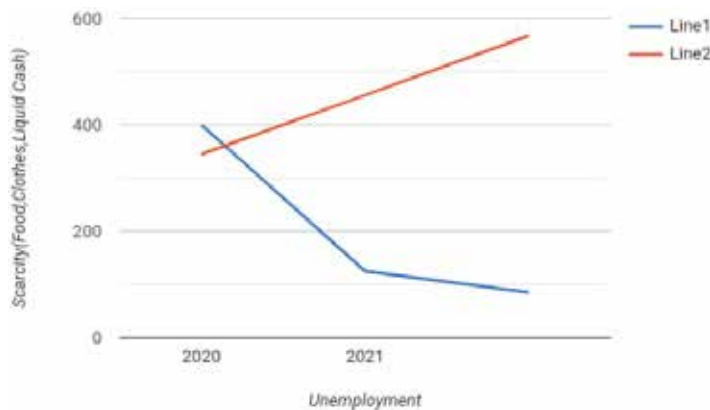
Above figure clearly highlights the near future disruption tendencies in marketing practices brought about by the pandemic which is surprisingly higher in positivity channelization.



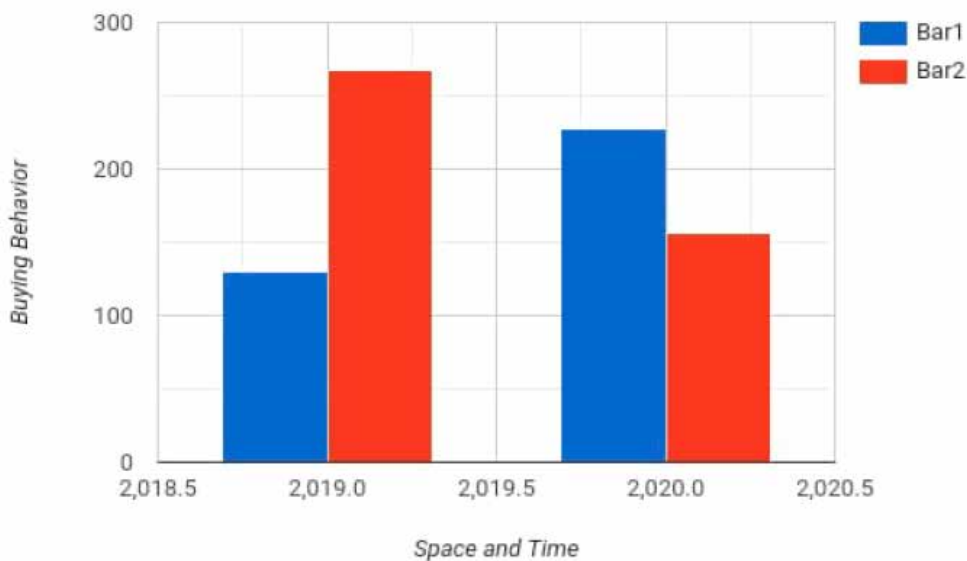
**Figure 9. Frequency bar**  
 Source: Unemployment rate author generated

The average unemployment frequency shows the distribution of trends in job loss mostly in urban areas but not the agricultural sectors where a substitution of regular involvement in jobs has been seen. Few rural areas in starting time of the pandemic showed rise in agricultural jobs though urban areas showed rise in unemployment rates.

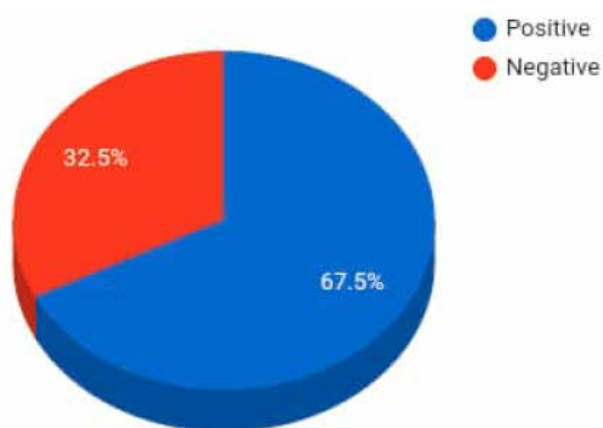
Though India is still lacking the digital propensity to consume but research work has shown as in above figure the changing dimensions to digital marketing over years of disruption.



**Figure 8. Scarcity in daily necessities**  
 Source: Author generated scarcity, unemployment linkages



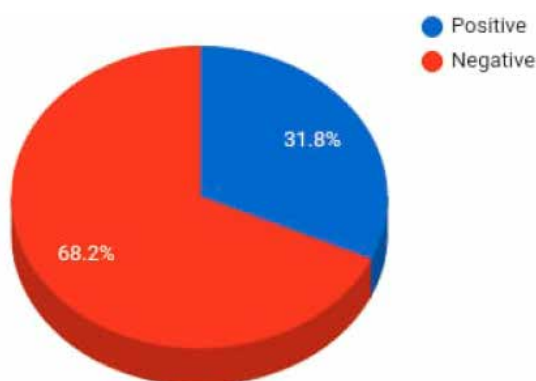
**Figure 10. Digital propensity**  
 Source: Author generated digital marketing trends



**Figure 11.** Control experiment blindfold

Source: Author generated controlled ambience experimentation

Controlled experiment was created with few controls of emotional resiliencies and consumption patterns over disruptive ambiances in firm operations. Emotional factors of despair, regret and prospects showed effects on buying behavior in consumers.



**Figure 12.** Natural buying behavior

Source: Author generated filed experimentation under natural conditions

In natural ambiances irrationality was noticed with restrictive emotional impulses creating barriers to buying behaviors.

### Analysis

Macroeconomic decision choices sometimes gets reflected evidences from psychological perspectives were emotions and other experiential trends in marketing jumps the bandwagon of scarcity and despair in crisis emergencies like Covid-19. The Indian scenario is quite unique in economic perspectives of growth and development wherein the national losses were higher with respect to human costs and emotional backwardness. In such scenario a huge research gap was created with respect to how and why brands needed emotional marketing and when

is the right time for firms to re-strategise formulations for targeted brand management which can be CSR reflective on one stage and can create an impression of loyalty and social welfare among consumers. When the nation is fighting crisis like Covid-19 with huge unemployment, hunger and diseases, companies needs to be more responsive and responsible at the same time while placing and advertising their brands. Mere storytelling of brands is not only miniscule but is redundant in human psychological effects wherein subconscious deliveries needs that extra mile from brand managers to emotionally link advertising to human choices. Products are clustered and segmented and better emotional mapping is necessity of the day to understand why and how people decide what to buy and what not to buy.

### Deduction

In a moving dimension of great challenges in society, marketers are facing condensation in choices which portray the emotional faces of brands and create resilience in their product differentiation amidst rising unemployment and shrinkages in global investments which of course has a multiplier effect affecting individuals as consumers and the brand marketer too. In such a scenario, emotions and subsequent marketing understanding society and its changing developments through reading the pandemic is absolute necessity which can be packaged inside the marketing P's and positioned into the union with greater stability. Human rationality is quite diverse and is not easy to measure. Such measurement rightfully judge how we measure brand equity during the pandemic. Usual marketing strategy will not funnel out consumption practices but will create restrictive behaviors which are quite detrimental for marketers globally. In such scenario, emotional tendencies and society ethical concerns can create resilience and a positive impact on how we perceive brands. It is important for brand managers to better align to consumer thoughts and behaviors during pandemic so that not to loosen the strings of cognitive impulses and haptic marketing trends. Future researches can take this study as a yardstick for creating resilience in marketing during multiple crisis points over various economic geographies and create stable policies and strategies at firm level. Greater impulses in artificial intelligence and machine learning may be future industry 4.0 best practice in mapping marketing trends in crisis points.

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*The article was submitted 03/17/2021; approved after reviewing 04/28/2021; accepted for publication 04/28/2021.*

*Статья поступила в редакцию 17.03.2021; одобрена после рецензирования 28.04.2021; принята к публикации 28.04.2021*