CONSUMERS' PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF ESSENTIALS DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

This study investigates consumer purchasing behavior concerning essential goods and services during the Covid-19 lockdown in the Indian state of Jharkhand. Conducted from March 2020 to May 2020, the research targeted adults over 18 who purchased essential items during that period. The study employed a structured online questionnaire to collect primary data using judgment sampling. Results indicated that most respondents refrained from unnecessary purchases, focusing on conserving money for necessities. Product quantity, quality, and variety were the primary influencers in purchase decisions, while price, product attributes, and brand image also played significant roles. Branded and ecologically friendly goods were preferred. Customers delayed purchases until genuinely needed and often sought credit as a motivator. Demographic characteristics influenced purchasing habits, with family members and spouses having a notable impact. The UPI app gained popularity as a payment method, and convenience stores remained a preferred choice despite an increasing preference for online stores.

Keywords: Covid-19 lockdown, Purchase decisions, Essentials, Consumer behaviour

1.   Introduction

By the end of 2019, the globe saw the arrival of the new terrifying phenomenon, known as Covid-19. The first Covid-19 case to be documented originated in Wuhan, China (Page J, Hinshaw D, McKay B, 2021). The Director-General of the World Health Organization Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared the coronavirus epidemic a "pandemic" on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020). In India, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi declared a 21-day state-wide lockdown on March 24, 2020, in order to protect the country's 1.3 billion residents from illness.

In this backdrop, understanding how consumer behaviour changed during the Covid-19 shutdown is crucial since prior studies have shown that certain behaviours tend to emerge during and after catastrophes or crises. According to Valaskova et al. (2015), consumer behaviour is a crucial and

continuous decision-making process involving searching for, buying, using, evaluating, and disposing of goods and services. In their study, Amalia et al. (2012) explained that people are not the same and not all people have the same perception about a situation like the Covid-19 pandemic. Different people deal with the crisis situation very differently. In his work, Hoon Ang and colleagues (2001) examined how demographic and personality traits may be able to regulate changes in consumer behaviour brought on by any crises.

The change in consumer behaviour during crisis times led the authors' interest to explore consumer purchase behaviour of essential products during Covid-19. Essential goods means the goods that concern the life of many people and are in high demand, as well as a supporting factor of public welfare, such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, butter, meat, chicken, chicken egg, milk, salt, medicines etc. (law inside, 2022).

2. Literature Review

A worldwide health catastrophe brought on by the Covid-19 epidemic had resulted in unpredictable behaviour changes (Di Crosta et al., 2021). A significant shift in consumer behaviour has been observed in previous research on how people cope with or recover from catastrophic events like earthquakes, terrorist attacks, tsunamis, floods, epidemics, or pandemics. These changes included stockpiling, postponing purchases, embracing digital technology, and home delivery (Roy et al., 2020). A 2020 study by Sheth, J. (2022). These crises led to a sharp fall in consumers' impulsive and discretionary purchases and spending in favour of more essential and important needs and wants (Bhakat & Muruganantham, 2013). Customers' preference for mass-produced goods declined during the lockdown in comparison to niche products (Huang, Y. & Sengupta, J., 2020). According to Helm (2020), the crisis encouraged many consumers to try out online food ordering or app-based purchases. Customers' preferences changed in a way that was unheard of during the first stage of India's coronavirus lockdown as a result of citizens facing unusual circumstances. Only essential commodities were made available to inhabitants, and lifestyle products were not in demand.

The state-wide closure had an impact on growing markets like India, which saw changes in the types of items bought, where they were bought from, and how they were paid for (Enormous, 2020). People spent less of their income during the pandemic on things they considered to be non-essential, such as clothes, shoes, jewelry, make-up, games, and electronics. The Covid-19 lockdown caused the emergence of new marketing strategies. For instance, online ready-to-eat food delivery services switched overnight to providing necessities like fruits, vegetables, and groceries (Mehta, S., Saxena, T., & Purohit, N., 2020). According to the study of Hojin et al. (2016), the influence of the epidemic outbreak caused a disruption in consumer expenditure. Compared to typical cash transactions, technology-based payments were more frequently used. Clement et al. (2020), Naeem (2020), and Eger et al. (2021) all saw a significant rise in online transactions during the Covid-19 lockdown. Important to note is that personal, family, and general public health were the top concerns for Indian consumers McKinsey (2020, July 3). According to the Nielson survey (2020), during the Covid-19 lockdown period, there was a sharp increase in the sales and purchases of hand sanitisers, medical masks, and household maintenance masks. In a

study done in Spain by Laguna et al. (2020), it was discovered that during the Covid-19 lockdown, people's concern about diet was reduced but their interest in grocery items such as wheat, bread, fruits, milk, and chicken was connected to cooking, baking, and storage conditions grew. Perishable foods like fish and seafood, which were typically consumed more on regular days, were consumed at lower rates. Due to their perception that ready-to-eat foods were unhealthy, many consumers restricted their consumption of them. Following a government-imposed lockdown that restricted individual movement, Chen et al. (2020), Carvalho, Garcia et al. (2020), and Carvalho et al. (2020), respectively, discover significant changes in Chinese, Spanish, and Portuguese consumer expenditure. In the two weeks after the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration designating Covid-19 as a pandemic, there had been a significant increase in grocery spending in Britain (Chronopoulos et al., 2020). This increase was consistent with panic buying and stockpiling behaviour. There were numerous accounts of panic shopping during the early stages of the Covid-19 epidemic, and there were subsequent shortages of essential commodities (O'Connell et al., 2021). Fear of a total lockdown, peer pressure to buy, the limited availability of essentials, stimulus checks, and panic buying were all found to have a strong and positive impact on the sudden swings in impulse buying habits among US residents (Ahmed et al., 2020). In several nations, panic buying during the outbreak led to the stockpiling of goods, including food, medications, and cleaning and hygiene supplies. (Verma et al., 2021). In a survey conducted by Dammeyer (2020) to examine Danish and British consumers' stockpiling behaviour during the early stages of the pandemic, the researcher discovered that just four out of ten consumers had not done any additional purchasing. Consumers were encouraged to store up on essential commodities during times of increased uncertainty. People have a justification for stockpiling emergency goods when there was a chance of supply disruptions, travel restrictions, or concern of demand-driven shortages.

According to Andersen et al. (2020), the government's limits on consumer mobility were associated with large drops in Danish consumer spending across a range of product categories. According to a survey on consumer attitudes in India during the coronavirus crisis, the majority of people firmly agreed to spend their money prudently and make fewer purchases. The consumers claimed that the Covid-19 shock had brought about a change in or revival of their awareness of how they behave when they shop, indicating a deliberate shift towards spiritual consumption. The time-tested idea of spending responsibly was brought back into focus in light of the loss of employment and lack of steady income. According to Ganesh's study (2020), consumers may not have a lot of disposable income or may be highly cautious with their expenditures during the Covid-19 lockdown. According to Cox et al. (2020), despite the fact that high-incom households in the US had a bigger fall in expenditure when restrictions were put in place, this was completely due to variations in non-essential spending. Even wealthy individuals restricted their consumption and prioritised buying environmentally friendly goods. Reusing products and recycling were identified as new behavioural motivators (Willmott, 2009). According to the Boston Consulting Group's research (2020) on market dynamics, significant declines in sales of many sectors in India were also observed during Covid-19, in addition to changes in spending patterns. Significant variations in spending behaviour were found among demographics. While older and higher-

income groups indicated greater resilience and were more likely to expect to retain or increase their spending, lower-income and younger consumers showed a larger tendency to plan to reduce their expenditure. All socioeconomic categories in the UK experienced a significant rise in expenditure on basic necessities and household goods during the four weeks previous to lockdown (O'Connell et al., 2021). In a British study, it was noted that during the Covid-19 lockdown, males spent much more than females, and younger people spent more than their older colleagues. Furthermore, people with high incomes spend more money than people with low incomes (Chronopoulos et al., 2020). According to Baker et al (2020), there have been considerable shifts in US consumer spending over a wide range of product categories, which vary by family structure, age, and gender during the Covid-19 lockdown period.

The source of information is very important, especially during times of crisis. Madathil et al. (2014) found that governmental organisations and professional groups were trustworthy sources of information during a pandemic situation in the past in Spain. Consumers regarded expert or scientist statements as having the highest level of perceived reliability when it came to the sources of information. Consumers expected that during times of crisis, producers would use advertising to inform them about products and services (Kantar, 2020). There were various platforms through which information was provided during the lockdown period. According to a study by Shyam, R., and Abirami, A. (2020) carried out in India, half of the consumers spent time using online platforms to carry out informational searches and make purchases. People were hesitant to buy goods from unidentified merchants. They have serious reservations about picking shops during the pandemic. In a study conducted in The Netherlands, Hutjens, M. (2014) noted that several outbreaks have caused perceived risk in consumers' purchasing decisions at points of purchase like supermarkets and supply food chains. Along with a change in spending habits, the pandemic saw increased consumer usage of e-commerce contact points, such as the official websites of products, social media, and mobile platforms (Deloitte, 2020).

People gave local and sustainable brands extra attention during the lockdown, igniting enthusiasm for sustainability. Smaller close-to-home Kiranas (retailers) that demonstrated solidarity in times of need and went above and beyond to make sure essentials are delivered in safe and hygienic ways won the consumers' business from larger organised brands of retailers. In a recent Edelman Trust Barometer survey, well over half of customers reported that the way brands responded to the epidemic would influence their subsequent purchasing decisions. Several participants stated that they had just stopped buying a brand from a company that was acting irresponsibly during the Covid-19 pandemic (Alexa et al., 2021).

According to the aforementioned literature reviews, the majority of consumer behaviour research was carried out either before the Covid-19 lockdown or after the Covid-19 lockdown. There were few research studies that examined customer behaviour during the Covid-19 lockdown. In this context, the purpose of this study would be to know the behaviour of consumers while purchasing essential goods during the Covid-19 lockdown period. The findings of this study would be very

useful to marketing agencies and policymakers. Businesses might use it to gather information about their customers, help them create winning marketing plans, and get ready for any pandemic or other emergency that might arise in future.

Objectives:

1. To investigate the major factors affecting the purchase of essential products during Covid-19 lockdown.
2. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.
3. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and the types of product purchased during the Covid-19 lockdown.
4. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and the mode of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.
5. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and the information source during the Covid-19 lockdown.
6. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and the influencer duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.
7. To determine the association between the demographics of buyers and point of purchase during the Covid-19 lockdown.

3. Research Methodology

The study's design was both descriptive and quantitative. The study was carried out in the state of Jharkhand, India during the Covid19 lockdown period from March 2020 through May 2020. The population for the study were composed of all adults above 18 years of age who purchased essential products during the Covid-19 lockdown period. A list of emails of people above 18 years of age who purchased essential goods during the Covid19-lockdown period was prepared. To collect primary data in an online format, a structured questionnaire was used. Based on the accessibility of their e-mail addresses, respondents were chosen using judgement sampling. However, a large number of the provided email addresses were inaccurate. As a result, choosing the appropriate email addresses for the study was made easier by a general mailing filter. This is significant because, as Srivastava (2020) advises, it is challenging to contact people during a lockdown. When obtaining respondents is challenging, judgement sampling is beneficial (Sekaran, 2005; Hair et al., 2010; Srivastava, 2020). A total of 223 questionnaires were collected, out of which 184 (83%) were found to be suitable for tabulation and analysis. According to Hair et al. (2010) and Sekaran (2005), the sample size is adequate for judgement sampling.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section discusses the demographic profile of the respondents and the major factors influencing the purchase decisions of essential goods during the Covid-19 lockdown period. Further, the section explains the cross-tabulation and hypothesis testing in detail.

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents	
Total number of Respondent s = 184	
Gender	
Male	59.20%
Female	40.80%
Age	
Below 31 years	62.50%
31-50 years	32.07%
Above 50 years	5.43%
Family Size	
Less than 5 members	82.60%
More than 5 members	17.40%
Income	
Up to Rs. 40,000	60.30%
Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 80,000	19%
Above Rs. 80,000	20.70%

The profiles of the respondents are shown in Table 1. There were 184 people in the sample in total. Male responders made up 59.2% of the total. The majority of respondents (62.5%) were under the age of 31. Families with less than five members made up the bulk of responders (82.6%). 60.30% of respondents (or those with incomes up to Rs 40,000) fall within this income range.

4.2. Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions during Covid-19 Lockdown

Table 2: Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions during Covid-19 Lockdown		
Total number of Respondent s = 184		
Factors	**Not influenced (%)**	**Influenced (%)**
Product Variety	19.6	80.4
Product Quality	5.4	94.6
Product Quantity	15.8	84.2
Brand Image	19	81
Product Features	15.8	84.2
Product Price	14.7	85.3
Product Availability	12.5	87.5
Product Awareness	17.4	72.6
Need of the Product	12	88
Product Information	18.5	81.5
Sales Promotions	21.2	78.8
Availability of Credits	28.8	71.2

Eco-Friendliness of Products	19	81

Table 2 depicts respondents' perceptions of the factors determining their decision to purchase essentials during the Covid-19 lockdown. The majority of respondents stated that product variety (80.4%), product quality (94.6%), and product quantity (84.2%) mattered when it came to buying essentials during the Covid-19 shutdown. For a large majority of consumers (81%), brand image was crucial. In contrast to the majority of customers (85.3%) who were influenced by product price, a sizable majority of consumers (84.2%) were influenced by product features. In comparison to 82.6% who said they are influenced by product awareness, 87.5% of respondents stated they are influenced by product variety. The majority of those surveyed claimed that their decision to buy a product was affected by both the need for it (88%) and product information (81.5%). A whopping 78.8% of respondents claimed that sales promotions have an impact on their purchasing decisions, while the availability of credit was also a significant factor (71.2%). The majority of respondents (81%) stated that purchasing decisions for essentials were influenced by a product's environmental friendliness.

4.3. Analytical Results

Cross-tabulation was used to determine whether consumer purchasing habits for essentials during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown varied based on the demographic characteristics of respondents. The Chi-square test value shows whether there is a significant difference between demographic variables and consumer purchasing behaviour. Fisher's exact test is used as an alternative to the Chi-square test of independence when one or more of the cell counts in a table is less than 5. There is no significant relationship between the variables if the p-value is greater than 0.05. To measure the strength of association between two variables, Phi and Cramer's V are used (Fisher, 1922).

4.3.1. Gender

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant association between the gender and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	2.855[a]	2	.240	.253		
Likelihood Ratio	2.822	2	.244	.283		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.741			.282		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.356[b]	1	.244	.277	.158	.063
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.85.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.165.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the gender and the stock keeping duration. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.282). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant association between the gender and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 4: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	1.056[a]	1	.304	.314	.195	
Continuity Correction[b]	.736	1	.391			
Likelihood Ratio	1.047	1	.306	.314	.195	
Fisher's Exact Test				.314	.195	
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.050[c]	1	.306	.314	.195	.079
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 19.97.						
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table						
c. The standardized statistic is 1.025.						

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether the types of products purchased are independent of gender. The results are not significant, $\chi2$ (1) = 1.056, p = 0.304. We fail to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant association between the gender and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 5: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	3.237[a]	4	.519	.531		
Likelihood Ratio	3.353	4	.501	.520		
Fisher's Exact Test	3.368			.505		
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.003[b]	1	.157	.165	.085	.013

N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.85.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.415.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the gender and the modes of payment used. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.505). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant association between the gender and the information sources during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	2.499[a]	5	.777	.790		
Likelihood Ratio	2.624	5	.758	.777		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.471			.798		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.920[b]	1	.337	.348	.181	.024
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.45.						
b. The standardized statistic is .959.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the gender and the information sources. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.798). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the information sources during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant association between the gender and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 7: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	1.069[a]	3	.785	.781		
Likelihood Ratio	1.087	3	.780	.778		

	Value					
Fisher's Exact Test	1.052			.788		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.086[b]	1	.769	.804	.416	.063
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.74.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.293.						

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether the types of influencers are independent of gender. The results are not significant, $\chi2$ (3) = 1.069, p = 0.785. We fail to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant association between the gender and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 8: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	1.985[a]	3	.576	.583		
Likelihood Ratio	1.979	3	.577	.587		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.042			.571		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.973[b]	1	.160	.177	.090	.017
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.34.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.405.						

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether the points of purchase are independent of gender. The results are not significant, $\chi2$ (3) = 1.985, p = 0.576. We fail to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the gender and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 shutdown.

4.3.2. Age of Buyers

Hypothesis 7: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 9: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	2.589[a]	4	.629	.623		
Likelihood Ratio	3.114	4	.539	.638		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.187			.677		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.678[b]	1	.195	.203	.119	.048
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 4 cells (44.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .38.						
b. The standardized statistic is -1.295.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the stock keeping duration. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.677). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the age of buyers and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 8: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 10: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	1.175[a]	2	.556	.587		
Likelihood Ratio	1.107	2	.575	.587		
Fisher's Exact Test	1.312			.542		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.072[b]	1	.788	.889	.443	.106
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.66.						
b. The standardized statistic is .269.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the types of products purchased. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.542). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the age of buyers and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 9: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 11: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	11.530[a]	8	.173	.171		
Likelihood Ratio	13.606	8	.093	.114		
Fisher's Exact Test	12.951			.074		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.606[b]	1	.436	.438	.229	.022
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 7 cells (46.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .38.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.778.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the modes of payment used. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.074). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the age of buyers and the modes of payment used during the Covid 19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 10: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the information sources during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 12: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.590[a]	10	.477	.470		
Likelihood Ratio	12.035	10	.283	.345		
Fisher's Exact Test	8.827			.492		
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.197[b]	1	.023	.024	.011	.002
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 9 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .33.						
b. The standardized statistic is 2.280.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the information sources. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.492). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the age of buyers and the information sources during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 11: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 13: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	22.877[a]	6	.001	.001		
Likelihood Ratio	23.510	6	.001	.001		
Fisher's Exact Test	20.356			.001		
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.269[b]	1	.000	.000	.000	.000
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.03.						
b. The standardized statistic is -3.503.						

Table 14: Symmetric Measures				
		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.353	.001	.001
	Cramer's V	.249	.001	.001
N of Valid Cases		184		
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.				
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.				

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the types of influencers. There was a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.001). We reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant association between the age of buyers and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 shutdown. The Cramer's V of 0.001 and degrees of freedom (6) indicates a small association between the age of buyers and the types of influencers (Zach, 2021).

Hypothesis 12: There is no significant association between the age of buyers and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.195[a]	6	.163	.158		
Likelihood Ratio	9.680	6	.139	.172		
Fisher's Exact Test	8.983			.142		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.497[b]	1	.481	.498	.255	.030
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .98.						

b. The standardized statistic is .705.

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the age of buyers and the points of purchase. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed $p = 0.142$). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the age of buyers and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 shutdown.

4.3.3. Size of Family

Hypothesis 13: There is no significant association between the size of family and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 16: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	.706[a]	2	.703	.819		
Likelihood Ratio	.660	2	.719	.763		
Fisher's Exact Test	.903			.755		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.136[b]	1	.712	.842	.413	.140
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.22.						
b. The standardized statistic is .369.						

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Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the size of family and the stock keeping duration. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed $p = 0.755$). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of family and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 14: There is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 17: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	.053[a]	1	.818	.832	.505	
Continuity Correction[b]	.000	1	.992			
Likelihood Ratio	.053	1	.817	.832	.505	
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.505	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052[c]	1	.819	.832	.505	.172
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.52.						
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table						
c. The standardized statistic is -.229.						

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether the types of products purchased are independent of the size of family of buyers. The results are not significant, $\chi 2 (1) = 0.053$, $p = 0.818$. We fail to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 15: There is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 18: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	2.983[a]	4	.561	.582		
Likelihood Ratio	3.294	4	.510	.592		
Fisher's Exact Test	3.491			.466		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.507[b]	1	.220	.225	.121	.022
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.22.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.227.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the modes of payment used. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed $p = 0.466$). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 16: There is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the information source during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 19: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	5.119[a]	5	.402	.404		
Likelihood Ratio	4.755	5	.447	.514		
Fisher's Exact Test	4.961			.396		
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.797[b]	1	.029	.032	.018	.005
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.04.						
b. The standardized statistic is -2.190.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the information sources. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.396). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the information sources during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 17: There is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 20: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	4.351[a]	3	.226	.225		
Likelihood Ratio	5.043	3	.169	.192		
Fisher's Exact Test	4.236			.226		
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.683[b]	1	.055	.066	.032	.013
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.30.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.919.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the types of influencers. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.226). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the types of influencers during the Covid 19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 18: There is no significant association between the size of family of buyers and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 lockdown.

						Point
Table 21: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	.637[a]	3	.888	.908		
Likelihood Ratio	.653	3	.884	.917		
Fisher's Exact Test	.719			.885		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.483[b]	1	.487	.496	.271	.048
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 1 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.13.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.695.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the points of purchase. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.885). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the size of the family of buyers and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 shutdown.

4.3.4. Level of Income

Hypothesis 19: There is no significant association between the level of income and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 22: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	3.080[a]	4	.545	.563		
Likelihood Ratio	4.427	4	.351	.445		
Fisher's Exact Test	2.583			.637		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.609[b]	1	.435	.455	.253	.059
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 5 cells (55.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.33.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.781.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the level of income and the stock keeping duration. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.637). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded

that there is no significant association between the level of income and the stock keeping duration during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 20: There is no significant association between the level of income and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 23: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	.279[a]	2	.870	.894		
Likelihood Ratio	.283	2	.868	.870		
Fisher's Exact Test	.254			.919		
Linear-by-Linear Association	.278[b]	1	.598	.610	.339	.072
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.32.						
b. The standardized statistic is -.527.						

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether the types of products purchased are independent of the level of income. The results are not significant, $\chi2\ (2) = 0.279$, p = 0.870. We fail to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the level of income and the types of products purchased during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 21: There is no significant association between the level of income and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 24: Chi-Square Tests						
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	23.902[a]	8	.002	.002		
Likelihood Ratio	24.756	8	.002	.003		
Fisher's Exact Test	22.352			.002		
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.195[b]	1	.274	.277	.144	.012
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 5 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.33.						
b. The standardized statistic is 1.093.						

Table 25: Symmetric Measures			
	Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.

Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.360	.002	.002
	Cramer's V	.255	.002	.002
N of Valid Cases		184		
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.				
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.				

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the level of income and the modes of payment used. There was a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.002). We reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant association between the level of income and the modes of payment used during the Covid-19 shutdown. The Cramer's V of 0.002 and degrees of freedom (8) indicate a small association between the level of income and the modes of payment used (Zach, 2021).

Hypothesis 22: There is no significant association between the level of income and the information sources during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 26: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	16.962^a	10	.075	.^{b}		
Likelihood Ratio	18.055	10	.054	.^{b}		
Fisher's Exact Test	15.264			.094		
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.340^c	1	.021	.022	.010	.002
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 7 cells (38.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.14.						
b. Cannot be computed because there is insufficient memory.						
c. The standardized statistic is 2.311.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the level of income and the information source. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.885). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the level of income and the information sources during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 23: There is no significant association between the level of income and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 27: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	9.203[a]	6	.162	.161		
Likelihood Ratio	9.137	6	.166	.191		
Fisher's Exact Test	8.769			.177		
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.220[b]	1	.022	.023	.014	.003
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.61.						
b. The standardized statistic is -2.285.						

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the level of income and the types of influencers. There was not a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.885). We fail to reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant association between the level of income and the types of influencers during the Covid-19 shutdown.

Hypothesis 24: There is no significant association between the level of income and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Table 28: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	16.392[a]	6	.012	.011		
Likelihood Ratio	16.887	6	.010	.013		
Fisher's Exact Test	15.381			.014		
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.813[b]	1	.028	.029	.016	.003
N of Valid Cases	184					
a. 2 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.42.						

b. The standardized statistic is 2.194.

Table 29: Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.298	.012	.011
	Cramer's V	.211	.012	.011
N of Valid Cases		184		
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.				
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.				

Fisher's exact test was used to determine if there was a significant association between the level of income and the points of purchase. There was a statistically significant association between the two variables (two-tailed p = 0.014). We reject the hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant association between the level of income and the points of purchase during the Covid-19 shutdown. The Cramer's V of 0.012 and degrees of freedom (6) indicate a small association between the level of income and the points of purchase (Zach, 2021).

5.   Conclusions and Marketing Implementations

Individuals make different purchases depending on their demography. When making any purchase decision, different people are affected by various factors in distinct ways. The study revealed that most of the respondents perceive product variety, product quality and product quantity as the most influencing factors for making purchase decisions during the Covid-19 lockdown. Brand image, product price and the features of products were also found to be very important factors influencing the purchase of essential products. In times of uncertainty, these outputs provide marketers with ideas for creating marketing plans. Even in uncertain times, it is not a smart idea for retailers to offer fewer varieties of products.

Additionally, companies must manage both product quality and quantity. Marketers need to make an effort to improve the branding of their goods and services. This study found that during the Covid-19 lockdown, consumers chose branded goods over unbranded goods. It also showed that most respondents favoured purchasing environmentally friendly products. Making informed buying selections during uncertain times requires having a thorough understanding of the products and services on offer. The objective of a company's marketing communications should be to raise consumer awareness of its goods and services. The information must be timely, accurate, and adequate. The study also found that respondents were restricting their purchases up until they recognized they actually needed the goods or services. Many of them felt that having access to credit was a major motivator when making any purchase. Customers will be encouraged to shop during uncertain times if businesses focus on customer-friendly pricing policies, including offering

credit or providing a variety of payment alternatives, such as EMI, debit card, credit card, UPI, net banking, and buy now pay later options.

According to the results of the hypothesis test, there is a significant association between the categories of influencers and the age of the purchasers. Those under the age of 31 and those between the ages of 31 and 50 were highly impacted by family members in their decisions. However, family members and spouses as well as partners had an effect on people over 50. The marketer must use several influencers to try to persuade buyers from various age groups. It was found that there was a significant association between income level and the different payment methods. The UPI app was the preferred mode of payment for the majority of people with earnings of up to Rs. 40,000, between Rs. 40,000 and Rs. 80,000, and beyond Rs. 80,000. By promoting the use of electronic payment methods, especially UPI-like apps, and guaranteeing the security and safety of all transactions, businesses can encourage their customers to do so. Additionally, a significant association between income level and points of purchase was discovered. Convenience stores were mentioned as the favourite site to make purchases by the majority of survey participants with incomes under Rs. 40,000 and between Rs. 40,000 and Rs. 80,000. Online shopping was preferred by respondents with salaries over Rs 80,000, nevertheless. Convenience stores are still relevant, and customers still prefer them over other retailing formats. However, there is a growing tendency among consumers who favour internet shopping. As a result, businesses need to be ready with modern, user-friendly online storefronts.

6.   Limitations & Future Research Direction

The study was restricted to the Indian state of Jharkhand. Therefore, the results cannot be extrapolated to the entire country due to the small sample size. The literature study may have some limitations due to the dearth of studies on consumption trends during the Covid-19 lockdown in developing nations like India. The research was carried out between March and May 2020. (During the first Covid-19 lockdown). Markets began to reopen in June 2020 once the lockdown was lifted; this might have caused other behavioral changes. To determine the actual behavioural change following the lockdown, similar research can be conducted in the future.

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